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**THE FAILURE OF THE PORTUGUESE FIRST
REPUBLIC: AN ANALYSIS OF WARTIME POLITICAL
MOBILIZATION**

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THE FAILURE OF THE PORTUGUESE FIRST
REPUBLIC: AN ANALYSIS OF PARTISAN POLITICAL
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THESIS

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This thesis is entirely the product of my own
research and has not been submitted to
any other University.

Antônio Ribeiro de Almeida

SUMMARY

This thesis represents an attempt to set the collapse of the Portuguese First Republic in December 1917 in the context of the First World War. The effects of the conflict on Portugal have been studied, traditionally, from diplomatic and military points of view. In this work priority is given to the effects of the war on the process of political mobilization launched by the Republic's leadership after October 1910. This is done in order to explain the ease of the regime's overthrow at a moment defined by observers of all political hues as crucial in the country's history. Attention is paid to the interpretation of the war formulated by Portugal's wartime governments and their supporters, and to the attempts to create a feeling of national unity in the face of the adversities of war. Conversely, the use made of the difficulties generated by the conflict, many of which were common to the whole of Europe, by the combined opposition forces, is also examined. Portugal's wartime experience is then set against that of two countries in the Southern periphery of Europe, Italy and Spain, whose liberal regimes were overturned in the immediate aftermath of the First World War. In this way the findings of the thesis contribute to the overall understanding of the sudden appearance of Fascist or neo-Fascist governments in the 1920s, because many of the features characteristic of those governments were to be found in the erratic search for stability which marked the presidency of Sidónio Pais in 1918. A conceptual link is also established between the rule of Sidónio Pais and the *coup* of May 1926 which definitively destroyed the parliamentary Republic in Portugal, creating first an ill-defined military dictatorship and then giving way to Salazar's 'New State.'

ABBREVIATIONS

A.H.M. - *Arquivo Histórico Militar.*

A.N. - *Arquivo Nacional.*

C.E.N. - *Conselho Económico Nacional.*

C.E.P. - *Corpo Expedicionário Português.*

D.G.A.P.C. - *Direcção Geral da Administração Política e Civil.*

G.N.R. - *Guarda Nacional Republicana.*

I.M.P. - *Instrução Militar Preparatória.*

M.A.E. - *Ministère des Affaires Etrangères.*

M.G.S.I. - *Ministério da Guerra, Serviço de Informações.*

M.I. - *Ministério do Interior.*

M.N.E. - *Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros.*

P.N.R. - *Partido Nacional Republicano.*

P.R.P. - *Partido Republicano Português.*

P.S.P. - *Partido Socialista Português.*

U.O.N. - *União Operária Nacional.*

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

I. Purpose of the thesis and methodology.

The First World War is usually regarded as one of the most prolonged and expensive military stalemates in the history of human conflict. After the battles of the Marne and of Tannenberg, the military situation on both the Western and the Eastern fronts stabilised, rendering false all the predictions of decisive breakthroughs leading to easy victories. The advantages which new weapons and tactics conferred on the defender were further shown by Serbia's determined resistance to Austria-Hungary's armies, which proved highly embarrassing to the Dual Monarchy, and by the creation of yet another stalemate following Italy's entry into the war. Although military and diplomatic historians have explained the reasons for the failure of the various military commanders to deliver on the promise of a quick military resolution to the conflict, they have not successfully accounted for the willingness of the huge citizen armies that carried out the fighting to endure four years of failed offensives, and extremely high casualty rates, with only occasional breakdowns of morale. Moreover, the willingness of the civilian populations to undergo enormous emotional and material sacrifices, crucial as it was to the maintenance of the armies at the front, has only more recently begun to be explored.

In order to account for the determination shown by civilians in the face of total war, historians have turned to the internal policies of the belligerents¹. Political mobilization, or the rallying of a given country's population around certain ideals and institutions identified as the defining characteristics of that country, and of different segments of its population (divided along political, social, or religious lines) played a very

¹ See, for example, Jean-Jacques Becker, *The Great War and the French People* (Leamington Spa: Berg, 1985) and Trevor Wilson, *The Myriad Faces of War* (Cambridge: Polity, 1986.)

important part in the process of harnessing the belligerent powers' strength. As E.J. Hobsbawm makes clear in his essay "Mass-producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914,"² this type of mobilization had been taking place throughout the more advanced nations as a result of two factors: liberalism's destruction of pre-existing bonds and ties of authority and the emergence, through the introduction of universal, or quasi-universal, male suffrage, of mass participation in politics. Because of the spectacular rise of ideologies grounded on class warfare and internationalism, which threatened the nature and even the existence of the modern state, new reasons for allegiance to this state had to be found and popularised. The war, with its constant demands for loyalty in the face of extreme adversity, was to draw on this existing process; when speaking of political mobilization in wartime, therefore, it is imperative to remember that what is being discussed is the sudden acceleration of an already existing process, or the momentary return to an accomplished process.

Wartime political mobilization, which was designed to create a higher and more readily exploitable political consciousness on the part of the population, and to forge the closest of links between the individual and the state,³ can be seen to have had a direct influence on political developments in the post-war world. This being so, the end of the First World War and the settlement of Versailles do not mark a clear boundary between two different political contexts; post-war politics, marked by the widening of the political spectrum and by the attempted creation of mass movements both among the far Right and the far Left, have their roots deeply implanted in the wartime experience of soldiers and civilians alike. This thesis represents an attempt to trace the process of political mobilization in Portugal during the Great War and the years that both preceded and

² Eric Hobsbawm, "Mass-producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 263-307.

³ Horne portrays wartime political and cultural mobilization as "connected spheres in which power, mediated by the state, was preserved, challenged or redistributed, and in which ideas, values and images were deployed to enrol elite and popular support for the national effort." He adds that "the overlapping core consisted of crucial public issues - war aims (why the war was being fought) and war equality (who was bearing the brunt of increasingly heavy sacrifices)." John Horne, "Democracies at Work: France and Britain, 1914-1920" [Paper delivered to the 'Grande Guerra e Mutamento' conference, Trieste, 28.9.1995-1.10.1995, forthcoming publication by conference organisers], 11.

followed it, from the revolution of 1910, which created the First Republic, to that of 1926, which destroyed it. The republican regime unveiled in Portugal in 1910 was confronted, from its very first days, by a terrible paradox: it could only become a national regime, one with support across the country and its social spectrum, if it launched a policy of political mobilization in turn of its institutions and principles. For the republicans, nominally committed to the creation of a popular democracy, this entailed the eventual broadening of the criteria for political participation and the consequent entry into political life of a largely conservative and Catholic peasantry whose numerical strength would necessarily alter the very nature of the secular - and even anti-clerical - Republic. Despite their claims to a commitment to universal male suffrage, and to a resurgence of the Portuguese nation, independently of class or political beliefs, the republicans were merely the strongest segment of the politicised minority of the population, and their increasingly bitter internal divisions served only to nourish the hopes of their monarchist rivals. The First World War presented the republican leadership with the possibility of hastening the process of political mobilization, and of creating, as a result, widespread loyalty to the new regime, by linking it with the more conventional process of generating patriotic support for a military intervention. This thesis will therefore examine the attempts made by the wartime governments to explain and justify intervention in the conflict. It will also consider the impact of this campaign, and of the rival campaign against military intervention in Europe, on Portuguese politics after the First World War, inserting these developments into the wider European setting by establishing a comparison with Spain and Italy, whose domestic politics were also affected in a dramatic fashion by the First World War.

Most studies of Portugal's experience of the First World War have reflected traditional military and diplomatic concerns. They have sought to explain the decision to intervene in the conflict - usually in terms of Portuguese and British strategic concerns - and to give an account of Portugal's actual military participation in the African and European campaigns. Although this thesis frequently considers military and diplomatic issues, its main concern is to focus on Portuguese domestic affairs: the attempt to use the war to build support for the republican regime, the corresponding response, which

attempted to blame specific political forces, or the Republic itself, for all wartime difficulties, and the political results of these conflicting currents. Archival material for this thesis is essentially threefold. In the *Arquivo Histórico Militar* [Army Historical Archive], in Lisbon, the files of the Ministry of War's Information Service provide a useful insight into the constant political disturbances and threats to the war effort, notably those which involved military figures, while the files of the *Corpo Expedicionário Português* [Portuguese Expeditionary Corps] reflect how these threats affected the military performance of the Portuguese army. Material from this Archive is also used in this thesis to illustrate the level of apathy towards the war, as reflected in the figures for desertion and the networks which were created to smuggle men of military age into Spain. The files of the Ministry of the Interior, now held in the *Arquivo Nacional* [National Archive] in Lisbon, constitute a second source of information on the mood of the country, and on threats to the regime, reflecting the communication between the central government in Lisbon and its appointees at District (Civil Governors) and municipal (Administrators) level. Finally, the correspondence between French diplomats in Portugal (in the Lisbon Legation and the Oporto Consulate) and the Quai d'Orsay provides an excellent independent overview of political life in Portugal; French diplomats were more sympathetic to the new regime than their British counterparts, and were flattered by the republicans' enthusiasm for all things French; nevertheless they were critical of the nature of the Portuguese 'Sacred Union', and of all actions and decisions likely to add to the country's instability during the war.

The archives of the *Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros* [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] and the *Assembleia da República* [the Portuguese parliament] were also consulted, the latter proving especially useful, for it holds the only copy of the secret debates of the Chamber of Deputies of 1917. In a study of popular opinion and debate, the Press is, of course, essential, and an attempt has been made to cover both interventionist and anti-interventionist sources: *O Século* has been chosen as the main non-partisan source of information for the Portuguese readership at the time of the First World War, while *O Mundo* and *O Dia* have been chosen as representative of,

respectively, Democratic and monarchist opinion. Finally, an attempt has been made to cover the interventionist and anti-interventionist literature available in the *Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa*, and accounts of events in Portugal written by foreign authors, useful for their greater objectivity, notably in relation to the republican leadership and its achievements. Secondary material has been relied on for certain topics, although the dearth of adequate research on the topic of the First Republic during the New State means that grave lacunae still exist. The work of António Henrique de Oliveira Marques, José Medeiros Ferreira, César Oliveira, and Fernando Farelo Lopes has been of special importance in the attempt to interpret documents found in the already mentioned archival collections. It is on secondary material that the comparative dimension of the thesis rests.

II. Varieties of wartime political mobilization.

Historians of the First World War have used a variety of means in their attempt to chart the scope, and the effects, of wartime political mobilization. They have concentrated, on the one hand, on specific initiatives undertaken by the governments of the warring countries, and private organisations, such as churches, trade unions, employers' groups, and propaganda leagues, to gain and bolster support for the stalled military effort. On the other hand, they have followed public opinion through the war years, both in order to gauge the reception to those initiatives, and to trace the evolution of mentalities and social structures caused by the need for total victory on the Clausewitzian model. Although the process of political mobilization is not the exclusive property of countries at war, being a characteristic of new regimes or even of new states, the fear of an invading Other does serve as a catalyst for a concerted action by governments and other opinion-shaping bodies to attempt to rally their respective audiences around the task of national defence. Once the movement of armies came to a halt in 1914, belligerent governments immediately began to put forward their interpretation of not only the events which had led to the war but also of the deeper significance of the war: what was being defended (family, property, and a certain set of peculiarly national political and cultural values), and from whom (an enemy demonized

without pity, one which represented not only a threat to family and property but also embodied the very antithesis of the already mentioned political and cultural values.) Horne writes, “the extent to which the preceding period had prepared the kind of political and cultural mobilization (and self-mobilization) which took place during the first phase of the war is indicated by the immediacy with which the language for defining both the enemy and the national cause emerged in 1914.”⁴ In this chapter we will consider some of the forms which political mobilization assumed during the war, in order to form the basis for a comparison with the Portuguese case, a comparison which lies at the core of this thesis.

In order to guarantee the support of a given country’s population in times of war, a government must, as a rule, attempt to control that population’s access to information from the battle front, from the enemy’s rival propaganda machine, and from internal opponents of the war. Only in this manner will a government faced by such circumstances ensure that its interpretation of the war’s causes and ultimate meaning is reaching its intended mass audience unimpaired by alternative accounts. For this very reason, most countries during the First World War restricted the availability of foreign newspapers to those of friendly nations, set up censorship boards to supervise domestic publications, and attempted to monitor private communication between soldiers and civilians, and between civilians of different countries, through postal censorship. This information vacuum was filled, simultaneously, by the belligerent governments, which employed various tactics to explain to the population the justice of their respective national causes, such explanations falling into the broad category of wartime propaganda. In times of great uncertainty, as were the initial months of the Great War, with the frantic movement of armies and a news black-out creating a barrier between soldiers and civilians, the latter’s susceptibility to official accounts of events is easy to understand. As the war wore on, however, the propaganda offensive had to become increasingly sophisticated in order to counteract the idea that ‘peace’ was an acceptable replacement for ‘victory’ despite the Generals’ obvious difficulty in mounting the decisive breakthrough which would produce that same

⁴ Horne, *op.cit.*, 12.

'victory'. Horne illustrates the process by which the morale crisis of 1917 led, in France and Britain, to a significant intensification of the mobilization process, carried out, in an ambiguous relationship with their respective governments, by the 'Union des grandes associations contre la propagande enemie', founded in March 1917, and the 'National War Aims Committee', founded in August of the same year.⁵ Perhaps the most impressive use of propaganda for domestic consumption was that of the United States which had entered the war only after a long and often acrimonious debate. The United States provides a useful comparison with the country whose experience of the war lies at the heart of this thesis - Portugal. Both countries entered the war once it had become a clear stalemate on the Western Front, to which they sent an army; in both countries a segment of the population was disposed to favour Germany - German immigrants and Germanophile monarchists respectively. George Creel, who headed the Committee on Public Information, the American propaganda agency, wrote, in his *How We Advertised America*, that

"There was no part of the great war machinery that we did not touch, no medium of appeal that we did not employ. The printed word, the spoken word, the motion picture, the telegraph, the cable, the wireless, the poster, the sign-board - all these were used in our campaign to make our own people and all other peoples understand the causes that compelled America to take arms."⁶

The numbers provided by Creel reveal an extraordinary effort which both captured the world's admiration for America's role in the war, giving Woodrow Wilson an

⁵ John Horne, "Re-mobilizing for Total War: France and Britain, 1917-1918", in *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War*, ed. John Horne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming.)

⁶ George Creel, *How We Advertised America* (New York, London: Harper Brothers, 1920), 5.

enormous moral authority in his dealings with the Allies and the Central Powers, and blanketed out most internal misgivings about intervening in European affairs. Three distinct series of pamphlets were published, explaining the causes of the war, America's war aims, detailing German atrocities, and calling for national unity while the country was at war. 6.25 million copies of one pamphlet alone, *How War Came to America*, were printed; another pamphlet, entitled *American Loyalty by Citizens of German Descent* was distributed both in English (700,000 copies) and German (560,000 copies). The American government's message was further spread by official films, posters, and war exhibits, held throughout the country, in which military hardware and other war-related items were on display, and, of course, by the 'four-minute men', who addressed total audiences estimated by Creel at 134 million, on topics such as "Why Are We Fighting?", "The Meaning of America" and "Where Did You Get Your Facts?"

The Committee on Public Information, according to Creel, also made its presence felt in schools around the country through publications to be read out by teachers and by the 'junior four-minute men'. This use of schools for propaganda purposes was characteristic of the belligerent powers' attempts to spread their message internally, notably in rural areas, where the school teacher's authority and prestige were greatest.⁷ The teachers' standing in their community and their education ensured that, in the eyes of the central governments, each school could be relied upon as a centre of propaganda aimed not only at children (the soldiers of the future) but also at their parents: teachers were encouraged to hold meetings and conferences on various aspects of the war and were also expected to lead by example, acting as model citizens or subjects. Jean-Jacques Becker points out that French primary school teachers were also expected to drum up support for the national war loans, especially from 1917 onwards, "when potential subscribers were showing some reluctance."⁸ It was not uncommon for teachers to

⁷ See Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau's *La Guerre des Enfants 1914-1918* (Paris: Armand Colin Éditeur, 1993) for a detailed discussion of the wartime role of school teachers in France.

⁸ Jean-Jacques Becker, *op.cit.*, 154.

accumulate a variety of administrative functions, due to the toll of conscription on local government employees and elected officials, and even to be used by the government as a source of information on the state of morale and the availability of foodstuffs in their area.

Harold Lasswell, in his *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, wrote,

“During the war much reliance was placed on propaganda to promote economy of food, textiles, fuel, and other commodities, and to stimulate recruiting, employment in war industries, service in relief work, and the purchase of bonds.”⁹

Moreover, Lasswell pointed out, propaganda was used “to mobilize the animosity of the community against the enemy.”¹⁰ What Lasswell failed to point out was the recognition, in wartime, that government backed or led propaganda was insufficient to maintain the high levels of mobilization of the civilian population required by the conflict. We must therefore turn our attention to actual measures, unveiled by belligerent governments, which were designed to reinforce the bonds between the individual and the state, thereby imbuing the war with a new meaning, and to propaganda emanating from private bodies or even individuals - the self-mobilization which was to play such a vital part in the definition of the war's meaning at national or local level. In order to bridge the gap between those at the front and their civilian counterparts, wartime governments launched a series of initiatives designed to create the impression that all could participate in the final victory. Initiatives such as war loans were not merely means by which to find the resources necessary for continuing the military struggle; the campaigns which accompanied them made it clear that those who lent money to the government were

⁹ Harold Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (Cambridge, Mass., London: M.T.I. Press, 1971), 9-10.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

playing a crucial part in the preparation for the 'final push', or, in other words, that they were buying a share, however small, in the final victory. Productivity prizes and even the rationing of food and other essential items also helped to produce this effect. Luigi Tomassini makes it clear that the different measures adopted by the Italian government in relation to food distribution, which culminated in the general introduction of ration cards in November 1917, were not merely fueled by economic needs - the morale of the population, eager for justice in the division of available foodstuffs, was also a prime consideration. Tommasini writes,

"Ration cards were extended to other foodstuffs and also maintained where they were no longer necessary from a purely economic viewpoint, the explicit motivation being that they were a useful element from a social point of view."¹¹

Alexandre Millerand, one of the leading figures in France's wartime governments, pointed out, in his *L'Effort et le Devoir Français*, that in order for civilian morale to hold out, civilian spending should be curtailed to a bare minimum so as to avoid superfluous expenditure and reduce France's trade deficit. He identified luxury foods, such as "gateaux, bonbons et confiseries" as an obvious target for savings.¹² More important were attempts to improve the quality of life for the poorer classes at a time of considerable economic difficulty, an obvious part of the process of political mobilization. Not only did the state, through the payment of pensions to the families of mobilized soldiers, take over the role of family bread winner; when possible, it either made promises or actually introduced measures in various areas which seemed to suggest that life in the post-war world would be substantially different for the returning soldiers and their families. The

¹¹ Luigi Tommasini, "L'Etat et l'Approvisionnement Civil en Italie pendant la Grande Guerre," in *Guerres Mondiales et Conflits Contemporains*, special number, "Etat, Société et 'économie morale.' L'Approvisionnement des Civils pendant la Guerre de 1914-1918," July 1996.

¹² Alexandre Millerand, *L'Effort et le Devoir Français* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1917), 30.

most famous of these promises were the post-Caporetto assurance of land for Italian agricultural labourers and the Kaiser's promise of Prussian electoral reform. Jay Winter has demonstrated the importance to Britain's war effort of improvements in health care (the 1916 revision of the 1902 Midwives' Act, and the Maternity and Child Welfare Act of 1918) and other interventions in the social plane by wartime governments - industrial canteens, introduced in September of 1916, and whose number had reached 900 by the end of the war, feeding 1,000,000 workers, and rent control. According to Winter, this last initiative was "the most important measure in the defence of working class living standards in wartime", without which the war effort might have broken down.¹³ The state also showed, in some cases, an understanding of the phenomena described by E.P. Thompson as the 'moral economy,'¹⁴ in France, for example, the price of bread in Paris was frozen for the duration of the conflict, because of the generalised belief among the city's poor that the availability of affordable bread was a basic responsibility of the government.¹⁵ The government chose to respect this belief, and to act accordingly, interfering, as a result, in the production and distribution of bread in the French capital in order to maintain order.

There was, in most belligerent countries, a great desire amongst substantial elements of the population to help bring about victory, and with the governments' blessing there appeared a host of private organisations intent on furthering the process of mobilization through propaganda and charity. According to Creel, one of the Committee of Public Information's most popular publications was a guide to all such organisations throughout the United States which, as Creel explained, allowed noncombatants to participate in the final victory.¹⁶ Tomassini, although stating that the Italian government in

¹³ Jay Winter, *The Great War and the British People* (London: McMillan, 1986), 229.

¹⁴ E.P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the Crowd," in *Customs in Common* (London: The Merlin Press, 1991.)

¹⁵ Thierry Bonzon, "La Société, l'Etat, et le Pouvoir Local: L'Approvisionnement à Paris, 1914-1918," in *Guerres Mondiales et Conflits Contemporains*, special number, July 1996.

¹⁶ Creel, *op.cit.*, 108.

1915 saw no need for the creation of a national consensus about the war effort, nevertheless points out that the state reminded “the local ruling groups of new duties, among which stood out that of spreading throughout the social strata (...) the moral model offered by the obedience and sacrifice of the soldiers.”¹⁷ As a result, a variety of local groups emerged, dedicated to “civil mobilization, preparation, or assistance”, which “gave themselves the task of combining assistance to those least favoured, hit by the new hardships of the war, with the patriotism which supported the moral effort of the country at war.”¹⁸

“In modern times, philosophers, professors, and intellectuals generally undertake willingly to provide their respective governments with those ingenious distortions and those subtle untruths by which it is made to appear that all good is on one side and all wickedness on the other.”¹⁹

Thus wrote Bertrand Russell in his impassioned “Appeal to the Intellectuals of Europe”, published during the war. Russell was reacting against the willingness of intellectuals to engage in political mobilization, shaping the ideological content of a war which, as Russell saw it, was not about ideologies. The war, as seen by intellectuals, was a war for the defense of Latin civilization against German barbarism, or for the defense of German Kultur from the atheistic French, from a nation of soul-less shopkeepers, and from hordes of savage Cossacks. There were nationalist, racial, and cultural appeals made in an effort to convince the soldiers, and their families, of the rightness of their country’s cause. Russell argued that all claims to objectivity, and to love of ‘truth’, had been brushed aside by “allegiance to country,”²⁰ and that a great opportunity had been missed

¹⁷ Tomassini, *op.cit.*, 14.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ Bertrand Russell, “An Appeal to the Intellectuals of Europe” in Russell, *Justice in Wartime* (Nottingham: Spokesman Books, 1975), 1.

by his colleagues in Britain and in the other belligerent nations.²¹ Historians were drafted, or offered their services, to authenticate atrocity stories and diplomatic accounts; Oxford University, for example, became an international propaganda machine, its history lecturers writing *Why Great Britain is Fighting*, which was translated into all major languages before 1914 had ended.²²

To these volunteer groups must be added the efforts of established organisations eager to impose their own logic on the war, and to improve their standing within their respective national community, organisations such as churches and trade unions. Both found that in order to carry out these immediate political tasks, they too had to develop their own sense of the meaning of the war: who had caused it and why, and what was being defended. Churches, as a rule, found themselves supporting national war efforts, and the difficulties faced by the French Catholic hierarchy in its relations with the Vatican during the First World War are well documented.²³ Viviani's government did not have to request the Catholic Church's help, for that help was offered immediately after the outbreak of hostilities. The Catholic Church in France, eager to reaffirm itself as a national force after the separation laws, formulated its own brand of patriotism, which it saw as being inextricably bound with the Catholic faith; this patriotism was evidenced in efforts such as the "Catholic Committee for Propaganda Abroad" and the calls for generosity in "support of war charities, subscriptions and loans."²⁴ The war, as explained by the French hierarchy to the French Catholics whose support it sought, was simply the international extension of Bismarck's *kulturkampf*: it was a war of religion. The Bishop of

²⁰ Russell, *op.cit.*, 2.

²¹ "Men of learning, who should be accustomed to the pursuit of truth in their daily work, might have attempted, at this time, to make themselves the mouthpiece of truth, to see what was false on their own side, what was valid on the side of their enemies." *ibid.*

²² Faculty of Modern History, University of Oxford, *Perche la Gran Bretagna Combatte* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914.)

²³ See Jacques Fontana, *Les Catholiques Français et la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1990)

²⁴ Becker, *op. cit.*, 180.

Grenoble published an article, in December 1914, detailing his vision of the wartime role of the village priest:

“He must know how to explain to the women the grandeur of the cause for which their husbands are fighting. He is an agent of liaison between God and the peasants. He must (...) comfort the bereaved and use the influence of his position to act in the interests of la Patrie in securing the victory, in particular by organising and encouraging works of charity and by using the pulpit to encourage participants to subscribe to *emprunts*, to welcome wounded soldiers and refugees.”²⁵

This patriotic campaign was carried out despite the mobilization of priests for combat duty at the front. According to Alan Wilkinson, 32,699 French priests were called for duty, over 4,600 being killed during the four and a half years of the conflict.²⁶ Becker, although conceding that there might have been a certain amount of self-interest behind the Church’s wartime actions, nevertheless concludes that Catholicism “certainly helped to ensure that patriotism did not disintegrate when put to the test.”²⁷

Although the Church of England’s position as the established religion ensured a very different working arrangement with the government, its role in the war effort was very similar to that of the French Catholic Church (although conscription, when it came, spared the Church). It was involved in the recruitment campaigns, not from the pulpits, but rather through articles from leading prelates, such as Archbishop Davidson’s pastoral letter of December 1914, and the various contributions of Bishops to *The Times*’ special

²⁵ Quoted in P.J. Flood, *Public Opinion and the War Effort* (Basingstoke: McMillan, 1990), 105.

²⁶ Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London: S.P.C.K., 1978), 42.

²⁷ Becker, *op.cit.*, 191.

recruitment supplement of November 1915. Like the French hierarchy, the Church of England was active in encouraging its faithful to give generously to the war effort, and contributed to propaganda abroad, some Bishops touring the United States “to tell the American people about the British war effort.”²⁸ Nineteen fourteen saw the religious leaders of the various belligerent powers expressing their support for the actions committed by their armies on the field, and these expressions of support became a bitter tussle for neutral opinion, conducted through the Press and through printed works.

If good relations between the belligerent governments and the churches soon revealed themselves to be of great importance in the fight to maintain the morale of the civilian population and even of some of the troops at the front, then, in a war marked by the need to produce ever-greater amounts of armaments and munitions, despite the departure of millions for the front, the support of organised labour was absolutely essential. In France, for example, skilled workers were removed from the front lines the moment that hopes for a quick victory were dispelled, a move which from the early months of the war set out the special status which these men were to enjoy for the duration of the conflict. This special status was revealed by the willingness to compromise with the unions’ pay demands, the government acting as a mediator with factory owners, provided that the unions’ support for the war itself did not waver. Horne points out that “the non-application of Carnet B”, the list of all those left-wing figures thought to oppose the coming war, and who were due for arrest upon its outbreak, “was the founding act of what came on both sides to be seen as a ‘policy of confidence’ by government in organised labour.”²⁹ Such a policy was to be maintained, according to Horne, even under the government of Clemenceau, who enjoyed a reputation as a ruthless strike-breaker. As Malvy, scapegoated by Clemenceau but nevertheless the architect of the government-organised labour cooperation explained, “a democracy has other duties than to launch

²⁸ Wilkinson, *op.cit.*, 45.

²⁹ John Horne, *Labour at War: France and Britain 1914-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 58.

itself into battle against labour organisations and to restrain syndicalist liberties at the moment when all social classes find themselves in the trenches, mingled in the same love of the patrie.³⁰

In Great Britain, meanwhile, the greater part of the labour movement collaborated in the 1914 and 1915 recruitment drives, so as to ward off the possibility of conscription, but when the government could no longer avoid the introduction of conscription, this drastic step was nevertheless accepted by the movement, heavily committed to the war. Such an acceptance was motivated by the greater fear of industrial conscription, which would have reduced both workers' incomes and their ability to negotiate with employers, magnified by the war. In return for the labour movement's cooperation, Lloyd George, whose vision of a nation united in the war effort, with shared sacrifices and reduced war profits made him a more attractive leader to the left than Asquith, allowed a considerable level of Labour participation in the cabinet - three ministers, one of whom was placed at the head of the newly formed Ministry of Labour, itself a long-standing aim of the Labour party.

A final element of political mobilization that can be considered in this short discussion was the need felt by governments to involve women in the war effort, and the general willingness of women's associations, and feminist groups, to cooperate with their respective governments. From the governments' point of view, the benefits to be derived from a wholehearted participation by women in the war effort was obvious: with more women taking up work in the rear areas, more men could be released for the front. Moreover, with women morally and professionally committed to the war, in factories, hospitals, or even in propaganda and charity associations, the idea that the war was a national effort could be more readily passed on to the men at the front: their will to fight on would be bolstered by the knowledge that all in the rear were contributing actively to the final victory. The fact that large numbers of women already worked outside the home

³⁰ Quoted in Horne, *ibid.*

was momentarily suppressed, as was the equally relevant point that many of those who sought work in munitions plants did so not for patriotic reasons, but rather out of economic necessity, or even the desire for economic independence. P.J. Flood makes this quite clear:

“(…) as producers, factory workers, and guardians of the family, the female sex must be portrayed in an ideal light. As the majority of the civilian population they were the backbone of the nation in time of war. They must therefore be idealised as arch patriots.”³¹

Feminist groups seized upon the war as a way of demonstrating loyalty to the state, which would be rewarded, in the post-war world by an increase in the political and social rights of women. It can be stated, therefore, that the greater part of intellectuals, clergymen, trade unionists, and feminists sacrificed, as a result of wartime conditions, the strength and authority derived from previous international links for the sake of short-term advancement at the national level.

III. Portugal and the First World War: A unique experience.

Having seen the importance of political mobilization in the leading belligerents, and some of the different shapes which it assumed, we can now attempt to establish a comparison between Portugal's war experience and that of the other belligerents, a comparison which will be more fully developed in the rest of this thesis. These differences in war experience, intimately bound with political mobilization in Portugal immediately

³¹ Flood, *op.cit.*, 82. For a discussion of women's war work, and its effects on those who carried it out, see Angela Woollacott, *On Her Their Lives Depend: Munition Workers in the Great War* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1994.) According to Woollacott, British munition workers held dear the belief that they too were participating in victory, a belief which made their immediate sacrifices acceptable: “Women working in munitions had the satisfaction of knowing they were directly helping the armies fighting at the front, or the navy or air force, by providing them with critically necessary ammunition, weapons, or equipment.” Woollacott, *op.cit.*, 194-195.

before and during the First World War, fall into three broad categories: the nature of the country and of its population, the nature of Portugal's engagement to the Allied cause, and the nature of the war that Portugal was eventually to fight.

In the first category, the most immediately apparent difference was the rate of illiteracy in Portugal, which was the highest in western Europe, reaching the 70% mark. Political mobilization under the constitutional monarchy had been nearly non-existent, because the rotativist system of government, relying on the vote-gathering function of the *caciques*, ensured that electoral results served only to legitimise changes of government, and not to determine them. Such a stranglehold on politics, combined with a limited franchise, prevented the success of any new political force, and even the Portuguese Republican Party, which had become the dominant political force in Lisbon, could not hope to expand into the countryside. The leadership of the monarchy did not feel the need, therefore, to create a new set of political, cultural, and even national ties between the six million Portuguese. The Republic, created in 1910, was the result of a successful assault on power by a force of armed civilians and the navy, and it promised to make all Portuguese into active citizens. The abject failure of the monarchy to defend itself shows that its leaders were incapable of raising popular support for their regime in a time of crisis. The republicans diffused the symbols of their new regime throughout the country - a new flag, a new anthem, and the bust of a woman wearing a phrygian cap as the very embodiment of the Republic, the last two being directly influenced by French republican symbols³² - and caused an increase in middle and lower middle class participation in politics. Recognizing, however, their immediate inability to compete with traditional sources of authority in rural areas, notably the Catholic Church, republicans quickly reversed their decision to concede universal male suffrage. Suffrage was henceforth linked to literacy, and once again the conditions necessary for the effective political mobilization

³² Hobsbawm, in his already quoted essay "Mass -Producing Traditions: Europe 1870-1914", makes the point that the Third Republic had a "store of earlier French republican symbolism" to draw upon, which was still capable of producing a response from its intended audience." Hobsbawm, *op.cit.*, 67. Portugal, however, had no such "store", as we will see in Chapter IV.

failed to materialize. Not only would peasants not derive the benefits of an active participation in politics, through the courting of their vote by rival parties, but also the other means to integrate politically into the new regime - compulsory education leading to literacy and hence the right to vote - was to be held up by the Democrats' drive for a balanced budget and, after 1914, by increased military expenditure. The country was not republicanised, which meant that the republican ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity were not internalised by the population. National consciousness, because of the illiteracy rate, did not match the country's long history, and the memories of national defense and of the brutal actions of foreign troops on Portuguese soil applied, unfortunately, to France's armies in the Peninsular campaigns. The feeling of being a citizen in an independent Republic of equals was largely non-existent in the Portugal of 1914. As for a knowledge of international affairs, in the words of one Democratic deputy, the majority in Portugal "ignores the world. It lives in the exile of itself."³³

Despite the fear of the rural masses, which led the Democrats to alter the Republic's original electoral law, the belief that 'the people' were essentially patriotic played an important role in republican ideology. Nationalism, in Portugal, was not yet the preserve of the right, for the republicans had become a political force after the humiliating British ultimatum of 1890, which had ended hopes of uniting territorially the colonies of Angola and Mozambique, and which had demonstrated that Portugal's claim to be a world power had finally collapsed. This belief in the innate patriotism of the Portuguese, which would be allowed to spring forth once the influence of the Church and of local notables had been curtailed, was to have serious consequences during the war, as the relatively weak pro-war propaganda was more than matched by a fierce anti-war, anti-Democratic, and anti-republican counter-mobilization which will be examined in chapters VIII and IX. The republican reinterpretation of Portuguese history as being the work not of single figures - kings, princes, and navigators - but rather of a whole nation striving consistently for Liberty might have formed an effective basis for the wartime political mobilization

³³ Augusto Casimiro, *Sidónio Pais: Algumas Notas Sobre a Intervenção de Portugal na Grande Guerra* (Oporto: Livraria Chardron, 1919), 15.

which would have led to the acceptance of the war as the final stage of this defense of Liberty. The war might also be interpreted as a sign of the resurgence of the Portuguese 'race' - a concept dear to the republicans - at a time when the future of Europe was being defined. Portugal's wartime political mobilization, however, because of its message, its presuppositions, and its methods, was unable to overcome the problems posed by the illiteracy rate, and the still paramount role of the Church in the countryside. Most importantly, wartime political mobilization in Portugal suffered from the lack of republicans; as we will see, wartime propaganda was couched in a language - the defense of Civilization, of the rule of law, of the rights of small nations - that was unintelligible to the majority of the population, for whom the change of regime in Lisbon had meant very little.

According to J.P. Nettl, "a political culture may be said to exist when political authority, and the processes relating to that authority, are effectively internalized by the members of the society. Political authority in this context may be defined as the institutionalization of societal goal attainment."³⁴ The Great War should have signalled the beginning of the battle for the allegiance of the rural population of Portugal. This was realized in 1916 by some interventionists, as we shall see in Chapter IV. In an environment characterised by low levels of political culture as defined by Nettl, traditional authority figures and institutions were clearly better suited to act as interpreters of the international situation, Portugal's role, and government policy. This meant, therefore, that in Portugal the creation of a true 'Sacred Union', by which existing elites and power groups might be reconciled to the republican regime, was vital. Jacques Ellul makes clear, in his *Propaganda - The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, that literacy, and a certain level of cultural awareness, are necessary in order for the more sophisticated types of propaganda to be effective. A paradox was created in Portugal: while its politicised minority was to find itself exposed to the often violent pro and anti-war campaigns, the majority of the country was to remain impervious to the debate, concentrating, as we shall see, on more

³⁴ J.P. Nettl, *Political Mobilization* (London: Faber, 1967), 57.

immediate matters, and being affected by what Horne describes as “cross currents of resentment (and worse) which set workers against employers, shopkeepers and peasants over ‘profiteering’ and ‘speculation’,”³⁵ which were often to result in violence.

In this category - the nature of the country and its population - we can also place the very real differences which existed within the politicised minority, the clearest one being that which separated the recently victorious republicans from their monarchist rivals. These political differences, closely related to differences in attitude to the Catholic Church, were to play, as we shall see, a vital part in the wartime governments’ failure to portray participation in the war as a policy of national unity and to secure the help of that same Catholic Church in enlisting the support of the rural population for the conflict. Finally, this category covers Portugal’s very real economic difficulties, which included an overwhelmingly rural population which nevertheless could not feed itself, and a weak industrial sector, both factors combining to make up a chronic trade deficit. Portugal’s colonial empire, whose potential wealth was already guessed at and which was seen as a potential solution to the country’s economic woes, had not yet been developed in systematic way, precisely because of Portugal’s inability to invest in the colonies: the empire had only brought with it constant wars of subjugation and intense diplomatic efforts to ward off Portugal’s stronger colonial competitors.

The second of the categories already outlined, the nature of Portugal’s commitment to its ally, Great Britain, and, indirectly, to the other Allied nations, includes the long period of diplomatic ambiguity which spanned from the parliamentary declaration of August 1914, affirming Portugal’s willingness to comply with all British requests, but not altering diplomatic relations with the Central Powers, to the German declaration of war in March 1916. This period was characterized by the splitting of the politicised minority into interventionist and anti-interventionist camps, and by the two sides’ attempts to secure power at all costs. The interventionists, composed essentially of the Democrats

³⁵ John Horne, “Re-mobilizing for Total War: France and Britain, 1917-1918,” 13.

and the Evolutionists (who were, however, sharply divided on domestic issues, or, rather, the division of political spoils) were seemingly victorious after a violent rising in May 1915 returned the Democrats to power: but they were forced to wait for nearly a year for a British invitation to join the Allied coalition which never arrived. The true nature of the diplomatic contacts which preceded the country's belligerency, and the mystery which surrounded the country's entry into the conflict were to ensure the credibility of the opposition's counter propaganda, rooted in the accusations that Portugal had not needed to become a belligerent, and that individual ministers were profiting financially from Portugal's belligerency. Prior to Germany's declaration of war, lastly, the armies of the two countries had clashed in Angola and Mozambique, in a series of encounters which revealed the Portuguese army's difficulties in fighting a European opponent, and which sparked off widespread rebellions among the tribes of southern Angola. Although all political parties agreed to the armed defence of the colonies, opponents of a military presence in Europe's battlefields claimed that interventionist governments, through their pro-British posturing, had in fact been responsible for the German incursions into Portuguese soil and even for the sinking of Portuguese merchant vessels by German U-boats.

The nature of the war that Portugal was to fight after March 1916 constitutes the third basic difference between its war effort and that of the other Allied nations. Not directly threatened by German land forces, Portugal did not fight a 'total' war, or even a 'mass' war, nor was its civilian population ever exposed to the full horrors of war. No refugees were displaced from one end of the country to the other, spreading atrocity stories as they passed, while soldiers were too far away, or not sufficiently trusted, to return home on leave, which meant that their families and acquaintances received no first hand accounts of the fighting and of the soldiers' desire for unity at home. P.J. Flood, describing France's war effort and the moral support which sustained it from 1914 to 1918, claims that this resolve to fight on was less remarkable than it might otherwise seem,³⁶ while Trevor Wilson, in his *The Myriad Faces of War*, makes clear the fact that in

Great Britain, close enough to the fighting for the guns to be heard, the line between civilians and soldiers was becoming blurred. By 1916, Wilson writes,

“the burden of taxation, the air raid, conscription for men, the movement of women from being occasional participants to forming a major component of the workforce and (not least) the sorrow imposed on countless families by the ubiquitous War Office telegram - ‘the terror by day’ - all brought the war home to civilians.”³⁷

Portuguese propagandists’ use of the idea that the war was being fought for the rights of small nations, Liberty, and Latin Civilization could not make up for the distance which separated Portugal from its enemy’s forces, especially when, as we have seen, these concepts were not capable of provoking an emotional response in the majority of the population.³⁸ In this sense, therefore, Portugal, as a country on the periphery of Europe, did not have a direct geo-strategic interest in the conflict at the continent’s heart; as for Britain, benevolent neutrality was all that was required from her ancient ally, whose harbours provided a global support network for merchant shipping and the military vessels which defended it. The need to preserve Portugal’s colonial empire altered, for Lisbon, these strategic considerations. In a war ostensibly about Germany’s ‘place in the sun’, the Portuguese government could not be indifferent to the course of the conflict: Germany’s military victory might be followed by a re-distribution of African territory, in which Portuguese colonies would probably be used by the defeated Allies to appease the victorious Germans, who had long looked to Angola and Mozambique as avenues for

³⁶ “Of all the belligerent countries in the First World War, France was the only one which had been invaded and occupied continuously (...) it is easier for governmental authorities and propagandists to evoke the need for sacrifice when one’s own national survival is threatened.” Flood, *op.cit.*, 179.

³⁷ Trevor Wilson, *The Myriad Faces of War* (Cambridge: Polity, 1986), 389.

³⁸ Similarly, British loans to finance the war effort, to be repaid after the war, meant that there was no need to issue war bonds, or raise war loans, and therefore the feeling of participating in victory by investing in that victory never developed in Portugal.

expansion. The very real threat which the Great War posed to Portugal's valuable but under-developed empire was not, however, a powerful mobilizing force, for two essential reasons. It did not follow, firstly, that in order to defend colonies in Africa troops should be sent to France; Portugal's small army could not aspire to be the force which would tip the scales of war in the Allies' benefit. The colonies would have to be defended from German incursions: this resolution met with the agreement of all political currents, but it was possible to argue that intervention in Europe's battlefields would prevent the adequate and energetic defense of the colonies. Secondly, the empire was not a popular cause: there was no widespread understanding of its wealth and resources, and it is significant that few Portuguese emigrated to any of the country's colonies, preferring instead to head for Brazil in the search of a better life. The colonies were merely the scenery for repeated military campaigns, and in this sense their defense would not represent a new departure for a Portuguese government; little enthusiasm could be expected as a result.

After a long wait, while Britain and France evaluated the military value of the Portuguese army, an army corps was sent to France, and a commitment was made to safeguard that corps' strength. Even considering the expeditions to East Africa, where German resistance continued until the end of the war, the number of men fighting Germany never reached 100,000, and casualties, estimated at 7,000 killed, were correspondingly low. When combined with the number of men who went into hiding after the promulgation of mobilization orders, and those who volunteered to work in Great Britain and France, however, the total of men suddenly unavailable to the national economy became considerable, and this disruption, combined with the German blockade and a short-sighted foodstuffs policy led to severe shortages of essential goods, which culminated in food riots both in producing areas and large cities. Rationing was not introduced until the war was nearly over, and even then only on a symbolic scale, and its beneficial effects on morale were never felt. Price ceilings on agricultural products merely led to a booming black market, large scale hoarding, and the smuggling of listed products into Spain. Food shortages, worsening living conditions, frequent strikes, and the

resulting political strife became the country's main preoccupation, rather than the welfare of the soldiers at the distant fronts and their need to be fighting for a united country, with the result that political disputes, not merely between monarchists and republicans, but even between different strands of republicanism, continued throughout the war.

In this chapter we have seen the different forms which wartime political mobilization assumed across Europe from 1914 to 1918, and how this mobilization was carried out by both governments and certain social groups, or associations, within the belligerent countries. We have also seen that Portugal's position within the war was unique, as it fought only a limited war, but did so at great cost to the fragile social and political balance that had emerged after the Republic's creation in October 1910. The purpose of this thesis will be to study the contents, the course, and the effects of the wartime campaign of political mobilization launched by the Portuguese government and private bodies. A similar analysis will be made of the campaign of political counter-mobilization which was launched concurrently by the enemies of the government, and of the republican regime as a whole. These findings will then be inserted into the broader context of the collapse of democratic regimes in southern Europe in the post-war years. We will begin, in the next chapter, by examining the political, social, economic, and military difficulties faced by all those who saw in the First World War the means through which to accelerate the process of republican mobilization: in other words, to transform backward Portugal into a modern and united democratic state.

CHAPTER II - POLITICAL MOBILIZATION IN PORTUGAL:

INHERENT DIFFICULTIES

Portugal, in 1914, presented those who wished it to participate in the Great War with a difficult, but potentially rewarding, task of political mobilization. Through the war, the interventionists hoped, Portugal's military backwardness, weak economy, and low standing among their proposed allies - France and Great Britain - could be overcome. Moreover, intervention in the First World War would create, among the whole of the population, a new attachment to the embattled republican regime. The First World War was viewed by Portugal's interventionists as a form of securing republican values across the country and banishing forever the spectre of a monarchist restoration. In order for the Republic to benefit from Portugal's participation in the conflict, however, the advantages of belligerence would have to be explained convincingly to a country whose politicised minority, on the one hand, was deeply divided, and whose illiterate majority, on the other hand, was excluded from politics. For this essentially rural majority, wartime military and political mobilization would represent the first real contact with the republican regime. Interventionists would also have to explain to a poor and under-developed country that the economic sacrifices characteristic of a wartime situation would in fact represent a wise long-term investment: that the war, in other words, was the key to Portugal's modernisation process.

I. A Republic without citizens.

When Austria declared war on Serbia, the Portuguese Republic was less than four years old, and the deep divisions which had resulted from the Republic's violent birth had

not yet begun to heal. Manuel II had taken refuge, first in Gibraltar and then, permanently, in Britain; many of his more devoted followers were in Galiza, which was used as a launching point for raids into Portuguese territory. The majority of monarchists who remained in Portugal abstained from politics, no party having been organised to represent their interests within the republican structure. As a result, a large segment of a small electorate refused to participate in the political process, denying it any legitimacy, and leading to the unshakeable hold on power of the Democratic party, led by Afonso Costa. The Democrats, because of their deep rooted attachment to anti-clerical policies, ensured that the existing rift grew wider. This vicious circle was aggravated by the relative weakness of the other, more conservative, republican parties (António José d'Almeida's Evolutionists and Brito Camacho's Unionists), which could not mount a numerical challenge to the Democrats, and by the personal dislikes, and ambitions, of the party leaders and their entourages.¹

The already mentioned small electorate was the result of the 1913 electoral law, which, reversing the 1911 introduction of universal male suffrage, a longstanding republican aspiration, restricted the franchise to literate men over the age of 21. The Democratic party, which defended the measure, argued that giving the vote to the impressionable rural population would be self-defeating for the Republicans, for it would ensure the triumph of reactionary priests and the *caciques* of the monarchist regime who would overwhelm the progressive forces of the Republic.² The creation of a popular Catholic party had to be avoided, and it was in the long-term interests of the rural masses to be denied the vote. The final argument employed by the Democrats in their reversal of policy was the prestige of the regime. As Afonso Costa put it, addressing Parliament, "men who do not even know the boundaries of their own parish, who have no clear and

¹ See João Chagas, *A Última Crise* (Oporto: Tip. Emp. Guedes, 1915), and *Diário*, vol. III (Lisbon: Edições Rolim, 1986), for an account of the scale, and the consequences, of these dislikes.

² This did not mean that the elections during the first four years of the Republic had been models of transparency: Fernando Farelo Lopes highlights the creation of a network of Democratic *caciques* from 1910 onwards, and charts the frequent electoral abuses practiced during the First Republic, in his *Poder Político e Caciquismo na Primeira República Portuguesa* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1994).

precise idea on any matter, or on any public figure, must not go to the polling station, so that it will not be said that it was with sheep that we legitimised the Republic.”³ While useful as a short-term defensive measure for the Democratic party and possibly even for the Republic, the restriction of the franchise was, in the long-term, a lost opportunity for the Republic to consolidate itself in the countryside.⁴ As Eugen Weber made clear in his *Peasants into Frenchmen*, participation in elections had led French peasants to understand the rules of the Third Republic and how those rules could be turned to their advantage.⁵ The effects of the restrictions on the franchise are clear; in the 1915 legislative elections, out of a male population of 21 years upwards of over 1.5 million, only 617, 201 were, in theory, allowed to vote. The number of those registered to vote stood at 471,557 and the number of those who did so was 282,387⁶. The prevailing mood during electoral periods was clearly one of apathy, especially if one considers the seriousness of the issues surrounding the 1915 elections. There was roughly one vote cast for every 22 people on a national level, although in some districts this ratio was far lower: 1 for every 30 in Castelo Branco, 1 for every 35 in Faro, and a staggering 1 for every 47 in Funchal⁷. Despite its claims to the contrary, therefore, the republican regime had not built up a national consensus, and, barring a direct invasion of Portugal’s European territory, the task of mobilizing its population would be a difficult one: the defense of republican ideals, and of France, the source of those ideals, could not be expected to generate enthusiasm among the bulk of the population.⁸

³ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon) 12.6.1913.

⁴ The failure of the republicans to extend the vote to the whole of the population (or of the male population) meant that those same republicans became a ‘political elite’ as defined by Nettl - one “formed in the political subsystem by virtue of their clustering around formal institutions like the legislature and institutionalized collectivities like parties, and (which) depend(s) for their survival on these institutions.” J.P. Nettl, *Political Mobilization* (London: Faber, 1967), 89.

⁵ Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1977), 271.

⁶ A.H. Oliveira Marques (coordinator), *Nova História de Portugal* vol. XI *Portugal da Monarquia para a República*, (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1991), 417-418.

⁷ *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal-1917*, (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1921), ch.X, fig.11.

Jacques Ellul, in his *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, suggests that propaganda of agitation, or of hatred, must be replaced by a propaganda of integration once power has been secured. He writes, "this is all the more true because the results achieved by revolution are all the more deceptive; just to seize power is not enough. The people want to give full vent to the hatred developed by the agitation propaganda, and to have the promised land or bread immediately."⁹ This propaganda of integration, designed to stabilize the social body by encouraging the population to participate in the political process, should have been launched by the Republic immediately after its creation, but budgetary restrictions and the fear of a conservative majority prevented the widening of the franchise.¹⁰ This choice left Portugal's rural population, and even part of its urban population, continuing with Ellul's model, outside the scope of action for total propaganda, that which characterises wartime situations. According to Ellul, "for propaganda to be effective, the propagandee must have a certain store of ideas and a number of conditioned reflexes. These are acquired only with a little affluence,

⁸ Hobsbawm, in his essay "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe 1870-1914", discusses the various forms which the creation of tradition took in the French Third Republic. Hobsbawm, op.cit., in *The Invention of Tradition* Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.) (Cambridge: University Press, 1983). Included in these forms was the construction of national monuments and the enactment of national rituals; in Portugal these practices had been largely ignored by the financially hard-pressed republicans, and the one national monument planned was a divisive one, fueled essentially by anti-clerical ambitions - the monument to the Marquis of Pombal in Lisbon.

⁹ Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 76-77.

¹⁰ The number of primary schools in Portugal increased from 5552 in the school year 1909-1910 to 6412 in 1911-1912, but very slowly after that, to 6700 in 1914-1915. Moreover, there were regional imbalances in the building of new schools; their total number in the district of Bragança actually fell from 1911-1912 (443) to 1914-1915 (442). See *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal - 1917*, p.15. These primary schools were supplemented by 336 mobile schools. See A.H. de Oliveira Marques (coordinator), op.cit., 531. These numbers, however, cover up one of the fatal flaws of the Republic's educational reforms - the attempted decentralisation of primary education, tutelage over which was handed to the municipalities. Oliveira Marques writes, "In general, the municipal chambers defended badly the interests of education, were late in the payment of salaries, did not respect the teachers, etc." Oliveira Marques (coordinator), op.cit., 529. Aubrey F.G. Bell wrote, in 1915, that "the foundation of a school in Portugal is a very simple affair, almost as simple as issuing a decree. It consists in fixing on a room or a house in a village which might be used for that purpose and - there the matter generally ends. Neither books nor furniture nor masters are provided, and that not from any carelessness or indifference but because there is no money to pay for them." Aubrey F.G. Bell, *Portugal of the Portuguese* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd., 1915), 69.

some education, and peace of mind springing from relative security.”¹¹ None of these characteristics applied to Portugal, and the challenge of explaining the motives for Portugal’s participation in the war was, as a result, immense - especially as any propaganda campaign would be challenged by conservative groups, fearful of losing their hold over rural areas and therefore willing to enter into a counter-propaganda campaign, which could employ concepts more familiar to the rural populations in order to disrupt planning for the war.

II. Portugal’s economic difficulties.

The task of political mobilization was made more difficult as a result of Portugal’s faltering economy, which ensured that attentions at home were, in general, turned towards more immediate domestic concerns. The cost of living index, base 100 in 1914, had risen to 111.5, and by 1916, the year in which Germany declared war on Portugal, it was to reach 137.1.¹² Industrial workers, who represented a small part of the country’s active population (142,565 in 1917)¹³ seem, according to official statistics, to have withstood this rise in prices, their average wages having risen from 63 cents per day for men in 1914 (100) to 1 Escudo and 13 cents in 1916 (180)¹⁴. For others, however, the European war had brought about a considerable financial strain, and the suggestion of adding to that strain by entering the war was clearly not going to be a popular one. Agricultural workers saw their real incomes decline from 35.3 cents per day in 1914 (100) to 37.4 cents per day in 1915 (88.9), only to recover in 1916: 42.6 cents per day (97.1).¹⁵ It was civil servants and, more importantly still, army officers, who bore the brunt of economic hardship. Their

¹¹ Ellul, *op.cit.*, 106.

¹² *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal-1919* (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1924), 234.

¹³ Oliveira Marques (coordinator), *op.cit.*, 129.

¹⁴ Oliveira Marques, *História da Primeira República Portuguesa: As Estruturas de Base* (Lisbon: Iniciativas Editoriais, n.d.), 367.

¹⁵ Oliveira Marques, *História da Primeira República Portuguesa...*, 402-406.

salaries were frozen from 1914 to 1917, a General earning 212 Escudos and 50 cents per month for the whole period, while a Second Lieutenant received only 40 Escudos per month for those years.¹⁶ It is worthwhile recalling at this point the words of Teófilo Duarte in his *Sidónio Pais e o seu Consulado*, describing the revolution of December 1917: “This was the revolution of the Second Lieutenants; out of all the officers who commanded troops, I was the only Lieutenant.”¹⁷

The reason for this decline in purchasing power lay in the simple fact that Portugal could not, in 1914, feed itself, despite its overwhelmingly rural population. Imported foodstuffs, notably grain, increased in price, as did, consequently, their nationally produced counterparts. Smuggling of foodstuffs into Spain, where prices were higher still, and hoarding, whether by private traders and producers or by local authorities, also led to the increase in food prices. If 1914 = 100, then by 1916 wheat was to reach 150 (7.5 cents/kg.), maize, extremely important in the north of the country, was to stand at 157.1 (5.5 cents/kg.), bread at 150 (10.5 cents/kg.), potatoes at 166.6 (5 cents/kg.), and wine at 150 (9 cents/l.)¹⁸ The Republic’s first years, with the exception of 1911, had also seen poor harvests, largely because of excess rainfall; 1911’s wheat harvest had yielded 321,678 tons of wheat, while 1914’s total stood at 189,305 tons, a total which was to fall in 1915 to 180,908 tons.¹⁹ For those same years, imports of wheat stood at, respectively, 6,583 tons, 141,022 tons, and 123,998 tons.²⁰ Food imports thus added to a trade deficit which, on the whole, was to grow during the years prior to Portugal’s participation in the war, despite, as we shall see, the emergence of some success stories in terms of exports and substitution of imports, from 53,691,600 Escudos in 1913 to 73,244,100 Escudos in

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ Teófilo Duarte, *Sidónio Pais e o seu Consulado*, (Lisbon: Portugália, 1942), 160.

¹⁸ *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal-1919*, fig.29, 35.

¹⁹ Oliveira Marques (coordinator), *op.cit.*, 94.

²⁰ *ibid.*

1916.²¹ The figures for imports from the U.S.A. demonstrate this dependence on foreign agricultural products quite clearly; their worth rose from 9,892,000 Escudos in 1913 to 27,155,700 Escudos in 1916.²²

This increase in the price of agricultural products was not a purely national phenomenon; rather, it was experienced by the whole of Europe. Millions of men across the continent left the land in 1914 and 1915 to be incorporated into the belligerents' armies, and production fell; the scramble for food imports and the necessary shipping began immediately, with the Allies enjoying a clear advantage in this regard.²³ Portugal, without a sizeable merchant marine of its own, was at the mercy of its ally, Great Britain, itself attempting to import food from the Americas, Asia, and Australia. The disappearance from the seas of the German merchant fleet, the military tasks assigned to Allied merchant ships, and the ever present threat posed by German U-boats all combined to drive up shipping prices, while Portugal's nutritional requirements were of less concern to Britain than those of its fighting allies: France and, later, Italy.

With Portugal still suffering from the North/South division which has traditionally plagued its agriculture (small individual holdings in the North and large latifundiary estates in the South), and with very little machinery with which to increase land productivity, the war years might have been seen as an opportunity to invest in the primary sector, modernizing it at a time of limited competition and good export prospects. Preparations for war, which absorbed money and men, prevented this from happening, and the resulting shortages (aggravated by illegal and legal exports, to Spain and Gibraltar, respectively) led to civil unrest in the towns and a scramble, on the part of Civil Governors, to find food for the populations of their respective Districts. This scramble for food is illustrated by the

²¹ *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal-1917* (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1921), 88-89.

²² *ibid.*

²³ For the importance of food supplies and the rival blockades during the First World War see Avner Offer, *The First World War: An Agrarian Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.)

correspondence between the Civil Governors and the Ministry of the Interior. In the month preceding the declaration of war this correspondence was stepped up, as the food crisis worsened. The Civil Governor of Aveiro wrote, on 21.2.1916, that

“in the northern municipalities of this District (...) the bells have rung out and the people have assembled because of the lack of maize; order is nevertheless assured (...) there is great urgency in the importation of maize as it is becoming scarcer every day.”²⁴

Such appeals were repeated by the Mayor of Póvoa do Varzim (“farmers risk not having enough with which to sow next year’s crop (...) the little maize we have has nearly run out,”)²⁵ the Civil Governor of Vila Real (“hunger will shortly break out, and once that has happened nobody will be able to predict the size and seriousness of the consequences that might result,”)²⁶ and the Civil Governor of Oporto (“our resources are close to exhaustion and the little grain that finds its way here is sold for extremely high prices.”)²⁷ In this same message the Civil Governor of Oporto blamed local authorities for the scarcity of foodstuffs affecting the country’s second city: “The attitude of the municipalities in which this cereal (maize) abounds, be it in my District or in those of Braga and Viana do Castelo, means that what I obtain is highly insufficient.”²⁸ Finally, the Civil Governor of Ponta Delgada, in the Azores, described the pressures to which he was subjected by the opponents of grain exports to the continent:

²⁴ Arquivo Nacional (A.N.), Lisbon, Ministério do Interior (M.I.), Direcção Geral da Administração Política e Civil (D.G.A.P.C.), stack 66 (1916), telegram, 21.2.1916.

²⁵ *ibid.*, telegram, 6.3.1916.

²⁶ *ibid.*, telegram, 4.3.1916.

²⁷ *ibid.*, telegram, 3.3.1916.

²⁸ *ibid.*

“There are different opinions as to the question of whether or not the existing stocks of wheat are sufficient to guarantee the needs of local consumption (...) I have received various requests not to authorize any exports, including some from administrative organs, and the press’s attitude is also contrary to allowing exports to proceed.”²⁹

Highly demoralizing across the countryside was the lucrative export trade, legal or illegal, designed to take advantage of the higher prices paid for agricultural products in Spain, which necessarily led to higher prices in Portugal at a time of increasing hardship. In October 1915, the parish junta of Santa Ana de Cambas wrote to the Minister of Development [Fomento], complaining that the main exporter was the president of the municipal chamber (Mértola), whose example was followed by the other producers:

“And the people, the ones who work and produce everything, die of hunger, because they are not paid enough, as a result of the terrible crisis assailing this poor region. Although exports are banned, cattle is being allowed into Spain for 10 cents per head! The people have no meat! That which is on sale is too expensive, and the great landowners pass thousands (of heads of cattle) into Spain, that nation which does so much harm to us, the shelter of those who conspire against our dear Republic (...)”³⁰

In the same letter, the parish junta added that the people of Mina de São Domingos had raided a herd of cattle being driven illegally into Spain, which obviously led to arrests

²⁹ *ibid*, telegram, 18.2.1916.

³⁰ A.N., Lisbon, M.I, D.G.A.P.C., stack 56 (1915); letter, parish junta of Santa Ana de Cambas to Minister of Development, 29.10.1915.

once elements of the *Guarda Nacional Republicana* (G.N.R.), the national paramilitary force, arrived.³¹ Complaints about cattle exports into Spain had been reaching the government throughout 1914 and 1915 - in February 1915, for example, from Ponte de Lima³² and Loulé,³³ at opposite ends of the country, and in March from Campo Maior, in the Alentejo.³⁴

The most serious of the pre-intervention rural disturbances, which revealed a deep hostility to the Lisbon government in the North of the country, occurred in July 1915, in the town of Lamego. Protesting against a recent decision to extend the name *Port* to similar wines made across the whole of the country, in order to take advantage of lower tariffs in Great Britain, peasants from the Douro valley invaded the town, led, according to the official report into the disturbances, by known monarchist figures and parish priests. One priest, from Figueira, was seen "leading his parishioners in rows of four, as if they were soldiers."³⁵ Three hundred demonstrators surrounded the town hall, defended by soldiers and armed civilians, and the resulting fire left 12 dead and 19 wounded.

Industry presented a similar picture of under-development, although the numbers involved were, of course, smaller. Of the estimated 142,565 industrial workers in 1917,

³¹ The administrator of the Municipality of Mértola denied, in a letter to the D.G.A.P.C., that the said herd was being exported illegally, and claimed that 576 animals had been divided up between the villagers. *ibid*, letter, 13.11.1915.

³² *ibid*; letter, Civil Governor of Viana do Castelo to D.G.A.P.C., 22.2.1915.

³³ *ibid*; telegram, President of the Executive Commission of the Municipal Chamber of Loulé to D.G.A.P.C., 11.2.1915.

³⁴ *ibid*, letter, Executive Commission of the Municipal Chamber of Campo Maior to D.G.A.P.C., 2.3.1915. The letter's authors requested a ban on exports of eggs, poultry, and cattle, writing that "it is to be feared that their shortage will lead to serious embarrassments and grave conflicts."

³⁵ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 61 (1915), Inquiry carried out by Judge António Sérgio Loureiro, final report, 9.10.1915. See also *Ilustração Portuguesa*, 2.8.1915, for an illustrated report of related disturbances in Santa Marta de Penaguião, where the municipal chamber was sacked and its archives burnt, and for another report on a demonstration of protest by southern wine producers, angry at the subsequent decision by the government to protect the specificity of the Port label.

48,464 were women and 21,804 were minors.³⁶ The majority of these were employed in workshops of under 21 employees. Textiles constituted the most important sector, with 37,000 employees, followed by the food processing industries, with 25,000 employees.³⁷ One half of these workers, moreover, were employed in or around Lisbon and Oporto. Whatever the reason for these figures, the fact remains that the years 1914-1916 showed that Portuguese industry could benefit from the war, as was the case in Spain.³⁸ Considerations of immediate profit were weighed against the possibility of government investment at a time of little or no foreign competition, and against the very real gains being made by Spanish industrialists under a policy of strict neutrality. The value of industrial exports rose from 3,311,000 Escudos in 1914 to 7,823,000 Escudos in 1916³⁹, their share in overall exports rising from 12.2% to 14% in the same years.⁴⁰ Textiles, tinned foods (notably fish) and coal for the home market met with the greatest success, coal production rising from 10,800 tons in 1911 to 60,000 tons in 1915⁴¹ and the value of textile exports rising from 1,142,000 Escudos in 1914 to 3,328,000 Escudos in 1916.⁴²

The industrial development which took place from 1914 to 1916 was aided by the relative weakness of the syndicalist movement, which, after its defeat at the hands of Afonso Costa in 1912, was in the process of reorganisation. Nevertheless, there was the strong possibility that the social agitation provoked by participation in the war, as well as the higher profits and greater need for smooth production, would lead to a resurgence of

³⁶ Oliveira Marques (coordinator), *op.cit.*, 129.

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ Brito Camacho, in his *Portugal na Guerra*, argued the contrary: "The war entrepreneurs, those who struggled in order to become suppliers or middlemen, were bursting with satisfaction and all incited the government to send many men, the more the better." Brito Camacho, *Portugal na Guerra* (Lisbon: Guimarães, 1935), 12.

³⁹ Oliveira Marques (coordinator), *op.cit.*, 128.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ *ibid.*, 117.

⁴² *ibid.*, 128.

the unions, which were, in principle, opposed to war. We have seen that certain industrial sectors grew in the early years of the war, and that industrial workers withstood the increases in the cost of living better than other social groups, but the advent of the Great War had caused great apprehension in socialist and syndicalist circles. *O Combate*, the Socialist Party's official weekly, wrote, as early as 23.8.1914 "the people are already suffering the consequences of this war (...) we see factories closing down, industries becoming paralysed, the whole country moving towards a dark period of nervousness."⁴³ In another article, dark days were predicted for sailors, furniture makers, and printers, *O Combate* adding that "nobody should doubt still that Portuguese industry will be, very soon, in the grip of an immense crisis and that, as a result, hundreds of workers will lose their jobs."⁴⁴ Correspondence between Civil Governors and the Ministry of the Interior shows that the war had indeed disturbed the labour market. In April 1915, for example, the Civil Governor of Funchal asked for a program of public works to be carried out in his District, "in order to employ the greatest possible number of its inhabitants, and especially those who, as a result of the European conflagration, have nothing to do, for they cannot export the product of their manual labour."⁴⁵ Another public works package was asked for in Portalegre, where the 900 workers of a cork factory had seen their working week reduced to three days and where a full closure was imminent.⁴⁶ In August 1914 free rail travel had been granted to cork workers and their families if they sought to find new employment away from their villages, due to lack of work;⁴⁷ a demonstration of unemployed workers in Faro took place in March 1915 in such peace that its Civil Governor agreed to request the Minister free rail tickets to Lisbon for the three representatives elected to meet the Prime Minister (Pimenta de Castro.)⁴⁸ Conditions

⁴³ *O Combate* (Lisbon) 23.8.1914.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 56 (1915); letter, Civil Governor of Faro to D.G.A.P.C., 22.4.1915.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, stack 60 (1915); letter, Secretary of the Civil Governor of Portalegre to D.G.A.P.C., 10.5.1915.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, stack 57 (1915); letter, *Secretaria de Estado do Fomento* to Ministry of the Interior, 27.8.1914.

continued to deteriorate, notably in rural areas, where illegal emigration into Spain increased; in November 1915, the Direcção Geral da Administração Política e Civil (D.G.A.P.C.) asked all Civil Governors to warn possible emigrants of the lack of rural jobs in Spain or in France: “the grave world crisis, reflected everywhere”, forced the emigrants to live in “most worrisome misery.”⁴⁹

III. *The republicans and the labour movement*

All countries in Europe experienced economic woes in the early months of the war, and the challenge before each was to turn the available resources and manpower into either the production of weapons and munitions or, for neutral countries, of the products likely to be needed by the belligerents. In either case dialogue with the unions was necessary, and this process of inclusion of the unions in the decision making process was part of the process of political mobilization for the coming crisis. In Portugal, 1914 had seen, at the Tomar congress, the creation of the *União Operária Nacional* [National Workers' Union] (U.O.N.), divided into two sections, North and South, which represented both a means for the government to communicate with the trade union movement as a whole and, conversely, the means by which the unions could carry out a more effective strike action. Moreover, as César Oliveira points out, the U.O.N. was represented at the abortive pro-peace congress of Ferrol, in Spain, in April 1915, and by November 1915 the Zimmerwald manifesto had begun to be distributed throughout Portugal. According to the same author,

⁴⁸ *ibid*, stack 56 (1915); telegram, Civil Governor of Faro to D.G.A.P.C., 25.3.1915.

⁴⁹ *ibid*, stack 61 (1915); telegram, D.G.A.P.C. to all Civil Governors, 4-11-1915. In another similar telegram, based on messages received from the Consul in Vigo, the D.G.A.P.C. wrote, “the number of destitute Portuguese that appear in that Spanish city, in an impressive state of poverty, is very high.” *ibid*, 13.10.1915. Emigration was seen by many as the sole solution to their economic difficulties. In January 1915 the Civil Governor of Aveiro informed the D.G.A.P.C. that, according to the administrator of the municipality of Feira, “the reservists of this municipality are emigrating in a clandestine fashion, and almost *en masse*,” as a result of arrangements with the police and with the employees of certain liners. See A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 57 (1915); telegram, Civil Governor of Aveiro to D.G.A.P.C., January 1915 (date illegible.)

“the fact that a significant majority of workers’ organisations and their most capable militants had adopted an anti-interventionist course of action led to the strengthening of those who, in Portugal, for other motives, had placed themselves in a position of refusal as regarded intervention in the war.”⁵⁰

The danger of ignoring the unions and their anti-war stance was thus obvious: they could form a rallying point for anti-war opinion, and they could demoralise substantial parts of the population in the large cities, threatening the Republic itself, committed as its leaders were to intervention. The challenge of bringing the unions into acceptability through concessions to the workers was thus doubly important in Portugal. In the Portuguese case, this process would have implied the attempt to safeguard standards of living in a time of war. Already in January 1916, according to César Oliveira, the U.O.N.’s central council had debated the possibility of launching a general strike in protest against the increasing prices of essential goods.⁵¹ The call for the determined enforcement of price limits, and for equality of sacrifice before the shortages - through the introduction of rationing and of a single type of bread to be sold at a low price - was to be maintained by the U.O.N. throughout the First World War: serious attempts to meet these complaints, along with the release of those arrested for social protests, would have contributed significantly to peace in the country’s cities for the duration of the conflict.⁵² In the pre-

⁵⁰ César Oliveira, *O Movimento Sindical Português. A Primeira Cisão* (Mem Martins: Europa-América, 1982), 25.

⁵¹ César Oliveira, *op.cit.*, 26.

⁵² The build-up to a series of strikes which took place in Almada, in October 1915, illustrate how this desire for equality of sacrifice could degenerate, if ignored by the government and local authorities, into violence. As depicted by the anarcho-syndicalist *A Aurora* (Oporto), the riots occurred in an industrial area hit by high unemployment or reduced employment, with many cork workers working a 3 or 4 day week at pre-war wages. As food prices rose yet again in October 1915, the workers of the town and local commerce began a war of nerves: the market was stormed and goods were bought at the old prices; stall owners responded by destroying part of their products. Carts bringing produce to the market were raided by the people of the town, and their contents were sold at pre-war prices: the response was another increase in prices. The local authorities introduced a series of price limitations on essential foodstuffs, but

war years, however, this challenge was ignored, because the Republic's governments, seeing the unions only as a threat, and not as a possible social partner, discounted the actual danger posed by the small U.O.N. As César Oliveira points out, the U.O.N. was not created at a moment of strength of the syndicalist movement in Portugal; in fact, there was "a certain artificial element in the U.O.N.'s creation which leads, among other factors, to its initial inactivity."⁵³

António José d'Almeida, in a speech at the 'historic' session of Parliament, on 23.11.1914, gave an apt description of Portugal's economic condition:

"A broken-up country, with empty treasure chests and, worse still, covered in debts, with an atrophied industry and an agriculture in a very difficult position, a Fatherland full of potential, which is currently trying to accomplish the task of economic regeneration, but which has been impoverished and exhausted by many years of constitutional debauchery."⁵⁴

The Evolutionist leader pointed out that, alongside Portugal's military weakness, the need to protect her economic recovery was the reason why Portugal could not, voluntarily, join the Allies in 1914. The European War represented for Portugal a chance

these limitations were ignored by shopkeepers, and the failure to enforce them led to another raid, this time on a warehouse, 90 sacks of beans for export being distributed by the crowd. At a final raid, on 22.10.1915, the G.N.R. arrived as olive oil was being shared out, and a firefight ensued, one woman dying as a result. Various arrests took place: this, in turn, provoked a 'general strike' in the city. See *A Aurora* (Oporto), 31.10.1915 & 7.11.1915. These events in Almada showed clearly that tensions between workers and commerce were to be expected for the duration of the war, and that the government and local authorities were faced by a difficult situation: curbing the interests of shopkeepers, traditionally republican voters, in order to protect the living standards of disenfranchised industrial and rural workers. Upon finding a solution to this quandary rested the attempt to maintain a semblance of peace on the home front.

⁵³ Oliveira, op.cit., 23.

⁵⁴ António José d'Almeida, *Quarenta Anos de Vida Literária e Política*, vol.III (Lisbon: J.Rodrigues e Cía., 1934), 178-179.

of rebuilding the country, of unifying it around the Republic through the advent of prosperity. Despite, as we have seen, some industrial successes, and, to a lesser extent, some agricultural successes (notably the export of wine to France, which increased from an insignificant 22,281 liters in 1914 to a considerable 1,280,536 in 1916),⁵⁵ the new prosperity had not been created by the time the German declaration of war arrived in March of 1916; in fact, for many, including those at the service of the government, lower living standards had become the norm, as had ever more frequent shortages. António José d'Almeida's words had not lost their significance in 1916, for it was still a divided and economically under-developed nation which was being led to war, one without hope for material benefits as compensation for the sacrifices that war always entails. By then, however, only the conservative and syndicalist oppositions continued to see in neutrality a golden economic opportunity. For the Evolutionists, these immediate economic needs had been overcome by other considerations, which we will examine later.

IV. Military unpreparedness.

In order for political mobilization to succeed in the context of a war, when there is no immediate danger to the country involved, military successes are required, as visible proof of the value of the common effort being undertaken. Immediate sacrifices are more readily accepted by the home front if the soldiers are winning battles, and if, as a result, there are visible signs of appreciation from one's allies. By 1916, it had become clear that military victories in the European theatre were not only hard to come by, but also required manpower, weapons, and ammunition on a gigantic scale, one to which Portugal could never aspire. Portugal's military preparedness, and initial border clashes with German forces in Africa, raised important questions about its chances of success in a more sizable campaign, whether in Africa or in Europe. Portugal's army had performed well in the Peninsular campaigns under Wellington and Beresford, but the struggle against Napoleon had been its last campaign against a European adversary. Success had marked recent

⁵⁵ *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal-1921*, (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1925), 296.

campaigns in Africa, but the leaders of those expeditions, men like Paiva Couceiro, were largely loyal to the monarchy; Couceiro himself was in exile, in Spain, plotting the overthrow of the Republic. Fighting in Mozambique, moreover, could not be likened to the fighting now taking place in France. The new regime had vowed to modernise its armed forces, and to introduce the 'nation at arms' principle, which would strike at the heart of the professional army. All Portuguese males, from an early age, were to be responsible for the defense of their country. Budgetary restrictions, however, ensured that both army and navy lagged well behind their European counterparts when the First World War broke out in 1914. The navy, loyal to the Republic, was especially ill-prepared for modern warfare. Its five cruisers, only one of which was armoured, two destroyers, three submarines, and thirteen gunboats, were responsible for the protection of Portuguese territory from the Minho to Timor. The Minister for the Navy, in private, aptly called the force he controlled "the remains of a navy" adding, "at the present moment it can only be depended upon to *collaborate* in the defense of the port of Lisbon."⁵⁶ As for the army, Brito Camacho, in his *Portugal na Guerra*, explained that

"At the end of the legislative session in the last days of June (1914) the Minister of War, in order to extract from the parliament the sum of a million and some Escudos, cried with a loud voice, so as to be heard by all, that the army had nothing of what it needed to have in order to be entrusted with the nation's defense. And he added, so as not to be misunderstood: 'I do not say that it has little: I say that it has nothing.'"⁵⁷

⁵⁶ *O Segundo Governo de Afonso Costa 1915-1916: Actas dos Conselhos de Ministros* ed. A.H. de Oliveira Marques (Lisbon: Europa-América, 1974), 68.

⁵⁷ Brito Camacho, *op.cit.*, 156.

Several clashes with German forces, mostly in Angola, had shown that a very real difference existed between the two armies. Such clashes, the most important of which took place at Naulila, in southern Angola, in December 1914, had demonstrated the army's lack of equipment and training, and necessarily raised doubts about its performance in the more sophisticated European battlefields. In the early months of the Great War, Pereira d'Eça, then Minister of War, seems to have concentrated his efforts on hindering the departure of Portuguese artillery pieces for the French army rather than preparing troops for the conflict. Daeschner wrote, on 24.11.1914, that "l'armée Portugaise est d'ailleurs aussi peu prête à entrer en campagne qu'il y a trois mois (...)"⁵⁸ Training and equipment were not, however, the only problems affecting the army; its attitude to the Republic had not yet been clearly defined. The revolution of 1910 had not been followed by a purge of the officer corps which remained, to a large and potentially dangerous extent, monarchist.⁵⁹ The years preceding Portugal's entry into the war provided clear illustration of the dangers posed by the officer corps to the Republic, or at least to its leading party, the Democrats. In October 1914 a *coup* was launched by elements of the garrison in Mafra, a *coup* quickly controlled by the government. Daeschner described it as an affair of little importance in itself, but motivated by the ever more persistent rumours that a division was going to be sent to France.⁶⁰ The revolt, however, was not just limited to Mafra. Daeschner, in a telegram, mentioned an off-shoot, in Guimarães, which led to the arrests of one colonel and two junior officers;⁶¹ and in Leiria another rebellion took

⁵⁸ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Coopération Militaire et Matériel de Guerre, 637, telegram, Daeschner to M.A.E., 24.11.1914. This topic was developed in a letter to Delcassé on the following day: there had been no purchase of horses or increase in the production of munitions. "C'est que d'après le règlement les mesures de préparation à la guerre ne peuvent être prises qu'après la signature d'un décret de mobilisation."

⁵⁹ José Medeiros Ferreira, *O Comportamento Político dos Militares* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1992), 43.

⁶⁰ "Ces incidents de Mafra sont caractéristiques. Périodiquement en effet, les monarchistes, plus ou moins alliés à certains éléments anarchistes, se livrent à ces tentatives destinées à changer le régime actuel (...) le moment favorable parut arrivé quand le pays, après une première période d'enthousiasme héroïque aveugle à tous les dangers, commençait à se rendre compte des sacrifices qui entraînerait son intervention dans une guerre Européenne." M.A.E., Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 632; letter, Daeschner to Delcassé, 10.11.1914.

place, the conspirators being led by a priest, Antonio de Sousa Bento.⁶² More serious still, from the interventionists' point of view, must have been the army's support for the government of General Pimenta de Castro, which soon muzzled parliament and put a halt to all preparations for a reinforced division to be sent to France.⁶³ Preceding Pimenta de Castro's government was a collective protest of officers in Lisbon who presented themselves directly to the President, Manuel Arriaga, in response to certain transfers seen by them as being politically motivated. "Dérrière ce mouvement attendu depuis quelques jours se retrouvent naturellement les excitations monarchistes usuelles et les intrigues allemandes", wrote Daeschner, adding that while 64 officers had been arrested as a result of the protest, many more were implicated, "étant donné les habitudes locales."⁶⁴

As republican political figures such as Brito Camacho and Machado Santos and republican officers added their support to the arrested officers, Manuel Arriaga implored General Pimenta de Castro to head a government. With a government composed almost exclusively of officers, and with the loud approval of the army's officer corps, Pimenta de Castro decreed an amnesty allowing exiled monarchists to return to Portugal, reversed all steps taken to organise the Portuguese division for France, and set about organising

⁶¹ M.A.E., Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Coopération Militaire et Matériel de Guerre, 637; telegram, Daeschner to M.A.E., 21.10.1914.

⁶² A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 56 (1915), letter, District judge Oliveira Coutinho to Ministry of the Interior, 2.12.1914.

⁶³ The British government had requested, in October of 1914, military assistance from its Portuguese ally, and Bernardino Machado, at the time leading an 'independent' government, readily agreed to provide a force of 22,000 men. It soon proved difficult to assemble such a force and, although partial mobilization had been ordered, the matter was quietly dropped, the British settling instead for a supply of 75 mm. artillery (which of course weakened the Portuguese army even further.) According to Augusto Soares, the Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1915 to 1917, the British had known fully well, at the time of their request, of Portugal's military weakness, asking for the division in order to obtain the required artillery. See A.H. Oliveira Marques (ed.) op.cit., 68.

⁶⁴ M.A.E., Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 632, telegram, Daeschner to M.A.E., 21.1.1915. Discussing the delays in the shipping of artillery to the Allies, Daeschner had already cast doubts on the officers' commitment to fighting in Europe: "Malgré les démentis qu'on en a donné, c'est parmi les officiers que les sentiments belliqueux se sont montrés les moins ardents - nombreux sont ceux d'entre eux qui ont manifesté leur intention de démissionner s'ils étaient désignées pour prendre part à des combats dont l'objet disaient-ils n'intéressait pas au Portugal (...)" M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Coopération Militaire et Matériel de Guerre, 637, letter, Daeschner to Delcassé, 27.11.1914.

elections. The nature of the Republic's electoral politics ensured that the government determined the outcome of elections; for this reason Pimenta de Castro was popular with the Unionist and Evolutionist parties, eager to break the Democrats' hold on power. When he was brought down, on 14.5.1915, it was the navy, whose ships dominated Lisbon, and armed civilians loyal to the Democratic party who carried out the bulk of the fighting.⁶⁵ With the Democrats back in power, and resuming their preparations for intervention in the European conflict, a great deal of wooing would have to be carried out in order to convince the army of the advantages of intervention. Difficulties for the government did not end here: Norton de Matos, in 1915, claimed that 35 million Escudos were needed to prepare a modern division for the Western Front;⁶⁶ this total was equivalent to one half of the government's yearly revenues. Resources on such a scale would have to be found abroad, presumably in Britain, thereby negating Portugal's attempt to affirm itself in Europe as an equal of the great powers. Financial resources would also have to be found in order to improve the internal security forces. By 1915 the government was well aware of the fact that the *Guarda Nacional Republicana* (G.N.R.), which policed the whole territory, the Civic police, in the cities, and the *Guarda Fiscal*, on the borders, were undermanned, underpaid, and hard-pressed to carry out their duties, so essential to a country at war. In November 1915 the G.N.R.'s commander warned the Minister of the Interior that his force was still not covering the country to the extent that the law which had created it had called for. "There are still various Districts of the country that have not been attributed units from this *Guarda*," he wrote, adding that, as a result, his men could only respond to crisis situations once such situations had erupted - and that the subsequent expense of housing and feeding guardsmen away from their barracks was preventing any expansion of the force.⁶⁷ During the revolution of 14.5.1915, the police in Lisbon, according to its commander, was repeatedly assaulted in its stations and overpowered,

⁶⁵ The 14th of May rising proved to be bloodier than the revolution which toppled the monarchy; some reports put casualties at 102 dead and 250 seriously wounded. Damião Peres (ed.) *História de Portugal [Supplement]* (Oporto: Portucalense Editora, 1954), 101.

⁶⁶ Close to £5.5 million.

despite its early release of all political prisoners: even the Civil Governor's headquarters was sacked by an armed mob.⁶⁸ At least ten men had been killed in two days and the rest of the force was in hiding.⁶⁹ The commander, Tristão da Câmara Pestana, wrote to the Minister of the Interior, stating that "mental indiscipline has reached such a stage (...) that the chiefs of station most suspect to certain serious and honest republicans are those most appreciated by other equally serious and honest republicans (...)"⁷⁰ Câmara Pestana also made an appeal for the end of the press campaign against the police. As for the *Guarda Fiscal*, 1915 saw numerous complaints about its inability to stop the flow of foodstuffs and men of military age into Spain, complaints which in 1916 would lead to an investigation by the Ministry of War's Information Service.⁷¹

V. *The mirage of republican unity.*

The divisions present in the Army as regarded participation in the European War were also present in the republican 'family', the three parties which had descended from the Portuguese Republican Party. This split was, according to some contemporary sources, more the result of personal differences, and of a tradition of embittered opposition, than of clearly spelt-out political differences. According to João Chagas, for example, "the Republic's greatest lie was that of its parties", for "the formation of a conservative republican group could only be justified by differences of principle on essential points of the republican program, and such differences were never manifested."⁷²

⁶⁷ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 61 (1915); letter, Commander of the *Guarda Nacional Republicana* to the D.G.A.P.C., 4.11.1915.

⁶⁸ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 60 (1915); report by commander of Lisbon's police, Tristão da Câmara Pestana, on the events of 14.5.1915, 19.5.1915.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰ *ibid.*

⁷¹ This investigation, carried out in 1916, highlighted the problems caused by low salaries (35 cents/day), which naturally caused corruption. Arquivo Histórico Militar (A.H.M.), Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296. Report, A.S. Casal Ribeiro, 26.7.1916.

⁷² João Chagas, *op.cit* (1915), 4.

Oliveira Marques, in his *Portugal da Monarquia para a República*, compares the programs of the three parties only to reach essentially the same conclusion. On a theoretical level, Oliveira Marques points out, the Evolutionist program complemented its Democratic counterpart, but was “not only tributary in doctrine” to it “but also manifestly inferior in detail.”⁷³ The more right-wing connotations which the party came to acquire were simply the result of practical politics, which was also the case with the Unionist party, of whose program Oliveira Marques writes that “it added nothing to either the Democratic or the Evolutionist (programs) and it was missing the vanguard elements of the other two.”⁷⁴ The two smaller parties differed from the Democrats through their greater receptivity to conservative and Catholic aspirations, which led them to advocate policies of reconciliation. This receptivity contrasted sharply with the Jacobin insistence of the Democrats on their unique ability to read public opinion and on their mission to protect the people from reactionary influences. As we shall see, the first ‘Sacred Union’ government nearly collapsed, in 1916, as a result of a proposed amnesty, which the Democrats insisted on restricting, ultimately with success. The extent of personal animosity among party leaders, and the way in which this animosity filtered through the ranks must not be ignored, however. The testimony of Brito Camacho,⁷⁵ João Chagas,⁷⁶ and even Almada Negreiros, in his short story “A Engomadeira,”⁷⁷ reveals that violence and politics were often associated. Daeschner, writing in January 1915, claimed that personal rivalries dominated every aspect of political life in Portugal, and that “on comprend (...) qu’un gouvernement et qu’un pays que la politique intérieure absorbent à ce point fassent passer au second plan les questions d’ordre extérieur.”⁷⁸

⁷³ Oliveira Marques (coordinator) op.cit., 379.

⁷⁴ Oliveira Marques (coordinator) op.cit., 381.

⁷⁵ Brito Camacho, op.cit., 4.

⁷⁶ João Chagas, *Diário*, vol.II, (Lisbon: Edições Rolim, 1986), 252, as well as *A Última Crise*.

⁷⁷ Almada Negreiros, “A Engomadeira” (1917), in *Obras Completas*, vol.IV *Contos e Novelas* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional - Casa da Moeda, 1989), 76.

⁷⁸ M.A.E., *Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général*, 632; letter, Daeschner to Delcassé, 21.1.1915.

To the left of the Democrats stood the veteran of Portuguese politics, the Portuguese Socialist Party (P.S.P.), founded in 1876, which also identified the Democratic party as its principal adversary, because it used, in its propaganda, the Republic as a panacea to all social problems, thereby depriving the P.S.P. of an electoral basis. This wooing of the working classes, possible because of the Democrats' greater resources, was inevitably followed, according to the Socialists, by a betrayal of the electorate.⁷⁹ According to the Socialists, there had been no difference between the Pimenta de Castro government and those which had preceded it, but once again the workers of Lisbon, on 14.5.1915, had risen to defend a Republic which would not defend them: "It is sad to see the working classes in their majority being dragged into a conflict such as this one, defending the political interests of men who, once in power, will again tread on them, as they have done until now."⁸⁰ The P.S.P. also saw itself as a victim of the electoral machinations of the larger parties; having elected two deputies in Oporto in the 1915 elections, the P.S.P. was then stripped of one of the seats, attributed to an Evolutionist after over 400 votes, at first deemed unacceptable (because of the size of the ballot papers), had been accepted and recounted.⁸¹

It is clear that the four parties represented in the chamber of Deputies were deeply divided among themselves, despite their largely common origins. What is harder to establish, however, is how the European War affected those divisions. The Democratic party seems to have been wholeheartedly committed to the Allies and to the policy of entering the war, seeing in participation the means by which to bring about national unity, as well as to create a new role on the world stage for Portugal and its vast, but neglected empire. João Chagas' *Diário* represents the most important illustration of this interventionist viewpoint, bound indissolubly with Portugal's alliance of unequals with

⁷⁹ See J.F. Alves in *O Combate* (Lisbon), 4.10.1914.

⁸⁰ *O Combate* (Lisbon), 23.5.1915.

⁸¹ *O Combate* (Lisbon), 4.7.1915.

Great Britain and the belief in the war as a means to strengthen the republican regime. As early as 2.8.1914, Chagas, disheartened by his government's failure to enter the war unless requested to do so by Britain, wrote, "Portugal does not understand that it is now or never the time to make up for its past as the *protégé* of England and to be its ally, to be somebody!"⁸² Protection of the colonies, largely in accordance with British desires, was not enough: "as if the fate of the colonial nations was to be decided in Africa!"⁸³ In the actions of those who demonstrated their support for the Allies in Lisbon, and those who defended the Republic in Mafra and who sacked the offices of the monarchist press following the failed *coup* of October 1914, João Chagas saw the nation coming together in order to save the Republic. For the Democrats, participation in the war seemed to create a curious duality: on one hand it was desired by the Portuguese, whom the Democrats represented, and as was evidenced by the marches in support of the Allies; on the other hand, and because the desire for participation was largely the result of the people's intuition as to national aspirations, the war would allow for national, and republican, integration, to be carried out quickly and evenly, transforming what was merely intuition into a purposeful republican patriotism.

Although Evolutionists, Unionists, and the P.S.P. agreed to grant extended powers to the Executive in the 'historic' sessions of Parliament, held on 7.8.1914 and 23.11.1914, their support for participation in the war, when it existed, was more difficult to qualify and explain. All three parties seemed content to await a British request for intervention, secure in the knowledge that the British government would not call on Portugal to make a sizable contribution. As in 1914 Bernardino Machado was the premier, leading an independent cabinet, the major parties attempted to influence the government's opinion, either towards participation or towards continued non-belligerence. The Evolutionists seemed to play a double game, considering the country to be unready for war, as we have seen, but at the same time using a violent anti-German rhetoric to mask their hesitations.

⁸² Chagas, *Diário*, vol.I (Lisbon: Edições Rolim, 1986), 128.

⁸³ *ibid.*, p.178.

In the already quoted speech, António José d'Almeida described the European War as "the bloody and *à outrance* struggle between despotism and law, between barbarism and justice." As for Wilhelm II, he was "a common criminal on whose head Destiny placed an Emperor's crown."⁸⁴ The Evolutionist position was further clouded by the party's inability to disassociate the present crisis from partisan ambitions; Pimenta de Castro might be a dictator, and he might have halted all preparations for Portugal's participation in the war, but he was organising elections that would be held with the Democrats out of government, and as a result the Evolutionists backed him to the end. The smallest of the opposition parties, the P.S.P., showed the clearest internal divisions on the topic of the war, with the Lisbon section supporting the Allied cause⁸⁵ while Oporto's Socialists remained loyal to the principles of the Second International, claiming that the desire to participate in the war was the result of a "superficial" interpretation of the crisis, and that Russia was not a worthwhile ally.⁸⁶

It was the Unionist party, however, which was to play a key role in 1914-15 in the struggle to keep Portugal out of the war. Brito Camacho and his followers, in Parliament and in *A Luta*, the party newspaper, were to cast doubt systematically on all proposed advantages to be derived from participation in the European war, and on Portugal's ability to fight in such a war, while insisting on the strict observance of the British Alliance, which of course meant keeping Portugal out of Europe's battlefields. For Brito Camacho, there was no honour or material advantage to be gained from Portugal's active intervention if that intervention came about against British desires. Although expressing his desire for an Allied victory, Brito Camacho asked, on 7.11.1914,

⁸⁴ d'Almeida, *op.cit.*, 178-179.

⁸⁵ J.F. Alves was the mouthpiece of this current, writing, "it is necessary to smash the German Empire and the Kaiser's ambitions in the same way that our grandfathers smashed Napoleonic claims (...) if a herculean effort is required in order to defeat German barbarism, if the crushing of those who hope to suffocate the freedom of us all is needed, then let us go to the front, in the name of Liberty, which has been our supreme aspiration." *O Combate* (Lisbon), 18.10.1914.

⁸⁶ See the articles by Manuel José da Silva in *O Combate* (Lisbon), 25.10.1914 and 8.11.1914.

“Is it a crime to be of the opinion that Portugal, if it can find an honourable way to avoid taking part directly in the war, should remain aloof from it, providing, however, all the aid requested by the Allies, no matter what its nature?”⁸⁷

Brito Camacho also claimed that Bernardino Machado’s cabinet was working secretly to bring Portugal into the war, and interpreted the British invitation for a Portuguese presence on the Western Front as the culmination of Portugal’s persistence in trying to carve out a role as a belligerent. By repeatedly calling for a white book on Portugal’s intervention, Brito Camacho effectively raised doubts as to the spontaneity of Britain’s invitation.⁸⁸ Although it is hard to quantify the effects of the Unionist campaign on public opinion, and especially within the military, it is clear that it represented the most cogent formulation of anti-war feeling. As we shall see, Camacho would be accused of creating the legal framework for refusals by officers to depart for France and for revolts against the government. Chagas, for one, could not contain his anger at the thought of his point of view being challenged,⁸⁹ and the questions raised by Brito Camacho in 1914 and 1915, during which the Unionists gave their support to Pimenta de Castro, were to remain unanswered by successive governments until the end of 1917.

VI. The true opposition: The monarchists.

Because of their lack of formal organisation, the attitude of the monarchists to the war is harder to gauge than that of the republicans. The fact that monarchist opinion was itself divided, between the supporters of the exiled Manuel II, the legitimists, loyal to the

⁸⁷ Brito Camacho, *op.cit.*, 112.

⁸⁸ “We challenge the government to send such an expedition (to France) without first publishing a white book in which the country might read all, but absolutely all, of the documents which concern the war, and from which it may be concluded that if we do not go to war we will be a country without honour.” Brito Camacho, *op.cit.*, 137.

⁸⁹ “An article by B. Camacho in *A Luta* causes me such indignation that I do not know how I manage not to collapse while reading it”. Chagas, *Diário*, vol.I, 166.

Austrian-based descendants of Dom Miguel, and the recently formed Integralists, who looked to the pre-Pombal monarchy for their political references, further confuses the issue. Nevertheless it can be stated that, as was largely the case with other political groups, the monarchists saw the war as an excellent political weapon with which to embarrass the Democratic party and even the whole republican regime. Republicans, not surprisingly, branded monarchists as germanophiles, and this moral condemnation was shared by Manuel II, who appealed for social and political peace in Portugal for as long as the war lasted. The exiled King was in full agreement, curiously, with the Democrats; he insisted on the fullest possible rendering of aid to Great Britain, believing that participation in the war would deliver Portugal from the threat of Spanish military intervention in Portugal, which actually occurred in the days following the revolution of 14.5.1915, when Spanish warships steamed into the Tagus in order to protect Spanish subjects caught in the violent revolution. Manuel II wrote, in October 1915, that monarchists in Portugal “do not listen to me, they do not care about what I say, and (they) are moving as fast as they can towards the absolute and complete ruin of our dear but oh so unfortunate Portugal (...) the germanophilism of the monarchists will be fatal to us!!!”⁹⁰

As we have already seen, monarchists disobeyed their King as early as October 1914, with attempted risings in Mafra, Guimarães, and Leiria. This attitude was to continue throughout the war, despite the obvious effects that it would have on the country's prestige abroad, and on Manuel II's plans. The leading monarchist daily, *O Dia*, highlighted all examples of Portugal's lack of prestige among the countries the interventionists wanted to join in the fight against Germany, while maintaining a very friendly attitude towards Alfonso XIII and the Maurist movement in Spain. Monarchists, not surprisingly, welcomed Pimenta de Castro, and were rewarded with an amnesty that allowed men like Paiva Couceiro to return to Portugal. According to *Homem Cristo*, a

⁹⁰ *Cartas d'el Rei D. Manuel II* ed. António Cabral (Lisbon: Livraria Popular de Francisco Franco, 1933), 202; letter, 4.10.1915, to Marquis of Lavradio. See also 200-201 for description of how monarchists openly criticised the King for defending the republican regime before the London government, when, as he believed, the fate of the country, and not just the regime, was at stake.

maverick republican figure, the pro-German feelings of the monarchists could be deduced from the sale of 30,000 copies of the germanophile Spanish daily *ABC*, a sales figure which dwarfed those of national monarchist newspapers. Manuel II was, to Homem Cristo, “the only Portuguese, on the monarchists’ side, who has performed his duty,”⁹¹ adding that

“the monarchists have not given any signs of patriotism or abnegation since the European war was declared (...) they continue to ask both God and the Devil to make the Republic go away, even if it means doing away with the Fatherland.”⁹²

O Dia shielded itself behind the articles of one of its contributors, Cunha e Costa, who called for military help to France, every time it was accused of germanophilism. For the most part, however, it denigrated any idea of intervening in the conflict. Alfredo Pimenta, on 3.1.1916, claimed that Germany’s inability to triumph on the battlefield showed clearly that she was not responsible for the war. He went on to add that all other belligerent states could have halted the march to war if they had chosen to do so: “Factors superior to the wills of Heads of State imposed their sovereignty.”⁹³

VII. The British alliance.

Portugal’s republican leadership was haunted by the spectre of the 1890 British ultimatum to Portugal, which had clearly demonstrated the fragility of Portugal’s hold over its imperial possessions, and the one-sided nature of the ancient British alliance.

⁹¹ *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 12.3.1916.

⁹² *ibid.*

⁹³ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 3.1.1916. See also the article “Fale o País” [Let the Country Speak], *O Dia* (Lisbon), 5.1.1916: “Portugal does not fit into the cafés of Lisbon, and even less in those of Oporto.”

Even a superficial reading of Chagas' *Diário* reveals that these spectres were carried into government, only to be compounded by doubts over the welcome given to the new regime in a Europe composed almost exclusively of monarchies. Participation in the war, as we have seen, was understood to be a means to improve Portugal's standing in the international order which would emerge from the conflict, notably by enshrining Portugal's hold over its African possessions. Democrats had made the link, in the pre-war years, between the public campaigns to denounce the treatment of natives of Angola and the São Tomé and Príncipe islands, and of monarchist prisoners in Portugal, and the negotiations between Britain and Germany concerning the future of Portugal's colonies. Teixeira Gomes, Portugal's Minister to the Court of St. James, noticed that, following the arrival of Prince Lichnowsky as German Ambassador, the 'anti-slavery campaign' had grown stronger than ever, and that, "for the first time, the two themes frequently referred to by the newspapers, of a possible break-up of the Portuguese empire, and of anti-slavery propaganda, were now appearing together."⁹⁴ According to Prince Lichnowsky himself, the British were willing to appease German ambitions in Africa at the expense of the Portuguese,⁹⁵ and it mattered little to him that the Portuguese might be informed of Germany's intentions by British diplomats.⁹⁶ It was from this type of threat that participation in the war was supposed to protect Portugal, according to the leading interventionists, who could not, however, express their views openly. An appeal for military help from the Allies, the encouragement of a friendly foreign press, displays of support and admiration from the Allies during and after the war, and a say in the division of spoils: these were the essentially modest war aims of the interventionists.

⁹⁴ Hipólito de la Torre Gomez, *Na Encruzilhada da Grande Guerra* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1980), 106.

⁹⁵ According to Lichnowsky, the territory which was meant to change hands was staggering: "the whole of Angola up to the twentieth degree of longitude (...) the valuable islands of San Thome and Principe (...) the Northern part of Mozambique." Prince Lichnowsky, *Heading for the Abyss* (London: Constable, 1928), 59.

⁹⁶ *ibid.*

There were, however, flaws in this vision of a Portugal, reconciled with its new regime, united around the government which had given it a new, independent, and respected voice in international affairs. The first, and most obvious, was the lack of concern for those same international, and even colonial, affairs on the part of a largely poor, and rural, society, in a country with no irredentist claims. In fact, neutral Spain was an extremely important market and source of wealth for the border areas, its immediate pull being stronger than that of Britain and France: whatever folk memories existed of the Napoleonic invasions were of French and British troops devastating Portugal. As for the fate of the Empire, the bulk of the population remained indifferent: there was no attachment to lands that were the location of seemingly eternal military campaigns. International prestige might be a desired status in Lisbon and Oporto, but these were largely republican areas; in the interior it was not yet a suitable vehicle of political mobilization. Although the Democrats and their allies were to overlook the general indifference to their international designs, they could not overlook the state of Portugal's military power. The belligerents certainly did not overlook it, and Portugal's military participation had not been sought by the rival coalitions; no 'sacred egoism' had come into play. The governments of Bernardino Machado, Azevedo Coutinho, José de Castro and, finally, once recovered from a tram accident, Afonso Costa himself, waited for a British call for help which came in October 1914, could not be answered, so that artillery pieces were delivered to the Allies without gunners, and then did not come again. More insulting than this wait, and more difficult still to explain, was the positive British attitude to General Pimenta de Castro, whose most significant course of action had been to halt military preparations. Pimenta de Castro's views were unmistakeable; he wrote, after his months in power, that as Britain had declared war on Germany without consulting, or even informing, her ally, Portugal was not honour-bound to fight alongside Britain, in a war from which Portugal would derive nothing. "Portugal", he wrote, "does not have either the indispensable elements or the conditions to go to war with civilized countries."⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Pimenta de Castro, *O Ditador e a Afrontosa Ditadura* (Weimar: Wagner G. Humbold, 1915), 28.

British support for Pimenta de Castro was even more difficult for the interventionists to accept, as the general was not carrying out a duplicitous policy. "The new Portuguese Prime Minister, Castro," wrote *The Times*, "has stated to representatives of the Press that Portugal will not take part in the war, but will keep neutral, in accordance with the will of the people."⁹⁸ The same newspaper heaped praise upon Pimenta de Castro, and his policy of political 'sanitation', directed primarily at the Democrats, "perhaps justly, for no other party has been so apt to exercise petty violence and reprisals when in power."⁹⁹ According to John Vincent Smith, the attitude of *The Times* towards Portugal mirrored that of the Foreign Office.¹⁰⁰ That attitude did not change when the Democrats stormed back to power in May 1915; whatever popular support the Democrats had, *The Times* claimed, had been engendered by "fanaticism and dictatorial methods."¹⁰¹ The revolution of 14.5.1915 led to further condemnation of the Democrats in the Allied press; *The Morning Post*, under a headline that read "Portuguese Revolt - The Rabble's Victory - A Gloomy Outlook" stated that "one will have to frankly consider it (Portugal) in the category of Chile or Morocco, or Mexico."¹⁰² The conservative press in France, notably *Action Française* and *La Libre Parole* echoed such sentiments, while the mainstream press gave out contradictory signals as to Portugal's entrance in the war, *Le Temps* announcing, on the 13.11.1915, Portugal's intended neutrality,¹⁰³ and *Paris-Midi*

⁹⁸ *The Times* (London), 19.2.1915.

⁹⁹ *The Times* (London), 27.4.1915.

¹⁰⁰ John Vincent Smith, "Britain, Portugal, and the First World War, 1914-1916", in *European Studies Review*, Vol.IV, no.3 (1974). See also Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros (M.N.E.), Lisbon, Archive, file "Movimento Militar em Janeiro de 1915 e Revolução de 14 de Maio do Mesmo Ano", for a letter, dated 21.5.1915 wherein the Portuguese Minister in Madrid described a conversation with the British Ambassador, who was deeply troubled by the May revolution: "It must be said," wrote the Portuguese diplomat, "that the Pimenta de Castro cabinet, precisely because it had the support of the Right, and of monarchist elements, enjoyed an excellent international reputation, especially in monarchies."

¹⁰¹ *The Times* (London), 17.5.1915.

¹⁰² *The Morning Post* (London), 22.5.1915. According to Manuel II, Chile's Ambassador had written a letter of complaint, and the newspaper had apologised. Cabral (ed.), op.cit., letter to the Marquis of Lavradio, 10.6.1915, 199.

¹⁰³ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 13.11.1915.

stating, in December, that France could play a key role in overcoming Britain's reluctance to have Portugal as a fighting ally. According to the article, the Portuguese army was ready to enter the war, with two army corps ready and another five being assembled - a terrible exaggeration - and *O Dia* was given an excellent weapon with which to strike at the government:

“On what account will we go to fight Bulgarians, Turks, and the Austro-Germans? (...)”

If England is opposed, as the *Paris-Midi*, excellently informed by its friend João Chagas, claims, one can only describe as abominable this insistence in attracting to our country a terrible calamity which no people would voluntarily seek out and which, in the face of Britain's attitude, we do not have to live through (...)”¹⁰⁴

With *The Times* also foreseeing a long wait before Portugal was ready to enter the war,¹⁰⁵ the Portuguese government and its interventionist allies received a very clear lesson about Portugal's international standing, and the way in which this standing was not a sacrosanct matter at home, hovering above domestic political strife: for the monarchists all tactics were valid if the final goal was bringing down the Republic. Gloom prevailed within Afonso Costa's second government. On 30.11.1915, Augusto Soares, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, complained that Britain had not understood, or had not wanted to understand, Portugal's position. The Minister of the Interior, Almeida Ribeiro, spoke of the need to distance Portugal from England, whose diplomacy “has abandoned us, at times, when it suits it.”¹⁰⁶ Even Afonso Costa himself shared in this feeling, irked, on

¹⁰⁴ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 28.12.1915.

¹⁰⁵ *The Times* (London), 8.1.1916.

¹⁰⁶ Oliveira Marques (ed.) op.cit., 11.

6.12.1915, by the presence of Manuel II at a dinner party hosted by Asquith.¹⁰⁷ The opposition, although it was not privy to diplomatic documents and to cabinet discussions, realized, nevertheless, that the Democrats were trying to force Britain's hand, which, as we shall see, was to have dire consequences for the war effort. Thanks to the widely read foreign press, any claims as to Portugal's international standing were easily dismissed. Brito Camacho repeatedly pointed out the government's weaknesses in *A Luta*: Britain was afraid of some "quixotic impulse" on the part of Portugal which would force it to over-extend its forces so as to protect Portugal,¹⁰⁸ while it was foolish to look forward to a future peace conference as an occasion in which Portugal would deal with the Great Powers on an equal footing: with all likelihood Portugal would be represented by Britain.¹⁰⁹

We have seen in this chapter that Portugal, by the end of 1915, had failed to enter the war, as the bulk of the republican leadership wished it to do, while already feeling the negative effects of the war - raids in Africa, a deteriorating economic condition, and the polarisation of political opinion typical of neutrals at the time (Italy, Spain, and Greece providing excellent comparisons.) The army's ambiguity towards the European war had also been demonstrated. The assumption that mere patriotism was enough to keep the army united and ready to fight, unquestioningly, the enemies designated for it by the republican government was no longer a realistic one. These reticences on the part of a conservative officer corps were strengthened by the seeming lack of interest by Great Britain in a Portuguese presence on the Western Front. Domestic concerns, despite the

¹⁰⁷ "This represents, at the very least, a lack of courtesy towards us which can only be explained by the serious worries that the war is causing the English, and by the little consideration which they have for our military capacity (...) it is imperative that England should understand that, if our relations with Germany are not as sound as they once were, it is only because we have had the honesty of defining our duties as allies and of committing various acts of belligerency, such as supplying munitions, etc. Our difficulties with Germany, including Naulila, are the result solely of our attitude as an ally that will not spare any sacrifice (...) at the same time England has with Spain niceties that are more deserved by Portugal." Oliveira Marques (ed.) op.cit., 34-35.

¹⁰⁸ Brito Camacho, op.cit., 112.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*

interventionists' hopes, had remained paramount: agricultural and food prices, exports to Spain, the religious question, and the holding of elections continued to dominate the attention of the population. In rural areas, nothing had changed, and the world of international politics was still an alien one; in urban areas political intrigue was heightened by the sense that the war was indeed going to bring change, whoever the victors might be. As the hour of Portugal's intervention approached, therefore, the Democratic government found itself unable to maintain the domestic peace necessary for a military intervention and increasingly misunderstood by its intended allies, which had welcomed General Pimenta de Castro's policies of pacification and neutrality.

CHAPTER III - A MANUFACTURED CRISIS:

MARCH 1916

We saw in the previous chapter that Portugal's intervention in the European War was conditioned almost exclusively by the ancient British alliance. Politicised public opinion would only accept intervention if motivated by a British request for military help. We also saw that such a British request arrived in October 1914, could not be met, and was not subsequently repeated, despite the Democrats' return to power in 1915, and despite their subsequent diplomatic campaign aimed at the renewal of the British request. Domestically, however, this diplomatic line could not be acknowledged, for it implied a desire to participate in the expensive slaughter of the European War, from which Portugal had been spared so far. In this chapter the crisis that finally brought Portugal into the war - the seizure of German merchant ships sheltered in Portuguese harbours for the duration of the conflict - will be examined. The suggestion will be made, moreover, that the nature of Portugal's entry into the First World War hampered the process of political mobilization in wartime, because it led to the impression that military intervention was merely a *partisan* policy, rather than the *national* crusade essential for the creation of unanimous agreement and enthusiasm.

I. The interventionist position.

It is interesting to contrast Portugal's attitude to the British alliance with Italy's view of its role within the Triple Alliance. As soon as the Great War broke out in 1914, Italy's leaders began to distance themselves from their arrangements with both Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which were very detailed and actually included the size of Italian military support in case of a war with France. This attitude, broadly described at

the time as 'Sacred Egoism', can be seen to stem from the uncertainties posed by a war between larger and more powerful nations than Italy, which, by timing its intervention, could hope to extend its territory to encompass *Italia irredenta*. In Portugal a comparable feeling of insecurity led to a search for safety under the rather loose alliance with Britain, despite the fact that Portugal's republican leaders had made their political debuts in the wave of anti-British sentiment which had followed the 1890 British ultimatum.¹ All parties, from the P.S.P. to the Unionists, approved of this step at the so-called 'historic' session of parliament on 7.8.1914, and all parties, furthermore, acknowledged the need to reinforce the defense of the colonies. It soon became clear, however, that cooperation with Britain could be interpreted in very different ways, especially as an invitation to participate actively in the war against Germany was not forthcoming. Conservative republicans and monarchists, began, moreover, to point to a direct link between the anti-German posturings of Democrats and Evolutionists alike and the German raids in Angola and Mozambique, as well as attacks by certain sectors of the German press.

The interventionist position contained a cruel paradox that had to remain secret: that one last act of subservience to Britain was required in order to assume a truly independent role on the world stage. This act of subservience consisted of waiting for a British invitation to join the fighting, while complying with all British requests for military assistance. This compliance necessarily worsened Portugal's economic and military position, but Britain made no gesture of solidarity with the embattled Republic, nor did it give it any assurances that Portugal's interests would be respected after the conflict's end. Portugal, aware of the ever present threat to its colonial possessions, was not free to declare itself a belligerent against British advice: it could only fight once Britain had

¹ For a contemporary discussion of the complex and contradictory relationship between the republicans and Great Britain see Aubrey F.G. Bell, *Portugal of the Portuguese* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd., 1915), 278+. The years which followed the British ultimatum proved fertile in anti-British sentiment, and Bell quotes extensively from Afonso Ferreira's *A Aliança Inglesa: Processo da Monarquia em Portugal* (Coimbra: Imprensa Universitária, 1910), which had been foreworded by Bernardino Machado. Even *A Portuguesa*, the song adopted by the republicans as the national anthem in 1910, dated from this period: the cannons which its chorus urges the Portuguese to march against are British.

agreed to protect Portuguese coastal areas, colonies, and shipping from German raids, and to transport the Portuguese army to a European battlefield in safety. Conversely, Portugal could not declare itself neutral: to do so would mean renouncing the British alliance, upon which Portugal's independence ultimately rested. The feeling that without active participation in the war the colonies would be lost grew, however, among republicans: in the words of Afonso Costa, "to remain inactive or in the same footing as heretofore is the same as to await our death sentence."² The European war, which set Britain against Germany, provided, at last, a welcome opportunity for the republicans to reaffirm Portugal's devotion to its ancient ally, and in so doing to reinforce Portugal's claim to its empire: were Portugal to be at war with Germany, its colonies would not be used as negotiating chips at a peace settlement. According to Hipólito de la Torre Gómez, this concern for post-war territorial integrity applied even to Portugal itself: "What merits, superior to those of Spain, could a neutral Portugal present after the Allies' triumph, which might ensure that it would not fall prey to the hegemonic claims of its neighbour? Could it not be the object of a treatment similar to that which could be foreseen for the colonies, if belligerence was renounced?"³

The Democrats' desire to participate actively in the conflict was reinforced by the realization that victory would allow Portugal to emerge united and more republican from the shadow of the more powerful British ally and Spanish neighbour. For men weaned on French culture and politics, the attractions of leading the Republic to war were obvious: the French Republic had established its rule over the country through the mobilization necessary for the fighting of the Revolutionary Wars. The interventionist paradox was

² A.H. de Oliveira Marques (ed.), *O Segundo Governo de Afonso Costa, 1915-1916: Actas dos Conselhos de Ministros* (Lisbon: Publicações Europa-América, 1974), 108. João Chagas had already expressed this view in a telegram to Freire d'Andrade, Portugal's Foreign Minister, on 7.8.1914: "Portugal cannot afford to hesitate in placing itself spontaneously alongside England in this war which is, for it (Portugal) a matter of life or death. Neutrality, impossible, in any case, to sustain, will not save Portugal in case of a German victory, and in compensation Portugal's spontaneous solidarity towards England will earn it a noble place among the nations should its cause triumph." João Chagas, *Diário* vol.I (Lisbon: Edições Rolim, 1986), 139.

³ Hipólito de la Torre Gómez, *Na Encruzilhada da Grande Guerra: Portugal e Espanha 1913-1919* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1980), 98-99.

best expressed by João Chagas, Portugal's Minister in Paris. Writing in July 1916, Chagas described Portugal's need to be seen as an equal partner in the Allied coalition, and not just as a minor ally of Great Britain:

“Portugal’s enemy in this war is England. It would be most convenient for England if Portugal were to have, at this time, no personality, as was the case in Napoleon’s time. We must fight this [British] objective, affirming, even if against her will, our personality. Our participation in this war has but one objective: To survive alongside the English. But this cannot be stated in the newspapers...”⁴

This paradox resulted, as might be expected, in confusion, for the opposition refused to accept as valid the arguments for intervention made by the Democrats and their allies, and, as we have also seen, Portugal's army revealed itself to be incapable of fighting its German counterpart.⁵ Vincent Smith acknowledges the existence of this paradox: “it had to be stressed that it was duty and honour which required the nation to become a belligerent.”⁶

Since the geo-political arguments had to be ignored, because they revealed both that Britain was as much a threat to Portuguese territorial integrity as Germany, and that Britain was largely uninterested in Portuguese belligerency, a different approach had to be developed. The war was presented, in interventionist circles and in the republican press,

⁴ João Chagas, *Diário* vol.II (Lisbon: Edições Rolim, 1986), 276-277.

⁵ George Young, a British diplomat assigned to Lisbon during the war, was critical of the British attitude towards the Portuguese government; H.M.G. had “failed to see that by allowing our Army and Navy to exploit the generous military offers of the Portuguese party in power without encouraging any corresponding military enthusiasm for the cause in the Portuguese people, they were putting an unfair strain on the position of their friends.” Young, *Portugal Old and Young* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1917), 293.

⁶ John Vincent Smith, “Britain, Portugal, and the First World War 1914-1916”, in *European Studies Review*, Vol.IV, no.3 (1974), 230.

as the struggle of Civilization and Justice against barbarism, of French democratic ideals against the reactionary force of Germany. In other words, the Allied propaganda machine was accepted and reproduced unquestioningly in Portugal by those predisposed by their political leanings to believing it. Such arguments were useful in convincing most republicans of the need to participate in the war; as Hipólito de la Torre Gómez explains, it would be difficult to understand “the state of bellicose excitement and the unshakable desire to take the country into the field of battle which took hold, from the outset of the conflict, of the great majority of the active and republican mass” without reference to these “sentimental and ideological motives.”⁷ At government level, however, these ideals did not go unquestioned. Almeida Ribeiro, the Minister of the Interior, stated, in a council of ministers held on 30.11.1915, that the war as a “struggle for the rights and liberties of the small nations” was mere rhetoric on the part of the British press and politicians, who used it to mask British interests; as a result, Portugal should become involved in the conflict merely as “the expression of the fulfillment of a duty” which should not be shirked.⁸ The Minister for the Colonies, Rodrigues Gaspar, was apprehensive about British designs in Africa,⁹ and the Minister of Education, Ferreira Simas, added that “it is not without reason that England has earned the title *perfidious*.”¹⁰ Appeals to Civilization and Justice, borrowed from the Allied propaganda machine, were, moreover, largely meaningless to the politically ignorant majority, and were scorned by monarchists, who refused to recognise the very legitimacy of the Republic. Monarchists also saw themselves as the victims of discrimination on the part of the Democrats, notably after the fall of the Pimenta de Castro dictatorship, which had tried to overcome the republican/monarchist

⁷ Gómez, *op.cit.*, 103.

⁸ Oliveira Marques (ed.), *op.cit.*, 11-12.

⁹ Oliveira Marques (ed.), *op.cit.*, 106.

¹⁰ Oliveira Marques (ed.), *op.cit.*, 107. As can be seen by these remarks, the prolonged period of diplomatic indefiniteness was placing the Democratic leadership under great strain. In the words of the Minister of the Interior, Britain was imposing sacrifices on Portugal without offering advantages. Oliveira Marques (ed.), 108. Almeida Ribeiro added that the aid already granted by Portugal to Britain should have been enough for Britain to treat its ancient ally with greater respect - but that this had not happened as a result of the lack of good faith among the British. *ibid.*

divide. To monarchists, as well as many republicans and, as we have seen, Socialists, the idea that Russia, and not Germany, represented Civilization and Justice was a source of much ridicule. Finally, the expense of military preparations when it had become obvious that Portugal's help was not needed by Britain was deemed to be an irresponsible waste motivated essentially by corruption. Brito Camacho wrote, when confronted in January 1916 by a budget deficit of over 30 million Escudos, caused by military preparations for a war that Portugal need not fight,

“one can only wonder at what could be done, in the interest of the national economy, either in the metropolis or the colonies, if not the whole, but rather the greater part of the money spent on military preparations was devoted to that economy.”¹¹

II. Portugal becomes a belligerent.

When one considers the crisis that finally led Portugal to become a belligerent, in March 1916, one realises that the motive which sparked the German declaration of war, the seizure of all German shipping in Portuguese harbours, was not a new idea. It was, rather, an obvious answer to the country's economic woes which was seized upon by the Democratic government as a convenient manner of precipitating the crisis that would bring the country into the conflict. It can be stated, therefore, that the crisis was manufactured by the government, which had already considered the possibility of manufacturing such an incident over a matter of diplomatic protocol: the lack of a formal greeting to the new cabinet by the German Minister, Baron Rosen.¹² Since the beginning of the year *A*

¹¹ Brito Camacho, *Portugal na Guerra* (Lisbon: Guimarães, 1935), 214. See also John Vincent Smith, *op.cit.*, for an example of how support for the Republic was balanced, in the case of George Young, the British First Secretary in the Lisbon Legation, with fear of participation in the war, because “it would mean the end of any hopes for national recovery and social and economic progress under the new regime.” Vincent Smith, *op. cit.*, 218.

¹² Oliveira Marques (ed.), *op.cit.*, 12-13 & 36-40.

Capital, a pro-Democratic daily, and the mouthpiece of Leote do Rego, the ardent interventionist who had commanded the fleet during the 14.5.1915 revolution, had been urging the government to take that step. *O Dia* reacted immediately, warning the government not to act along such lines: "Let us restrain ourselves, remembering England's advice not to abandon our present state. Enough madness!!"¹³ This discussion was prophetic, for soon the Democratic cabinet was faced by a British warning that Britain's economic blockade of Germany, as well as Germany's counter blockade, would lead to a concentration of British mercantile shipping for Britain's own commercial needs. This warning was delivered to all powers, Portugal included, and no mention was made of the all-important alliance. Portugal's minuscule merchant marine was insufficient to meet the country's economic needs, and as a result the government's one option was to seize German ships at anchor across the empire: 36 in Lisbon, 8 in Cabo Verde, 6 in the Azores, 4 in Madeira, 4 in Mozambique, and others in India and the Far-East. To undertake even a limited requisition, which might lead to war with Germany, without first having secured from Britain the assurance that such a requisition had been carried out under the terms of the alliance (i.e. that Britain had specifically requested the seizure of the German ships) would have meant going to war against the wishes of the 1914 parliament. It would also mean, as we have already seen, risking German attacks at sea and in Africa with no guarantee of British protection, a nightmarish scenario that left the Portuguese cabinet in a state of agitation. The need to wrest diplomatic initiative away from the British was clear for all in the cabinet: British and Portuguese interests no longer coincided. The Minister of the Interior discerned an Anglo-Spanish plot to destroy the Portuguese empire; the Minister of Development argued that it would be better to declare war on Germany first and only then seize the ships.¹⁴ At a later council of ministers, in the presence of Bernardino Machado, now President of the Republic, Afonso Costa agreed, but stressed that such a course could only be adopted after the failure of all diplomatic efforts designed to make the British change their minds. If such efforts failed, war would be declared

¹³ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 13.1.1916.

¹⁴ Oliveira Marques (ed.), *op.cit.*, 117.

unilaterally against Germany. Afonso Costa described his predicament in the following manner:

“Were I to be asked why we are going to war, I would not be able to answer ‘because we have been asked to’, for I would have to present the memorandum, and the memorandum is a disgrace! I would prefer in such an eventuality a simple declaration of war under our responsibility, and act of dedication to our ally even if carried out against her will (...) we would then requisition the ships.”¹⁵

All ministers agreed, although the Minister for the Interior was, correctly, skeptical about the possibility of finding a motive for a declaration of war which might prove acceptable to the country at large: over one year had passed, after all, since the battle of Naulila, and Britain was proving every day that it did not deserve such an act of dedication. By this time press speculation about events had begun, made possible, as Vincent Smith explains, by the widespread leaking of diplomatic documents.¹⁶ As before, *A Capital* pushed for war while *O Dia* urged caution, wondering why so much was being done to plunge the country into the war, and complaining that “we did not know how to benefit, as we might have, from this war, which is the scourge of others.”¹⁷ Two days later, on the 11th, *O Dia* accused the government of intending to use the German ships as a pretext for going to war, adding that the government knew fully well what it was doing.¹⁸ Finally, on the 16th, the monarchist daily reacted sharply to an enumeration, in *A*

¹⁵ Oliveira Marques (ed.), *op.cit.*, 124.

¹⁶ Vincent Smith, *op.cit.*, 221.

¹⁷ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 9.2.1916.

¹⁸ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 11.2.1916.

Capital, of all the services rendered, so far, by Portugal to the Allies, and of the alleged signs of growing hostility in Portugal towards Germany:

“It is a case of, no longer covertly, raising the temperature, with the sole purpose of establishing our belligerency, and pushing Portugal into the war, by publishing the list of our services to the Allies, or rather, of the glaring and repeated breaches of neutrality, of the acts committed with clear hostility, of *everything* that is needed to make Germany feel provoked and declare war.”¹⁹

Moreover, *O Dia* pointed out that, as Britain had not been invaded by German forces, the alliance would not be tolerated as an excuse for all government initiatives, thereby raising the stakes: Britain could not drag Portugal into the war unless it was in mortal danger, which it manifestly was not. *O Dia* then set out its ideal course for Portugal during the war: “a discreet neutrality, within which, and having in the peninsula the example and the support of Spanish neutrality, one might safeguard and promote the growth of the country’s economy.”²⁰ By the time the Council of Ministers met, on 19.2.1916, the problems facing Portuguese intervention, from a diplomatic point of view, had been resolved. On 17.2.1916, and acting within the context of the Portuguese-British alliance, Sir Lancelot Carnegie, His Majesty’s Minister in Lisbon, passed on to the Portuguese government a ‘verbal note’ inviting Portugal to assume control of the German ships lying at anchor in Portuguese waters. The impasse had been overcome, and a radiant Afonso Costa informed his colleagues that “this document represents, for our diplomacy, the re-establishment of the situation such as it was on the October 10 1914.”²¹ A week after the verbal note had been delivered, and without any formal warning being

¹⁹ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 16.2.1916.

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ Oliveira Marques (ed.) *op.cit.*, 157.

given to the German government, not to mention an offer of negotiation with the ships' owners for their use during wartime, the Portuguese government decreed the requisitioning of all the German vessels, to which Germany responded with an ultimatum, which was ignored, and, subsequently, a declaration of war.

III. Implications of the nature of Portugal's entry into the war.

While the seizure of the German ships did allow Afonso Costa to steer Portugal into the war, it did not provide him with an acceptable reason, from the point of view of public opinion, for belligerency. The Democrats, and the 'Sacred Union' government which followed them in power could not publish a white book, like the other belligerents had done, for such a white book would make clear the little interest that Great Britain had shown in Portugal's belligerency, ultimately accepted only in return for the use of most of the German ships. In a country like Portugal, moreover, there was no guarantee that even with the full encouragement of the British authorities the war would be welcomed, or even accepted. As we have already seen, in a rural society with an illiteracy rate of 70% the notion of 'international prestige', so dear to the republican leadership, meant little to the majority of the population. A white book, moreover, would necessarily have raised one fundamental question: would it not have been easier, not to mention cheaper, to requisition the few ships that Portugal needed in order to survive, rather than to push for what was, essentially, Britain's permission to enter the war? This matter was to become, during the war years, more and more pressing, as the opposition, and the press, saw that the seized ships were put at Britain's disposal for very low rates, while lack of Portuguese shipping ensured the continuation of food shortages and prevented the proper supply, and reinforcement, of the Portuguese Expeditionary Corps (C.E.P.) which was eventually sent to France early in 1917.

In Britain, Portugal's action was presented as an independent gesture on the part of the Portuguese government, which added to confusion among the Portuguese public and reinforced the idea that the war was in no sense a national one. Sir Edward Grey,

addressing Parliament in March 1916 spoke of Portugal “having been compelled to range herself on the side of the Allies.”²² In the same statement, the Foreign Secretary complicated the issue by stating that “it became clear that in the interests of the country it was the duty of the Portuguese government to make use of all the available ships in their harbours. *This was their view* and it was also urged upon them by His Majesty’s Government.”²³ Why did the British government urge solutions to Portugal’s internal difficulties? How could it be in the interests of Portugal to seize more ships than it could possibly use, and to do it in a way that led the country into the costliest war ever? These were the questions that Grey’s words raised in Portugal. As for *The Times*, its account of the German declaration of War completely left out the British request for the seizure of the ships: “War between Germany and Portugal became inevitable when the Portuguese government seized the German ships in Portuguese ports on February 23.”²⁴ Confusion over the whole intervention process was widespread, even on the British side, leaving opponents of that intervention with a much simpler task.

The criticisms of Portugal’s attitude present in the German declaration of war and in the German press mirrored those made of the Portuguese government by its domestic opposition: monarchists, conservative republicans, and syndicalists. After the German ultimatum, for example, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* wrote, according to *The Times*,

“We are not afraid that Portugal’s example may find imitators, for that country and its government do not belong to those who are destined to establish rules of international behaviour. Portugal seems rather to be a fine example of the extent to which a country can submit to England’s bondage. We shall soon see from the Portuguese

²² Parliamentary Debates (Commons) vol. 80 (February 1915-March 16, 1916), cols. 1898-1899.

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *The Times* (London), 11.3.1916.

government's answer to the German note whether Portugal can still be counted among the independent nations."²⁵

The declaration of war itself, after a list of Portugal's "insults" to Germany since 1914 (which attributed responsibility for the events at Naulila to Portuguese 'treachery') stated that Portugal had seized more ships than it needed for its own commerce, and that it had done so without consulting their owners. "The whole procedure of the Portuguese government", it continued, "represents a serious violation of existing laws and treaties."²⁶ Finally, the German declaration of war pointed out the inconsistency between patriotism and the conduct of the Portuguese government, which "by this procedure openly showed that it regards itself as the vassal of Great Britain, which subordinates all other considerations to British interests and wishes."²⁷ During the crisis *O Dia* stressed the fact that the country as a whole was against intervention, and it challenged the government to test national sentiment before rejecting the German ultimatum:

"It would suffice that in each District demonstrations indubitably in favour of the war be held, in which all classes which have anything to lose by the war - those who represent the country's material wealth, those who represent its intellectual wealth, and its producing element - might show their support."²⁸

This challenge, obviously made in bad faith, should nevertheless have served as a sharp reminder to the government that its course of action could have serious consequences, for the Democratic party, for the Republic, and for Portugal itself. It had

²⁵ *The Times* (London), 4.3.1916.

²⁶ For the full text of the declaration of war, see *The Times* (London), 11.3.1916.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 8.3.1916.

been made clear, by 1916, that the policy of possible intervention in the European War had not created a consensus around itself, or, rather, that it had actually exacerbated existing political differences within the country. The seizure of the ships had also proved to be controversial, and had been readily exploited by the opposition. To expect patriotic feeling to counteract that exploitation was, in the context of Portuguese politics, taking a very great risk. Not even the sudden shock of being in a state of war with Germany hushed criticism of the government: in Funchal, *Trabalho e União* was punished with an eleven week ban for its forceful rejection of the Democratic government's policy: "We are being pushed towards the slaughter. Damned be those who have led us to this disaster!"²⁹ War, according to the syndicalist newspaper, would be a devastating experience for the whole country, with "thousands of men, torn from their valuable work and the company of those dear to them, being led to the slaughterhouse."³⁰ The same newspaper added that although war was, in some cases, an acceptable proposition (most notably in the Belgian case), in Portugal it had been the result of "a demented headlong rush", "a criminal decision."³¹ Finally, the British alliance was acknowledged as the source of Portugal's intervention, but rejected as a valid reason for belligerence: "England could ask whatever she wanted from us, but she did not have the right to push us to the slaughter. And the Portuguese government could have refused to agree to a request whose compliance would lead to such grave results."³² Similar, but milder sentiments, were expressed by *A Aurora*, a syndicalist newspaper from Oporto, which escaped punishment from the authorities. *O Dia*, for the moment, called for monarchists to ignore political differences, and to rally around the coat-of-arms of Portugal, "to which one owes exceptional duties."³³ This attitude of selflessness, would not, however, last.

²⁹ *Trabalho e União* (Funchal), 18.3.1916.

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ *ibid.*

³² *ibid.*

³³ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 11.3.1916. It did not urge its readership to rally around the flag, because Portugal's flag had been changed in 1910.

As we shall see in ch. V, the German declaration of war was followed by the creation of an essentially flawed 'Sacred Union' government. Under this government, and its successor, led again by Afonso Costa, suspicions about the way Portugal had become a belligerent did not die down. They were still present in July 1917, when secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies were held; the records of these sessions show how the republican opposition was still using the events of February 1916 as a weapon with which to embarrass the executive. Moura Pinto, a Unionist deputy, remarked that

“the mystery of our intervention in the European war and the mysterious way in which it was carried out, keeping the country ignorant of the negotiations under way, and hence of its very future, provoked the most dreadful confusion so far recorded in our history, and was the sole cause of hatreds which will never be healed within this generation, and which have complicated, perhaps fatally, the political problems of the regime.”³⁴

Moura Pinto went on to accuse the Democrats of having led the country to war merely in order to strengthen their hold on power through the repressive measures open to a government at war, and asked, re-emphasizing the secrecy which had surrounded the belligerency crisis, if “there were, or still are, treaties and conventions which defined, or define, our obligations, and ensured, or ensure, our rights and compensations?”³⁵ The following day, the second of the secret sessions, Casimiro de Sá, a breakaway Evolutionist, reaffirmed the Chamber's right to know all the secrets of the country's entry into the conflict: “It is imperative for us to know the following - did we offer our services

³⁴ Assembleia da República, Lisbon, Archive, safe, Transcript of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, July 1917, 9.

³⁵ *ibid.*

or were we, initially, invited by England to participate in the war side by side with her allies?"³⁶ The matter, according to the deputy, could only be clarified by the immediate publication of the complete diplomatic correspondence between the British and Portuguese governments on the subject of intervention. Finally, Casimiro de Sá spoke of Portugal's diplomatic duplicity being a source of shame for the country, the precise opposite, of course, of the prestige that belligerency was thought to deliver.³⁷

We have seen in this chapter that in order to turn Portugal into a belligerent Afonso Costa and his government took advantage of a sudden window of opportunity. There had been no change in the British estimate of Portugal's military capability,³⁸ or of the stability of Portugal's political life. The British government simply calculated that the benefits to be gained from Portugal's seizure of the German ships outweighed the inconvenience of having Portugal as an active ally. Once secure in the knowledge that the seizure of the ships could be announced as yet another service rendered in the name of the British alliance, Afonso Costa acted with all possible speed, eventually forcing the German declaration of war. Such an action, however, although designed above all to secure the Republic's position domestically and internationally, merely rendered the task of mobilizing the Portuguese for war all the more difficult. In July 1917, the Spanish conservative newspaper *ABC* published an article describing the capture, by the German army, of its first Portuguese prisoners of war, 16 men caught in a failed raid. According to the report, "not one knew how to define the ideals which guided them in their struggle; most said that they had come because they were sent by Lisbon while others, wiser or more naive, declared that they were in the battlefield because Britain had wanted them

³⁶ Assembleia da República, Lisbon, Archive, safe, Transcript of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 21.

³⁷ Assembleia da República, Lisbon, Archive, safe, Transcript of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 22.

³⁸ Or in the opinion of the Portuguese government itself. Afonso Costa, in the crucial council of Ministers held on 4.2.1916, asked "becoming thus, unexpectedly, belligerents, how will we carry out our military preparations?" Oliveira Marques (ed.), op.cit., 119. The lengthy preparation of the Portuguese army for participation on the Western Front was to contribute considerably to the difficulties faced by the 'Sacred Union' governments to earn the support of the population.

there. Hearing these men one receives the impression that Portugal is a British colony (...)”³⁹ This inability to define Portugal’s war aims - which clearly suggests that the soldiers described did not see the war as *their* war - was the legacy of the events of February and March 1916. Confusion and the growing belief that Portugal was being sacrificed by its ancient ally were made possible by the continuation of political strife, and by the competing explanations of Portugal’s belligerence which we will examine in the next chapters.

³⁹ ABC (Madrid), 6.7.1917.

CHAPTER IV - POLITICAL MOBILIZATION IN PORTUGAL, 1916-1917

We saw in the previous chapters that armed intervention in the European war was the primary objective of the Democratic party after August 1914. The opportunity presented by the British request for the seizure of German ships in Portuguese waters was immediately seized upon, and the German response was swift. Reaction to the state of war, as can be expected, varied: feverish enthusiasm on the part of interventionists, as evidenced by the many marches and demonstrations held throughout the country in favour of the Allies; apparent resignation on the part of conservative republicans and even monarchists; and outright hostility in syndicalist circles. Hardest to gauge, of course, was the reaction of the vast majority of the population, the illiterate agricultural workers. In this chapter we shall consider the actions of the government and other bodies to mobilize the population for the coming trial of the war - not in the strict military sense, but rather in the sense of providing that population with a set of beliefs as to why the war was being fought, and why the forthcoming sacrifices should be endured. The war presented an opportunity for the republicans to consolidate the regime they had unveiled five and a half years earlier. This could be done by stressing, at a time of danger for all, the need for national unity irrespective of political or religious allegiance; demonstrating the democratic and egalitarian nature of the republican regime, through the insistence on equality of all before the sacrifices of war; and developing a political vocabulary intelligible to the whole of the population. This vocabulary would explain, on the one hand, the reasons for Portugal's belligerence, and what would be gained from that belligerence and, on the other

hand, why a republican regime guaranteed victory and a more equitable division of the spoils.

I. Government-led mobilization.

Whereas in the principal belligerents the task of political mobilization was, in the early years of the war, left largely to self-mobilizing groups - churches, unions, propaganda leagues, women's associations, intellectuals - in Portugal, where there was no consensus about the nature of the regime, and where the government had alienated both the Catholic Church and the syndicalist world, it is clear, with hindsight, that the government, through the whole state apparatus, should have taken the lead. To do otherwise, welcoming the Church and the unions as acceptable social partners, would have implied a change in the nature of the Republic that was being built. For the Democrats, there could be no question of accepting this change of course. This internal division makes the lack of government intervention in the propaganda campaign for the war all the more striking. As we shall see, the government remained outside the propaganda fray, choosing instead to concentrate its efforts on the preparation of a military force to be sent to France. The task of political mobilization was therefore left, as in other belligerents, in the hands of self-mobilizing groups, which were largely unprepared for the task before them, in terms both of the evaluation of that task and the means for carrying it out.

The government's refusal to use all instruments at its disposal, especially the country's primary schools, remains one of the most striking features of Portugal at war. Portugal's republican leadership, which traditionally looked to France's example for guidance, could not but be aware of the importance attached to propaganda as one of the means through which to keep the home front united. There are two possible explanations for the refusal: lack of resources and the belief that such a campaign was not necessary. The first explanation does not seem plausible. Portugal's military effort was made possible by loans from Great Britain. Had the republican leadership considered an extensive propaganda campaign to be of value for the purpose of uniting the population in

turn of the Republic and its ideals, part of the funds provided by Britain could have been diverted from the purely military effort, or the sums borrowed could have been increased. The second explanation is therefore closer to the truth, and is made more plausible by repeated assertions of those in power. Republican politicians seemed paralysed by their own rhetoric about the 'people', in whose name they acted. The 'people', having been delivered from the clutches of the reactionary forces that had sapped their energy for centuries, were held to be inherently patriotic and willing to undergo any sacrifice for the sake of the Republic, requiring only able leadership. As a result of this misunderstanding, there was a dearth of government propagandistic initiatives: sporadic visits around the country, such as the ones undertaken by António José d'Almeida to Évora and Coimbra (28.9.1916), a planned series of rallies to be held at monuments of national significance, the publication of an explanation for Portugal's presence in the conflict as a prologue to the decrees which officially constituted the C.E.P. and named its commanders, and another planned speaking tour by leading ministers, to coincide with the troops' departure for France. The government was also nearly inactive on the international front, commissioning one magazine, *Portugal na Guerra*, to be published in Paris *in Portuguese*, and after that publication's failure, appointing a commission to oversee the publication of another such magazine.

The government's initiatives were remarkable not only for their scarcity, but also for the lack of commitment shown to them, which led to the cancellation of most events. The series of rallies at national monuments, for example, was limited to the first, at the monastery of Batalha. The second tour, which should have seen politicians touring their regional power bases, accompanied by local Deputies in a concerted effort to cover the whole country (Afonso Costa in Oporto, Viseu, Lamego, Guarda, Covilhã, Castelo Branco and Tomar, António José d'Almeida in Coimbra, Figueira da Foz, Beja and Faro, and Norton de Matos in the extreme North - Braga, Viana do Castelo, Guimarães, Amarante, Barcelos, and Bragança) was postponed until the spring of 1917 and it perished with the first Sacred Union government.¹ *Portugal na Guerra* was another fiasco, one

which considerably upset the press in Portugal and removed all propagandistic value from the C.E.P. The publication was given the monopoly of pictures from the Portuguese front, which, from a commercial point of view, should have ensured its success. Despite this monopoly, and despite requests for copies from administrative agencies, such as consulates and municipal chambers, the project was brought to a halt by delays and mismanagement after criticism that it was concentrating on the activities of Portugal's allies rather than the exploits of her troops.² Attempts to launch another magazine, and to create a propaganda commission, composed essentially of republican journalists and artists, were brought to a halt by the sudden arrival of Sidónio Pais to power in December 1917.³

Government ministers neglected to see the value of propaganda for the war effort, and for the consolidation and survival of the republican regime. Perhaps the greatest example of this failure was the poor use made of schools as propaganda centres, primary schools representing one of the most effective networks for the dissemination of information that belligerent governments possessed.⁴ Although the loyalty of the teachers to the Republic was not unquestionable (not being the product of a republican school system themselves), teachers nevertheless constituted a class whose interests the republicans had always claimed to represent, and which was central to the future development of the country. Teachers initially offered their services to the 'Sacred Union' government, pledging to undertake tasks of propaganda and national reconciliation.⁵

¹ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 31.1.1917.

² *O Século* (Lisbon), 12.7.1917.

³ *A Capital* (Lisbon), 5.8.1917 & 11.8.1917.

⁴ See Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, *La Guerre des Enfants: 1914-1918* (Paris: Armand Colin Éditeur, 1993) and Andrea Fava, "The 'Tender Children of the Warriors': Children's Assistance and the 'National School' on the Italian Home Front (1915-1918)," *State, Society, and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* ed. John Horne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming), for a discussion of the multiple use made of schools in wartime.

⁵ See *Educação Nacional* (Oporto), 19.3.1916: "Great in our love for the fatherland, great in our dedication, and in our sacrifice: while we are not allowed to give our generous blood for the cause of freedom, let us carry out in schools, and, more importantly, outside them, patriotic lectures, elevating in them the name of our dear Fatherland. Let us carry out before the humble but good and heroic people the

Instead of taking advantage of the 6,000 potential propaganda centres which the primary schools alone represented, the government allowed the teachers' enthusiasm to cool and turn to apathy, while inflation concentrated the teachers' attention on their low salaries.⁶ Not even in Italy, which also lagged behind the other Allies in terms of propaganda, was the failure to use the schools as centres of mobilization so glaring. Andrea Fava explains that while there may have been no directives from the Italian Ministry of Education on the subject of patriotic propaganda, that same Ministry put pressure on its teachers, from the onset of the conflict, to participate in works of "civilian assistance."⁷ This failure to use the schools was so obvious that *O Mundo*, the Democratic party's Lisbon daily, began to question the government's wisdom on the matter (helped by the fact that the Minister for Education was an Evolutionist.) Lopes de Oliveira, a teacher in the Passos Manuel secondary school in Lisbon sent the newspaper a copy of a letter he had written to his headmaster, a document published by *O Mundo* in January 1917. Lopes de Oliveira complained that, having read out to his class the already mentioned official explanation for Portugal's belligerency, he found that most of the students had never even heard of it - at a time when "next to the barracks, it is the schools which constitute the greatest centres of germanophile propaganda."⁸ Lopes de Oliveira complained that the Ministry of Education seemed to think that Portugal was still neutral, ignoring all appeals from teachers for guidance in the propaganda campaign:

"Along with the primary school teachers, the staff at Passos Manuel secondary school has officially offered to carry out an informative, authorized, and knowledgeable war propaganda, to be carried out throughout the country at no

most intelligent of campaigns in favour of the war. Let us tell the obscure sons of the people the historic deeds of our forefathers and let us point them in the way of Honour and Duty. Let us be the spokesmen of Law (...)"

⁶ *Educação Nacional* (Oporto), 7.10.1917.

⁷ Andrea Fava, op.cit.

⁸ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 21.1.1917.

expense to the government. The most indifferent (not to say hostile) of silences continues to reign at the Ministry. Why?"⁹

Commenting the letter, the Democratic newspaper affirmed its support for the teacher, returning to the same subject later in the same month, alleging that Pedro Martins, the Minister, had germanophile connections, and that he had flinched from using the schools for propaganda purposes "because opposition to war propaganda (had) made itself felt in some schools."¹⁰

A possible explanation for the government's failure to use the schools as centres of propaganda lies in the intended use that was to be made of the Preparatory Military Instruction (I.M.P.) The I.M.P. was envisaged as an important part of the 'nation-at-arms' principle, providing basic military skills to boys aged 7 and over. A series of decrees were published, in 1916, which attempted to turn the I.M.P. into a more effective institution. In April 1916, The War Ministry urged not only the intensification of strictly military training for the I.M.P.'s second grade (boys of 17 and over) but also of Civics teaching, the topics to be discussed reflecting the importance attributed to the war: "Family, fatherland, flag, Republic, obligatory military service, patriotism, Portugal's colonizing influence, alliance with England, European conflagration, legal background to the requisition of the German ships, insubstantial nature of the declaration of war, admiration which our noble and correct attitude has provoked in the cultured world, our considerable contribution to the Allies."¹¹ Further legislation attempted to stimulate the

⁹ *ibid.* Lopes de Oliveira was to speak out on this topic at a propaganda session held in Lisbon, on 18.2.1917: it was imperative, he argued, that the official report on Portugal's belligerence should be read out and explained in schools. He wondered, however, why it was that teachers were not allowed to do so. *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 20.2.1917.

¹⁰ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 27.1.1917. The article went on to claim that "were future history to be written on the basis of the archives of our Ministry of Education, historians would come across no mention of a European war in the first quarter of the 20th century."

¹¹ *Ordens do Exército - 1916* (Lisbon: Ministério da Guerra), Secretaria da Guerra, Primeira Direcção Geral, 3.4.1916.

creation of I.M.P. societies, which were given “patriotic and beneficial” status, allotting two officers from each military region for the task of administering the necessary courses to the second graders, and altering the rules concerning absences, which were made stricter: five unexcused absences could lead to up to 7 days’ imprisonment.¹² While these initiatives show that the government was at least aware of the need to aim propaganda to those nearly ready to perform their military service, the general lack of financial resources prevented the formation of new I.M.P. societies, and general attendance at the courses remained low to such an extent that in September 1916 the *Director Geral da Administração Política e Civil* (D.G.A.P.C.) wrote to all Civil Governors, urging the latter to pressure local authorities into cooperating fully with those responsible for the I.M.P. scheme.¹³

If the government’s effort to capitalise on the war for purposes of political mobilization failed to impress on the quantitative plane, then, in qualitative terms, one finds that the terms in which belligerence and its benefits were being explained were not suited to Portugal’s specific conditions. The government’s official explanation for the sending of troops to France, published on the 17.1.1917, spoke of a clear diplomatic attitude, which had never been that of a simple neutrality, of German treachery in Africa, and of a legal seizure of ships for economic reasons and in order to comply with a British request. Another British request had followed, and it too had been met: the sending of a force to the Western front. As for the benefits of belligerence, the document added that it was too early to tell precisely what these would be. Nevertheless, one at least had been made clear:

¹² *Ordens do Exército - 1916* (Lisbon: Ministério da Guerra), law 623 (Ministries of War, Navy, Education, and Interior), 23.6.1916.

¹³ “It having been brought to the attention of this D.G. that successive absences, on the part of young men taking part in the I.M.P. scheme, have occurred, in various of the instruction nuclei situated in the seat of their respective municipalities, and that we are heading towards the almost complete abandonment of the scheme (...)” Arquivo Nacional (A.N.), Lisbon, Ministry of the Interior (M.I.), Direcção Geral da Administração Política e Civil (D.G.A.P.C.), Stack 66 (1916); letter, D.G.A.P.C. to all Civil Governors, 11.9.1916.

“A people worthy of the traditions of its past and of the hopes for its future, worthy of its freedom and its independence, worthy of the noble civilization to which it belongs and for whom Law and Justice are sacred and inviolable notions, has affirmed itself.”¹⁴

For Portugal, belligerence was to be a feat of glory never to be forgotten by the rest of the world: a sacrifice endured for an alliance six centuries old, with no desire for conquest or material rewards; it was, moreover, a fight for the right of small nationalities, which the German empire was crushing. “Portugal defends its life and defends its patrimony. For them it will shed its blood to the last drop.”¹⁵ This struggle was being carried out by a nation finding its lost strength, and Afonso Costa, in a public rally, used belligerence and the status it had brought Portugal to accuse his enemies of “unworthiness and cowardliness.”¹⁶ In a special booklet published by the “Universidade Livre”, an organisation designed to promote adult education, President Bernardino Machado explained his conception of the war to the soldiers about to leave for the front. The war, he argued, was the logical continuation of the revolution which had given birth to the Republic: it was supported by the people at home and there were strong ties between domestic reactionaries and Germany: the enemies of 1910 and those of 1916 were essentially the same. According to Bernardino Machado, the history of Portugal was, essentially, a long road towards democracy, from the establishment of municipalities, to the Estates-General, to the constitution of 1821, and, of course, to the Republic, and the war was the culmination of this process. The President went on to add that

“it is our mission (...) to struggle always in the vanguard of civilization, that same civilization which we were the first to

¹⁴ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 17.1.1917.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 25.8.1916.

take to the whole world, through seas never before sailed. This civilization is called, today, democracy. It is the motto which is inscribed (...) on the flag which we have entrusted to our brave army. Fighting for democracy we are fighting for ourselves, for our kind, for our language, for our past and for our future (...)”¹⁷

Bernardino Machado, with his imagery borrowed, like so much of Portuguese propaganda, from Camões’ “Lusiad”¹⁸, was merely restating basic republican views: that only through a republic could the link with Portugal’s energetic and vibrant past be refashioned, by allowing the nation’s full energy to be channeled into all aspects of its life. Participation in the war was the first manifestation of this energy, a sign of hope for Portugal’s future. These views were shared by most republicans, whose basic creed was undoubtedly marked by nationalism. Nevertheless, they reflected a frightening ignorance of the real state of the nation, if it could indeed be called a nation: marches in favour of the Allies in Lisbon did not reflect the mood of the Portuguese population; the law of separation had not curtailed the clergy’s influence in rural areas; and, finally, the replacement of a monarchist cacique network by an essentially Democratic network had not brought the whole of the population into the political arena. To speak of a distant past, of the affirmation of the Republic as a champion of ‘democracy’ and ‘civilization’ while neglecting the material needs and the worries of the rural population, and even to believe that these sentiments were shared by that rural population implied a shallow understanding of the country at large and even of the difficulties which had faced the republicans since 1910.

¹⁷ *Boletim Patriótico da Universidade Livre* (Lisbon), July 1917, 5-6.

¹⁸ In the words of Júlio Dantas, *Ilustração Portuguesa* (Lisbon), 14.6.1915, “Five years ago, this official cult” (of St. Anthony) “was transferred to another Portuguese, one of the greatest poets of the Renaissance: Camões.” It was around the figure of Camões that the republicans had begun to rally before the ultimatum. Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão writes, “(...) the republicans (...) participated in strength in the third centenary of the death of Camões” (1880) “in the hope of obtaining wide popular support.” Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal vol.X 1890-1910* (Lisbon: Verbo, 1988), 17. The appeal of the “Lusiad”, the epic poem of praise for a whole people, to the nationalist republicans, is obvious.

Eric Hobsbawm, describing the production of tradition in the Third Republic, makes the point that “history before 1789 (except, perhaps, for ‘nos ancêtres les Gaulois’) recalled church and monarchy”¹⁹ and was therefore ignored by the republican leadership. Even within the context of the French Revolution, however, there was an infinity of dates and men to celebrate in accordance with the political nuances of the Third Republic. For the republicans in Portugal, attempting to mobilize the country for war, the situation was very different. The Republic was less than six years old when Portugal went to war; there was no reservoir of republican events and symbols to draw upon in the attempt to generate popular enthusiasm. There was, moreover, a very real shortage of popular heroes who might be disassociated from a monarchist or a religious setting. Bernardino Machado’s contribution to the “Universidade Livre” booklet illustrates vividly this difficulty. Autonomy for the municipalities, a basic component of the republican creed in Portugal,²⁰ was also one of the political ambitions of the Integralists, eager to recreate the power structures of the pre-Pombal monarchy; the liberals of 1820, furthermore, were not democrats, and popular engagement in the civil wars of the early nineteenth century often occurred on the absolutist and clerical side. The vision of Portuguese history presented to the departing troops by Bernardino Machado was therefore fraught with contradictions, and its propagandistic value was, at best, slight.

II. Self-mobilization.

The government’s paralysis on the propaganda front did not mean that its importance was not recognised by other bodies. A discussion of the various attempts to self-mobilize must therefore be included. Many organisations took up the challenge of spreading the message of the Sacred Union and mobilizing the country’s energy for the

¹⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914,” *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 272-273.

²⁰ A.H. de Oliveira Marques, “Republicanism e Idealismo,” *Ensaio de História da 1ª República* ed. A.H. de Oliveira Marques (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1988), 32-33.

coming struggle. The most important of these organisations, not surprisingly, was the Democratic party, whose network was a redoubtable one and which covered the whole of the country through local branches, political clubs and, of course, newspapers. On 1.4.1916, *O Mundo* published extracts from the party's call to arms, which had been, in the newspaper's more than significant words, "profusely distributed to the people *and especially to the party's political organisations* (my italics.)"²¹ The party called upon all of its political commissions, centres, associations, etc. "to enlighten the people as to the causes and origins of our participation in the war, through conferences and propaganda missions."²² According to the document, Portugal was at war in order to carry out its duties to England, its ancient ally; failure to do so would have earned it "the entire world's scorn."²³ The Portuguese army was fighting for the rights of nationalities to exist, for "the triumph of Law and of Civilization, [and] against the barbarian empires' brutal theories of universal domination."²⁴ Finally, this message had to be taken to all villages, no matter how remote, "so as to prepare all Portuguese to carry out any sacrifice which the Fatherland may request."²⁵

The first months of the war saw a flurry of these party activities, notably in the big cities, where patriotic conferences and meetings took place one after the other. On 4.4.1916, for example, four conferences took place in Lisbon alone, one speaker, Jaime Cortesão, appearing at two different venues. Such conferences would continue throughout 1916 and 1917, although their rhythm naturally decreased. On 1.10.1916, for example, Leote do Rego spoke at the 'Bernardino Machado Republican Centre' on "Germany, Portugal, the Portuguese and the War", while on 14.2.1917, a patriotic session was held to mark the first anniversary of the Radical Republican Youth Association, at

²¹ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 1.4.1916.

²² *ibid.*

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ *ibid.*

which Afonso Costa was present. The same pattern was broadly followed in medium-sized cities, such as Coimbra and Évora. It must be mentioned, however, that not even the Democratic propaganda machine worked flawlessly. The *Correspondência da Covilhã*, by September 1916, had become disappointed with how little the region's Democrats had achieved.²⁶

Occasionally overlapping the P.R.P.'s machine, although keeping up a front of independence, were a variety of organisations which appeared in 1916 with the explicit purpose of helping the government in the task of preparing the country's population for the coming sacrifices, and, in some cases, for the post-war world. The most important of these organisations were the *Cruzada das Mulheres Portuguesas* (Portuguese Women's Crusade,) the *Junta Patriótica do Norte* (North Portugal Patriotic League,) and the *Junta Nacional de Propaganda Patriótica* (National Junta for Patriotic Propaganda.) The latter was virtually indistinguishable from the P.R.P.; its manifesto, for example, was drafted by *O Mundo's* Mayer Garção. Published on 9.6.1916, it argued that while Portugal had in no way contributed to the outbreak of the war, it could not avoid it, because of its alliance with England and its own higher interests.²⁷ The *Junta's* actions and limitations are well expressed in an interview granted by Abílio Marçal, one of its members, to *O Mundo*, in October 1916. Marçal described his associates as "good republicans, friends of the country and of the regime"²⁸ and their actions as a "criss-crossing of the entire country, explaining to the humble and simple people of the countryside the reason for our

²⁶ "We feel infinitely embittered. Everywhere 'kermesses', festivals, and shows were held which obtained sizable contributions for the poor families of good Portuguese soldiers, for the medical care of our war wounded, for the winter clothing of the keepers of our honour in Flanders.

What did we do? We have three clubs, with rooms sufficiently ample to hold an event that would not shame us: a patriotic conference, a raffle, a concert...

The War? Everybody shrugs their shoulders: Why bother? No one is being sent." *Correspondência da Covilhã* (Covilhã), 17.9.1916.

²⁷ *Ao Povo Português: A Guerra*, (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1916): "Here is the war! We did not provoke it. It sought us out, as it did other peoples. We know what we are going to fight for. For the honour of the Fatherland, for the salvation of national independence, for the triumph of liberty. (We will fight) to avenge the dead who fell defending our flag; (we will fight) to ensure the future of our children."

²⁸ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 11.10.1916.

belligerency, and the material and moral benefits which will result from that belligerency.”²⁹ Incredibly, Marçal believed that, after only four months of this campaign, the country had been won over³⁰ and that the time had come to change over from war propaganda, as it was no longer needed, to preparing the people for the taking advantage of the benefits of victory.³¹ The model to follow was now Spain, in order to develop Portugal’s backward industry and commerce.

Abilio Marçal’s claim that the *Junta* had reached the whole of the population must be greeted with skepticism for, as we shall see in ch.VIII, the government, in 1916 and 1917, was receiving calls for a propaganda campaign from all across the country. Moreover, his claims to have addressed the people of even the most obscure villages in terms that could be understood by all does not ring true. João Ferreira do Amaral, an officer who served both in Africa and in France, gave, in his *A Mentira da Flandres...e o Medo*, an impressive description of wartime propaganda and the way it was received by its intended audience:

“Diplomacy entrusted its heralds with the task of explaining matters to those who were most sacrificed and to their respective families, through the press, through rallies, and through conferences. In this manner, the future soldiers of Sur-la-Lys were shouted at (...) that it was necessary to D-I-E for Reason! D-I-E for Law! For small nationalities! And the future soldiers of Flanders, from that sometimes idiotic, and almost always violent, harangue, understood

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ “The people, by being present at our meetings and at our great patriotic rallies, listening closely and warmly applauding our vibrant speeches show that they understand what we are saying to them. At this moment, in which the nature, importance, and effects of our alliance with the British Empire have become clearly defined, the people of even the most obscure villages, to whom we have spoken, demonstrate an understanding of the role which our country will play.” *ibid.*

³¹ *ibid.*

only that, for a great number of unknown reasons, they were surely going to D-I-E!”³²

In the North of the country a more serious attempt at a prolonged mobilization campaign was made, one which involved local authorities, delegates from “the various scientific, industrial, commercial, artistic, and associative corporations”, and “all individuals who, spontaneously, or at the League’s invitation, agree with its patriotic goal.”³³ The League in question was the *Junta Patriótica do Norte*, an attempt to coordinate the action of local authorities and the private sector in the task of preparing the country for war. According to the two résumés of the League’s activities, published in 1918 and 1931, the League’s activities were divided into two periods: before and after the departure of the C.E.P. The first half of its action was dedicated to “the diffusion of patriotic ideas,”³⁴ carried out in the manner typical to the First World War: “When this movement was at its highest, manifestoes and bills were published and widely distributed throughout the country; exhibitions were promoted in picture theatres, lectures and public meetings were held (...)”³⁵ Twelve manifestoes were published in 1916, five in 1917, and two in 1918, by which time, of course, the focus of the League had changed. Its main task was now the running, and funding, of the “Home for Soldiers’ Children”, whose mission it was to educate both the children of soldiers whose families faced economic hardship and those who had been orphaned by the war; by 1918 85 children were being looked after. Other initiatives included the League’s “Information Office,”³⁶ its “Service to the Newspapers to the Front”, which, by the end of the war, had sent over 50,000 newspapers

³² João Ferreira do Amaral, *A Mentira da Flandres...e o Medo*, (Lisbon: J. Rodrigues, 1922), 128.

³³ *Junta Patriótica do Norte: Sinópsse da sua Obra, 20-3-1916 - 30-9-1918* (Oporto: n.p., 1918) vii.

³⁴ *Junta Patriótica do Norte...*, xviii.

³⁵ *Junta Patriótica do Norte...*, xviii-xix.

³⁶ “Designed to facilitate relations between soldiers and their families and to serve as intermediary for the sending of parcels, letters, money, and to follow up the processes of maintenance of soldiers’ families and of pensions to families of soldiers mobilized or dead on the Field of Honour.” *Junta Patriótica do Norte...*, xx-xxi.

to the men at the front; the organisation of marches in support of the Allied Nations (20.5.1916, 22.4.1917, to celebrate Brazil's entry into the war, and most significantly, 14.7.1918;) and a service of aid to Portuguese P.O.W.'s in German hands. Finally, as is to be expected, the League organised art exhibitions and other fund raising activities, which had raised, by November 1918, £12,788, over half having been raised among emigrant communities in Brazil and California.

The League's rhetoric, as exemplified by a one-page pamphlet whose distribution to the troops was authorised in September 1917, was built upon the idea of the need for solidarity at home in order to give those at the front the peace of mind necessary for the proper carrying out of their patriotic duty, a duty crucial to the regeneration of the old Fatherland. The pamphlet spoke of the pride which praise for Portugal's troops was causing in the country, this praise emanating from Allied officers and the Allied press, "surprised to see emanating from a small nation like ours such daring fighters for the cause of Civilization and Justice of the Peoples."³⁷ Again appealing to Camões' formulas,³⁸ the pamphlet promised that the soldiers' heroism would be matched at home by the care given to their families now and in the future. The "Home for Soldiers' Children" represented living proof of this promise "at the moment when you have been called upon to risk your life for the destiny of the Fatherland, closely bound to the destiny of Humanity."³⁹

The *Junta Patriótica do Norte* stands out from the rest of the self-mobilization effort for its ambition, linking local authorities, private entities, and patriotic citizens in the attempt to show the soldiers departing for the front that the country was united behind their sacrifice. It also stands as a powerful reminder of what might have been achieved had the Lisbon government not ignored the vital propaganda battle that had to be waged

³⁷ Junta Patriótica do Norte, *Aos Soldados Portugueses*, in Arquivo Histórico Militar (A.H.M.), Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th Section, box 714.

³⁸ "Honour the Fatherland, for the Fatherland is watching you." *ibid.*

³⁹ *ibid.*

aggressively across the country in order for the Republic to emerge stronger from the ordeal of war. Nevertheless, it shared the drawbacks of other mobilizing bodies, namely the belief that propaganda was necessary only until the C.E.P.'s organisation and departure, the use of an outdated rhetoric which meant little to the soldiers or the rural classes, and an inability to maintain its initial impetus for the duration of the war. According to the League's 1918 report, its attempts to branch out into rural districts from Oporto were not, intriguingly, successful,⁴⁰ while the number of conferences planned but never carried out (22) far outweighed the number of conferences which did in fact occur (3).

The last of the organisations already mentioned, the *Cruzada das Mulheres Portuguesas*, was torn between two roles: that of a semi-official charitable association, and that of a pioneering entity in the status of women, trying to involve women in the war effort in order to demonstrate their importance to the republican leadership, which had failed to deliver equality after 1910. Created immediately after the declaration of war, and with its leading positions being occupied by ministerial wives, the Crusade was under the intellectual guidance of Ana de Castro Osório, a leading pre-war feminist, who wasted no time in seizing belligerence as a shortcut to economic, social, and political equality for women in Portugal. Osório's language matched that of the republican leadership, for she stressed the fact that Portuguese women had lost their identity, whereas in the Sixteenth century, after all, they had been "among the best educated in Europe."⁴¹ Faced by war, the Portuguese woman was attempting to undergo a process of re-discovery:

⁴⁰ "Stirred by a living faith, the new missionaries of patriotic Glory and Honour held meetings in about eighty rural municipalities of North Portugal, resulting in the formation of organised groups in these places which, however, on account of local conditions, did not attain the success of the Central Organisation." *Junta Patriótica do Norte...*, xviii. See also *A Ordem* (Lisbon) 13.4.1916, for an account of a J.P.N. meeting in Vila Real, attended by "a large crowd". The speaker, when confronted by the audience's enthusiasm, declared that propaganda for the war seemed an irrelevance, for the people "are ready to march at the first call to do so."

⁴¹ Ana de Castro Osório, *A Mulher Heróica* (Lisbon: n.p., 1916), 5.

“She is called to the responsibilities of the present hour, reminded of what she was once, in the past, names which she was never made to learn and memorise are mentioned, and she, surprised and hurt, asks, ‘what is my name? What is my name? I can no longer remember it...I have lost my name in the darkness!’”⁴²

The Crusade’s membership application, reprinted in *O Mundo*, was accompanied by a short declaration of intent, which laid out clearly the dual nature of the new organisation. While on the one hand the future members of the Crusade, by promoting charity and women’s work, would be “creating, for their men’s benefit, an atmosphere of serenity, of patriotic enthusiasm, and of absolute belief in the Fatherland’s high destinies,”⁴³ on the other the Crusade had a crucial role to play in fomenting the improvement of the condition of women: the most crucial aspect was feminine agricultural teaching, “following the lead of France, England, Russia, and other countries.”⁴⁴ Work for the wives of mobilized soldiers would also preclude accusations that these women were willing to live off the “pensions which represent the blood and the life of their men.”⁴⁵

The Crusade soon found itself active on a variety of fronts: organising charity events; assigning ‘War Godmothers’ to soldiers at the front; distributing clothes, cigarettes, and postcards, already addressed to the Crusade’s ‘Commission for Aid to the Soldiers in Campaign’, to departing soldiers; organising a nursing course, from which 165 women had graduated by November 1917;⁴⁶ and petitioning government and local

⁴² *ibid.*

⁴³ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 10.4.1916.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

authorities to give preference to soldiers' wives in the replacement of workers who had departed for the front, while asking store owners to provide discounts for those same women. Lastly, of course, the Crusade was involved in the propaganda campaign, either directly or by invitation.⁴⁷ The origins of Portugal's belligerence were discussed, Beatriz Pinheiro pointing out that belligerence was Portugal's duty, as a result of the British alliance, and that it was also in the country's "highest interest."⁴⁸ This was a war to end all wars, and none could object to such an undertaking; moreover, Britain had delivered Portugal from Napoleon, and now the time had come to repay that debt, "for the moral among men must be, and in fact is, the same as the moral among nations."⁴⁹ Germany's intentions towards Portugal's colonies left no room for doubt regarding her ultimate aspirations and the risks to Portugal should Germany emerge triumphant. Another frequent propaganda topic was the enumeration of heroic women in Portuguese history, Beatriz Pinheiro pointing out that women had participated actively in the sieges of Lisbon and Diu, and in the battle of Aljubarrota, which had become symbolised by a woman, Brites d'Almeida:

"The Portuguese woman, over the past seven centuries of independence, has given the most remarkable proof of patriotic devotion, and today's woman will be the proud heir of those civic virtues which ennobled her ancestors (...)"⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Ana de Castro Osório, *Em Tempo de Guerra: Aos Soldados e Mulheres do meu País* (Lisbon: Ventura e Cia, 1918), 110-111.

⁴⁷ See, for example, Guerra Junqueiro's pamphlet, *Edith Cavell* (Lisbon, 1916) or António Arroyo's *Palestrando* (Torres Novas, 1916), commissioned by the Crusade's delegation in Torres Novas.

⁴⁸ Beatriz Pinheiro, *A Mulher Portuguesa e a Guerra Europeia* (Lisbon: Tip. de Eduardo Rosa, 1916), [Transcript of a conference given at the Maria Pia secondary school, Lisbon, 8-6-1916], 6.

⁴⁹ Beatriz Pinheiro, *op.cit.*, 10.

⁵⁰ Beatriz Pinheiro, *op.cit.*, 24. A similar list of patriotic feminine heroes can be found in Ana de Castro Osório's *A Mulher Heroica*, 6-9.

The problems faced by the *Cruzada das Mulheres Portuguesas* were the result of the close proximity it enjoyed with the Democratic party, which led to its abolition under Sidónio Pais, amid speculation over corruption, and, of course, the ambivalent attitude towards women of that same party. While on the one hand its activities and propaganda would be welcomed only by certain elements of society (and it is significant that there were wartime charity organisations formed by women belonging to the aristocracy and to the higher bourgeoisie,) on the other there were limits to the extent to which the government was willing to respond to the Crusade's further-reaching demands. This point is clearly spelt-out by Osório in her *Em Tempos de Guerra. Aos Soldados e Mulheres do Meu País* [In Times of War. To The Soldiers and Women of My Country], a collection of wartime articles, whose very name suggested a society completely mobilized for war. Osório complained that a vicious circle was in operation: women were slow to adhere to the war effort, while the government was slow to call them to its aid.⁵¹ It was this attitude on the part of the republican authorities which Osório found most incomprehensible: the reluctance to create large numbers of training schools to allow women to replace the departing soldiers, to ensure the equality of wages among men and women, and even to allow women already working for the State to attend the Crusade's nursing course.⁵²

Ana de Castro Osório, despite the difficulties faced by her Crusade before and after the collapse of Portugal's war effort in December 1917, towered over her contemporaries in terms of the energy devoted to the task of mobilizing Portugal for the war. Her action was channeled towards different goals: preparation of the whole country for the war, preparation of women to replace their husbands and brothers in order to keep the economy alive, and preparation of women for full citizenship. More impressively still, she recognised, to an extent not matched by the Sacred Union governments, where

⁵¹ "Thousands of men are, in this tragic hour, far from their Fatherland, far from their loved ones, far from their blessed patch of land matched by no other, defending the honour and the future of a race (...) but supporting their effort, one finds only some women working, not because of necessity, but out of the high ideal of returning to their men a redeemed Fatherland, worthy of their effort and of their heroism." Ana de Castro Osório, *Em Tempo de Guerra...* 71-72.

⁵² Osório, *Em Tempos de Guerra...*, 111.

dangers to the mobilization existed: in *O Mundo* she openly criticised the role of the Catholic Church, whose Masses dedicated to peace were hurting civilian willingness to endure the sacrifices of war (“We do not want peace, but, rather, victory.”)⁵³ Osório wrote that every pulpit should be a source of patriotic propaganda, designed to encourage sacrifice and work at this crucial hour for the country, and to console those whose sons had departed, telling them that glory awaited those same sons.⁵⁴ Osório also recognised the war as a useful tool to create a new generation of republicans, the children still at school, whose spirit would be forever marked by the agitation and the changes being brought about by the conflict. In order to take advantage of this unique opportunity she wrote *De como Portugal Foi Chamado à Guerra* [Of how Portugal Was Called to the War,] subtitled “History for Children”. Although the war ended before the book had been published (and although it is doubtful that under Sidónio Pais such a work would have been tolerated in the schools,) the initiative’s merit cannot be ignored; Osório, seemingly alone among those at the heart of the mobilizing elite, had understood the full importance of children in the Republic’s future.⁵⁵

III. The intellectual response to the war.

The other great source of mobilization for the war came from intellectual circles, whose sympathies lay, for the majority, with the Republic, and whose eyes were fixed on France; the rhetoric with which they attempted to explain the war and Portugal’s place in

⁵³ Osório, *Em Tempos de Guerra...* 114.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*

⁵⁵ One of the book’s chief interests is that it precedes Salazar’s ‘New State’ rhetoric about the place of Portugal in the world: “Never must it be taught in Portuguese schools, or in Portuguese homes, that our Fatherland is small, for that is far from the truth. Whenever such a lie is uttered in front of a Portuguese, he will have the duty to defend himself as from a personal insult (...)

What would suit us most (...) would be for Portugal to return to what it was in the 16th century and what, in reality, it never stopped being, despite its decadence, more apparent than real: the beautiful metropolis of a world-wide colonial empire, the stunning capital of a universal Portuguese nation, linked by the same consciousness, and strengthened by the same great and noble pride of being Lusitanian.” Ana de Castro Osório, *De Como Portugal Foi Chamado à Guerra: História para Crianças* (Lisbon: Libanio da Silva, 1918), 36-37.

the conflict was borrowed directly from their French counterparts, and was, as a result, largely similar to the government's own explanations. We must remember, of course, that Portugal could only offer small rewards for those engaged in intellectual self-mobilization, as a result of its deep political divisions, which were largely religion-based, and its illiteracy rate. Nevertheless, the intellectual response to the war predated Portugal's belligerence; in 1914 the Portuguese Academy of the Sciences published, in Portuguese and in French, a reply to the German Intellectuals' Manifesto, in which it was claimed that "un savant et un artiste méritent seulement ces noms quand la probité et l'amour de la justice rehaussent leur génie; la science et l'Art, en effet, ne sont grands que si l'Honneur et le Bonheur Social les inspirent."⁵⁶ Building on this premise, the members of the Academy then proceeded to advocate drastic measures against the signatories of the German manifesto: they should be shunned as a result of their "esprit misérable et nuisible."⁵⁷ It was around the poet Teixeira de Pascoaes and his literary journal *A Águia*, the official organ of the "Portuguese Renaissance" movement, that the Allies' staunchest intellectual supporters were to be found. An examination of the themes employed reveals the dependence of their authors on the French model: the war as a conflict between the latin world against barbarism, as a struggle for 'Civilization' and 'Justice', and as a source of regeneration for the nation. Teixeira de Pascoaes' article in the December 1914 issue of *A Águia* encapsulates this vision: Portugal had a responsibility to participate in the great conflict between the Celtic-Roman civilization, which stood for beauty, justice, and law for all, and German civilization, hostile to those around it. Participation in the war would heal rifts within Portugal and allow the country to find its real strength, doing away with

"this cold selfishness which renders individual life incompatible with collective life; this disbelief in our own qualities; this inertia which consumes all of our energy; this

⁵⁶ *Aux Academies et aux Universités des Nations Civilisées, à Propos du Manifeste des Intellectuels Allemands* (Lisbon, 1914)

⁵⁷ *ibid.*

stupid, aggressive, anti-fraternal, and destructive fanaticism (...) the lack of a common goal, which results from the forgetting of our traditions, of our History, of our art, of our literature, in other words, of our patriotic soul.”⁵⁸

For Teixeira de Pascoaes, the task of Art in the present situation was to present the ideals behind the war in such a light that they might overcome internal divisions and fire the imagination of the country’s youth. His poetic efforts to this end included “Belgium”, published in June 1915, and “Miss Cavell”, which followed in December of that year. January 1916 saw the publication of Xavier de Carvalho’s speech at the Sorbonne, “Le Portugal et la Latinité”, in which Portugal’s links with the Latin world, and especially France, “la grande semeuse d’idées”, were reasserted.⁵⁹ The German declaration of war led to an issue of *A Águia* wholly devoted to the war and the need to participate actively in it, as well as defining the intellectual’s role in the coming struggle. No conclusions seem to have been arrived at, because after that issue *A Águia* turned away from the war, in yet another example of the lack of staying power of the interventionists, who relaxed their efforts once Portugal was at war and especially once the C.E.P. had been dispatched to France. Teixeira de Pascoaes, in the April issue of *A Águia*, returned to Portugal’s ties with France:

“As Portuguese, we must love France, no matter what, for France is our older sister; as Latins we must love France no matter what, for France is the great fountain of the Latin spirit; as men we must love France no matter what, for she was our emancipator, for she gave us freedom, self-esteem, justice, law, and individual consciousness.”⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Teixeira de Pascoaes, “Portugal e a Guerra e a Orientação das Novas Gerações”, in *A Águia* (Oporto), December 1914, 166.

⁵⁹ *A Águia* (Oporto), January 1916, 40-41.

Similar arguments were advanced by Teófilo Braga, President of the Academy of Sciences and twice non-elected President of the Republic, and João de Barros, who was a Democratic party deputy and who had attempted to form, in 1914, a pro-war artists' committee. The most interesting contribution in the issue came from Raul Proença, who spoke both of the need to campaign profusely in favour of the war and of the need for the Republic to come to terms with its internal antagonists. Of all the contributors to the special issue on the war, Proença was the only one to identify the need for a 'popular propaganda', aimed not at Lisbon's republican population, but at the rest of the country, "a campaign of the highest intensity and intelligence, a popular propaganda capable of making all Portuguese understand the unquestionable motives which brought us to war."⁶¹ Proença did not hesitate to mention the fact that there was a highly motivated germanophile current in the country, and, prophetically, added that "empty rhetoric and incendiary speeches" would not suffice to defeat the action of this germanophile current: "We have to tell the people the real reasons for why we have to fight and why it is good that we do so. The whole truth, and nothing more than the truth."⁶² These reasons included future territorial tranquillity, both in Europe and in Africa, respect for treaties, which formed the basis of the security of small countries, Liberty and Justice, and, of course, the economic struggle in which all countries were involved, and which would not be resolved through the war. Proença saw, lastly, that pro-war propaganda could only function if the Republic's enemies were placated. Proença therefore advocated a far-reaching amnesty and a deep division of the law of separation: once the personal ambition of monarchists and the religious dimension of the monarchist cause had been addressed, opposition to the new regime would crumble.⁶³

⁶⁰ Teixeira de Pascoaes, "A Guerra", *A Águia* (Oporto), April 1916, 110.

⁶¹ Raul Proença, "Unidos pela Pátria", *A Águia* (Oporto), April 1916, 121.

⁶² *ibid.*

⁶³ "Supporting the monarchist cause there is little more than Catholicism; give Catholicism its freedom and the monarchist beliefs will vanish from your hands." Raul Proença, *op. cit.*, 125.

Closely related to the *A Águia* group, and representing the Democratic party in the Chamber of Deputies, stood the man who best understood the difficulties posed by Portugal's specific conditions to those attempting to mobilize the population around belligerency. Jaime Cortesão, doctor, playwright, poet, politician, and historian, understood that the oratory of his fellow politicians and intellectuals would be lost on the mass of the population, who lacked an understanding of even the most basic concepts of pro-war propaganda: nation, fatherland, international law, and the alliance with Britain. He understood, moreover, that the war represented an excellent opportunity to turn the great rural mass into committed republican citizens. Cortesão's first warning that all was not well came in the Chamber of Deputies, on 20.5.1916, when he warned António José d'Almeida that, as Portugal was not following the lead of the Allies in propaganda terms, the war effort was in danger of proving unsuccessful:

“If we convince ourselves that our people are as of now ready to endure all sacrifices for the Fatherland, we will be living in error. The idea that our military cooperation in any front is a national necessity has not yet entered the national consciousness (...)”⁶⁴

Because of the government's lack of enthusiasm for the propaganda battle, only the anti-war case was now being put to the country, even before any serious sacrifice had been asked of it. The Prime-Minister's reply, reprinted in his own memoirs, neatly encapsulated the reasons for the government's propagandistic shortcomings: propaganda by action was of greater impact than verbal propaganda, and it was the first kind which the cabinet identified as a priority: for example, it had recently drawn up legislation on allowances for the families of mobilized soldiers (see ch.V.) This did not mean, however, that “propaganda by the written and spoken word” was being neglected: Jaime Cortesão

⁶⁴ Jaime Cortesão, *Memórias da Grande Guerra (1916-1919)* (Oporto: Renascença Portuguesa, 1919), 20-21.

had been aided by the government in his initiatives, and he, António José d'Almeida, had spoken in Évora; he was, in fact planning to tour the country for propaganda purposes. Topping it all, António José d'Almeida stated that

“The fact that in other countries war propaganda has been more intensive than in Portugal can be easily accounted for: those countries’ territories are being swept by gunfire; in every corner of those territories one can hear the groans of martyrs.”⁶⁵

This statement reveals a complete lack of understanding of the propaganda phenomenon on the part of the man usually acknowledged as the Republic’s most gifted and stirring orator. To argue that propaganda, in Portugal’s case, was a luxury, precisely because the fighting was taking place so far away, was to surrender all initiative to the enemies of the war, who stressed the war’s distance as proof that it was an unnecessary, costly, and deadly exercise. Cortesão, while agreeing that the legislation on family allowances was a welcome development, nevertheless declared himself unsatisfied with the attitude towards “propaganda designed to prepare the public spirit for the war”, which should be “guided by the government and carried out especially among the illiterate.”⁶⁶ Afonso Costa and the Democrats might have opposed extending the franchise to the illiterate because of the fear that they would constitute a voting block controlled by reactionary forces, but that fear was never acted upon in light of the special conditions created in wartime: only Jaime Cortesão attempted to bring a simplified version of the government’s reasons for belligerence to the rural workers, realizing that otherwise they could be used by monarchists and the Church as foot soldiers against the republican government.

⁶⁵ António José d'Almeida, *40 Anos de Vida Literária e Política*, vol.III (Lisbon: J. Rodrigues e Cia., 1934), 242-243.

⁶⁶ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 20.5.1916.

Jaime Cortesão's main contribution to the propaganda battle was a booklet, published in 1916 with the support of the Ministry of War, entitled *Pela Pátria: Cartilha do Povo* [For the Fatherland - the People's Primer]. The 'Primer' consisted of a dialogue between three figures, José Povinho, the traditional embodiment of the Portuguese, his son, Manuel Soldado [Soldier], and finally João Portugal, representing the 'old' and noble traditions of the country. The work shows that Cortesão was firmly embedded in the republican myth of the 'people', who were by nature and tradition patriotic. The decadence of the later monarchy had covered this patriotism with a layer of selfishness and meanness, and it was the role of propaganda to promote a rediscovery of the self, rather than a mere inculcation of new facts - a process similar to the one outlined by Osório in relation to Portuguese women. Cortesão's views, while strictly within the mainstream of republican opinion, acknowledged, at least, that action was necessary. José Povinho set the scene by claiming that his son was being sent to a war that none understood: "I don't even understand that word, 'Fatherland.'"⁶⁷ João Portugal, before explaining the concept of 'Fatherland', expressed his regret at the way that José Povinho's patriotism had been allowed to vanish.⁶⁸ Beginning with José Povinho's love of his family and village, João Portugal pointed out that that love should be extended to all the families and villages that Povinho knew, and eventually to all the villages and cities of Portugal,

"Where everybody speaks the same language - our language - has the same traditions, and laughs or cries with the same feelings. You must remember this: The man with whom a Portuguese will get along best is another Portuguese."⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Jaime Cortesão, *Pela Pátria - Cartilha do Povo* (Oporto: Renascença Portuguesa, 1916), 6.

⁶⁸ "(...) How your memory has faded! Once you knew fully well what that word meant (...) but in those days you constantly fought and suffered to give it security and greatness." *ibid.*

⁶⁹ Cortesão, *Pela Pátria...*, 8.

To this geographic definition of Fatherland was added a historical element: the Fatherland had been made stronger by the struggle of generation after generation to ensure its freedom for the benefits of those who would follow, a legacy which had to be honoured and continued. When Manuel Soldado stated that he had heard that Portugal would be better off if run by foreigners, João Portugal was categorical in his reply, including in it the Spanish occupation of Portugal (1580-1640), the patriotism of Portuguese emigrants abroad, and the sufferings of Belgians and Serbs at the hands of the Central Powers. Moreover, Cortesão depicted the results of a German invasion of Portugal, demonstrating, on one level, the destruction that would ensue,⁷⁰ and on another completely different level the difficulties faced by Portugal's interventionists, who in order to attract the attention of their audiences had to create a highly unrealistic scenario; in order to explain why Portugal should not wait until the enemy had arrived at its borders, João Portugal appealed to his listeners' sense of honour with an everyday example: if one's neighbour's house was on fire, would one wait until the fire threatened one's own house before offering to help to put it out? Convinced by the historical and practical arguments, Manuel Soldado was reconciled with the part he would have to play in the war⁷¹ while his Father wished only that he had enough strength to join him at the front. The simplicity of Cortesão's arguments provided the 'Primer' with its greatest strength, and at least 100,000 copies were printed: but it could only form the basis, and not the totality, of a propaganda campaign: it could furnish primary school teachers and local authorities with ideas for propaganda, but it could not replace the State's coordinating action, as desired by Cortesão himself.

Other intellectual figures joined the propaganda fray with different aims and through different means. Guerra Junqueiro, a poet closely attached to the republican ethos, contributed with his pen to the Portuguese Women's Crusade, writing the

⁷⁰ "The enemy's triumph would mean, for our country, murder, theft, fire, destruction, and dishonour. His control after the war would represent a constant affront to our feelings, violence against our wills, and endless shame and hurt in our hearts." Cortesão, *Pela Pátria...*, 15-16.

⁷¹ Cortesão, *Pela Pátria...*, 28.

pamphlet, “Edith Cavell”, in 1916, and contributing, the following year, to the already mentioned “Boletim Patriótico da Universidade Livre”, with an article, “Aos Soldados que Partem/Aos Portugueses que Ficam” [To the Departing Soldiers/To the Portuguese who Stay Behind]. In this article, Guerra Junqueiro deemed it a duty to unite in turn of the Fatherland for the duration of the war, and he suggested a prayer common to all:

“Divine Fatherland of Camões and Nun’Álvares⁷²
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy glory and thy worth come,
Thy will be done upon our souls.
Give us each day the immortal bread of Hope,
And forgive us, Lady, our trespasses.
Deliver us from all weakness and all crime (...)”⁷³

Augusto Casimiro, another man of letters representing the Democratic party in the Chamber of Deputies, published a collection of patriotic verse, *A Hora de Nun’Álvares*, in 1916, and an account of his life at the front, *Das Trincheiras da Flandres*, in 1918. Magalhães Lima, Masonic Grandmaster and former Minister of Education also contributed, taking word of Portugal’s wartime contribution to France (Toulouse, Montpellier, Bordeaux, Paris, Lyon, and Marseilles) and Italy (Rome, Florence, Bologna, and Milan) and then returning to Portugal, holding conferences in Lisbon and Oporto. Magalhães Lima was another republican who expressed his disquiet at the lack of unity evidenced by propaganda in Portugal, which led to the demanding of costly sacrifice without an adequate explanation being given, and by the failure to use Portugal’s military contribution as a way of focusing the world’s attention on Portugal itself. Only the

⁷² Nuno Álvares Pereira was the commander of the victorious Portuguese army at the battle of Aljubarrota (1385), which preserved the country’s independence, and is remembered both for his military prowess and his piety.

⁷³ Guerra Junqueiro, “Aos Soldados que Partem/Aos Portugueses que Ficam”, in *Boletim Patriótico da Universidade Livre* (Lisbon), July 1917, 2.

government, Magalhães Lima pointed out, could provide the coordination and the means necessary in order for the different strands of propaganda to become united and achieve the desired results.⁷⁴ In an interview to *O Mundo*, in August 1917, Magalhães Lima went so far as to say that

“internal propaganda has not yet begun. There is no doubt that, militarily, our organization is remarkable and worthy of the Allies, but at a civilian level little or nothing has been done, and it is the common people who suffer (...) the common people more than the other classes. Both at home and abroad I would use posters and the cinema as the two great and principal means of modern propaganda.”⁷⁵

In his conferences, lastly, Magalhães Lima essentially ridiculed the idea that Portugal did not need an effective propaganda, as it was so distant from the front. This distance, he argued, had led to a careless attitude as regarded the war, which had allowed the essential questions of the day, and the dangers in which the country had placed itself, to disappear from the public mind. “(The war) has to be felt, so that we may convince ourselves that we have a noble, great, and elevated task to carry out: the defense of our territory, the defense of our freedom, the defense of our very lives, of our very dignity (...)”⁷⁶

Intellectual involvement in the war effort was not restricted to Lisbon and Oporto. That, at least seems to be the conclusion to be drawn from the town of Portalegre, in the Alentejo, where a series of plays, each depicting acceptance of, and enthusiasm for, the

⁷⁴ “Dispersed propaganda, as has been carried out so far, gives only meagre results, and can at times be harmful (...)” *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 8.8.1917, interview with Sebastião Magalhães Lima.

⁷⁵ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 8-8-1917.

⁷⁶ Sebastião Magalhães Lima, *Terras Santas da Liberdade/França Imortal, Portugal Heróico* (Lisbon: Sociedade Tip. Editora, 1917), 8.

war in a different segment of society, were written and performed in 1916. In Jorge Torres Caroço's *Amar a Pátria* [To Love the Fatherland,] the play revolved around an aging Lisbon tavern keeper, whose Father had fought with distinction against Napoleon, but whose young son, because of peer pressure from friends with syndicalist contacts, had decided to flee the country in order to avoid conscription; the problem was only resolved by the offer of the tavern keeper's 8 year old grandson, to take up his uncle's place in the army:

“Don't cry, grandfather, don't cry. I will go in place of uncle Pedro. Now I know what it means to love the fatherland! I will defend it...and give you the life that Pedro wanted to take from you.”⁷⁷

After this spontaneous offer Pedro repented, shunned his former friends, and prepared himself for the army. In M. Velez Tavares'⁷⁸ *Uma Heroína Portuguesa (Apelo à Escola)* [A Portuguese Heroine (Appeal in Favour of Education)] Laura, the educated daughter of an illiterate peasant, based her patriotism on Camões' "Lusiad", and the strength of her patriotism, as well as of her learning (the two being linked in the mind of the author,) was sufficient to convince Laura's parents of the justice of the war, and to accept her decision to join the Red Cross. Laura's interpretation of the war was, at the same time, a sophisticated and naive account; when her mother insulted the Germans, Laura came to their rescue:

“The German people are progressive, hard-working, devoted essentially to industry, for which, without a doubt,

⁷⁷ Jorge Torres Caroço, *Amar a Pátria* (Portalegre: Tip. Democrática, 1916), 27.

⁷⁸ Velez Caroço was the surname of Portalegre's Civil Governor in 1915; the writers of this series of plays seem therefore to be his family members, if not Velez Caroço himself: in any case, the plays reflect the basic republican explanation for the war, and are presented in the language of official propaganda. Whatever their ability to mobilize republican opinion in the city of Portalegre, their attraction to members of the opposition (often denigrated in the plays) would have been minimal.

they deserve our admiration (...) the leadership, however, those who rule over the German people, they will be cursed by humanity for all time (...) It was they, the leaders, who forced the German soldiers to amputate the arms of Belgian children (...)"⁷⁹

Artur Paz Malato's *O Maior Amor* [The Greatest Love,] set in a Lisbon bourgeois family, charts the decision of the family's daughter, Júlia, to marry the most patriotic of two suitors, the one that defends the idea that the Fatherland is indeed 'the greatest love'. The other suitor, a monarchist, poured scorn on the war, claiming that it would be a pleasure trip financed by the government for the sake of arms dealers and grocers, but his cowardliness was eventually demonstrated, ruling him out of Júlia's affections. A.B.C.'s *Gente Portuguesa* (Portuguese People) finally, traces the mortal illness of a working class woman, and the refusal of her husband, Marcelo, to use the illness as an excuse not to serve in the army: "I cannot accept. When the Fatherland needs strong and able men to defend it, one cannot go around looking for ways to dodge the blows which will fall on others."⁸⁰ The family's doctor, in a gesture of solidarity, offered to house Marcelo's family for the duration of the conflict, exemplifying the patriotism and the union that the author deemed necessary in order for the war to be a success.

IV. The nature of propaganda in Portugal.

In this chapter we have seen that despite the distance that separated Portugal from the war, and despite the influence of conservative elements over the minds of a large segment of the population, the government chose to play only a small part in the mobilization campaign for the war. Self-mobilization was the rule, but this process was

⁷⁹ M.Velez Tavares, *Uma Heroína Portuguesa (Apelo á Escola)* (Portalegre: Tip. Democrática, 1916), 20.

⁸⁰ A.B.C., *Gente Portuguesa* (Portalegre: Tiago H. Morgado, 1916), 15.

essentially carried out by figures and organisations close to the Democratic party, or by the party itself. This surprising failure raises the question of whether or not the government wanted to mobilize the rural population and include it in the Republic as active citizens; to do so would have threatened the Democratic network of *caciques*, or local power brokers, which the Democrats had built up over 6 years.⁸¹ The mere fact that the war effort did not even last two years, without a major defeat, before collapsing, when the money necessary for the prosecution of the war was readily available, provides conclusive proof that the mobilization campaign failed - but it cannot explain why this was the case. In order to answer that question we have to look at the nature of the propaganda campaign launched by the various associations and individuals. In the first place it was antiquated, ignoring the giant leaps that were being made by Portugal's allies; as Magalhães Lima pointed out, no use was made of posters, or of cinema; it relied essentially on the written and the spoken word. The written word, as we know, was the wrong means by which to attempt to influence the rural population; even Jaime Cortesão's *Cartilha do Povo*, designed to explain the war to that rural population, needed a network of readers, or performers, that was not put in place. As for the spoken word, it was restricted to, at best, District capitals, and was heard only in the first months of belligerence; any attempt to spread out from these cities was sporadic and therefore irrelevant: as we shall see, it could achieve little against the more effective, because constant, campaign to discredit the war and the Republic's leadership. Moreover, the sectarian nature of Portuguese politics ensured that speakers at conferences and rallies, organised by the Democratic and Evolutionist parties, or by their associates, would never be heard by the opponents of those parties.

Equally important, however, was the content of the propaganda being produced by both government and private organisations. Since nearly all who were engaged in propaganda were republicans associated with the Democratic or Evolutionist parties, the

⁸¹ See Fernando Farelo Lopes, *Poder Político e Caciquismo na Primeira República Portuguesa* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1994) for an account of the development, and the strength, of this new network, which invariably delivered Democratic majorities in legislative elections.

nature of the propaganda involved was essentially similar. The language employed in the propaganda campaign, especially important as the use of images was practically inexistent, was the language of traditional republican rhetoric, which had proved successful in the cities where the republicans were strongest but which had no common denominators with the life of the rural population of the country. Democratic voters did see the war as it was portrayed by *O Mundo*; they did respond to the various appeals for participation in the war effort, as did their families. Concepts such as Fatherland, Civilization, the rights of small nationalities, and the historic continuity of the Portuguese with their glorious ancestors, however, meant very little to the rural population at a time of economic crisis, forced requisitions, artificially set prices, and, of course, physical separation from land and loved ones with the very real possibility of death in France or in Africa. Horne states that there were two basic ideological components to political mobilization in the main belligerent countries: war aims and war equality.⁸² Portugal's war aims had to be stated in such a way that they appealed to the rural population; as for the equality before the sacrifice of war the gap between official rhetoric and reality was enormous, as we shall see in the next chapters. Monarchists, syndicalists, and certain elements within the Catholic Church did not hesitate to turn the immediate complaints of the rural population and the urban working class - especially the perceived lack of equality - into rallying points against the government, whatever the consequences to the war effort, and found much greater receptivity among the bulk of the population than the interventionists.

Efforts to mobilize the Portuguese population for the rigours of warfare needed to be more intense than those carried out in other Allied countries. This was the result of many factors: the conservative desire to destroy the Democratic hold on power, the nature of Portugal's entry into the war, and the distance that separated Portugal from the actual fighting. Most importantly, however, was that political allegiance to the Republic had to be created alongside enthusiasm for participation in the conflict. In order to reach rural

⁸² John Horne, "Democracies at War: France and Britain, 1914-1920" [Paper presented to the *Grande Guerra e Mutamento* conference, Trieste, 28.9.1995-1.10.1995; publication forthcoming by conference organisers], 11.

populations, and the working class of the cities, interventionist republicans had to make overtures to conservative republicans, monarchists, and syndicalists. This would require, however, the acceptance of immediate changes in the nature of the Republic as a consequence of the widening of the franchise: and this the Democratic party was not willing to countenance. Nominally committed to establishing a Republic of six million citizens, the republicans failed, during the war, to create a nation of six million Portuguese, a more realistic and immediately useful goal, possible if a common ground had been sought with conservative and labour elements. A revision of the constitutional balance of power in order to allow the President to dissolve parliament; a revision of the law of separation, and of the legislation concerning trade unions and arbitration; and a revised plan for military participation in the conflict: these were some of the steps needed in order to pacify political life in Portugal, none of which were taken, and in the next chapters we will examine the resulting difficulties for the 'Sacred Union' governments.

CHAPTER V - THE DIFFICULTIES CONFIRMED: PORTUGAL AT WAR, 1916

Portugal, having entered the Great War, as we saw in ch.III, in circumstances that were less than straightforward or flattering, was to witness, throughout 1916, the first signs of the unraveling of hopes invested by many in that same War: namely, that it would prove to be a regenerative process, allowing a new national unity to be forged, and strengthening, at the same time, the fragile republican regime. Portugal's tortuous path towards belligerency led to doubts regarding the country's real motives for being at war. These doubts, strengthened by the failure to create a truly national government which might rise from the constant charges of partisanship, favouritism, and corruption, to put an end to anti-war propaganda by force and by an effective pro-war campaign, and to solve the ever-worsening foodstuffs problem, foreshadowed the collapse of the will to sustain a large-scale military effort against Germany. These failures will be examined in this chapter, as will their immediate result: the attempted *coup d'état* led by the republican hero, Machado Santos, in December 1916.

I. The legislative response to the war.

António José d'Almeida's speech to Parliament, on 16.3.1916, was crafted around the notion of a Portuguese nation, united through patriotism, and represented by a Sacred Union government. This union would be sufficiently strong to overcome the hardships of war. As the Evolutionist leader put it, the Evolutionists and the Democrats had come together "because, hanging over our heads, are those terribly menacing words: 'The fatherland is in danger.'"¹ It would be the aim of his government, moreover, to ensure that the spirit of the Sacred Union would be spread to the whole country. As the new

¹ António José d'Almeida, *40 Anos de Vida Política e Literária*, vol. III (Lisbon: J. Rodrigues e Cia., 1934), 233-234.

Prime Minister saw it, the first priority for his cabinet was to “maximize solidarity among the whole Portuguese family in this the culminating point of its great history.”² António José d’Almeida then proceeded to outline his vision of how Portugal’s participation in the conflict would be presented to the public: “(the government) will seek to establish bonds between all men, and between all men and the traditions of the Past, establishing thus the equation of historical continuity through sacrifice, tolerance, and the love for the land in which we were all born.”³

This speech was remarkable when analysed in the light of the government’s lack of actual commitment to the task of creating unity among the politicised minority of the population, or, more importantly, of forging a national consciousness in order to secure the success of both the war effort and the Republic itself. The Evolutionist leader called the war “the culminating point” in Portuguese history, which made it, as a result, worthy of an attempted reconciliation of the “Portuguese family”, but no acknowledgement was made of the fact that this “family” existed only in the minds of the republican politicians in Lisbon: Did the illiterate majority really belong to the Portuguese “family”, or did it even know that it belonged to such a “family”? Bringing Democrats and Evolutionists together had been a considerable accomplishment after the latter party’s support for Pimenta de Castro, but these two parties were, as interventionist forces, were, in the circumstances, natural allies. The real test would be the inclusion of Socialists, Unionists, and monarchists into the Sacred Union. Had António José d’Almeida’s cabinet recognised these inconsistencies, it might have made a greater effort to turn the existing love of local customs and traditions into love of the nation as a whole, in order to demand the sacrifices necessary in a war from the rural population. Moreover, had the first Sacred Union government shown a greater degree of tolerance for the defenders of alternative political visions - the tolerance mentioned by the new premier in his inauguration speech - its

² *ibid.*

³ Almeida, *op. cit.*, 234.

political enemies might indeed have agreed to recognize the war as a watershed in Portuguese history, collaborating in the creation of the desired national consciousness.

Armed with an extensive array of extended executive powers with which to prepare for war, the Sacred Union government proceeded to prepare the country for the coming sacrifices. In this it was merely following the legislative path charted by its predecessor, Afonso Costa's second cabinet. In the few months of its existence, Costa's government had empowered the police and other administrative agencies to seize printed material which might perturb public opinion and harm the State's interest (Ministry of the Interior decree no.2270); empowered itself to mobilize factories and other industrial installations (Ministry of Development law no.493) and also shipping and coastal facilities (Ministry of the Navy decree no.2277). Afonso Costa's government had also attempted, through decree no.2253 (Ministry of Development), to put into place an improved system of distribution for the available foodstuffs. Through this decree, the government was empowered to buy and sell foodstuffs, to authorise or forbid their import and export, and to order a census of existing stocks. This decree, moreover, envisaged the creation of a Central Commission for Foodstuffs, to be composed of the president of the Public Credit Junta, the director general of Customs, the head of the Lisbon relief Organisation, the director of the military supply board, and seven other members to be appointed by the Minister for Development, representing different economic interests: one farmer, one industrialist, two workers, two representatives of commerce, and a seventh representative left wholly to the Minister's discretion. The main tasks of this Central Commission would be the elaboration of reports on the supplies situation as it evolved, the fair distribution throughout the country of existing stocks, and to approve, or to alter, the prices set by their district-based counterparts (whose members the Central Commission would appoint, with the help of the respective Civil Governors.) Finally, the same decree established the fines for the sale of foodstuffs above the established price - ten times the profit derived from the transaction - and for shopkeepers who did not display, in their establishments, the official price list: from 5 Escudos for the first offense to thirty days' imprisonment. Hoarding could lead to three months' imprisonment, while the destruction of goods in

order to cause a shortage was also recognised as an offense punishable by fine and imprisonment.

The Sacred Union government built upon these foundations, strengthening the executive even further while at the same time trying to spread the spirit of reconciliation which it was meant to embody. On 28.3.1916, law no. 495 (Ministry of Justice) created the basis for press censorship, to be exercised, at national level, by commissions appointed by the government, and at local level by commissions appointed by the Civil Governors. According to the text of the Law, this censorship was designed to “eliminate all that might facilitate the spreading of rumours capable of alarming public opinion, or of harming the State as regards its internal and external security, or even the preparation and execution of its military defense.”⁴ April saw the extension of censorship to all correspondence entering and leaving the Portugal from and to other countries and the colonies. On 17.4.1916, the cornerstone of the Sacred Union was unveiled: an amnesty granted to all those who had served in the Pimenta de Castro government - mostly military officers - as well as to deserters, priests banished from their parishes following infringements of the law of separation, and those guilty of press abuses. On 29.4.1916 decree no. 2357 (Ministry of Finance) forbade the export of a whole range of mineral and agricultural products, while on 30.6.1916 a census of existing cereals was ordered, with farmers being instructed to declare their harvests and local authorities being instructed to confirm the veracity of such declarations. Local authorities, moreover, were instructed to estimate their cereal needs for the coming year, and to negotiate with each other accordingly; wheat, however, was to remain under the control of the Lisbon government through the *Manutenção Militar* [military supply board.]

On 12.7.1916 a crucial effort by the government to ensure the material well-being of the families of soldiers soon to be mobilised and sent to France was made. The preamble to decree no. 2498 (Ministry of War) considered that it was “the State’s duty to

⁴ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 28.3.1916.

watch over and to support the families of its citizens who are sacrificing themselves for the Fatherland and for the Republic when the said families have few resources and when their members, in virtue of their age or of their physical condition cannot, through their work, ensure their own subsistence (...)” The government, accordingly, committed itself to protecting the jobs of mobilized civil servants (who were to be replaced, in order of preference, by the wives, mothers or daughters of wounded soldiers, and then by those of the civil servant himself) and to paying daily subventions to the families of the mobilized men “who have no means and who are incapable, through work, of obtaining them.”⁵ Article 24 of the same decree stated, lastly, that “members of mobilized soldiers’ families (...) have preference in the assignment of jobs in the State’s industrial establishments and in the concession of any work or trade related to those establishments (...)”⁶ Finally, on 28.9.1916, two alterations were made to the Constitution in order to allow greater rewards and punishments to be handed out as a result of the war: honorary orders were reintroduced, as was the death penalty, to be made applicable only in the theatre of war.

II. Military preparations.

Alongside this legislative effort, the Sacred Union oversaw the preparation of an expeditionary corps - a military and diplomatic effort, for the British government remained unconvinced of the benefits a Portuguese presence on the Western Front. At the same time, more troops were dispatched to Mozambique, in the hope that in that theatre of operations at least the Portuguese might prove to be the decisive factor in the defeat of a German force. The culmination of this military and diplomatic effort came on 7.8.1916, when the Chamber of Deputies voted to respond affirmatively to the British request for a Portuguese force to be dispatched to the battlefields of France, a request accompanied by the guarantee that Britain would finance the Portuguese war effort through loans to be

⁵ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 12.7.1916. According to this decree, a wife would receive between 12 and 20 cents per day, according to where she resided, with further subventions being made in relation to the number of children. Parents were also included in the decree.

⁶ *ibid.*

repaid once the war had ended. By the time the British request arrived, Portugal's preparations for war were well advanced, as a force of 20,000 men had been assembled in Tancos for instruction and manoeuvres. *O Século* wrote, "for the first time, sizable military units in their entirety have carried out their combat preparations, and the secret for the success achieved was the order, the serenity, and the foresight with which those preparations were carried out. As a result, a visitor to Tancos cannot but be impressed with the joyous and vigorous expressions of pride and of discipline which are present in all faces, in all gestures, and in all words."⁷ On 22.8.1916 a military parade was held in Tancos, in the presence of Bernardino Machado, the cabinet, the diplomatic corps, and the press. Twenty thousand men, belonging to 12 infantry regiments, 3 cavalry regiments, and 3 artillery regiments, as well as various support groups, marched past the assembled guests, in the biggest military parade ever held in Portugal.⁸ While this display of armed might was being staged, moreover, a new expedition was sent to Mozambique, under the command of General Ferreira Gil: a total of 4,642 men, 1,378 horses, 159 vehicles, and 3 mountain artillery batteries. This was the biggest force sent to Africa by the Portuguese since the Great War had begun.⁹

⁷ *O Século* (Lisbon), 16.7.1916. These preparations were carried out in the face of British scepticism, which the French tried to assuage. Daeschner wrote, in April of 1916, "il y a quelques jours à peine, le Ministre de l'Angleterre a notifié, une fois de plus, un peu rudement, que le rôle militaire du Portugal ne saurait dépasser la défense de son territoire et de ses colonies." Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (M.A.E.), Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Coopération Militaire et Matériel de Guerre, 637, telegram, Daeschner to M.A.E., 30.4.1916. The attitude of both Allied nations was still in evidence in September, when an Allied military mission arrived in Lisbon to evaluate the Portuguese forces. The leader of the mission, British General Bernardiston, undiplomatically listed British conditions for Portuguese participation in the combined war effort against Germany - a greater effort in Africa, the handing over of captured colonial territory to Britain, and a presence on the European battlefield only when preparations would be fully complete, due to British inability to provide weapons or munitions. Such a statement, according to the French officers present at the meeting with the Portuguese delegation, unnecessarily hurt the pride of interventionists like Minister of War Norton de Matos and added support to those opposed to participation in the conflict. M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Coopération Militaire et Matériel de Guerre, 638, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 19.9.1916.

⁸ According to the French Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. de Montille, "Ces troupes en défilant donnaient l'impression d'une force et d'une force utilisable." M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 633, letter, M. de Montille to Briand, 24.7.1916.

⁹ *The Times History of the War* vol. XVII (London: The Times Printing House, 1918), 342.

The list of the achievements of António José d'Almeida's government is, at first glance, an impressive one, with the preparation for the war being carried out at a variety of levels at an impressive rhythm. Such a reading would be, however, superficial, because the government's decisions were badly carried out, evoked serious opposition from all shades of political opinion, split the army, which was not convinced of the benefits of fighting in France, and very nearly split the cabinet itself, one month into the Sacred Union experiment. Nineteen sixteen, in fact, saw the appearance of serious focus points of resistance to the government, whose actions would culminate in the attempted *coup d'état* led by Machado Santos in December. Unable to convince the Portuguese in general of the benefits of participation in the European war, the government was further hampered by the fact that the state of war implied certain restrictions and attitudes which were seemingly incompatible with the climate of openness the Republic was meant to embody. Republicans turned against the government; monarchists grew more effective in their organisation and bolder in their actions; everywhere the worsening economic conditions led to unrest and above all there lingered the doubt of whether or not the army would actually fight in France.

III. The mirage of 'Sacred Union' dispelled.

The foremost reason for opposition, in politicised circles, was the actual composition of the Sacred Union cabinet. Only two out of the three republican parties were represented, while Socialists, syndicalists, Catholics, and monarchists were excluded. The new government represented, therefore, an alliance between the two parties with the greatest parliamentary weight, rather than a temporary union of all shades of political opinion for the purpose of waging war against Germany. The government's composition was especially troubling because it seemed to defy the express wishes of the combined Congress, which, on 10.3.1916, had called for, unanimously, a government uniting all political opinions; there had been great speculation in the press that, at the very least, all parties represented in the Congress would be included in the coming government. O

Combate described the 10.3.1916 session in glowing terms, seldomly used by the Socialist press:

“It was one of those solemn occasions which only from time to time are reproduced in History’s eternal bronze. The republican leaders spoke as the circumstances demanded. The Socialists spoke. The Church spoke. One thing was made clear above all others, a sole and indisputable fact: that all were Portuguese.”¹⁰

However, the same article continued, the spirit of that joint session had been betrayed by the republican leadership,¹¹ despite a meeting between Bernardino Machado and Costa Junior, during which the sole P.S.P. deputy had expressed his willingness to participate in a national cabinet. *A Ordem*, the leading Catholic daily, which had speculated on the possibility of Catholic participation in the forthcoming cabinet (which would have represented a dramatic new departure for the regime), chose not to criticise the make-up of the new government, opting instead for an appeal for the restoration of full rights to all Portuguese. Nevertheless, the Catholic newspaper quoted in full the parliamentary declarations of Costa Junior, according to whom the government “did not correspond to the country’s aspirations.”¹² The attitude of monarchists, as expressed through their press, was merely an extension of their attitude for the new regime: *O Dia*, for example, cast doubts on the very viability of Sacred Union governments, highlighting difficulties being faced in France,¹³ but the following day criticised the restricted participation of the Portuguese variant, which did not, of course, include monarchists of

¹⁰ *O Combate* (Lisbon), 19.3.1916.

¹¹ “From the first hour all that was attempted was the union of the three republican parties, which at best would represent a coalition government, which must not be confused with a national government.” *O Combate* (Lisbon), 19.3.1916.

¹² *A Ordem* (Lisbon), 11.3.1916.

¹³ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 15.3.1916.

any hue.¹⁴ Machado Santos, perhaps the most active opponent of the Sacred Union governments, was finishing his *A Opinião Pública e o 14 de Maio* when the government's composition was announced; in a postscript to that work the "hero of the Rotunda" expressed his disappointment with the solution arrived at.¹⁵ Brito Camacho, finally, explained the reasons for his party's decision not to join the Sacred Union government:

"It was my opinion that a national union in which the monarchists and the socialists did not take part could never be the expression of a truce between the various currents of political opinion, put into place in order to carry out a specific goal."¹⁶

According to the Unionist leader, the monarchists had given a flat refusal to participation in the Sacred Union government; as a result,

"we, the Unionists, declared that we could not share power with the men who, for many months, had been accusing us of the heinous crime of betraying the Fatherland."¹⁷

Daeschner, the French Minister in Lisbon, attributed Brito Camacho's refusal to enter the cabinet to the other parties' refusal to revise the law of separation and decrees enforcing the retirement of civil servants hostile to the Republic.¹⁸ The negotiations which resulted in the formation of the Sacred Union cabinet, and the position

¹⁴ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 16.3.1916: "The monarchists were not heard (...) maybe it was because there are so few of them among these six million people that nobody knows where they live."

¹⁵ Machado Santos, *A Ordem Pública e o 14 de Maio* (Lisbon: Pap. e Tip. Liberty, 1916), postscript.

¹⁶ Brito Camacho, *Portugal na Grande Guerra* (Lisbon: Guimarães, 1935), 13.

¹⁷ Brito Camacho, *op.cit.*, 13.

¹⁸ M.A.E., Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 633, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 31.3.1916.

of all the parties in these negotiations (and the extent to which all parties were in fact consulted) deserve detailed research of a kind that falls outside the scope of this work; nevertheless, it remains clear that their result, the straightforward alliance between Democrats and Evolutionists, prevented the war effort from being seen as a national one: from that moment onwards the war was the creation of the Republic, and the two would forever be associated. Whatever mobilization was to take place for the war would do so under the republican banner; this fact only serves to underline the seriousness of the republicans' neglect of political mobilization. It shows, moreover, that the already quoted inauguration speech by António José d'Almeida was built upon at least one false assumption: the very composition of the cabinet was an affront to the principles which, the Evolutionist leader claimed, would guide that cabinet's actions. Moreover, as we have seen, the Sacred Union failed to unite even all republicans: Machado Santos and later Sidónio Pais conspired against it, while Brito Camacho and his followers attacked all aspects of its action from within the parliament. The political violence of the Republic's first years, notably 1915, and the bitter personal rivalries that developed between leading republicans finally resulted in the inability to unite in the crucial hour that might have ensured the Republic's ultimate success. The failure to form a truly national government was to haunt those responsible for Portugal's war effort by ensuring the continuation of the political disputes that had arisen since 1910. Although both republican and monarchist oppositions included the need for internal peace and support for those at the front in their rhetoric, the truth is, as we shall see, that the war and its inevitable consequences were seized upon as tools with which to disrupt, and hopefully bring down, the Sacred Union.

Republican opinion was not dismayed solely by the failure to create a government of national, or even republican, opinion: the actions undertaken by António José d'Almeida's government, as it tried to reinforce the executive in the face of the war seemed to be distinctly anti-republican. Parliament was curbed, and the opposition within it was kept in the dark about military and diplomatic developments. Press censorship soon prevented open criticism of the government in strictly political matters (although, as we shall see, it frequently allowed terrible news, or rumours, pertaining to the mobilized men,

to be published) and led to frequent complaints on the part of republican mainstream newspapers such as *O Século*, while the limited introduction of the death penalty continued to widen the split between the labour movement and the mainstream republican parties (see ch.VIII). It fell to the debate on the proposed amnesty, an integral part of the Sacred Union program, to show exactly how fragile the concept of republican unity was. The amnesty provided the Sacred Union government with its first crisis, and nearly proved to be the end of the experiment, for during the negotiations which preceded it António José d'Almeida, exasperated by the intransigence of the Democratic party, tendered his resignation to the President, Bernardino Machado.¹⁹ The two parties in power could not agree on the scope of the proposed amnesty, and the reasons for this disagreement were obvious to all commentators: the Evolutionists' more flexible approach to politics (as exemplified by their support for Pimenta de Castro) resulted in a greater willingness to use the war as a means to heal Portugal's self-inflicted political wounds; at the same time, however, the more powerful Democrats, through their jacobin identification with 'the people', maintained that the Republic's enemies could not be brought into the fold of acceptability, even during a national emergency. As we saw, the amnesty covered those who served in the Pimenta de Castro government (who would not, however, be allowed to command a military unit or head a military service), as well as pre-war deserters, priests banished from their parishes, and press offenders.²⁰ We do not know to what extent the original Evolutionist proposal differed from the final draft, but, according to *O Século*, the Prime Minister had wanted a full amnesty for Pimenta de Castro's collaborators: "According to the Evolutionist party, the absolution for past crimes must be complete."²¹ According to the same newspaper, António José d'Almeida's resignation had been tendered as early as 10.4.1916.²² The bill became law on 14.4.1916, despite the

¹⁹ *O Século* (Lisbon), 15.4.1916.

²⁰ According to Daeschner, the amnesty was applicable to 50 men only, as it was highly unlikely that the deserters would return to the army once it had begun to prepare itself for battle. M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 633, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 14.4.1916.

²¹ *O Século* (Lisbon), 13.4.1916.

²² *ibid.*

opposition of Costa Junior (on the grounds that the amnesty did not include those convicted of 'social' crimes). The Unionists voted their support for the measure, but only after qualifying that support to such an extent that it became nearly worthless.²³

Within one month of its creation, the essential difficulties facing the Sacred Union government had been made apparent for all to see: with only two parties represented in the cabinet, there was a tremendous imbalance of forces, as a result of which António José d'Almeida and his fellow Evolutionist ministers were powerless against Afonso Costa; only the appeals of Bernardino Machado kept the Evolutionist leader in his place. Participation in the Sacred Union government, as we shall see later, was eventually to split the Evolutionist party, which had, a year before, given its full support to General Pimenta de Castro *against* the Democrats. Defeated over the amnesty, the Evolutionists also failed to revise the Constitution in order to introduce presidential dissolution of parliament. By early June *O Dia* was already rejoicing over the apparent cracks in the cabinet's solidity: "Evolutionists no longer mask their anti-Democratic fury. The Evolutionist press in the countryside, where His Omnipotence's" (Afonso Costa's) "authorities continue to be all-powerful, is no longer quiet. The pot is about to blow."²⁴ Within one month of its creation, moreover, the Sacred Union government had tarnished its image and created a feeling of insecurity advantageous to its internal rivals. *A Ordem* warned of disaster if the government fell,²⁵ adding that whereas a complete amnesty would have represented "good

²³ The following declaration was signed by the Unionist deputies and reprinted by *O Século* (Lisbon), 15.4.1916: "The undersigned deputies recognize that the proposed amnesty lacks the essential characteristics of a true amnesty, not being, as a result, far-reaching as a political gesture or as a gesture of generosity.

However, having pondered present circumstances, and surrendering to the government the entire and exclusive responsibility for the moral and material consequences that might result from the approval of the measure, they abstain from discussing the bill, and declare that it will have their vote."

²⁴ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 4.6.1916.

²⁵ *A Ordem* (Lisbon), 12.4.1916: "A wind of insanity has been blowing over Portugal, and it threatens to destroy her independence, dragging down with it, in a diabolical and shameful manner, the glorious traditions of a heroic people.

What is this, oh men of politics?

What madness is this?"

national tactics,” the government had failed to create such an amnesty. According to the Catholic daily, there was only one solution to the country’s problems: the creation of “a true and authentic national government, composed of all the nation’s living forces, and of a representative of each and every political party.”²⁶ *O Dia* predictably made the most out of the government’s initial difficulties, highlighting the Evolutionists’ incompatibilities with the laws being passed in their own name, sowing discord between the government and the army, which had, after all, supported Pimenta de Castro, and reaffirming its support for all monarchists in exile, who had not been included in the amnesty. The monarchist daily defiantly proclaimed that there could be no political truce until all monarchists had been allowed to return to Portugal, as they had been allowed to do by Pimenta de Castro.²⁷ Daeschner painted a gloomy picture of recent events in Lisbon:

“Cette loi qui ne satisfait naturellement personne a montré qu’en Portugal ‘l’Union Sacrée’ n’était qu’un mot et les divisions de personnes et partis plus profondes que jamais.”²⁸

Homem Cristo, in his *O de Aveiro*, had warned, as early as 2.4.1916, that the monarchists would derive great political capital from any amnesty; his prediction was totally correct. The amnesty was also criticised by those on the other end of the political spectrum: on 22.4.1916 *O Século* reported that the “Pro-Anarchist Prisoners Committee” had rejected the measure, denouncing it as incomplete as it did not contemplate those arrested for ‘social’ crimes and those implicated in the anarchist movement which had taken place on 29.1.1916 in Lisbon. Isolated and divided after only one month, the

²⁶ *A Ordem* (Lisbon), 12.4.1916.

²⁷ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 15.4.1916: “To those monarchists in exile, the noblest and bravest of Portuguese, the most generous and loyal men to which this land has given birth, we send, in this, their hour of proscription, our warmest sympathy, as well as the ever more fervent enthusiasm born out of our admiration.”

²⁸ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 633, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 14.4.1916.

government now found itself singularly unprepared for the coming challenges, as partisan ambitions reasserted themselves. A series of political questions were exploited by an opposition eager to bring the government down. The first of these was the use to which the German ships seized in 1916 had been put, a question which lay at the very heart of Portugal's belligerency, and which soon led to charges of gross corruption.

IV. The continuing saga of the German ships.

Although the seizure of the German merchant ships had given rise to hopes that Portugal's economic difficulties would be eased, no such change was noticeable as 1916 progressed, and it seemed to some commentators that the government was in no hurry to put the ships to use. *O Século*, in May, chronicled the "more or less heated debate,"²⁹ giving the government the benefit of the doubt (there had been instances of sabotage on some ships, and a legal framework for the ships' use had been required,) and printing an interview with António Maria da Silva, the Minister of Labour. According to the Minister, the seizure of the ships had been carried out in accordance with British wishes, and as a result the ships' use had to be coordinated with Portugal's allies. Nevertheless, some of the vessels had been entrusted to 'recognised firms' and were already being employed in the export of wine, cork, and tinned foods, while at the same time returning to Portugal with coal from Britain and maize and sugar from the colonies. Eight ships had already been put to use, and another seven had just been made ready.³⁰ By the 28.7.1916, according to the same newspaper, the total of ships ready to be employed now stood at 32. September, however, saw the country's leading daily criticizing the government on the question of the ships seized in February:

"We seized the German ships. We did this in order to meet our economic needs. However, we do not see of what use

²⁹ *O Século* (Lisbon), 26.5.1916.

³⁰ *ibid.*

these ships are to us, as our economic situation is becoming more and more difficult and prices increase daily.”³¹

The following day *O Século* re-stated its case, complaining about the lack of regular sailings to Brazil, which favoured Spanish producers supplying the Portuguese immigrants in Brazil.³² In October the veil surrounding the seized ships was finally lifted. 50 were to be operated by a British firm while 21 were to remain in the service of Portugal. This division, necessary as a result of the government’s desire to collaborate with Portugal’s allies to the fullest of extents, brought with it a wave of accusations of corruption, leveled at cabinet ministers, for there was intense speculation, in opposition circles, about huge pay-offs in return for the contract. Moreover, as Costa Junior pointed out in August, it seemed to be at odds with the government’s declarations in March 1916, when Afonso Costa had first announced that *some* of the ships would be put at Britain’s disposal.³³ Throwing open the whole debate on Portugal’s entry into the conflict, Costa Junior then complained about not being allowed to see the original British note concerning the German ships. The implications of the Socialist deputy were clear: either the then government had lied to Parliament in order to take Portugal into the war, or the present government had suddenly changed course for some undisclosed reason.

The matter of the German ships and their use was to hang over the Sacred Union governments for the rest of the war. Jorge Nunes, a Unionist deputy, in a long and critical speech on the government’s economic performance, delivered on the eve of Machado Santos’ attempted *coup*, placed a heavy emphasis on the matter of the ships. Their importance had led the country into war, and yet they had remained idly at anchor, after

³¹ *O Século* (Lisbon), 3.9.1916.

³² *O Século* (Lisbon), 4.9.1916. This newspaper was not alone in its criticism. *Trabalho e União* (Funchal), on 12.8.1916, had attributed the prices of essential goods such as coal (which, according to the Funchal newspaper had risen from a pre-war 6 Escudos/ton to 36 Escudos/ton) to the poor use made of the requisitioned ships, adding that there seemed to have been no point to their seizure, insofar as they continued to lie idle in their respective ports.

³³ *O Combate* (Lisbon), 13.8.1916.

which they had been rented out for too low a price.³⁴ Not surprisingly the ships were to be brought up in the July secret sessions of the Chamber: Brito Camacho referred to the ships in his opening address, accusing the government of failing to give details of their use to the Chamber. Unfortunately, however, the matter was discussed only after the opposition's withdrawal from the sessions. In their *O 13 de Dezembro*, the 'group of friends of Machado Santos' claimed that the deal struck with the British firm regarding the ships would cost the country at least thirty million Escudos per year (nearly one half of budgetary income) in lost revenues,³⁵ and that industry had become paralysed due to the lack of raw materials "as a result of the poor use made of the merchant fleet seized from the enemy."³⁶ Finally, the syndicalist *A Greve*, in October 1917, commenting the lack of bread in Lisbon, wrote, "it is in a situation like this that one can clearly see the mistake that our shortsighted and narrowminded cardboard statesmen made, giving away the ships that would have been our salvation for a few handfuls of gold."³⁷ In the 1940's, in his apology of Sidónio Pais, Teófilo Duarte again returned to the German ships, claiming that no-one had forgiven the government for allowing the British to use 190,000 tons of shipping at 19 shillings/ton when their real worth stood at 160 shillings/ton:

"This question - transport - provided the ultimate proof of the government's administrative incompetence, for not only would those 237,000 tons have sufficed to carry our own imports and exports, they would have also raised

³⁴ "Had we not, following the proposal of Mr. Afonso Costa, dispensed the use of such a great number of the ships of which we had absolute necessity, we could have established regular sailings to Argentina and the Azores in order to bring to this country frozen meat, meat which could be consumed in our markets with absolute trust." *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados*, 12.12.1916. Jorge Nunes referred to the matter again on the 8.1.1917: "that most ruinous of (financial) operations".

³⁵ *O 13 de Dezembro: Homenagem a Machado Santos de um Grupo de Amigos* (n.p., 1917), 7.

³⁶ *O 13 de Dezembro...*, 8.

³⁷ *A Greve* (Lisbon), 28.10.1917.

very important profits, due to the scarcity of shipping in all countries.”³⁸

V. Republican political normality altered: local elections postponed.

The municipal and parish elections, scheduled for November 1916, provided another source of division and of criticism which the marred Sacred Union government had to endure. Alleging the need to protect public order, at a time when internal conspiracies and the appearance of U-boats off the Portuguese coasts threatened that order, the government cancelled the elections.³⁹ *O Século* was cautious in its reaction to the news, stating that although it did not know who constituted the ‘perturbing element’ mentioned in the official note, it was nevertheless aware of the ‘ignoble propaganda’ being carried out across the country.⁴⁰ *O Mundo*’s Oporto correspondent was delighted with the blow struck against the government’s enemies, all of whom were now threatening the very existence of the Republic: monarchists, Catholics, Unionists, and even some Evolutionists. Not surprisingly, however, the reaction in other circles was less welcoming. Brito Camacho claimed that the postponement of the elections was a device designed to maintain stability within the Sacred Union government, and introduced at the expense of democracy.⁴¹ *O Combate*, which on 15.10.1916 had announced the P.S.P.’s decision to contest the elections, called the postponement a “feat” on the part of the regime, in a leading article almost totally erased by censorship.⁴² The P.S.P.’s deputy spoke out in Parliament against the inclusion of rural strikes in the Alentejo in the list of disturbances

³⁸ Teófilo Duarte, *Sidónio Pais e o Seu Consulado* (Lisbon: Portugália, 1942), 33.

³⁹ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 5.11.1916.

⁴⁰ *O Século* (Lisbon), 4.11.1916.

⁴¹ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 8.11.1916. Brito Camacho went on to add, being seconded by Jorge Nunes and Celorico Gil, that it was ridiculous to claim that the Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros (M.N.E.) had received detailed information from Allied intelligence concerning contacts between Portuguese citizens and Germans while not acting against those same citizens.

⁴² *O Combate* (Lisbon), 12.11.1916.

which, according to António José d'Almeida, showed the influence of German gold in Portugal. "It is imperative that such a libelous charge leveled at the proletarian classes be withdrawn (...)"⁴³

The initial reaction of *O Dia* was also blanketed out by an increasingly political censor,⁴⁴ but by 7.11.1916 *O Dia* had been allowed to give its account of the government's action. According to the monarchist organ, the government had acted out of fear of an embarrassing electoral defeat, because, for the first time in the Republic's history, monarchists had shown signs of wanting to contest the elections, in association with Catholics, and seemed in fact set to take over the running of some municipalities. The government's action was, in other words, a triumph for the monarchist cause, because it had shown that the Republic had become incompatible with a "true and free suffrage."⁴⁵ Daeschner agreed with the monarchist interpretation: the U-boats were just an excuse on the part of the government, which feared that without extensive electoral manipulation (which the Evolutionist Minister of the Interior would refuse to carry out) "beaucoup de conseils municipaux échapperaient aux républicains."⁴⁶

Defending what they saw as an offense to the balance of power, the 'group of friends of Machado Santos' claimed, in their work, that the Executive branch was attempting, during the war, to become Absolute: it refused to publish a diplomatic white book and it refused to allow the public to demonstrate its frustration through the ballot box. In other words, Machado Santos had led his rising in order to reassert the prestige of the parliament and the rights of the electorate.⁴⁷

⁴³ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 8.11.1916.

⁴⁴ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 3.11.1916.

⁴⁵ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 7.11.1916.

⁴⁶ Daeschner also stated that "dans le nord du pays surtout, le triomphe des républicains était du en grand partie a l'abstention des monarchistes", which, as we have seen, could no longer be relied on. M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 3.11.1916.

As we saw, the Portuguese government used the sudden arrival of U-boats in Portuguese waters to cancel the municipal and parish elections. These submarines and their spectacular actions⁴⁸ were merely the most visible signs of Portugal's participation in the war, a participation which, by the end of 1916 had only led to military defeats, culminating in the shelling of Funchal by a German U-boat. On 3.12.1916 a submarine entered the harbour in Funchal, sank three vessels (a British steamer and two French warships - the gunboat 'Surprise' and the submarine tender 'Kangaroo') and proceeded to shell the city itself, from beyond the range of the outdated coastal batteries. Norton de Matos admitted that there had been no provision for the training of crews to fire against U-boats, but attempted to reduce the incident's importance: "Cities like Funchal, we all know, are exposed to attack, and in this attack the city's defensive system was efficient, as the submarine kept itself at a great distance from the city at all times."⁴⁹ In an unconvinced parliament, the government was accused of neglecting Madeira's defenses, and on the island *Trabalho e União* did the same: "A sole enemy submarine did not destroy us (Funchal) on Sunday for the simple reason that it chose not to do so."⁵⁰ *O Combate* explained, expressing a view that would soon find other supporters: that the German captain's feat was the necessary consequence of Portugal's attempt to act on too many fronts at the same time.⁵¹

VI. The war in Africa.

⁴⁷ *O 13 de Dezembro...*, 7. The Unionist Deputy Jorge Nunes also stressed the need to reassert parliamentary prestige, by demanding to see the intelligence documents which proved that some Portuguese were receiving German gold to cause disturbances. *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 8.11.1916.

⁴⁸ See *O Século* (Lisbon), 31.10.1916, for details of the campaign.

⁴⁹ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 4.12.1916.

⁵⁰ *Trabalho e União* (Funchal), 10.12.1916.

⁵¹ *O Combate* (Lisbon), 10.12.1916.

If the war at sea was being conducted with meagre results, then the war in Africa, and more specifically on the border between Mozambique and German East Africa, was becoming a terrible disappointment. Nineteen sixteen had seen a series of attempts to cross the Rovuma river, which separated the two colonies, after the much celebrated capture of the disputed territory of Kionga, at the mouth of the river, and the capture of a German fort in Newala, after a northwards march from the Rovuma. Within days, however, the troops in the fort were cut off from the main body of the expeditionary force and, after a failed relief attempt, the garrison fled at night and returned to Portuguese territory.⁵² As no Portuguese troops remained in German East Africa, nine months' efforts had been in vain. The capture of the fort in Newala had been celebrated in Portugal as a major victory, achieved through perseverance after the difficult crossing of the Rovuma (on 26.7.1916, *O Século* reported that German machine-gunners had inflicted 60 casualties during one such crossing attempt.) The Civil Governor of Angra do Heroísmo, for example, wrote to the Minister of the Interior on 8.11.1916 detailing the celebrations that had followed the news of the victory in Africa: a torch-lit parade had wound its way through the town's streets, which were thronged with "students (...) civil servants, shopkeepers - representatives of all social classes."⁵³ By 3.12.1916, however, this cheerful attitude changed to one of anxiety, as *O Século* reported the resignation of General Gil, the expedition's commander, allegedly on grounds of health. Two days later, António José d'Almeida announced, in Parliament, the fall of Newala, after an eight day siege during which the garrison had seen its water supply cut off. Speculation naturally followed the Prime Minister's address, as he had given no casualty figures. Not surprisingly, the government was accused of interfering in the running of the campaign (an obvious attempt to foster divisions between the army and the cabinet) and of having demanded victories without providing the necessary means. On 11.12.1916, António José d'Almeida tried to quell this speculation, denying the rumour that he, as Minister for the

⁵² The retreat was described by António José d'Almeida as an operation "destined to become famous in the history of our overseas campaigns." *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 5.12.1916.

Colonies, had received a telegram reporting the full losses, as well as the accusations that the expedition had been badly organised and equipped, and sent into battle under pressure from the government.⁵⁴

On 20.12.1916 a casualty list was published: 2 dead, 13 wounded, 2 prisoners, and 27 missing, to which was added, on the 7.1.1917, the casualty list for African soldiers: 21 killed, 43 wounded, and 43 missing. *O Dia* again explored the government's weaknesses, reprinting an interview with Machado Santos printed originally in *A Vanguarda* (see ch. VIII)⁵⁵ and by dwelling at length on the Newala disaster. Congratulating the troops for their discipline and endurance during the break-out and the long retreat which followed it, the monarchist daily launched a campaign questioning the African experience of General Ferreira Gil⁵⁶ and arguing that government interference had led to the disaster⁵⁷, a campaign which culminated in an article by Cunha e Costa in which he argued, with great plausibility, that the Portuguese army in Africa had been led into a trap carefully set by the Germans, and that as a result, Portugal's hold over Mozambique was now in jeopardy.⁵⁸

Like topics such as the white book and the German ships, the 1916 Mozambique campaign was to remain a source of controversy which, although not necessarily reflected in mainstream periodicals, fueled rumours about the government's lack of competence and its role in the cover-up of the sufferings experienced by the soldiers who took part in the African campaigns. The government's inability or unwillingness to share information with opposition groups added fuels to these rumours, and helped to widen the growing rift

⁵³ Arquivo Nacional (A.N.), Lisbon, Ministério do Interior (M.I.), Direcção Geral da Administração Política e Civil (D.G.A.P.C.), stack 71 (1916), letter, Civil Governor of Angra do Heroísmo to Minister of the Interior, 8.11.1916.

⁵⁴ *O Século* (Lisbon), 12.12.1916.

⁵⁵ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 16.11.1916.

⁵⁶ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 6.12.1916.

⁵⁷ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 7.12.1916.

⁵⁸ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 11.12.1916.

between the Republic and its army, as governments and generals held each other responsible for successive battlefield failures. The publication of a critical work, such as *O 13 de Dezembro*, is a perfect example of the opposition's exploitation of this growing rift. According to its authors, discontentment within the army at government interference in military matters was growing, especially because of the political decisions made by the cabinet, "which makes it (the army) sacrifice itself without glory and without any advantage for the nation."⁵⁹ The book was especially critical of António José d'Almeida's role in the African campaign:

"When the 13th of December movement took place, it was known that António José d'Almeida's government had ordered victories from Africa, hiding from the country a telegram received from General Gil in the first days of November, wherein that officer highlighted the poor sanitary conditions of his expedition, which had been reduced from five battalions to five companies (...) and where he explained his decision to send the cavalry back to Port Amelia, as that branch was devoid of men and of horses (...) and that tens of men died everyday in provincial hospitals (...)"⁶⁰

The government's need for victories with which to quiet public fears had thus led the Prime Minister to ignore his General's request for a complete withdrawal and had resulted in the defeat of Newala. According to the book, moreover, another telegram (that whose existence had been denied by the Prime Minister in the Chamber of Deputies) had been kept from the public, one which stated the real casualty figures: 300 dead and wounded and 600 prisoners. During the secret sessions of July 1917, all of these rumours

⁵⁹ *O 13 de Dezembro...*, 8.

⁶⁰ *O 13 de Dezembro...*, 10.

were again resurrected as the opposition sought details from the government and as it sought a parliamentary enquiry into the ill-fated expedition, and one of Sidónio Pais' first actions was to publish General Gil's official report on the campaign, which the previous governments had kept secret. The report was to make clear Portuguese fears of a British victory in German East Africa before the Portuguese troops had been properly organised and trained (as had happened in German Southwest Africa), which suggested, of course, that Portugal's relationship with her 'ancient' ally was not as linear as the republican governments made it out to be. The report, moreover, did make it clear that the government had pressured General Gil to advance, despite his protestations. After the publication of the report, *O Dia* was to describe the government's actions in 1916 as "the most disgusting crime" so far committed by the republican regime⁶¹ while the Integralist *A Monarquia* called António José d'Almeida the "assassin of Newala."⁶²

VII. Economic hardship.

If among the politicised minority of the population there were, throughout 1916, indications of discontentment, which hinted at future difficulties, then similar indications could be discerned, albeit for different reasons, among the less politicised majority. Portugal was not a haven of tranquility which might reassure soldiers at the front that their country was united in support of their efforts. The main source of problems continued to be the lack of food, or its faulty distribution across the country. Although this shortage was not a direct consequence of Portugal's belligerency, the two became associated in the minds of many throughout the country, especially producers, resentful of the government's attempt to impose market controls. Local authorities seem to have contributed to this climate of tension, as many refused to cooperate with the government in the attempt to distribute available foodstuffs evenly throughout the country. On 1.8.1916, the *Director Geral da Administração Política e Civil* (D.G.A.P.C.) wrote to all

⁶¹ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 22.12.1917.

⁶² *A Monarquia* (Lisbon), 4.4.1918.

Civil Governors, instructing them to oversee the actions of local authorities, many of which were failing to heed the requisitions made by the Military Supply Board.⁶³ Civil Governors, meanwhile, appealed for help from the Ministry of the Interior in the attempt to maintain order in their respective districts. On 31.10.1916, for example, such a request arrived at the D.G.A.P.C. from Aveiro, where “armed clashes in virtue of the foodstuffs crisis” were expected.⁶⁴ On 1.11.1916 the Civil Governor of Vila Real warned that

“The news that in France 30,000 barrels of wine were awaiting their return to Portugal, having been adulterated, which, if true, would represent the ruin of the nation’s viticulture, was spread profusely”

and that people in the municipality of Régua had sought out those whom they believed had been responsible for the fraud. The Civil Governor also submitted the respective municipal administrator’s report, which described the ringing of bells, the formation of a mob, and the subsequent attacks on the warehouses of wine merchants.⁶⁵ The Civil Governor of Braga warned that the very real economic difficulties faced by the population were being exploited by the enemies of the regime. From Monção he warned that monarchists were urging the people to resist proposed departures of cereals from the district, and he called for an increased *Guarda Nacional Republicana* (G.N.R.) presence.⁶⁶ From Bragança came, on 15.11.1916, the news that a train had been plundered by around 500 people who had seized all the foodstuffs carried aboard: potatoes, chestnuts, and walnuts.⁶⁷ News of these disturbances were sometimes carried by

⁶³ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 69 (1916), letter, D.G.A.P.C. to all Civil Governors, 1.8.1916.

⁶⁴ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 71 (1916), telegram, Secretary General of the District of Aveiro to D.G.A.P.C., 31.10.1916.

⁶⁵ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 71 (1916), letter, Civil Governor of Vila Real to Minister of the Interior, 1.11.1916.

⁶⁶ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 71 (1916), telegram, Civil Governor of Braga to Minister of the Interior, 2.11.1916.

newspapers; on 29.3.1916 *A Gazeta de Coimbra* reported a 'mutiny' in Montemor-o-Velho, sparked off by the high price of maize at the market. Bells were rung, a crowd gathered, but violence was averted by the prompt action of the municipal administrator, who apprehended the cereal and sold it at a lower price, being, as a result, "well applauded by the people." In the city of Coimbra itself, clashes and a firefight between soldiers and the police led to the death of one soldier, the wounding of many, and 45 arrests.⁶⁸ A similar event was to take place in Oporto, in October, but there the scale would be much greater. The Inspector of the security services and of the Administrative Police wrote to Oporto's Civil Governor, on 9.10.1916, stating that throughout that same day policemen in the city had been attacked by soldier-led crowds, and that few arrests had been carried out, because of the imbalance of forces.⁶⁹ The report went on to indicate that clashes between soldiers and the police had been occurring on a minor scale for days before the larger confrontations of the 8 and 9 May, and that Socialists, syndicalists, and anti-war and anti-republican soldiers and officers were behind the attacks. The same inspector, in a later report (13.10.1916) recounted an attack on a police station, carried out by civilians and soldiers with stones, handguns, and rifles, which had led to the death of one policeman and the wounding of five others.⁷⁰

A more detailed report concerning the events in Oporto,⁷¹ dated 18.11.1916, attempted to establish the long term reasons for the recent outbreak of street violence. According to the General Commissioner, the shortages of foodstuffs had led to clashes between civilians and the police, often called in to maintain order and protect private

⁶⁷ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 71 (1916), telegram, Civil Governor of Bragança to Minister of the Interior, 15.11.1916.

⁶⁸ *A Gazeta de Coimbra* (Coimbra), 19.4.1916 & 22.4.1916.

⁶⁹ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 69 (1916), report, Inspector dos serviços de segurança e Polícia Administrativa to Civil Governor of Oporto, 9.10.1916.

⁷⁰ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 69 (1916), report, Inspector dos serviços de segurança e Polícia Administrativa to Civil Governor of Oporto, 13.10.1916.

⁷¹ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 69 (1916), report, Comissário Geral to Civil Governor of Oporto, 18.11.1916.

property, but above all “to cancel the political exploitation that at times was attempted as a result of the cost of living.” Moreover, mobilization had brought together soldiers and criminals, as well as Socialists and syndicalists, all of whom acted as corrupting influences. September had seen a P.S.P. campaign against the government’s policy on foodstuffs, which had been accompanied by a covert campaign calling for assaults on shops and warehouses, which had eventually taken place, leading to 68 arrests and sowing the seeds for the October clashes. The Commissioner found the soldiers’ ability to leave their barracks almost at will disturbing, for it hinted at a complicity on the part of the officers. Total casualties for the clashes were, according to this report, 1 policeman killed and 24 wounded, 8 soldiers wounded, and 1 civilian killed and 36 wounded. 177 arrests were made, and charges were brought against 70 men. The French consul in Oporto, reporting to the Quai d’Orsay, accused the officer in command of the Oporto troops (General Ribeiro) of being slow to act. As for the other officers,

“un grand nombre d’entre eux seraient mécontents du régime actuel, opposés a l’intervention active en faveur de la France et de ses alliés, et leur état d’esprit devrait nous dissuader de faire fond sur leur concours.”⁷²

Homem Cristo wrote of “the spirit of indiscipline and revolt” as being an inherited disease of the Portuguese, and argued that while “these last events which took place in the country’s second city are not of themselves very important”, they nevertheless showed that the “illness persists, and indeed is becoming worse.”⁷³ According to Homem Cristo, no other people in the world had as little respect for their own police force as the Portuguese, and while the police could still hold its own against street thugs, fighting the army itself was a different matter. “Fantastic country! Fantastic country! Even the

⁷² M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, Letter, Consul in Oporto to Briand, 11.10.1916; the French Consul, in the same letter, put the death total at 3.

⁷³ *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 15.10.1917.

soldiers shoot and brandish their weapons at the agents of authority!”⁷⁴ *O Mundo*, meanwhile, downplayed the disturbances in Oporto (as did *O Século*), considering them unworthy of even a mention in the *fait-divers* page and accusing the monarchists of trying to derive some political gain from the events.⁷⁵

As we shall see in later chapters, the question of food supplies, both in the countryside and in Lisbon and Oporto, was to remain a thorn in the side of governments until the end of the war. In the context of this chapter, however, it is useful to remember the case of France, where, as Thierry Bonzon points out, the price of bread in Paris was fixed at the outbreak of the war. This measure, which required the resurrection of a 1791 law, was introduced despite the obvious problems posed by the conflict to French agriculture. French authorities recognized that bread carried “une charge symbolique particulièrement forte,”⁷⁶ and became involved in its distribution and sale in order to maintain its price at a level similar to the of 1914, ultimately with success, despite the war’s unexpected length. As Bonzon explains, “Cette mesure est appliquée de façon tellement rigoureuse que le pain est la seule denrée à connaître un prix quasi invariable pendant tout le conflit.”⁷⁷ Nineteen sixteen in Portugal was therefore marked by the lack of political will not to set prices for bread and other essential foodstuffs in Portugal - as we shall see there was a wealth of such measures passed by the Sacred Union government - but rather to ensure that those price limits were adhered to by commerce, whatever the short-term consequences to public finances. Bread was equally as symbolic in Portugal as it was in France, and revolutions and *coups* were usually carried out in Lisbon, after which their result was announced to, and accepted by, the rest of the country. Stability in Lisbon, born from a feeling of concern for the plight of the poor of the city and from an

⁷⁴ *ibid.*

⁷⁵ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 12.10.1916.

⁷⁶ Thierry Bonzon, “La société, l’état, et le pouvoir local: L’approvisionnement à Paris, 1914-1918”, *Guerres Mondiales et Conflits Contemporains*, special number, “Etat, Société et ‘Economie Morale.’ L’approvisionnement des Civils”, July 1996, 3.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

awareness of equality before the hardship imposed by the war (through the taxing of war profits, for example), was seemingly not an overriding priority for the Sacred Union governments, which had, nevertheless, armed themselves with the legislative powers to enforce that equality. Portugal's war effort was to be distinctly un-republican in this regard, and as we shall see, in 1917 the enemies of the war effort were to make great political capital out of this failure to ensure both equality of sacrifice and what can be described as the 'moral economy' of the poor in Lisbon.

VIII. The rising of 13.12.1916.

The danger posed by disturbances such as the one in Oporto was a long-term one: that the resulting breakdown in morale among soldiers would lead to refusals to fight abroad and to accept that the war was a national cause, fully supported by civilians. A more pressing danger for the government was an actual armed revolt, such as the one attempted by Machado Santos in December 1916. This movement failed to attract the direct support of the army as a whole or even of large bodies of the civilian population. After a short period of support for Portuguese intervention in the European war,⁷⁸ Machado Santos had changed his mind, and, embittered by his arrest and deportation following the 14th of May rising, had begun to plot against the war, as well as organising his *coup d'état*. This organisation proved, on the day, to be faulty, as the movement was effectively limited to a handful of towns in central Portugal - Tomar, Abrantes, and Castelo Branco - and was, as a result, easily suppressed by the government.⁷⁹ Despite

⁷⁸ See Machado Santos' newspaper, *O Intransigente* (Lisbon), August-October 1914, for details of his proposed intervention in the European War, which involved a declaration of war against Germany and the sending of over 60,000 soldiers to the European battlefield.

⁷⁹ Machado Santos had produced a fake *Diário do Governo*, according to which Bernardino Machado had empowered him with the creation of a new cabinet, which included well known opposition figures such as Costa Junior, Moura Pinto, Alfredo Magalhães, and Celorico Gil, an Evolutionist critical of his party's collaboration with the Democrats. With this newspaper Machado Santos and a handful of conspirators tried to subvert military units. See Afonso Aniceto & Marília Guerreiro, "A Revolta de Tomar (13 de Dezembro de 1916)", *Boletim do Arquivo Histórico Militar* vol.LI (1981) for details of the *coup* attempt. See also the letter from Daeschner to Briand, in which the French Minister pointed out that although the movement took place near Tancos, the troops receiving instruction were not used to quell it.

the apparent ease with which then government dealt with the movement, Machado Santos' actions were to send shockwaves through Portugal's political and military structures which were to undermine the war effort in 1917. Throughout the country hundreds of suspects were arrested (including political figures such as Costa Junior, Moura Pinto, Alfredo Magalhães, and Egas Moniz) and constitutional guarantees, as well as monarchist newspapers, were suspended. Democratic newspapers such as *O Mundo* attempted to belittle the *coup* attempt and to demonstrate the scale of the public's indignation with Machado Santos and his followers,⁸⁰ but in private Democratic figures admitted their concern. Jaime Cortesão wrote, in his diary,

“in the dark, that man (Norton de Matos) is surrounded by a circle of hatreds. The movement might have been defeated, but it is common knowledge that hundreds of officers were implicated.”⁸¹

Homem Cristo expressed a similar view, again raising questions about the efficiency of censorship in wartime Portugal. According to the Aveiro-based journalist, the movement had failed because many, including exiled monarchists under Paiva Couceiro and ‘advanced elements’ in Lisbon, with whom Machado Santos had close relations, had withdrawn their promised support at the last minute. Homem Cristo wrote,

“Machado Santos was counting on support from the North of the country. It is said that he was greatly surprised when

M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 17.12.1916.

⁸⁰ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 14.12.1916. Similar sentiments were expressed by Norton de Matos days later: “I could not imagine that there might be within the army a group, however restricted, of officers and sergeants, men fully able to judge their own actions, capable of carrying out the actions which took place on the 13th, the 14th, and the 15th.” Norton de Matos, who refused to mention the name of Machado Santos, in order not to “dirty” his lips, characteristically went on to praise the soldiers, who had been misled in the name of the Fatherland. *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 18.12.1916.

⁸¹ Jaime Cortesão, *Memórias da Grande Guerra* (Oporto: Renascença Portuguesa, 1919), 34.

he found out that the movement was limited to Tomar and Abrantes, with off-shoots in Figueira da Foz and Castelo Branco.⁸²

O de Aveiro demanded energetic action against all officers implicated in the movement, which, it claimed, would have been shot in any other country, and on 31.12.1916 painted a somber picture of the public's reaction to the movement, one which directly contradicted that of *O Mundo*:

“The last military movement would have been of little importance had it provoked patriotic demonstrations. But exactly the opposite occurred: it has brought to light the fact that no patriotism exists in this country.”

For the government, the benefits to be derived from a strong response to the *coup* attempt had to be weighed against the possibility of incurring the wrath of the bulk of the army only months before the departure of the C.E.P.'s first contingents, seen as the overwhelming priority for the cabinet. The army, whose mood the government knew to be volatile, might resent seeing its members humiliated by the Sacred Union government, and its various factions might yet come together, destroying the Republic as it had existed for six years. After a brief show of strength, therefore, which included mass arrests and even the use of airplanes to drop leaflets calling for order in the towns affected by the movement, the government tried to freeze the problem for the duration of the war by holding under arrest the officers implicated, but without bringing them to trial. Legislation was duly put into effect in the last days of the year, allowing the government to dismiss from their service officers and n.c.o.'s charged with the crimes of “treason, espionage, insubordination, revolt, military sedition, and cowardliness”, and to whom the death penalty did not apply, and to hold them indefinitely “for as long as either the Minister of

⁸² *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 24.12.1916.

War or of the Navy find it necessary to do so, as a result of, and during, the state of war.” Article 5 of the same law made the whole decree applicable to those who had participated in the recent rising, which of course violated the principle of retroactivity.⁸³ This one piece of legislation, moving the government further still from the basic republican creed, caused an enormous strain in the Evolutionist party, which eventually split, a minority joining the Unionist party in opposition, forming what was referred to as the Parliamentary Bloc. The split was bitter, revealing the tension that had built up within the party after nine months of collaboration with the Democrats. Malva do Vale called his former leader, António José d’Almeida, a “Democratic militiaman”, and asked him to explain in what way the Evolutionist dissenters were “squanderers, conspirators, drunkards, café-orators, (...) accusations made by the newspaper *A República*.”⁸⁴

The Unionists, as ever, tried to capitalize on the government’s troubles. Brito Camacho, in the chamber, pointed out that the movement had been designed to topple only the government, and not the Republic itself, calling for the recognition of the worth of Machado Santos: after all, had the naval officer not displayed fine qualities during the 5th of October revolution, in 1910, the Chamber now discussing him would never have met. The Unionist leader then presented a motion of no confidence in the government,⁸⁵ and in February 1917 a similar motion was presented by another dissident Evolutionist, Vasconcellos e Sá.⁸⁶ Brito Camacho’s intentions in the crisis were clear: to point out that the opposition was stifled by the weight of the majority, that it was kept in the dark, that the Republic was being threatened by this disregard for the Parliament’s prestige on the part of the government, and that Machado Santos, who had created the Republic had merely acted in order to rescue it from the hands of the government. In this task Brito

⁸³ For the bitter parliamentary discussion surrounding this decree, see the *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 18.12.1916.

⁸⁴ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 10.2.1917.

⁸⁵ *O Século* (Lisbon), 15-12-1916.

⁸⁶ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 10.2.1917.

Camacho was accompanied by his fellow deputies. José Barbosa pointed out that while three deputies had been arrested (Costa Junior, Moura Pinto,⁸⁷ and Alfredo de Magalhães) only the first, a Socialist, had been released, while the two Unionists were still being held. This duality of criteria had been extended to the suspension of the Unionist newspaper, *A Luta*:

“That shameful measure, entitled preventive censorship, had already been decreed, but it proved not to be sufficient to prevent the opposition from acting. (The government) needed truths not to be told, the country not to be addressed.”⁸⁸

Alfredo de Magalhães, who claimed to have been kept under arrest on the Tagus for 33 days without having been interrogated, stated that since his release he had been approached by other conspirators for a movement which was aborted. He was certain, moreover, that other such movements would follow, “as a result of the constitutional reasons which did not allow the country another safety valve against the state’s tyranny.”⁸⁹

The failure of Machado Santos meant that his attempted *coup d'état* has never received as much attention as that of Sidónio Pais a year later. As a result his intentions, as well as the extent of the support he enjoyed have remained unclear. Machado Santos issued two proclamations, one during the movement itself and another after his arrest. The first stated that his government would not make empty promises as to the overcoming of the ills caused by present and past mistakes, made possible only by the public’s “apathy and indifference.”⁹⁰ His government would attempt instead to act as an agent of “national

⁸⁷ Who, according to José Barbosa, was arrested on the Parliament’s steps. *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 18.12.1916.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 2.2.1917.

concord”, and as a result to “obtain the contribution of all of you for the safeguarding of the Fatherland’s future.”⁹¹ Machado Santos’ views on the European war were clearly laid out: his government would remain loyal to the British alliance, and as a result of that loyalty it would endeavour to “defend with energy the continental and the overseas territories from any incursions by the enemy” through a more rational use of land and sea forces.⁹² No mention was therefore made of the Portuguese Expeditionary Corps and of the intention to fight on the Western Front. Machado Santos’ declarations after his arrest were censured initially, but were later reprinted in *O 13 de Dezembro*:

“Sampling the asphyxiating atmosphere which covered the whole country, and pondering my responsibilities in the foundation of the present regime, I decided to intervene in order to drive from government Mr. António José d’Almeida, who had been responsible for the greatest crimes through his odious international politics and his imbecilic indifference to the economic and financial problems which were driving us to ruin and to hunger.”⁹³

According to Machado Santos, Portugal was awash with worthless paper money, the government’s sole means of dealing with its economic difficulties, and the country’s available wealth was being channeled into national defense, but being diverted through incompetence and corruption with the result that the country’s real military strength had not been altered. As for the extent of his support, Machado Santos gave no clue, claiming defiantly that “in the preparation of the movement I had as accomplice the whole country, but in the actual events I had no accomplice, having done everything with my own

⁹⁰ *O Século* (Lisbon), 15.12.1916.

⁹¹ *ibid.*

⁹² *ibid.*

⁹³ *O 13 de Dezembro...*, 33-34.

hands.”⁹⁴ Whatever the size of the movement’s support,⁹⁵ the superior moral attitude assumed by the prisoners in relation to their captors, as exhibited in their correspondence, was striking. Júlio Costa Pinto, a seasoned monarchist conspirator, wrote,

“What angers me is that somebody in the Portuguese army interpreted the noble and dignified attitude assumed by the majority of the arrested officers kept on board (he was writing from a warship on the Tagus) as a monarchist political manoeuvre, rather than the obvious symptom of the high bearing and of the energetic character of tomorrow’s society.”⁹⁶

This attitude was seconded by Lieutenant José Xavier Vaz Osório, who complained of the lack of visits, and of the constant interrogations, adding that “we refuse to give any declarations other than the affirmation of the patriotic ends which lay behind the movement.”⁹⁷

Nineteen sixteen, a year which had promised so much for the two main republican parties, ended on a negative note, with defeat in Africa, the shelling of Funchal, and an attempted *coup d'état*.⁹⁸ There was, as a result of these incidents, as well as of a

⁹⁴ *ibid.*, 34.

⁹⁵ Nineteen officers were still awaiting trial in December of 1917 for their involvement in the 13th of December rising. Aniceto Afonso & Marília Guerreiro, “A Revolta de Tomar (13 de Dezembro de 1916)”, *Boletim do Arquivo Histórico Militar* vol.LI (1981), 131.

⁹⁶ Arquivo Histórico Militar (A.H.M.), Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1279, report on intercepted correspondence from detainees.

⁹⁷ *ibid.* Such a view is, however, flatly contradicted by Daeschner, who wrote to Briand, “j’ai eu maintes fois l’occasion de dénoncer à Votre Excellence les méfaits de l’or allemand en Portugal. Il poursuit son oeuvre démoralisatrice. Je n’y reviens pas (...)” M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 24.12.1916.

⁹⁸ And, according to Daeschner, the expectation of more *coups*: “L’aventure Machado Santos a été heureusement et rapidement liquidée, mais la situation du gouvernement n’en est que momentanément

perceived lack of activity by certain ministers, a feeling that at least a ministerial reshuffle should take place. *O Século*, preoccupied that not enough was being done to 'prepare the peace', began to call for a reshuffle as early as 23.10.1916, at the height of its campaign for a more energetic and rational policy for the cultivation, distribution, and purchase of wheat. In the same article, *O Século*, preoccupied with the government's faltering energy, also called for parliament's role and power to be increased. By 8.12.1916, the daily's tone had changed to one of exasperation: "With the exception of the War portfolio, one could almost say that there is no government (...) Because we are at war, we cannot tolerate a government that does not act, that does not think clearly, that does not resolve the important questions that lie before it (...)" On 18.12.1916, while praising the energy with which the government had suppressed the movement of the 13th, *O Século* still called for a reshuffle, which, after all had already taken place both in Great Britain and France. José Barbosa, a Unionist Deputy, took advantage, on the same day, of these public calls for a new cabinet, stating that "the country does not want this government, but the government wants to be in power (...) There are no means within this parliamentary machine that might guarantee the life of another (government)." ⁹⁹

As we saw in ch.IV, the government failed to turn the war into a popular, national cause, and by the end of 1916 the dangers inherent in that failure had become more than apparent. Even before the disturbance that the C.E.P.'s departure was expected to cause a serious attempt to topple the government had been made, the army was not united in the will to fight a war that it, like most of the politicised minority, saw as a partisan matter;¹⁰⁰ and the economic difficulties faced by the country were being explained to the majority of the population as being the direct result of participation in the war by the regime's

fortifiée, et il n'est pas impossible que dans l'état actuel d'anarchie et d'nerveusement des esprits, de nouveaux incidents se produisent." *ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 18.12.1916.

¹⁰⁰ Daeschner explained to Briand, in April of 1916, that intervention was opposed by "un corps d'officiers dont les 2/3 sont notoirement hostiles à la guerre et passent pour disposés à favoriser tout mouvement séditieux qui empêcherait une mobilisation." M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Coopération Militaire et Matériel de Guerre, 637, telegram, Daeschner to M.A.E., 30.4.1916.

enemies, both to the Right and to the Left. The government, however, was distracted, all of its efforts being directed towards the training and shipment of the Portuguese force to fight in France: and it seemed oblivious of the fact that without the creation of a national consensus around the sending of the C.E.P. to France, the force's departure would only be counter-productive to republican, and Portuguese, interests.

CHAPTER VI - THE CRISIS OF 1917:
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

We saw in the last chapter that Portugal's entry into the war did not lead to a calming of the political or the social situation. As the government prepared the forces to be sent to a European battleground, and passed the legislation required for the more efficient running of the country in an emergency situation, its political enemies continued to seize the immediate political and economic difficulties in order to discredit both the 'Sacred Union' and the Republic itself. Military shortcomings also led to renewed doubts about the worth of any military assistance on the Western Front. In the next two chapters we shall examine the evolution of the difficulties faced by those 'Sacred Union' governments over the year of 1917, which in Portugal, as in the rest of Europe, can be considered to have been a year of crisis. In order to understand the collapse of the Portuguese war effort in December 1917, one must first examine the social and economic difficulties faced by the country in that year. Nineteen seventeen was the year in which the State's ability to act across the country, undermined by fickle allegiance to the new regime and by corruption, finally collapsed; in which desertion increased, as did the officer corps' hostility to the regime, with the result that the expectation of a military revolt against the government was constant; in which conflict between the Church and the State broke out anew; and in which the *União Operária Nacional* (U.O.N.) began to exert itself at a national level, strengthened by the ever more pressing difficulties faced by workers and mounting support for its actions from other social bodies. In this chapter we will see how internal conflict reflected a rejection of the government's attempt to mobilize the country around the banner of national defense. An examination will also be made of the diverse nature of the opposition to the government, and of the attempts by the different opposition

groups to come together. As a result this chapter will not be a straightforward socio-economic description of Portugal in 1917, a task which falls outside the scope of this thesis; rather, it will provide an illustration of the visible rejection of the government's call for unity. It will also illustrate the government's failure to make concessions to key organisations in return for their support for the war effort, thereby taking political mobilization beyond the level of rhetoric.

I. The attitude of the army.

The obvious starting point for this chapter is the army, which, after all, was called upon to join the fight against Germany on the Western Front. Beginning with the officer corps, we see that the governments of António José d'Almeida and of Afonso Costa received, throughout the year, evidence of the army's mounting resentment towards the 'Sacred Union.' Monarchist officers plotted against the Republic and its leaders, allowed their men to fall prey to anti-war propaganda (as we shall see in ch.IX) and, on some occasions, refused to leave the country for France. The government offered nothing in the way of conciliation, but, at the same time, failed to challenge the authority of these monarchist officers, fearing that an outright confrontation with the army might be followed by a military dictatorship. Officers of two infantry regiments - 7th and 34th - did not march towards Lisbon in January 1917 in solidarity with the officers who had been arrested in the aftermath of the Machado Santos' rising.¹ João Chagas chronicled the arrival of the C.E.P. in France and, judging the opinions of its officers and the letters

¹ According to the French Consul in Oporto, 50 officers refused to march until they had been told whether Britain had asked for Portuguese troops in France or whether they were being sent on the government's initiative. Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Consul in Oporto to Briand, 23.1.1917. According to the French Minister in Lisbon, most of the officers of the 34th refused to march, being replaced by n.c.o.s who led the troops out of Santarém, where the 34th was based. M.A.E., Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Coopération Militaire et Matériel de Guerre, 639, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 28.1.1917. Norton de Matos, discussing the events with the rest of the cabinet, months later, did not mention the number of officers involved, but explained that "the 34th marched with a full complement of officers and sergeants - who belonged to other regiments" and that the afflicted battalion belonging to the 7th had marched only as a result of the efforts of the then Colonel Gomes da Costa, future commander of the 2nd Division of the C.E.P. and leader of the *coup* that finally toppled the Republic in 1926. A.H. de Oliveira Marques (ed.), *O Terceiro Governo de Afonso Costa: Actas dos Conselhos dos Ministros* (Lisbon; Livros Horizonte, 1977), 62.

written by its soldiers, was left with doubts about the eventual outcome of the expedition.² Chagas later mentioned the very real atmosphere of hostility towards himself and President Machado when the latter undertook his tour of the Portuguese front in October 1917.³ Chagas' reflections were not immediately available to the government in Lisbon, but the Information Service of the Ministry of War (M.G.S.I) left the government in no doubt as to the hostility to the Republic and "its" war on the part of a substantial percentage of the officer corps. Lists of unreliable officers routinely arrived in Lisbon,⁴ while an inquiry into a series of riots which took place in Évora, in June and July 1917, revealed a complete breakdown of morale among the officers of the units involved. One officer, interviewed by the city's *Guarda Nacional Republicana* (G.N.R.) commander, claimed that the officers and sergeants under his command "had been in the reserve, were unhappy to be serving, and, like himself, were being dragged into the war against their wills," and that his officers' "ill-feeling was so great that they no longer care(d) about being punished."⁵ According to the same report, the already quoted officer was seen, on the night of 29.6.1917, *arming* his troops when, in the interests of public safety, they should have been confined to their barracks.⁶ Foreign diplomatic services were aware of the scale of the officers' disenchantment. The French Consul in Oporto mentioned, in June, that some officers were still vowing to refuse to depart for France, while others were simply deserting and crossing the border into Spain.⁷ Daeschner, explaining the causes for the

² João Chagas, *Diário*, vol.II (Lisbon: Edições Rolim, 1986), 324-325.

³ João Chagas, *Diário* vol.III (Lisbon: Edições Rolim, 1986), 47.

⁴ See Arquivo Histórico Militar (A.H.M.), Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, for these lists and reports on specific units covering 1916 and 1917, such as the fort of Caxias, outside Lisbon, "where we can only count upon, with absolute trust, a second sergeant." Report, A.S. Casal Ribeiro, 17.9.1916.

⁵ Arquivo Nacional (A.N.), Lisbon, Ministério do Interior (M.I.), Direcção Geral da Administração Política e Civil, stack 76 (1917), report, G.N.R. battalion commander, Major João Augusto da Costa, July 1917.

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Consul in Oporto to Ribot, 15.6.1917.

success of Sidónio Pais' revolt, mentioned "la repugnance à la guerre en France principalement de la part des officiers."⁸

That monarchist officers should question their allegiance to the Republic when faced by the test of war was understandable to the Portuguese government. Harder to accept, however, was the attitude of the soldiers mobilized for the war, many of whom simply vanished, never reporting for duty or deserting at the first opportunity. The high levels of desertion were not simply the result of the anti-war propaganda which, as we shall see, was aimed, above all, at the soldiers in the barracks. Shirking of military duty was the natural response to the war of a population for whom the Republic, if not the Fatherland, meant very little. Despite the claims of its leadership, and despite this leadership's constant rhetoric about the innate patriotism of the Portuguese, the Republic had yet to affect positively the lives of the great majority of rural workers and small landowners who made up the bulk of the population and hence of the army. For these rural inhabitants, the mobilization order represented an imposition from a little known entity, to which no allegiance had been pledged. It is hard to quantify the scale of desertion from military units, or the failure to obey mobilization orders. The one complete survey of desertion available in the *Arquivo Histórico Militar*, in Lisbon, was carried out in April 1917, when part of the C.E.P. was already in France. The units that stayed behind reported, between them, 2,500 deserters, 2,017 of whom belonged to the infantry.⁹ Some regiments were particularly hit in the first four months of 1917: the 29th (Braga), with 95 deserters; the 31st (Oporto), with 79; the 8th (Braga), by May 1917, registered 175 deserters, 68 of whom had vanished on 22.4.1917; hardest hit of all was the 3rd Infantry (Viana do Castelo), which listed 211 deserters, an astounding 111 of whom had vanished

⁸ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 635, telegram, Daeshner to M.A.E., 8.12.1917. See also Daeschner's detailed account of the rising, given in a letter to Ribot, dated 9.12.1917: "M. Sidónio Pais s'était de plus assuré le concours d'un certain nombre d'officiers et des élèves de l'École de Guerre qui voyaient dans le succès d'une insurrection le moyen de ne pas être envoyés au front."

⁹ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th Section, box 1260 & 1261 - "Relações de Desertores Enviados às Autoridades Pedindo Captura." According to the *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal - 1917* (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1921), the Portuguese army in 1917 was a force of 170,000 officers and men; from this total must be deducted the troops already in France (30,000+) and in Africa (35,000.)

on 15.4.1917. Other reports in the Archive reveal that desertion and other forms of shirking of duties increased prior to boarding the ships for France. One of the battalions due to leave in January 1917 reported that out of its 356 soldiers, 175 had not reported for duty, while a further 129 were in hospital. These figures, limited to the early months of 1917, do not account for the men who were never incorporated into the army in the first place. According to the official government statistics, published after the war, the numbers of those who did not report for their obligatory military service rose from 12,500 for the 1915 class to 21,000 for the 1916 class, a total which fell, in 1917, to 19,000.¹⁰ These men went into hiding in Portugal, or crossed the border into Spain, where many, despite the Portuguese government's protests, were given political exile status.¹¹ The smuggling of young men into Spain became a profitable business, and, as we shall see, led to the widespread corruption of local and national authorities.¹² By 1917, moreover, seeking refuge abroad had become an established practice,¹³ but the government was never able to control it, which had obvious implications not only for the soldiers who had been sent for France but also for their families.

Most of the reports to be found in the files of the M.G.S.I. and the Direcção Geral da Administração Política e Civil (D.G.A.P.C.) concerning desertion and illegal emigration to Spain of men of military age speak of the lack, or the the incompetence, of local

¹⁰ According to the *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal - 1917* (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1921), the numbers who should have reported to the recruitment centres (for both the army and the navy) in 1915, 1916, and 1917 were, respectively, 69,571, 78,540, and 77,823.

¹¹ See, for example, A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 67 (1917), report from the Consulate in Tuy, 25.6.1917.

¹² *ibid.* The above report added that many in Tuy were now living exclusively from this traffic.

¹³ See, for example, A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, Ministério da Guerra, Serviço de Informações (M.G.S.I.) report, November 1916: "From informations gathered from the postal censorship, we know that across the northern border, and especially through Valença and Monção, the constant emigration of young men liable for military duties is continuing. The same is occurring on the Eastern border (Elvas) (...)" In January 1917 the Consul in Ciudad Rodrigo spoke of the appearance of many Portuguese in the region, the majority of whom had deserted from the 21st Infantry (Lisbon); in one village alone there were between 25 and 30 deserters. A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th Section, box 1296, Consul in Ciudad Rodrigo to M.N.E., 16.1.1917.

authorities and security forces, if not of their outright cooperation in the process. One report, from the Special Emigration Police, stated that in Vilar Formoso, one of the most important border crossing points between the two countries, no action whatsoever was being taken by the *Guarda Fiscal* to halt the smuggling of men into Spain.¹⁴ An M.G.S.I. agent singled out the head of the Emigration police for the north of the country, Aníbal Sousa, “who had not carried out the necessary measures so as to bar the way to the many who, with great ease, enter Spain without any documents.”¹⁵ In April, a “good Portuguese and a true patriot” complained, in a letter addressed to Norton de Matos, that deserters abounded in the border region of the provinces of Minho and Trás-os-Montes, protected, in many cases, by the administrative authorities, who did not act against them: many even resided in their family homes.¹⁶ The lack of zeal shown by police forces and local authorities in the fight against desertion led to complaints from the M.G.S.I. to the overseeing ministries.¹⁷ A complaint to the Ministry of the Interior again referred to Aníbal Sousa, while also implicating the local authorities in the towns close to the border, which issued safe-conducts into Spain indiscriminately.¹⁸ A day after the complaint was made two men were arrested whilst crossing the border, one a soldier and the other a man whose incorporation into the army was due to take place shortly; the former bore a safe-conduct passed by the administrator of the municipality (Amares.) This incident led to new complaints, one of them to the Ministry of Finance, which oversaw the running of the *Guarda Fiscal*, now accused of “not exercising the necessary vigilance in the northern and eastern border”, which allowed the free traffic of individuals for “purposes contrary to the

¹⁴ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 67, Special Emigration Police report, 11.3.1917.

¹⁵ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1262, M.G.S.I. report, 25.8.1917.

¹⁶ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1295, letter, João M. da Silva to the Minister of War, April 1917.

¹⁷ In May 1917 all 35 Infantry regiments reported that they were holding a total of 192 deserters under arrest. A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1026.

¹⁸ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, letter, M.G.S.I. to Ministry of the Interior, 27.8.1917.

security of the Republic and the prestige of the military institutions.”¹⁹ Captain Pinto Vieira, of the M.G.S.I., addressed the local authorities of the municipalities on the northern border, and stressed the importance of ending the practice of the safe-conducts, but with little practical success.²⁰ An informant wrote from Chaves, in November 1917, that “the *Guarda Fiscal* on the border does not check baggage and suitcases, does not inquire as to the identity of those who pass etc (...) It is imperative to ascertain who is responsible.”²¹

A final form of shirking of military duties, again with the complicity of public officials, consisted of being declared medically unfit for the army. As we will see, there were frequent reports of men in poor physical condition being sent both to Africa and to France; the practice of sparing the fit was thus doubly harmful. In August 1917, the M.G.S.I. reported the arrest of one man, and the impending arrest of others, in Lisbon and elsewhere, who negotiated in both exemptions and unnecessary stays in hospital.²² Two months later, a letter was sent to Norton de Matos by a private citizen, alleging that in his municipality, and with the full knowledge of the local authorities, fit men were being registered as unfit for money:

“Matters have reached such a state, the assuredness of impunity is so great, that the PROTECTED openly boast of having spent A LOT OF MONEY and having used A LOT OF PULL in order to be registered as unfit! And there are others who are not ashamed of confessing that, the day

¹⁹ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, letter, M.G.S.I. to Ministry of Finance, 29.8.1917.

²⁰ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, M.G.S.I. report 965, 29.8.1917.

²¹ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, M.G.S.I. report, Chaves, 21.11.1917.

²² A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, M.G.S.I. report 972, 29.8.1917.

before they were due to be sent to France, they notified the authorities of an illness, and as a result did not set off (...)"²³

Finally, it is worth mentioning here that the problems caused by the simple military mobilization were not solved under Sidónio Pais, and that local authorities continued to be as unreliable in 1918 as they had been before. The new Minister of the Interior wrote to all Civil Governors, stating that a great number of desertions was taking place among the 1915-1917 classes, and that this was due to "the almost absolute assuredness, on the part of the deserters, that they will not be caught by the respective administrative authorities, or given away by their townsmen."²⁴

The lack of cooperation by local authorities and entities such as the *Guarda Fiscal* can be explained by two factors: the intrinsic nature of Portuguese politics, still run, as Farelo Lopes has made clear,²⁵ along the lines of *caciquismo*, and the poor pay of military and para-military corporations, hard hit by inflation and Afonso Costa's 'brake law,' which prevented increases in public expenditure. Municipal administrators, despite their nominal republicanism, saw politics merely as a means of advancement. Their main task, in pragmatic terms, was to deliver Democratic victories at the polls; their loyalty to the central government ended there, and the Democratic governments dared not attack the well-oiled machine that kept them in power. Strict enforcement of the mobilization laws would obviously affect the administrators' ability to influence electoral outcomes; the added promise of financial gain must not be discounted either. For the *Guarda Fiscal*, this was the crucial element. Already in July 1916 it had been investigated on behalf of the M.G.S.I. by A.S. Casal Ribeiro, who had come to the conclusion that the daily pay of the

²³ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, letter, Augusto António to Minister of War, 31.10.1917.

²⁴ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 78 (1918), D.G.A.P.C. to all Civil Governors, 5.1.1918. The request for further action was not heeded; a similar letter was sent on 18.7.1918 and 29.9.1918. See A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 82 (1918).

²⁵ Fernando Farelo Lopes, *Poder Político e Caciquismo na Primeira República Portuguesa* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1994.)

guards, 35 cents, was insufficient.²⁶ The Guards further complained that their pay lapsed when they were ill or suspended for disciplinary reasons, which did not occur in other police forces, and that officers regularly suspended them in order to save money. Not surprisingly, Casal Ribeiro concluded, some had fallen prey to corruption and had been removed from the force, and, he added, the situation was even worse in border areas.²⁷ Worse still were the allegations of corruption within the government itself, constantly alleged by the different oppositions but occasionally sufficiently strong to influence impartial commentators. In a letter to Briand, Daeschner claimed that several Germans had been allowed to return to Portugal, and that Alexandre Braga, one of the more controversial figures of the Democratic party and Minister of Justice, had been offered 50,000 Escudos in order to allow one German to return, threatening the cabinet with his resignation unless his request was agreed to. A despondent Daeschner wrote, by way of explanation for this situation, “la perseverance et la tenacité sont des qualités incompatibles avec le tempérament portugais.”²⁸ By 1917, therefore, the Sacred Union governments knew that whatever legislation they adopted in order to secure the country’s borders and prepare it for war would be undermined by lack of resources and by the very nature of the Republic that they themselves had created.

II. The growing rift with the Catholic Church.

The army’s repeated breaches of discipline, both at the level of officers and of soldiers, did not provide the only sign of the doubts which gripped Portugal as to the wisdom of not only the war policy, but also of Democratic government at a time of

²⁶ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, report by A.S. Casal Ribeiro on the *Guarda Fiscal*, 26.7.1916.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 12.1.1917. Daeschner had earlier mentioned rumours that the Minister of Labour, António Maria da Silva, Afonso Costa’s future heir as party leader, was in the pay of the two companies which dominated the production of flour in Portugal; as we shall see, there was corruption in this field. Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 13.11.1916.

national emergency. Conservative opinion was deeply angered by the resumption, in wartime, of the conflict between the State and the Catholic Church, or rather, as it was interpreted by this same conservative opinion, the persecution of the Church by the free thinkers and masons of the Democratic party. Displaying a bold recklessness and an inability to grasp the need for a political truce in the country, especially once the Democrats began to govern alone, in April 1917, the government began to resolve its disputes with the hierarchy by resorting to the tactic employed in the first years of the regime: the driving out of prelates from their dioceses. As a result, Portugal's four leading clerical figures were separated from their flocks and driven into temporary exile to another part of the country, the Bishop of Oporto on 31.7.1917, the Cardinal of Lisbon on 23.8.1917, and the Archbishops of Braga and Évora on 27.11.1917, for infringing the law of separation. When six nuns were found sharing a house in Oporto with the Bishop's knowledge, the latter was forced to leave the District, despite pleas for toleration. Even some republicans could not understand the reasoning behind the government's action; Homem Cristo wrote,

“The expulsion of the Bishop of Oporto is yet another sign of the lack of common sense which prevails in the spheres of power. I am not saying that Dr. António Barroso did not break the law of separation, but it was a minimal offense, of no importance whatsoever (...) those who organised the December 13 rising have not been punished. Not a single German agent is arrested, when there are hundreds of them running about. Nothing is discovered about the great offences, the great crimes. But what are discovered and stolen are the letters of bishops, and what are punished are the simple crimes of conscience.”²⁹

²⁹ *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 12.8.1917.

From the other side of the political divide came bitter taunts; *O Dia* called the government's actions "a brilliant and courageous act of strength for Liberty and Law and certainly, as well, for the greater glory of Civilization and Justice,"³⁰ mockingly employing the terms used by the government to describe the nature of the European war. When António Mendes Belo, the Cardinal of Lisbon, attempted to regulate the affairs of the Sisterhood of the Sacrament, a lay organisation, without first consulting the government, as he should have done according to the law of separation, the government responded, after some warning signs, by banishing the Cardinal from Lisbon for a year. *Vida Católica*, the official organ of the Lisbon patriarchate, attacked the government for not allowing the Cardinal to defend himself: a "simple exercise of executive will" had been enough to deprive Lisbon's Catholics of their spiritual guide at a time of crisis.³¹ Increased tension between the government and the Catholic Church was also reflected by the Interior Minister's decision to ban a 'Catholic Youth' congress, which was to be held in Viseu, a move approved of by the Council of Ministers,³² and by the harsh guidelines sent out by the D.G.A.P.C. to all Civil Governors on how to deal with Catholic associations, a sign that the government was aware of the Church's role as a focus for hostility to the Republic and to the war.³³

These circumstances naturally led some elements within the Church to fight back, taking advantage of the heightened religious feelings that accompanied the uncertainties of war. In ch.VIII we shall examine this campaign in detail, but in this chapter we can

³⁰ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 3.8.1917.

³¹ *Vida Católica* (Lisbon), 5.9.1917.

³² Oliveira Marques (ed.), *op.cit.*, 40.

³³ "The moment that there might be reason to believe that such associations are moving away from the declarations of intent that they have formulated before the authorities, regarding their headquarters, their internal regulations, and their avowed ends, becoming as a result involved in the discussion of actions foreign to those ends, and acting collectively outside of their allowed geographical areas, or allowing the interference of elements alien to their regulations, then those associations (...) should be given one warning, and if they repeat their actions they should be dissolved." A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 71 (1917), letter, D.G.A.P.C. to all Civil Governors, 3.7.1917.

consider the clearest demonstration of strength by the Church in the war years: the Marian apparitions in Fátima. On the 13th of every month from May to October 1917, the Virgin allegedly appeared to three children in a field, and news of the apparition, and of the Virgin's message, spread quickly throughout the country, so that pilgrims began to arrive in the hope of witnessing the miracle. The final apparition, in October, at which a crowd of between 30 and 40,000 was present,³⁴ was followed by the now famous sun dance. One of the central themes in the dialogues held between Lucia, the oldest of the three children, and the Virgin, was the end of the war. In July, the Virgin called for prayers to be addressed to Our Lady of the Rosary in order for the conflict to come to a close, and this recommendation was repeated in September. In October, according to *O Século*,

“Lucia, the one who speaks to the Virgin, (announced) with theatrical gestures, borne aloft by a man who carried her from group to group, that the war had come to an end and that our soldiers were coming home.”³⁵

Moreover, according to the same account, among the crowd who witnessed the sun's miraculous dance there were priests, members of Catholic associations, and known monarchists who, “with their words of faith, increased the mystic fervour of the crowd.”³⁶ To the thousands who travelled the length of the country to witness the events in Fátima, and to the larger thousands who heard their accounts, there was a clear discrepancy between the Virgin's words of peace and the War Minister's call for 4,000 soldiers to be sent every month to France; the continuation of the war seemed, as a result of the apparitions in Fátima, to defy the will of God.

III. The economy and public discontent.

³⁴ *O Século* (Lisbon), 15.10.1917.

³⁵ *ibid.*

³⁶ *ibid.*

We have seen in this chapter that the government was aware, throughout 1917, of discontent with its policies on the part of the army, which it did not dare to counter, and the Church, which it could control but only at the risk of alienating Catholic opinion even further. What remains to be seen is the extent to which the government's economic standing rose or fell among the country's 'living forces', its agricultural and industrial producers. Portugal's economic performance was not encouraging. The cost of living index, described in the *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal* as the combined prices of 25 essential household items, continued to rise, reaching an index of 162.3 in July (1914=100), but with serious regional variations: 172.1 in Lisbon and a staggering 214.8 in Oporto.³⁷ These discrepancies add weight to the allegations of widespread fraud and hoarding of agricultural goods. Agricultural products, on average, reached 192.8 (1914=100) but with wheat at 260 (13 cents/kg.), maize at 242.8 (08.5 cents/kg.), bread at 242.8 (17 cents/kg.), and potatoes at 200 (6 cents/kg). Only wine decreased, to 141.6 (8 cents/l.)³⁸ There are, however, serious discrepancies in the accounts of the population's ability to keep up with these price increases. According to Oliveira Marques, who worked from official statistics, 1917 was to see an improvement in the wages of agricultural workers (to 58 cents per day for men) which meant that their wages were now growing at a faster rate than inflation.³⁹ The wages of industrial workers, moreover, more than doubled since 1914, as opposed to the 62.3% increase in the cost of living.⁴⁰ According to A.J. Telo, however, official statistics were not reliable, because they were elaborated on the basis of a small sample of union members.⁴¹

³⁷ *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal - 1921* (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1925), 234.

³⁸ *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal - 1919* (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1924), 35.

³⁹ A.H. de Oliveira Marques, *História da Primeira República Portuguesa: As Estruturas de Base* (Lisbon: Iniciativas Editoriais, n.d.), 367.

⁴⁰ Oliveira Marques, *op.cit.*, 319.

⁴¹ A.J. Telo, *O Sidonismo e o Movimento Operário: Luta de Classes em Portugal 1917-1919* (Lisbon: Ulmeiro, 1978), 102.

Contemporary accounts seem to favour the latter interpretation, even when published in non-working class newspapers. *O Século*, for example, published, in August, figures which indicated a 110% increase in prices since the outbreak of the war, while adding that “in no industry have wages increased by more than 30%.”⁴² Whatever the truth about the increases in prices and wages, there was a perception that prices were outstripping the workers’ ability to keep up with them, a common phenomenon in times of high inflation and usually leading to labour militancy. As we have already seen, it was public servants, upon whom the government relied for the implementation of its policies, and who formed the visible face of the Republic, who were hardest hit by inflation; the freeze on their salaries was not ended in 1917. Primary school teachers, who had offered their support for the task of political mobilization, were by 1917 mobilizing exclusively in a salary struggle against the government. According to *Educação Nacional*, a Third Class (i.e. recently employed) primary school teacher earned a monthly 19 Escudos, one half of what an already badly paid Second Lieutenant received.⁴³

In terms of productivity, the picture was equally bleak. Agriculture continued to falter, with the 1917 wheat harvest reaching only 200,603 tons, a low total accompanied by an even lower than usual importation of only 62,343 tons,⁴⁴ which, as we shall see, was to be the cause of violent criticism. The production of maize also fell to 260,058 tons, a trend followed in the case of wine, rice, beans, and potatoes; the only successes were to be found in the case of rye, oats, and barley,⁴⁵ cereals which escaped the government’s price control mechanisms. As for Portuguese industry’s ability to react positively to the war, the results are also mixed. The lack of competition, Telo points out, helped some of the industries which supplied the national market: mining, food, wood, and cement, most of

⁴² *O Século* (Lisbon), 23.8.1917.

⁴³ *Educação Nacional* (Oporto), 7.10.1917.

⁴⁴ A.H. Oliveira Marques (coordinator), *Nova História de Portugal*, vol IX *Portugal da Monarquia para a República* (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1991), 94.

⁴⁵ *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal - 1919* (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1924), 32-33.

which relied upon small factories or even workshops. The industries dependent on foreign raw materials, or geared towards export, suffered: textiles, chemicals, and metallurgy. There was a shortage of raw materials, of fuel, of machines, and, of course, of markets.⁴⁶ The importation of iron fell from 71,361 tons in 1914 to 23,970 in 1917; that of heavy oils from 9,301 tons to 6,789 in the same period.⁴⁷ Industrial exports rose to 8.2 million Escudos, or 14.9% of total exports. Once converted to Sterling however, we see that the total worth of the exports fell from 1916 to 1917, by £60,000.⁴⁸ Telo, however, claims that the price of industrial products rose in accordance with the increased costs, and that some of the hardest hit industries were given special protection by the government, as long as they were deemed to be of special value to the war effort; his conclusion is that, overall, the war was beneficial to industry.⁴⁹ In terms of Portugal's chronic trade deficit, industry's contribution to import substitution was nullified by the poor agricultural output. Imports stood at 137.4 million Escudos, as opposed to exports of 55.2 million Escudos, and the weight of agricultural imports is reflected by the ever increasing imports from the U.S.A., which reached 40 million Escudos in 1917.⁵⁰

In practical terms, 1917 was a year of shortages, notably of essential foodstuffs such as bread, and these shortages aggravated all the conflicts present in Portuguese society prior to the war. There were refusals to allow cereals to leave the municipality in which they had been produced; there was hoarding and large-scale smuggling of foodstuffs and cattle to Spain; and there was a profitable black-market for wheat, which was channeled into highly profitable and illegal white bread, with the result that the legal, and affordable bread became scarcer and of an ever worsening quality. Shortages of food, in 1917, became equated with riots, and these riots were responded to with force.

⁴⁶ A.J. Telo, *op.cit.*, 66+.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal - 1919* (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1924), 74-75.

⁴⁹ A.J. Telo, *op.cit.*, 72.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

When to this repression is added the conflicts sparked off by the reinvigorated labour movement, one can begin to understand the Democrats' loss of support in Lisbon, their traditional bastion. The most important food riot, which some hailed as the long-predicted 'revolution of the hungry', broke out in Lisbon on 19.5.1917. According to the G.N.R.'s report on the events, a shortage of bread led to a sudden increase in the demand for potatoes, whose price shot up from 6 cents/kg. to 14 cents. "The people protested," the report continued, "waiting for nightfall and then carrying out a general assault on all types of foodstores throughout the city: grocery stores, bakeries, and fish warehouses."⁵¹ One hundred and two arrests were made in one night and General Pereira d'Eça, the capital's military governor declared martial law and took control of the city. Constitutional guarantees were suspended, and commerce was forced to close early. The army, the G.N.R., the Civic Police, and the *Guarda Fiscal* were all called upon to take part in the restoration of order, and the General called for "persuasive efforts" to bring calm to the city's streets, to be followed, if unsuccessful, by "maximum efforts, including violent means." Putting his considerable prestige on the line, Pereira d'Eça added that he would take full responsibility for his forces' actions.⁵² *O Século*, whose explanation for the events coincided with that of the G.N.R., reported the death of 23 men and women and the wounding of 50, and only on 23.5.1917 could it assure its readership that peace had been restored in the capital; on 22.5.1917 it still described scenes of pillaging as well as the *Guarda Fiscal's* reluctance to intervene.

According to the French Minister in Lisbon, events were more serious: 100 killed was the likely figure, with hundreds of wounded, while the *Guarda Fiscal* had actually turned against the G.N.R. out of solidarity with the rioters.⁵³ There was a general

⁵¹ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 75 (1917), report of the 2nd Commander, Carmo barracks, 20.5.1917.

⁵² A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 36th section, box 1, First Division Command, order, 20.5.1917.

⁵³ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918. Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Ribot, 31.5.1917. See ch.IX for Daeschner's interpretation of the riots.

consensus, among labour and conservative sources, that the riots were economic in nature; the government and the security services saw the events differently. According to the M.G.S.I., the riots were being carried out “according to an old plan of Lisbon’s anarcho-communists, led by the propagandist Bernardino dos Santos, with the support of the workers’ unions (...)”⁵⁴ According to the same source, a curious combination of Unionist politicians, owners of illegal casinos, and irate taxi drivers were all linked to the plot, which was funded by Germanophile and monarchist agents, or even by monarchist charity organisations, purporting to raise money for the families of mobilized soldiers.⁵⁵ Afonso Costa, in a possible political error, explained the riots to parliament on the basis of these intelligence reports, without acknowledging that they were at least partly motivated by the food shortages. According to the Prime Minister,

“Those who took part in the attacks were not driven by a lack of bread, or by difficulties in finding food, but rather by the intent to destroy and disturb. It was people more or less linked to anarchist and syndicalist elements (...) who constitute a part of the fauna possessed by all capital cities (...)”⁵⁶

The opposition’s response to the government’s claims was immediate. In parliament, Costa Junior put the blame squarely on the government’s inability to solve the foodstuffs crisis, and on its constant backing of commerce over the consumers. Moreover, the Socialist deputy did not refer to the G.N.R. by its name, referring to it rather as the *Guarda Municipal*, the paramilitary force of the monarchy which the G.N.R. had replaced after 1910. According to the *Partido Socialista Português* (P.S.P.),

⁵⁴ A.H.M., 1st Division, 35th section, box 1281, M.G.S.I. report 505, Lisbon, 21.5.1917.

⁵⁵ *ibid.* The M.G.S.I. reached its conclusions through a net of informers, the postal censorship system, and its own direct inquiries.

⁵⁶ Oliveira Marques (ed.) *Afonso Costa: Discursos Parlamentares, 1914-1926* (Lisbon: Bertrand, 1977), 272-273.

therefore, there was no longer any difference between the Republic and the previous regime. Brito Camacho presented a motion blaming the government for the crisis, which was, inevitably, defeated.⁵⁷ The press of all hues also lined up against the government. *Trabalho e União*, although late in reporting the riots, predicted that they would spread to the rest of the country, and stated that the government had rushed into the war without considering the practical aspects of belligerency: “While abroad bread was ensured before bullets, in this country the supply of bullets was ensured before the supply of bread, and not very well.”⁵⁸ *O Dia*, heavily censored, drew a sarcastic comparison between the riots in Lisbon and the Russian revolution:

“Crises of hunger and misery are never solved by anarchy. We, who did not light fireworks in honour of the ‘Russian salad’, can only face with terror the possibility of a ‘Portuguese salad’ which might adopt it as a model.”⁵⁹

Even the republican *O Século* turned on the government, claiming, in an editorial, that behind the riots stood “the precarious living conditions of certain social classes” and “damaging habits which allowed the unnecessary worsening of our economic situation.”⁶⁰ The government’s account of the causes of the riots in Lisbon were not convincing to public opinion because, since the outbreak of the First World War, successive cabinets had failed to please both consumers, by providing cheap bread, and producers, who unrealistically called for the withdrawal of price controls within a market heavily protected from external competition. The artificially low ceiling set on the price of cereals restricted their production (some latifundiary estate owners refusing to grow

⁵⁷ *O Século* (Lisbon), 23.5.1917.

⁵⁸ *Trabalho e União* (Funchal), 16.6.1917.

⁵⁹ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 22.5.1917.

⁶⁰ *O Século* (Lisbon), 23.5.1917.

cereals, leaving their land uncultivated or switching to cattle)⁶¹ and led to part of that production being channeled into the black market, or being exported illegally to Spain. Moreover, the government was seen as being unduly slow in purchasing wheat abroad to make up for the shortfall caused by poor harvest, which resulted in the purchase of too little wheat at too high a price.

Producers, shopkeepers, and consumers had reason, by 1917, to complain about the government's handling of the foodstuffs question. Corruption was a part of this disenchantment. In October 1916, *O Século* denounced the corruption which surrounded the flour industry. The newspaper claimed that the mills were only producing the flour required for the more expensive types of bread, which rendered impotent all legislation concerning the types of bread to be made available to the public, and that the army's supply board was selling some of the grain that it had requisitioned to selected mills, a charge later admitted by the government.⁶² Daeschner fully believed that corruption was widespread, and claimed, after the riots, that while white bread was available throughout the country, "la population de Lisbonne, depuis plusieurs mois déjà, est réduite à un produit qui souvent n'a de pain que le nom."⁶³ Daeschner went on to add that fraud was a frequent occurrence in the bakeries, but that it was easy for the bakers to curry favour with the badly paid police who were sent to investigate complaints.⁶⁴ The government, unable to move efficiently against the republican shopkeepers, its own supporters, legislated furiously, altering its mind frequently on the subjects of what kinds of bread should be on sale, what their composition should be, and, of course, on their price. In February 1917, for example, a decree called for two types of bread to be produced and

⁶¹ A.J. Telo. *op.cit.*, 76.

⁶² *O Século*, 3.10.1916. *O Combate* (Lisbon) had also been active in denouncing hoarding and speculation as the reasons for the food shortages; in 1915 the Socialist newspaper claimed that "there is no food crisis. What is really happening is that, despite the ban on exports, many goods still leave the country, while others are stored (...) the crisis is being deliberately provoked (...)" *O Combate* (Lisbon), 26.12.1915.

⁶³ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Ribot, 31.5.1917.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

sold: a 'normal' bread, half wheat and half maize, and a special white bread, to be purchased at pharmacies by those with a medical prescription, for the outrageous price of 40 cents/Kg. These procedures, and the assurances given by the government, after the Lisbon riots, that grain was on its way from Mozambique and the U.S.A., did not convince the public opinion that the situation could be solved, and *O Século* predicted a catastrophe as the year ended:

“We are living off the scarce remains of the national harvest, which will last for a few weeks only. After that there will be hunger (...) or, rather, hunger in its definitive stages, for hunger is already widespread (...) these remnants of wheat are obtained with great effort, for farmers withhold the grain and local authorities do not have the strength, or the will, to carry out the law.”⁶⁵

In parliament, the government's food and supplies policy came under heavy fire from the Unionist party, which accused the cabinet of failing to carry out its responsibilities towards the public, and of being divided over how best to tackle the crisis. Inevitably, the German ships were brought into the discussion,⁶⁶ as the lack of coal was

⁶⁵ *O Século* (Lisbon), 28.10.1917. These predictions were true, for Bernardino Machado appealed to Daeschner, in November, to inform the French government of the seriousness of the situation: Lisbon was faced by a complete breakdown in the supply of bread, which would lead to violence. Machado was hoping for French support to be given for Afonso Costa's attempt to purchase wheat while in London for an Allied economic conference, but Daeshner informed Paris that, according to the British and American Ministers, no more wheat would be sent to Portugal until serious improvements had been made in the distribution and the consumption of cereals. Daeschner saw no way out of the impasse: “Il est exact, en effet, que la farine ne parait manquer à Lisbonne et que si le peuple n'y trouve pas chaque jour du pain noir les classes aisées y consomment journellement du pain blanc. Mais à mon avis, *il y a lieu de tenir compte du fait qu'un gouvernement Portugais aura difficilement l'autorité ou les moyens suffisants pour assurer l'application d'une réglementation alimentaire quelconque* et la situation est sérieuse.” (My italics.) M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 635, telegram, Daeschner to M.A.E., 26.11.1917.

⁶⁶ See Jorge Nunes' lengthy speech, *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 12.12.1916. See also Nunes' speech on the 8.1.1917: “The work of the government, despite what it proclaims, has been truly damaging for all Portuguese and ruinous for the country. Of the measures taken by the government, not even one can be said to have brought the country the smallest portion of well-being.”

blamed on the shortage of available transports. The lack of bread, the Unionists alleged, was also the government's fault; according to Jorge Nunes, "the government did not buy cheap wheat because it chose not to do so,"⁶⁷ believing that the country's needs would be looked after by the Allied commission for supplies. When this proved to be a false assumption, the government had had to resort to the hurried purchase of that cereal, which had meanwhile risen in price from 9 cents/kg. to 20 cents/kg. State intervention in the production, distribution and sale of wheat had led to disastrous results.⁶⁸ Jorge Nunes also attempted to turn António Maria da Silva, the Minister of Labour, responsible for agriculture, against Afonso Costa; either the Minister of Labour had refused to purchase cheap wheat, in which case he was incompetent, or he had obeyed the will of the Finance Minister, in which case the workings of the cabinet had to be seriously rearranged.⁶⁹ Alfredo de Magalhães, in a long speech after his imprisonment following the 13.12.1916 *coup* attempt, claimed that sugar shortages had resulted from a government decision to sell Mozambican sugar to the Allies, leaving Portugal to purchase that badly needed commodity at hugely inflated prices.⁷⁰ As for meat, the government's decision to supply the needs of Gibraltar and the numerical weakness of the *Guarda Fiscal* were the reasons for the country's shortage.⁷¹

Afonso Costa believed, in the first days of December 1917, that he had resolved the problem of food supplies to Portugal. According to Rêgo, Portugal's premier had achieved an important triumph at the Allied economic conference in Paris. He had obtained the opening of credit lines in the U.S.A. and in Britain which would allow Portugal to purchase, per year, and until one year after the end of the conflict, 1.5 million tons of coal and 240,000 tons of wheat. Moreover, Afonso Costa had obtained Britain's

⁶⁷ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 12.12.1916.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 10.1.1917.

⁷⁰ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 2.2.1917.

⁷¹ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 12.12.1916.

agreement for the immediate return of up to 100,000 tons of shipping: a substantial part, therefore, of the German ships seized in February 1916.⁷² An interesting comparison can be opened up at this point, between Portugal and Italy, which also struggled, throughout the war, to produce and import enough food for its civilian population. After the Turin bread riots (August 1917) turned into pacifist demonstrations, and after the Caporetto battle, Italy was forced to reinforce the State's control over civilian supplies, notably through the introduction of rationing. Nevertheless, as Dentoni makes clear, it was the joint British-American decision to supply Italy with the necessary food that allowed the Italian war effort to survive the last year of the war.⁷³ Portugal's inability to feed itself during the war was not, therefore, unique: for Afonso Costa, the Allied aid which was to save Italy arrived too late. Nevertheless, Costa's decision to ask for the return of seized German merchant ships shows that too many had been put at Britain's disposal, and that these ships did not contribute to the alleviation of Portugal's supply difficulties. Whether this was a mere oversight, or the result, as the Unionists would put it, of too great a faith in the generosity of Britain as an ally (and an over-estimation of Portugal's overall contribution to the Allied war machine) remains to be established.

IV. The U.O.N. in open opposition.

If the government's handling of the May riots had been seen as necessary once they had broken out, not only by the Democratic party but also by more conservative forces (insofar as attacks on private property should be responded to with force, whatever their origin,) then the same heavy-handed approach was to receive universal condemnation in the aftermath of the next crisis to hit the capital: the construction workers' strike in July. The repression which resulted was the first serious clash between government forces

⁷² Raul Rêgo, *História da República vol.IV Do Sidonismo ao 28 de Maio* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1987), 8. These facts are ignored by Georges-Henri Soutou in his *L'Or et le Sang* (Paris: Fayard, 1989) but they are in keeping with another decision made by the conference: the future allocation of tonnage to France and Italy according to their respective needs. Soutou, *op.cit.*, 512.

⁷³ For a detailed discussion of the question of food supplies in Italy, see Maria-Concetta Dentoni, *Annona e Consenso in Italia 1914-1919* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1995.)

and striking workers since the general strike attempted in 1912, and it reflected the rift which the government had allowed, unwisely, to develop between itself and the U.O.N. The war sapped the government's support, and distracted its attention from social issues; the increased seriousness of these issues, and the inequality of sacrifice apparent throughout Portugal, made the unions stronger. On 12.7.1917, construction workers, who had been holding out for improved wages for over a week, and who had led a peaceful march through Lisbon, were surrounded in their federation's headquarters by the G.N.R. During the siege, a bomb was thrown by an unknown party, after which shooting broke out. *O Século* put casualties at 6 killed and 28 wounded in what it called "a real battle," during which the G.N.R. had "lost its head."⁷⁴ The public safety apparatus unveiled in May was again put in place, and scenes of chaos were frequent, as were allegations that the G.N.R. had fired on unarmed civilians or into houses. Condemnation came from *O Dia*,⁷⁵ which criticized the use of violence and the curtailment of democratic rights, and from the opposite end of the spectrum, with *A Voz do Operário* claiming that "these last events (...) are proof that the republicans are no better than the monarchists in their contempt for the working classes, in their despotism, and in their unfairness towards those who work and produce."⁷⁶ In parliament, the Unionist deputy João Meneses condemned the government and the police forces:

"The occurrences which took place were monstrous: defenceless people, women and children, were murdered. The force sent out on the street to preserve order, which had not been threatened, fired point-blank at windows, in the Chiado itself, where a girl of fourteen was wounded (...) in the streets where there were no clashes taking place, or

⁷⁴ *O Século* (Lisbon), 14.7.1917. Daeschner put casualties at 20 killed, and described the G.N.R.'s actions as "particulièrement redoutable pour les gens paisibles." M.A.E., Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Ribot, 20.7.1917.

⁷⁵ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 14.7.1917.

⁷⁶ *A Voz do Operário* (Lisbon), 22.7.1917.

bombs being thrown, guards shot against innocent people.”⁷⁷

The events of 12.7.1917 were followed by a two-day general strike in the capital which resulted in the 50% increase in wages demanded by the construction workers: plasterers, at the top of the scale, now earned 17 cents an hour, while ‘boys’ earned 5. Acceptance of the demands prior to the use of violence, in recognition of the fact that the strike was fueled by economic necessity, might have inaugurated an era of cooperation with the U.O.N., and would certainly have spared the government the widespread condemnation which followed the repression of the workers. Troubles with strikes continued in August,⁷⁸ when the water workers, who called for a war subsidy of 20 cents per day, left the capital with no water during the hottest day of the month, and culminated with a U.O.N. show of strength in September, in what was to prove another defeat for the government. In late August, and again for economic reasons, postal and telegraph workers went on strike. The government replied with a different type of force: it mobilized the entire workforce, which meant that striking became equivalent to desertion.⁷⁹ The strike continued, and over 700 arrests were made in Lisbon alone; the arrested workers were jailed in warships on the Tagus, a fate usually reserved for political prisoners, and immediately became the focus of public sympathy. Despite the use of retired personnel, military staff, and even boy scouts and Preparatory Military Instruction youths to sort out and deliver the mail, the postal system broke down, with thousands of Escudos in postal orders and packages disappearing. The strike continued, and again the government raised the stakes, announcing that the 194 postal workers who had been spared military mobilization on account of their functions would be delivered to their

⁷⁷ Reprinted in *O Dia* (Lisbon), 14.7.1917; the ‘Chiado’ is one of Lisbon’s most important commercial areas.

⁷⁸ See *A Greve* (Lisbon), 12.8.1917, for a vivid description of the tension between workers and shopkeepers in Lisbon: “there isn’t money enough to satiate the greed of the commercial class (...)”

⁷⁹ *Diário do Governo*, 1.9.1917.

respective military units.⁸⁰ Unfortunately for the government it had engaged in a tug-of-war that it could not win quickly. A national general strike was declared by the U.O.N. in support of the embattled postal workers, and the only vocal support for the government came from the increasingly authoritarian Homem Cristo, who lamented the lack of a Thiers to restore order to Lisbon once and for all.⁸¹

Studies so far carried out on the U.O.N. have failed to give exact figures for its membership, or for the percentage of the total working population that its membership represented. As a result, the overall importance of the strike action of September 1917 cannot be properly evaluated. Nevertheless, because the strikes represented a fratricidal struggle among republicans, and also because of the support shown for the employees by rival political parties, the press, and by workers' associations across the country, they became the most important symbol of the government's failure to unite the population around its war policy. Unlike the wartime governments in France, from that of Viviani to that of Clemenceau, whose ministers realised that strikes motivated by economic reasons could be tolerated by a country at war, and who made it clear that the workers' demands would be listened to and acted upon for as long as they did not touch upon the subject of the war,⁸² Afonso Costa's third government failed to grasp that the maintenance of social peace at home was a prerequisite for a successful military campaign abroad. The government's hostility to the U.O.N., inexplicable in the light of the latter's growing power, extended to the postal workers, who were civil servants, with no revolutionary aspirations, and with an attachment to republican values. *O Combate* described the postal workers as "men who contributed more than anyone else to the Republic's implantation,"⁸³ while Daeschner spoke of "l'importance du role que joue un grand nombre des fonctionnaires des postes dans les combinaisons de la politique intérieure du

⁸⁰ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1281, official notice, 8.9.1917.

⁸¹ *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 16.9.1917.

⁸² John Horne, *Labour at War: France and Britain 1914-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 56+.

⁸³ *O Combate* (Lisbon), 16.9.1917.

parti républicain.”⁸⁴ Daeschner also pointed out that the strike of the postal workers reached the top levels of the service’s bureaucracy, which was surprising, because those levels had been filled after the revolution of 1910 by republicans who had contributed to the rising, and who had remained loyal ever since.⁸⁵ The strikes of September 1917 saw the government turning against some of its more loyal supporters, and it is significant that the final accord between the two parties was brokered by the Lisbon Commercial Association, another bastion of the Democratic party. The government did not revoke the mobilization order, but the salary increases called for by the strikers were agreed to, as was the immediate payment of all overtime; moreover, absences were excused and the mobilized workers were made permanent at their posts.⁸⁶ Homem Cristo, disgusted with the compromise, called for the government’s resignation,⁸⁷ while *O Dia* saw the settlement as a capitulation.⁸⁸ The same newspaper once again had cause for rejoicing, congratulating the government on its ability to unite public opinion: “(...) today we stand before a sight never before seen in Portuguese History: on the one hand, the entire nation against the government; on the other, the government (...) against the nation.”⁸⁹

César Oliveira writes, “in 1917 there is a sudden reawakening of the strike movement, finally assured of the barest of organisations and of syndicalist leadership, which accompanies the increase in the cost of living (...)”⁹⁰ Not since 1912 had so much strike activity taken place, and never had it attracted as much support, even from

⁸⁴ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, letter, Daeschner to Ribot, 4.9.1917.

⁸⁵ *ibid.* For the same point, see *O Dia* (Lisbon), 13.9.1917.

⁸⁶ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1281, pamphlet, “Da classe dos correios e telégrafos ao público em geral.”

⁸⁷ *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 23.9.1916.

⁸⁸ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 11.9.1917.

⁸⁹ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 13.9.1917.

⁹⁰ César Oliveira, *O Movimento Sindicalista Português: A Primeira Cisão* (Mem Martins: Europa-América, 1982), 28.

conservative forces. The U.O.N.'s first demonstration of its strength was not a strike, however; it came in the shape of two conferences, held in Lisbon and Oporto, in April and May 1917, at which 176 unions, 4 industrial federations, and various cooperatives and newspapers were represented. There were three motions before the twin conferences: "Workers' Organisation", "The Cost of Living", and "The Workers' Movement and the Peace Talks." The second motion, which was approved, lay behind the wave of strikes that hit Lisbon in the summer of 1917, as it stated that strikes should be employed in order to alleviate, even if only on a short term basis, the immediate suffering of the working class. The government, employing the tactics of 1912, misread the situation, and its explanation for the strikes - the work of German agents⁹¹ - was simply not convincing. That there was an inherent contradiction in attempting to crush the strikes while appealing for national union was never recognised: the U.O.N. was not regarded by the Democratic government as a social partner, as the legitimate voice of a growing segment of the population with equally legitimate grievances. Despite some internal criticism, aimed essentially at the willingness of some delegates to depart from the motions on to a more theoretical plane, the overall reaction to the conferences was positive, and the workers' confidence soared. For Manuel Joaquim de Sousa, a leading contemporary syndicalist,

"the U.O.N. left those magnificent meetings full of prestige and with its strength doubled, having written henceforth, until the creation of the C.G.T., beautiful pages, full of glory."⁹²

These were not empty words; the workers' undeniable morale during the July and September strikes boosted not only their confidence but also the U.O.N.'s standing as a major political and social force. Its news bulletins during the September crisis were

⁹¹ See M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 635, letter, Consul in Oporto to Ribot, 14.9.1917.

⁹² Manuel Joaquim de Sousa, *O Sindicalismo em Portugal: Esboço Histórico* (Lisbon: Publicações da A.I.T., 1931) 112.

printed by all save the Democratic press, while the government's own bulletins were ignored; moreover, the U.O.N.'s language became one of moderation, rendering possible an alliance with the Democrats' other opponents. On 12.9.1917, one such note claimed that

“the extent to which we were willing to give in where it was reasonable, and where it was permissible by the honour and pride of the working class was demonstrated by the accords reached with the representatives of Lisbon's commercial class (...) in any country with reasonably democratic institutions the public protest which took place would have rocked the strongest of governments. In Portugal, however, public opinion has no influence in the Olympian decisions of the government.”⁹³

A very different kind of strike had, by December 1917, caught the opposition's attention, highlighting the ill-will that the government had built up against itself. In April, the government had attempted to reform the secondary school system, by introducing new examination timetables, and by reducing the number of times that an exam could be sat. Although this was an attempt to democratise the system, by allowing more students to present themselves for examination, the existing students' rebellion was given whole-hearted support by the press. From the last week of October, the students, with the full support of their parents, went on strike, and their action was portrayed as a struggle between virtuous youth and an uncaring government. Lopes de Oliveira's warning, which we saw in ch.IV - that, as all knew, the schools rivaled barracks as centres of germanophile propaganda - had finally been proven correct. Privileged adolescents, who in other belligerent countries resented not being allowed to fight, sought, in Portugal, to

⁹³ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 12.9.1917. This notice also claimed that the representatives of commerce, recognising the justice of the U.O.N.'s case, had agreed to join it in its struggle if the government did not reach an agreement with the union.

embarrass the government and were turned into heroes for doing so. *O Século*, for example, wrote,

“The boys are growing more and more united, in a noble stance of order and standing by of principle, which does them honour. All of their families can be proud of them, and the country cannot remain indifferent to the way in which the future generations know how to fight against injustice.”⁹⁴

A week later the same newspaper added that “for the honour and peace of the country,” the victors in the present conflict had to be the students.⁹⁵ In 1917 there were a mere 32 secondary schools in the whole of Portugal, with a total attendance of 11,827 students, of whom 2,871 were girls.⁹⁶ This total represented slightly over 1% of the total 11-17 age group, and while the strike may have been a national one in geographic terms, it was clearly part of the on-going struggle between the increasingly embattled Democrats and the more conservative elements of Portuguese society. Why the honour of the country should be at stake, or why the reform should be described as “sinister”⁹⁷ is of very little significance: all open opposition to the government was now welcomed, even by those who had previously expressed support for the war. One of Sidónio Pais’ first actions, having taken control of the country, was to cancel the April reforms; this was part of his drive to be seen as a champion of youth.

V. Continued unrest in the countryside.

⁹⁴ *O Século* (Lisbon), 18.11.1917.

⁹⁵ *O Século* (Lisbon), 25.11.1917.

⁹⁶ *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal - 1917* (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1921), 62-65.

⁹⁷ *Gazeta de Coimbra* (Coimbra), 17.11.1917.

Social unrest in 1917 was, of course, not limited to Lisbon. Throughout the country disturbances suggest that the government had failed to make its message understood, and that the riots which preceded the German declaration of war, and which had continued unabated in 1916, were still taking place in 1917. To these disturbances must be added the increasing assertiveness of rural unions representing landless labourers. In June, Beja's Civil governor reported serious disturbances in Baleizão, where a train carrying flour was looted, and where the parish administrator was called upon to sell it at 12 cents/kg. The G.N.R. prevented the rest of the flour from being removed from the train, and an armed confrontation ensued, in which two women died and two other civilians were wounded; the Civil Governor concluded that "it would be convenient to prevent any more wheat from leaving, as there is a shortage of bread in many parishes."⁹⁸ In Braga, in July, an aborted strike left one worker dead and another wounded.⁹⁹ The administrator of the municipality of Lamego asked for help from the Civil Governor of Viseu, for, he claimed, "it is becoming impossible to ship goods, whether they have been produced in this municipality or outside it, through our roads and paths," for such shipments were routinely hijacked and the contents sold for very low prices.¹⁰⁰ *A Greve* reported rural unrest and popular seizures of foodstuffs in Mangualde, Ceia, and Silves, where 500 people were involved.¹⁰¹ Lootings of shops and warehouses took place in Coimbra, on 10.10.1917, and the army had to intervene to restore order;¹⁰² similar events were planned in Portalegre, according to its Civil Governor, who was forced to ban a rally

⁹⁸ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 76 (1917), telegram, Civil Governor of Beja to Minister of the Interior, 20.6.1917.

⁹⁹ *ibid.* According to the M.G.S.I., there was a "syndicalist-monarchist-Camachist" conspiracy behind the strikes, during which the G.N.R. was surrounded in its barracks and attacked with bombs. A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, M.G.S.I. report, Oporto, 8.7.1917.

¹⁰⁰ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 67 (1917), letter, Administrator of Lamego to Civil Governor of Viseu, 26.11.1917.

¹⁰¹ *A Greve* (Lisbon), 6.10.1917. Further disturbances were reported by the same newspaper on the 28th of the same month - assaults on the warehouses of alleged speculators in Darque, Mirandela, Santa Marta, Perres, Santa Comba Dão, and Loulé, and assaults on shops in Viana do Castelo.

¹⁰² *Gazeta de Coimbra* (Coimbra), 13.10.1917.

being organised to protest at high food prices.¹⁰³ By 24.11.1917, the G.N.R.'s commander warned the government that the force under his command was no longer able to accomplish all of its missions. "The current situation of the country," he wrote, "with the circumstances resulting from the state of war, and notably with the supply of essential goods," led to a constant need to reinforce rural posts in order to maintain order, "to the obvious detriment of the other services for which this *Guarda* is responsible."¹⁰⁴

E. P. Thompson, in his article "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," makes it clear that one cannot draw a simplistic connection between food shortages and riotous mobs without overlooking the continued existence of certain paternalistic social structures which still held considerable sway in rural areas. Food riots in 18th century England followed well established patterns, and the desires of those 'mobs' were articulated in a precise language, one which posited the notion of a 'moral economy' of the poor.¹⁰⁵ The rights of the consumers inherent in this moral economy, moreover, were accepted as legitimate by the Crown and its agents, eager to maintain social peace, despite the obvious clash between the 'moral economy' and granting market forces their freedom. As we have seen in this and previous Chapters, there was a clear pattern to rural disturbances in wartime Portugal, one which was similar to those described by Thompson: the ringing of church bells to assemble the rural population, followed by the storming of warehouses where foodstuffs were kept, or of trains in which they were being transported, and the subsequent sale of those foodstuffs at what locals

¹⁰³ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 67 (1917), telegram, Civil Governor of Portalegre to D.G.A.P.C., 11.11.1917.

¹⁰⁴ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 67 (1917), letter, Commander-General of the G.N.R. to the D.G.A.P.C., 24.11.1917.

¹⁰⁵ "It is of course true that riots were triggered off by soaring prices, by malpractices among dealers, or by hunger. But these grievances operated within a popular consensus as to what were legitimate practices in marketing, milling, baking, etc. This in turn was grounded upon a consistent traditional view of social norms and obligations, of the proper economic functions of several parties within the community which, taken together, can be said to constitute the moral economy of the poor." E.P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century", in E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (London: The Merlin Press, 1991), 188.

perceived to be fair prices. The collaboration of local officials (a municipal administrator in the case of Baleizão, described above) was always welcomed by the crowds, who did not consider their actions to be a crime, but merely the reaffirmation of a neglected right. The notion of the 'moral economy' is of extreme importance in understanding the Republic's collapse in 1917 because it shows that the rural population was not made of apolitical "sheep", as Afonso Costa claimed in 1913; they were politicised, but in accordance with local customs and traditions: traditions which the modernising republicans, with their belief in their own ability to interpret the needs of the "people", ignored at their own peril. As we shall see, priests and local notables understood the workings of this 'moral economy', and exploited it with great success.

The role played in these rural disturbances by the unresolved economic divisions was highlighted in a July report elaborated by Major João Augusto da Costa, of the G.N.R., as part of the investigation into the soldiers' riots in Évora, the principal city in the Alentejo province, where agriculture was dominated by large latifundary estates. According to that officer,

"the contrast between the two classes, (land owners and landless labourers) so unequally set face to face, in a confrontation which propagandists and sowers of disorder have explored to the utmost, has created a state of permanent revolt which has worsened since the first days of the Republic (...)"¹⁰⁶

The officer added that the economic conditions of the people of the region had worsened, and that as a result rural and city workers were "allowing themselves to be caught in the trap which syndicalists have set before them."¹⁰⁷ On the night of the most

¹⁰⁶ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 76, (1917) report of the 3rd G.N.R. battalion's commander, 30.7.1917.

serious disturbances in Évora, the report continued, ‘thousands’ of civilians, mostly women, were ready to pillage the city, in a culmination of acts of violence which had shaken the whole Alentejo: “Beja, Baleizão, Vidigueira, Ferreira do Alentejo, Odemira, etc.” Major João Augusto da Costa concluded that

“Most such acts are carried out under the pretext of the lack of foodstuffs, or of high prices, but this does not mean that the explosions of popular fury, by their frequency and nature, are not quite serious, and that they do not deserve proper study and solutions.”¹⁰⁸

The fear being expressed by the G.N.R. officer, in other words, was that a revolutionary element was being added, by 1917, to the traditional protests against high food prices and shortages.¹⁰⁹ A. J. Telo points out that the owners of the latifundiary estates, supporters of the Unionist party, were caught between low prices, necessary to ensure the supply of cheap food to the cities, and the increased assertiveness of their workers (whose representatives attended the Lisbon conference of the U.O.N.) Their response was to collaborate in all movements of resistance to the Democrats, and to support financially the *coup* being organised by their fellow Unionist, Sidónio Pais, whose regime was marked both by a crackdown on the agricultural labourers and by the possibility of higher agricultural profits.

The difficulties encountered by the government in 1916 mushroomed the following year. While on the one hand the increased social agitation can be placed in the context of

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ The May food riots in Lisbon raise a question on similar lines: were they merely the violent reaffirmation, by the population of Lisbon, of the perceived right to cheap bread (as most of the opposition forces seemed to suggest), or did they represent a potentially revolutionary force, along the lines of the riots in Turin of August 1917, which also began as a complaint against food prices? Further investigation of the Lisbon riots is necessary in order for this point to be clarified.

the general downturn of morale which afflicted all European countries in 1917, Portugal's late entry into the conflict, and the low number of casualties suffered by its forces, suggest that the Portuguese case has characteristics not necessarily shared by the rest of the European belligerents. Underpinning the refusal to accept worsening economic conditions was the refusal to accept the war as a national cause, on the part of the politicised minority, and a misunderstanding, or an ignorance, of that war, by the politically excluded majority. Political infighting, which, because of the republican/monarchist split, was not limited to the chambers of parliament, but which spilled out onto the press and even onto the streets, intensified throughout the year. This lack of unity was seized upon by a resurgent labour movement, whose improved organisation allowed it to take advantage of the economic conditions caused by the war to turn Lisbon, the traditional bastion of republicanism, against the Democratic party. It is to the political crises of 1917, which were partially motivated by the Democrats' growing uneasiness with the way in which the country, or their party structures, were being sacrificed for the sake of the war, that we will turn our attention in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII - THE CRISIS OF 1917:

POLITICAL FACTORS

In the previous chapter we saw how in 1917 social and economic difficulties, already apparent in the early years of the First World War in Portugal, were aggravated by the continuation of the conflict, with the result that tension grew not only in rural areas, where the Republic's traditional adversaries regained the political initiative and affirmed their hold over the population, but also in urban areas, notably Lisbon, the bastion of the republican cause in Portugal. Nineteen seventeen was also to see a dramatic decline in the Democrats' political fortunes, despite the fact that in April they assumed complete control over the government. Opposition to this single party cabinet was to be consolidated across all hues of the political spectrum, including, crucially, within the Democratic party itself. In this chapter we shall consider the principal political events of 1917 from the perspective of a failed political mobilization. The inability to unite the country's political forces around the war effort was to have a dramatic impact on Portuguese troops, who were exposed, before and after their departure for France, to damaging anti-war propaganda. The inability to create a true 'Sacred Union' was intricately linked with the nature of politics in the first years of the Republic, and with the perceived notion that participation in the war was a purely partisan policy, favoured by the Democrats as a source of profit and of increased power and patronage. Feelings of resentment were to be exacerbated in 1917, resulting in the idea that only through a revolution could the Democrats be ousted from power in order for a 'national' policy to be unveiled.

1. The fall of the first 'Sacred Union' government.

As we saw in ch.V, 1916 had ended, internally, with calls for a cabinet reshuffle and with Machado Santos' failed attempt to overthrow the government, and, externally, with the news of an important defeat in German East Africa and the shock of a U-boat attack on Funchal. Despite these reverses, however, the government led by António José d'Almeida was to remain in power for another four months, eventually carrying out the first part of the considerable task to which it had devoted its efforts: the sending of an expeditionary corps to France. The government fell in April 1917, however, and the circumstances in which it did so were not clear to contemporaries or even to historians. The outcome of the ministerial crisis - the exclusively Democratic government which followed in a matter of days - was to lead to a significant deterioration in the relations between those in charge of Portugal's war effort and the political opposition, both parliamentary and non-parliamentary. On 18.4.1917, while Afonso Costa was out of the country, the government issued a decree turning the recently formed *Conselho Económico Nacional* (C.E.N.) - an initiative of António José d'Almeida - into an official body, with its own permanent secretariat, funds, and the ability to publish its findings in the official gazette, the *Diário do Governo*. The C.E.N. was described in this decree as being representative of all

“the collectivities which, being active agents, sources of energy and labour, or recognised authorities in social and economic studies, might bring about a solution to those problems (wartime and peacetime economic conditions) with a zeal born out of their patriotism, their culture, and their intelligence.”¹

In other words, the constitution of the C.E.N. showed a willingness on the government's part to engage in a dialogue with representatives of the 'living forces,' responsible for the economy, in order to find a solution to the crisis besetting the country,

¹ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 18.4.1917.

through effective and knowledgeable planning: a process similar to that taking place in other belligerent countries.² The same decree called the future cooperation between the government and the C.E.N. “an eminently national enterprise.”³ To the Democrats, however, it seemed as if these economic interest groups were being allowed to bypass parliament in their ability to influence government decision-making, a development which they could not countenance, as their power rested on their ability to produce parliamentary majorities through political patronage: any attack on the powers of parliament was seen as a direct threat to the party’s ability to control the country’s fortunes. Moreover, according to Oliveira Marques, the first meeting of the C.E.N., on 3.3.1917, was marked “not by economic collaboration but rather by frontal attacks on the government’s policies and the Democratic majority in the parliament, seen as favouring the interests of the proletariat and the small bourgeoisie.”⁴ A bitter row erupted in parliament between the two Sacred Union parties, with the Democrat António da Fonseca (Lamego) introducing a motion calling for the withdrawal of the decree, owing to its alleged unconstitutionality. According to the motion, the C.E.N. had become an affront to parliament, whose functions it was usurping. With Afonso Costa away and António José d’Almeida ill, the task of defending the decree fell to the Development [Fomento] Minister, the Evolutionist Fernandes Costa, who turned the issue into one of trust in the government, only to be defeated, by 57 votes to 21.⁵

² See the intervention of the Evolutionist Deputy, Júlio Martins, *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 20.4.1917.

³ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 18.4.1917.

⁴ A.H. de Oliveira Marques (coordinator), *Nova História de Portugal* vol. XI *Portugal da Monarquia para a República* (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1991), 313. Oliveira Marques also lists the entities present at the meeting of 3.3.1917, which included representatives of industry, agriculture, commerce, transport (shipping and railways), supplies commissions and universities.

⁵ *O Século* (Lisbon), 29.4.1917. In March a sharp clash over the C.E.N. had already taken place, with attacks being delivered by the Democrat António da Fonseca and the Unionist Jorge Nunes, and the defense of the body being taken up by António José d’Almeida, António Macieira, and Júlio Martins, who stated that “the government should be praised for seeking to establish contact with conservative forces - which the Bloc represents, or claims to represent (...)” *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 8.3.1917.

The press, in its analysis of what had happened in the Chamber, was divided over whether the government partners had split on political grounds, or whether the matter was indeed a constitutional one. *O Mundo* adopted the latter attitude, claiming that during Afonso Costa's absence the government had erred in attributing too much power to the C.E.N. and in having linked its survival to that of the decree;⁶ opposition and neutral newspapers claimed the reverse: that the Democrats were simply taking full control of the country now that the controversial and difficult task of sending soldiers to France had been accomplished. *Homem Cristo*, in his *O de Aveiro*, attributed the move to the "extreme imbecility and selfishness of the Democrats."⁷ While the Democratic press claimed that the government had acted without the knowledge of Afonso Costa, betraying the trust between the two parties, the opposition replied, and with good reason, that the Democratic party would never have moved against a government of which its undisputed leader was a part without Afonso Costa's knowledge and approval and that, as a result, the Democrats had simply out-manuevered the Evolutionists, acting under the guise of 'parliamentary prestige.' *Homem Cristo* wrote that with the troops arriving in France, António José d'Almeida had become expendable, and had been treated as "dead-weight, a contemptible being, a poor devil."⁸ This theory becomes more plausible when we recall that those engaged in propaganda activities, closely linked to the Democrats, believed that pro-war propaganda was needed only until the troops had departed uneventfully, after which their attention could be diverted elsewhere. The idea that with the world's attention turned to Portugal because of its participation in the war, and with troops committed to the fighting, an armed revolt might take place was not yet feared in April 1917. Daeschner, explaining events to Ribot, wrote that the C.E.N. had been used as a pretext by the Democrats, in order to "mettre fin à une situation devenue intenable, et qui menaçait de s'éterniser."⁹ In the opinion of the French Minister, the sheer effort of staying

⁶ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 21.4.1917.

⁷ *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 29.4.1917.

⁸ *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 6-5-1917.

together had paralysed the government for a year, leaving it no time to gather its energy and to act decisively. By insisting on their role as the defenders of parliamentary prestige, however, the Democrats suddenly found themselves using the Bloc's weapons. On 23.3.1917, the Bloc had presented a proposal for a parliamentary inquiry into expenditure resulting from the war,¹⁰ and six days later Jorge Nunes stated that "we are becoming concerned that the parliament's functions, already reduced, are being transferred to the private prerogatives of the executive (...) in this manner the Republic's parliament will one day proclaim its uselessness to the country."¹¹ The claim of both sides to be protecting the role of parliament would set the tone for the confrontations which would follow during the year.

Whatever the reasons for the Democrats' actions in April 1917 might have been, the C.E.N. remained an extremely original attempt to bring together government, business representatives, and economic experts, in the Portuguese context where, as Oliveira Marques points out, "the constitution of 1911 did not specify the creation of any consultative organs."¹² The permanent secretariat envisaged by decree 3092, which created the C.E.N., gave the short-lived institution the possibility of studying the country's economic problems in great depth. It also served a political purpose: it brought together republican politicians and economic elites, groups which had previously mistrusted each other. There is no doubt that the creation of the C.E.N. was a move inspired by corporative beliefs - namely, that a parliamentary majority did not guarantee the government which arose from that majority a deeper insight into the needs and aspirations of the country's producers - its 'living forces.' One of the salient points of the economic history of Europe during the war was precisely this realisation in countries

⁹ Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (M.A.E.), Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Ribot, 21.4.1917.

¹⁰ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 23.3.1917.

¹¹ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 29.3.1917.

¹² Oliveira Marques (coordinator), *op.cit.*, 312.

desperately trying to convert their peace-time economies into industrial power-houses able to meet the needs of mass industrialised warfare. John Horne writes that “as the relationship between state and economy was redefined, industrialists and businessmen became the state’s privileged partners. The price of their collaboration (especially in war-related sectors such as heavy industry) was a degree of managerial autonomy and assured profits achieved through some simulacrum or substitute for normal market mechanisms.”¹³ This relationship between business and government developed in most belligerents, including republican France, the model for so much of Portugal’s legislation. The C.E.N. can be seen as the first tentative step down this road at a time of great economic difficulty for the country. That it had taken over a year of belligerency for the C.E.N. to be created can be attributed to the fact that Portugal did not need to produce vast quantities of arms and munitions to ensure its very survival.¹⁴ There was no need for a dramatic restructuring of the Portuguese economy, merely the need to find solutions for the present crises and for the challenges of peacetime.

II. The Second ‘Sacred Union’ government.

The most important change to have resulted from April’s ministerial crisis was the dramatic shift in power within the Sacred Union. The Democrats took over the whole of the government, while the Evolutionists limited themselves to the role of parliamentary

¹³ John Horne, “Democracies at War: France and Britain, 1914-1920” [Paper presented to the *Grande Guerra e Mutamento* conference, Trieste, 28.9.1995-1.10.1995. Publication forthcoming by conference organisers], 6. Horne goes on to point out that “businessmen (along with intellectuals and bureaucrats) also played a direct part in the extraordinary state bureaucracies which galvanised the whole process (the War Raw Materials Section {KRA} of the Prussian War Ministry, the Ministère de l’Armement in France, the British Ministry of Munitions.)” *ibid.*

¹⁴ There were no labour representatives at the C.E.N.’s first meeting. If this absence was the result of a deliberate policy of exclusion, then the C.E.N., in time, would have become an anomaly in wartime Europe - even in Italy and Germany trade unions were accepted as wartime collaborators in the economic process. There is no need to speculate on the subject, however, because of the C.E.N.’s short life: it was not because of the absence of labour representatives that the C.E.N. was crushed by the Democratic party, and the consultative body did not have time to mature or to be improved by the government.

allies on national matters; they would provide, in the words of Deputy Júlio Martins, “frank, loyal, impartial, and patriotic support.”¹⁵ If the first Sacred Union government had been seen, in conservative circles, as disappointing, then the second government was considered to be an affront. The hostility to the single party solution was so great that, as we shall see, it filtered into the Democratic party itself, Jaime Cortesão writing, in his *Memórias da Grande Guerra*, that the formation of the exclusively Democratic government had been “the most disastrous political error as regards our national life.”¹⁶ *O Dia* gave a sarcastic welcome to the new government, praising its leftwards lurch and calling for an even more extreme cabinet.¹⁷ *O Século* was measured in its criticism of the new cabinet’s composition, commenting that while the men who formed it constituted an enviable whole, the new ministry did not really address the “most direct indications of public opinion”, as the government no longer possessed a “national character.”¹⁸ The parliamentary bloc, formed by Unionists and breakaway Evolutionists, and the lone Socialist Deputy, Costa Junior, voted against the new cabinet upon its presentation to the Chamber of Deputies, not believing that a partisan government could carry out a strictly ‘national’ policy. Brito Camacho claimed that the country, now more than ever, required a strong and vigilant opposition, thereby making clear his distrust of the government. Only *O Mundo* continued to assert that the political climate had not been altered: “There persists the union of the two parties which, after the declaration of war, came together to respond to the German insult.”¹⁹ This was, at best, a half-truth, for the Democratic newspaper omitted the fact that the Unionist stance in March 1916 had been nearly identical to the current Evolutionist position - parliamentary support in ‘national’ matters without actual participation in the government.

¹⁵ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 27.4.1917.

¹⁶ Jaime Cortesão, *Memórias da Grande Guerra* (Oporto: Renascença Portuguesa, 1919), 43.

¹⁷ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 26.4.1917.

¹⁸ *O Século* (Lisbon), 26.4.1917.

¹⁹ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 6.5.1917.

With only one party in power, that most closely identified with the interventionist stance, criticism of the government could not but increase, especially when one considers the worsening economic situation. Even republican newspapers now focused their attacks on Afonso Costa, notably *A Capital*, which argued that the country had become too dependent on the Democratic leader, without whose approval no decision was made on any topic,²⁰ that in the July Democratic party congress no guarantees had been given as to the final size of Portugal's commitment to the Allies,²¹ and that the congress represented only the views of the Lisbon Democratic machine, intensely loyal to Costa, and not of the party as a whole. *A Capital*, moreover, criticised the government's handling of strikes²² and the searches carried out in the offices of *O Dia*,²³ calling for, finally, the introduction of a 'corporative spirit' into Portuguese politics in order to reduce the influence of political parties.²⁴ In parliament, meanwhile, Moura Pinto returned to the still delayed municipal elections; according to the Unionist deputy, the government was convinced that its majority in the Chamber effectively meant that it was in tune with public opinion, but in this it was wrong, and the government was in fact sowing the seeds of future confrontations.²⁵

When, in July, Norton de Matos announced to parliament that the C.E.P. would be composed of 55,000 men, to be reinforced by 4,000 men every month until the war's end, a fresh outburst of anti-government opinion was sparked off, for it was deemed by the opposition, republican or otherwise, that such numbers, and the open-ended nature of

²⁰ *A Capital* (Lisbon), 19.4.1917 & 15.7.1917.

²¹ *A Capital* (Lisbon), 2.7.1917.

²² *A Capital* (Lisbon), 15.7.1917 & 10.9.1917.

²³ *A Capital* (Lisbon), 29.7.1917.

²⁴ *A Capital* (Lisbon), 5.9.1917 & 12.9.1917.

²⁵ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 8.5.1917.

Portugal's commitment to the war, could not be squared with the apparent lack of compensation. Questions regarding Portugal's wartime agreements with the Allies forced the government to agree to secret sessions of parliament, held that same month, which were to represent the final and irreparable split between the government and the parliamentary bloc, the latter emerging from the sessions convinced that all means to overthrow the government had now become legitimate.

III. The secret sessions of parliament, July 1917.

The secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies lasted from 11.7.1917 to 26.7.1917, as the violence which surrounded the construction workers' strike gripped Lisbon. The bloc, however, stormed out of the sessions on 25.7.1917, leaving Costa Junior as the only member of the opposition, effectively bringing the sessions to an end. The range of criticism to which the government was exposed over those two weeks was enormous, but, because Democratic and mainstream Evolutionist voting discipline held firm, the Unionist party and its allies found themselves unable to force the government into any concessions or disclosures of any information pertaining to Portugal's involvement in the war, be it on a military plane, be it on a political one. The main battleground was, ironically, that of parliamentary prestige, the bloc arguing that the two Sacred Union governments had reduced parliament to a glorified tribune for their propaganda and their attacks on political enemies. Starved of information, and having relinquished many parliamentary prerogatives to the Executive branch at the onset of the European crisis, the opposition, faced by what it saw as the country's deepening crisis and the poor handling of military affairs, now sought to reestablish the parliament's powers through a series of investigations into treaties and conventions which Portugal might have signed since 1914, and into actual military operations. The government refused to allow any such inquiries to take place while the army was on the battlefield²⁶ and before the signing of the peace

²⁶ See Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, "Too serious a matter to be left to the Generals? Parliament and the Army in wartime Portugal, 1914-1918", *Journal of Contemporary History*, forthcoming publication.

treaty that would put an end to the war. According to the government, its policies would be explained only when no harm might be caused by these explanations to Portugal's international position.

Moura Pinto denounced the government's use of its parliamentary majority to stifle the opposition's legitimate doubts, adding that, because the country had been kept in total ignorance of all the negotiations which had caused Portugal to enter the war, the government had caused "the most dreadful of confusions so far registered in our national history", a confusion which was "the sole source of a hatred that will never die out among this generation."²⁷ Dismissing the main thrust of the government's rhetoric, Moura Pinto, who would prove to be one of the leading figures of the secret sessions, asserted that, as the Portuguese had demonstrated that they were still sufficiently brave to die on the battlefield, they had earned the right to know

"if they were going to die exclusively in the name of the Civilization, Liberty, and Justice of others, or in the name of their own Civilization, their own Liberty, and their own Justice."²⁸

According to Moura Pinto, the government's silence made it seem, to those at the front, that they were risking their lives in order to maintain a political faction in power through the curtailment of debate and of political action. In order to undo this impression, the government should release all information pertaining to the military conventions signed with Great Britain in 1914 and with France in 1917. Moura Pinto added that no government was worthy of the country's trust if it repeatedly ignored article 26, section 15, of the Constitution, which stated that only the parliament could approve treaties and

²⁷ Assembleia da República (A.R.), Lisbon, Archive, Transcript of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 9.

²⁸ *ibid.*

conventions, and that the present government, as a result, was setting a “monstrous precedent in the life of a free nation.”²⁹ Tamagnini Barbosa, a rebel Evolutionist, seconded the belief that all such conventions were null and void unless approved of by the parliament, and asked to be informed of their terms and of the compensations guaranteed by France for the recent agreement (announced by Norton de Matos in the same speech which provoked the secret sessions) according to which Portugal undertook to send 15 to 30 artillery batteries, at its expense, to cooperate with the French army, away from the C.E.P.

Casimiro de Sá, another Evolutionist dissident, claimed that parliament’s ignorance of Portugal’s diplomatic position stretched as far back as to include the actual reasons for Portugal’s participation in the war: had Portugal volunteered, or had it been invited by Great Britain? According to the Deputy, this question could only be resolved once the government had handed over all diplomatic documents which pertained to this question. Quoting José Estevão, a nineteenth century politician, Casimiro de Sá claimed that it had always been England’s objective to weaken Spain and to control Portugal, and that “for nearly five centuries (...) they (the English) have harangued us into wars only to drop us in peacetime.”³⁰ The government had to make clear the reasons for Portugal’s belligerency, Casimiro de Sá claimed, because “we do not place great trust in the loyalty and the generosity of England and of France.”³¹

Doubts concerning the reasons for participation in the Great War were exacerbated by the knowledge that Portugal’s armies were performing badly in the field of battle. Deputies, many of whom were officers, had been made aware of various shortcomings in the organisation and the performance of the expeditions to Africa and to

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ A.R., Lisbon, Archive, Transcripts of the secret sessions of the chamber of Deputies, 24.

³¹ *ibid.*

France, deficiencies which had resulted, unfortunately, in terrible suffering and unnecessary loss of life among fighting men, both European and African. According to the bloc's Deputies, a political decision had been made to the effect that soldiers in the African theatre would have to endure considerable sacrifices so that their counterparts in the more visible battlefield of Flanders might be seen to enjoy conditions similar to those of the Allies, a dubious decision at best, and one rendered grotesque by the British army's insistence on the use, by the C.E.P., of British weapons and munitions. As a result of this insistence, the troops in Africa had to contend with obsolete and diverse weapons and munitions, adding to already considerable logistical difficulties, while in France Portugal's modern weapons stood stockpiled for the sake of standardisation. To make things worse, Norton de Matos had insisted, in his July speech, that all Portuguese should be proud of the fact that Portugal was purchasing these British weapons, rather than having them given to its army: Portugal was seen as an equal by the Allies. For the opposition, this equality simply did not exist, and the government, through its constant need to impress the Allies by agreeing to their demands, had forced the army to fight at a terrible disadvantage on what was, after all, Portuguese territory. Moreover, many Deputies challenged the government to put a ceiling on the number of losses that would have to be endured in France before the monthly shipment of 4,000 men came to a halt.

Tamagnini Barbosa, who represented Mozambique, claimed that nothing in the Minister of War's speech dispelled the impression that 4,000 was an average figure, which might be increased, according to circumstances, to 5,000 or even 10,000.³² When Vasconcellos e Sá presented a motion attributing the responsibility of the military "disasters" at Naulila, Rovuma, and Newala to the faulty organisation of the expeditions, to the government's unwillingness to send reinforcements, and to its desire to run the campaigns from its Lisbon offices³³ (a clear attempt by the Evolutionist Deputy to salvage the army's reputation) the government replied that such a motion would have to be voted

³² A.R., Lisbon, Archive, Transcripts of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 15.

³³ A.R., Lisbon, Archive, Transcripts of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 41.

on in a public session, according to parliamentary procedure, which would surely hurt the national interest, and again stated that all inquiries would take place once the war had ended and the peace had been settled. Brito Camacho, replying to Afonso Costa, attempted to widen the rift between the government and the army even more, by attributing the defeats to political control by the government and by pointing out that some defeats did not harm the professional reputation of those who had suffered them.³⁴ Moreover, Portugal's Allies were well aware of the defeats in Africa, the Unionist leader pointed out, and would be reassured by a parliamentary inquiry, with its promise of a subsequent improvement in battlefield performance.

The African expeditions were to provide another source of criticism for the government, one which forced Afonso Costa to threaten his resignation in order to enforce party discipline. Tamagnini Barbosa, in a lengthy intervention, highlighted the lack of clear military objectives, faulty cooperation with Allied forces, the lack of preparation of the expeditions sent, and the faulty training of the men who composed them, the insufficient use made of local residents and of African infantrymen (the keys to Germany's success), the lack of adequate hospital facilities, and, finally, the poor performance of General Ferreira Gil, the commander of the 1916 Mozambique expedition, seen by many as a purely political appointee with no African experience.³⁵ Democrat Tomás Rosa, an officer, read out to the Chamber, during Tamagnini Barbosa's intervention, a series of sworn statements made by officers and sergeants who had taken part in the 1915 Angolan expedition. According to these statements General Pereira d'Eça, who had commanded the expedition, had condoned and possibly ordered a series of brutal reprisals against the tribes which revolted against the Portuguese following the battle of Naulila in 1914. This rebellion had been suppressed only after a long campaign which culminated in the set-piece battle of Mongua, in which 2,000 Portuguese soldiers had been surrounded by 12,000 natives, 5,000 of whom had been supplied by Germany

³⁴ A.R., Lisbon, Archive, Transcripts of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 24.

³⁵ A.R., Lisbon, Archive, Transcripts of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 45-50.

with rifles.³⁶ In order to punish the rebellious tribes, which had hampered the Portuguese retreat after Naulila, large scale hangings and other atrocities were allegedly carried out, and descriptions of these alleged actions were read out to the horrified Chamber. According to the testimonies, hundreds were hanged with the full knowledge of officers, while surrendering families were separated, the men being hanged and the women and children being forced to march in the direction of the territory of rival tribes - another form of murder. One surrendering man, having been identified as a notable in his tribe, was crucified for a day before being hanged. Tomás Rosa also read out a letter, written by a soldier in the expedition, which stated that “we have orders to kill all natives from the age of 10 upwards.”³⁷

The government, constituted long after the alleged atrocities, and hence not responsible for them, could not allow for an inquiry into the conduct of General Pereira d’Eça, who had now become the Military Governor of Lisbon. As we saw in the previous chapter, Lisbon, in July, was placed under martial law as a result of the construction workers’ strike, all constitutional guarantees being suspended. A magnificent opportunity to embarrass the government was created, and the opposition took full advantage of it. Afraid to challenge a prestigious General such as Pereira d’Eça, the government had to defend his actions, or at least appeal for patience. The appeal was not heard by the bloc. Brito Camacho, while claiming that “the so-called inferior races are merely backward - one cannot civilize them through their elimination”, added that under no circumstances should Pereira d’Eça remain at his post.³⁸ Moura Pinto supported his party leader. According to military justice, he stated, an officer was responsible “for all the errors,

³⁶ João Ferreira do Amaral, *A Mentira de Flandres...e o Medo* (Lisbon: J. Rodrigues, 1922), 141+.

³⁷ A.R., Lisbon, Archive, Transcripts of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 85. The testimonies read out by Tomás Rosa, typed, are appended to the handwritten transcripts and kept in the Assembleia da República Archive, Lisbon.

³⁸ A.R., Lisbon, Archive, Transcripts of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 57.

mistakes, or crimes which take place under his command until he uncovers the name of those responsible.”³⁹ As a result, it was absurd

“for the Minister of War to want to maintain in a very sensitive post - as is that of supreme governor of Lisbon during a suspension of constitutional guarantees - a General against whom documents, so far uncontradicted, were produced in this parliament, which showed that the column under his command committed savage atrocities, possibly according to his orders, which no state of war can justify, barbarous acts so stupidly cruel that only with amazement, indignation, and revulsion was the Chamber able to hear them.”⁴⁰

Moura Pinto, finally, accused the government, which seemed so reluctant to act against the General, of knowing of Pereira d’Eça’s actions in Angola and to have recognized in them the solution to the problems of maintaining order in Lisbon. The shock caused by the reading out of the documents was considerable; another Deputy who called for the suspension of General Pereira d’Eça, Alfredo de Magalhães, spoke of “an impression of horror, which I cannot describe, on all sides of this Chamber.”⁴¹

Afonso Costa responded swiftly, giving full support for the embattled General: if the Chamber wanted to relieve the Military Governor of Lisbon of his present functions, it would have to defeat the government in a vote of confidence. Afonso Costa again pointed out that no country at war would be so foolish as to make public such potentially harmful

³⁹ A.R., Lisbon, Archive, Transcripts of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 55.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ A.R., Lisbon, Archive, Transcripts of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 51.

information (and here the the primacy of international prestige for Portugal as a reason for belligerency asserts itself clearly.) Finally, the Prime Minister stated that Africans equated humanitarian concerns with weakness. In attacking General Pereira d'Eça, "who is a man of honour", and whose orders in his present capacity had all been "aimed at defending our institutions, as well as order and public safety", the opposition, argued Afonso Costa, was attempting only to bring down the government, which revealed a terrible lack of wisdom, "for, in truth, they are not in a position to replace it."⁴²

Moura Pinto, thoroughly unconvinced by the Democratic leader's explanations, presented a motion calling for a parliamentary inquiry into Pereira d'Eça's performance as commander of the 1915 expedition, and for an immediate curtailment of the state of siege in Lisbon, but this motion was not admitted, while a rival motion, put forward by the Democrat Catanho de Meneses, accepting the government's explanations and calling for an inquiry to be handled by the Ministry of War itself, was accepted, which caused the bloc to abandon the Chamber. After its departure, the government was able to deal easily with questions pertaining to Portugal's financial situation, the contract drawn up with Great Britain concerning the German ships seized in 1916, and relations with Spain. The collapse of the secret sessions marked the end of the attempt to use the parliament as a means to carry out a legal political opposition, and the thoughts of the Unionists and their allies turned to conspiracy, to an armed rising, and, as we shall see, to the new conservative party proposed by Egas Moniz.

V. The collapse of politics at the national level.

Having abandoned the Chamber on 25.7.1917, the bloc declared that it had done so because it had not been given the information it sought from the government. Moura Pinto, in a public session of the Chamber, stated that the secret sessions had been of no use, because there had been no impartial judge: "the judge is the majority and its vote and

⁴² A.R., Lisbon, Archive, Transcripts of the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, 56.

it is, above all, the government, with its means to exert domination and duress on the majority.”⁴³ Pent-up hostility was ignited by Moura Pinto’s words, and the session had to be brought to a close following an ink-well battle. *O Dia* criticised this attitude, for the Bloc had not specified what information it had been denied, and it had not used its complaints to mobilize the country against the Democrats in what the monarchist daily called “a great and truly national crusade.”⁴⁴ *O Dia* reacted too quickly, however, for in an interview with *O Século* Brito Camacho made it clear that he envisaged just such a campaign, one which would mobilize all the social forces that no longer felt represented by the Republic’s parliament:

“The country does not want a sectarian Republic, a Republic of factions, a Republic in which there is no respect for all sincere opinions, where there is no punishment for any crime, where there are no guarantees to safeguard all legitimate interests.”⁴⁵

According to the Unionist leader, this change would be attempted by legal means, but if necessary, revolutionary tactics would be employed (and Brito Camacho was well aware that Sidónio Pais was already preparing his coup.) Brito Camacho then went on to describe what had happened behind the closed door of the parliament:

“Look at what happened in Africa. We began to send military expeditions as soon as war broke out in Europe, and having sacrificed many men and enormous sums - millions of Escudos - we succeeded in causing revolts in

⁴³ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 26.7.1917.

⁴⁴ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 28.7.1917.

⁴⁵ *O Século* (Lisbon), 2.8.1917.

Angola, and revolts in Mozambique, where the Germans are still occupying our territory. We suffered a disaster in Naulila, we suffered a disaster on the Rovuma, and we suffered a disaster in Newala, and on none of these subjects has the country been given any explanations by the government.”⁴⁶

A Capital, commenting the interview, remarked that if the leader of the opposition addressed such words to a newspaper, it could only be because he no longer believed the present Parliament to be in any way relevant. What seems to have taken place in opposition circles, however, was the adoption of a two-tier strategy: on one level a political relaunch of conservative republicanism, with Egas Moniz’s attempt to form a Centrist party, in order to defeat the government at the polls in the upcoming at the polls in the upcoming administrative elections (which, as we have seen, were long overdue.) On another level, meanwhile, a military coup was being planned by Sidónio Pais, at the time a Unionist, in the offices of Brito Camacho’s *A Luta*, a plot which involved many of the figures behind the new party.

June 1917 had seen the first stirrings of this new political movement, designed to attract, at the same time, the votes of both the Right and of the Left. Egas Moniz, a celebrated doctor and former Deputy, who had been among the hundreds arrested in December 1916 as a preventive measure during Machado Santos’ coup attempt, gave an interview to *O Século* in which he spoke of the need for a new party, which might attract ex-monarchists who refused to join the existing republican parties and all republicans who felt the same way, as well as the so-called ‘living forces’ of the nation, about whom much was being heard in 1917.⁴⁷ His political stance was closest to that of Brito Camacho, and the two men agreed to cooperate in the ‘Bica’ pact, described by *O Dia* as one man

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁷ *O Século*, 22.6.1917.

pledging what little he had and the other what he did not yet have. The monarchist newspaper nevertheless went on to add that the interest created by the political reappearance of Egas Moniz in the political world revealed the fragility of the republican regime and the despair of the population, who, gripped by a messianic fervour, waited for a strong figure to deliver it from political chaos.⁴⁸ In October 1917 the Centrist party was launched. Surrounded by dissident Evolutionists who had played a key part in the secret sessions of Parliament, Vasconcellos e Sá, Tamagnini Barbosa, and Simas Machado, Egas Moniz, who, in the early days of the Republic had proposed the creation of a corporate Senate, presented the party's programme:

“We underline, as the supreme criterion of our action in the nation's political life, the principle of respect for the law (...) we have entered into political action in the name of order and of social discipline; we ardently desire order and discipline among all classes of society.”⁴⁹

Through constitutional reform, the new party hoped to secure respect for civil liberties and respect for individual rights, which its leaders saw as dependent on a stronger executive branch. Dissolution of parliament by the President, the Centrists believed, would allow for a better balance of power between the country's political institutions.⁵⁰ A bid for Catholic support was made, through the promise to reestablish diplomatic relations with the Vatican, while through the promise of social reforms (social security, designed to protect workers from the effects of injury and illness, and to protect them in their old age) it was hoped that the newly mobilized Left might adhere to the party and

⁴⁸ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 26.6.1917. The monarchist daily might have been correct in its analysis, but it was wrong in identifying Egas Moniz as this strong man: the real one was still waiting in the wings.

⁴⁹ Egas Moniz, *Um Ano de Politica* (Lisbon: Portugal-Brasil, 1919), 28.

⁵⁰ This did not necessarily imply a greater commitment to true democratic procedure; rather, it suggests a return to the rotative system of the monarchy, still present in Spain, whereby two parties alternated in power at the bequest of the King.

abandon its revolutionary aspirations. One of the central ideas of the programme was, precisely, the need to foster “a better understanding between capital and labour.”⁵¹ Finally, the party promised to begin the preparation of Portugal for the battles of peacetime through a massive development of the country’s resources and infrastructures - roads, rail, irrigation, hydraulic power, soil improvement, and, of course, development of the colonies. On an international level, significantly, Egas Moniz spoke of improving relations with Spain and Brazil, turning Portugal’s attention away from Western Europe.

In an interview with *O Século*, Egas Moniz adopted Brito Camacho’s rhetoric on the need for the country to be informed of what the compensation for Portugal’s wartime sacrifices would be, and for the attribution of responsibilities regarding Portugal’s entry into the conflict:

“It is hard to believe that statesmen who, no matter how incapable we might believe them to be, might have taken us into a war characterised by the most colossal sacrifices without having guaranteed the advantages which we might obtain from that participation. It would be criminal to throw lives and possessions into the bonfire in which Europe is being consumed, without, in an exact and positive manner, securing the advantages to be had. Quixotic times have passed.”⁵²

Finally, pointing out the gap that he perceived between the nation and the regime, Egas Moniz called for union in the forthcoming municipal elections, from Socialists to monarchists, in order to form neutral electoral lists, which, being composed of efficient

⁵¹ *O Século* (Lisbon), 20.10.1917.

⁵² *O Século* (Lisbon), 18.10.1917.

administrators, might “give municipal residents the best guarantees.”⁵³ In other words, Egas Moniz called for the creation of a reverse Sacred Union with the technocratic efficiency required to overcome the economic crisis as its immediate goal. As we shall see in Ch.X, Egas Moniz’s Centrist party was to evolve, in the ‘New Republic’, into the *Partido Nacional Republicano* (P.N.R.), Sidónio Pais’ attempt to create a solid power base for his regime, while Egas Moniz himself was to serve the President in a variety of roles: leader of the parliamentary majority, Minister in Spain, and, eventually, Minister for Foreign Affairs. Other elements linked to the Centrists, such as Vasconcellos e Sá, were present at Sidónio Pais’ conspiratorial sessions at the offices of *A Luta*; the men involved in the party and the conspiracy were clearly the same, and the only doubt remains whether the Centrists and their Unionist allies attempted sincerely to create a union of all oppositions, in order to defeat the government in the local elections, or whether they were preparing public opinion for the change that was about to occur by presenting a platform designed to appeal to all social classes, a platform of which Sidónio Pais was going to make considerable use during his year in power.

V. The local elections and Lisbon by-election.

In the autumn of 1917 the government took a political risk by allowing the long-delayed administrative elections to take place, and these were preceded by a Lisbon by-election, with a seat in the Chamber and another in the Senate being disputed. Although there were no merchant ships being sunk off the Portuguese coast, one of the motives for the postponement of the elections in 1916, the same could not be said for the other motive: conspiracies which threatened the regime. The government’s risk did not pay off, for it revealed a worrying increase in the apathy of the urban population, the most loyal, as we have seen, to the republicans, while the country’s conservatism was highlighted. The monarchists, participating in the contest for the first time since 1910, showed themselves to be the second political force in the country, despite the lack of a unified party. The

⁵³ *ibid.*

number of abstentions in the three sets of elections (Lisbon by-elections, on 14.10.1917, municipal elections, on 4.11.1917, and parish elections, on 18.11.1917) was the highest ever in the Republic's history, and the results cannot be explained simply by reference to the number of men at the front. The consensus, among most of the republican newspapers, was that the regime, and not just the Democrats, had been weakened by the elections. The Democrats emerged victorious from the Lisbon by-elections, *O Mundo* claiming that "the majority of voters carried out their civic duty and voted in the P.R.P.'s candidates."⁵⁴ Electoral statistics, however, tell a different story: 9,619 votes had been cast, in contrast with the 22,866 votes of 1915. *O Século*, on 16.11.1917, commented despairingly on the lack of civic pride evidenced by the electoral results: "A nation like this has the government that it deserves." As for *O Dia*, the elections had been a clear sign that the Democrats were a spent force, and that "even in its Lisbon stronghold, the Republic's life is exhausted."⁵⁵ Democrats and Evolutionists had, lastly, pooled their votes under a 'Sacred Union' banner, which made their 3,007 votes all the more dismal, especially when compared to the 2,258 votes obtained by the Unionists, who put forward Machado Santos as their candidate for the Senate, in an obvious attempt to gather all the protest votes.

Sensing the Democrats' momentary weakness, the monarchists decided to contest the local elections, thus entering the political fray for the first time in the republic's seven years of existence, despite the divisions within monarchist ranks and the consequent lack of a powerful national organisation. *O Dia*, for example, urged all candidates to send their names into its office, so that the monarchist daily could endorse their campaigns.⁵⁶ *Pátria!*, in Oporto, ran a strong anti-government campaign, giving voice to the rumours that vast fortunes were being amassed by leading ministerial figures as a result of the war.

⁵⁴ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 15.10.1917.

⁵⁵ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 15.10.1917. The monarchist daily's figures do not tally with official statistics; again on 15.10.1917, "O Dia" claimed that out of 48,000 voters, 42,000 had abstained.

⁵⁶ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 22.10.1917.

The monarchists were proved right in their decision to contest the elections, whose results again suggested the regime's exhaustion. Once again only *O Mundo* saw the municipal results as a victory for the Republic - the majority of Municipal Chambers had remained, it claimed, in *republican* hands. This uncharacteristic recognition of the merit of other republican forces was the result of the monarchist-conservative irruption on the national scene. *O Combate* stated that in Lisbon the government party had been outstripped by the combined opposition results "by many thousands"⁵⁷ while *O Dia* rejoiced in the fact that the monarchist "City List" had come in second place, becoming, as a result, the official opposition in the Municipal Chamber: "As a dress rehearsal it has left us with great ambitions for the opening night."⁵⁸ Accusing the government of falsifying results, and of resorting to violence in order to deter monarchists from voting, the monarchist daily then enumerated conservative victories around the country, which included five district capitals: Castelo Branco, Faro, Leiria, Portalegre, and Santarém.⁵⁹ *Pátria!* pointed out that in Oporto, out of 20,000 voters, only 6,000 had taken part in the elections, the Democrats winning under the 'Sacred Union' ticket (2,782 votes), followed by the 'conservatives' (1,535), Socialists (971) and Unionists (749).⁶⁰ The monarchist newspaper accordingly called for "the creation of a national monarchist organisation, to coordinate future campaigns."⁶¹ *Pátria!* also claimed victory after the parish elections, which it called "the death blow against demagoguery."⁶²

⁵⁷ *O Combate* (Lisbon), 11.11.1917.

⁵⁸ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 5.11.1917.

⁵⁹ Daeschner sent the following municipal electoral results to Pichon: Democrats, 68; mixed republican, 18; Evolutionists, 11; Unionists, 6; neutrals, 12; independents, 17; 'listes de conseils', 24; conservatives, 11; monarchists, 24. In the same letter, the French Minister added that the neutrals, independents, and 'listes de conseils' were made up essentially of anti-republican figures. M.A.E., Paris. Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 635, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 22.11.1917.

⁶⁰ *Pátria!* (Oporto), 5.11.1917.

⁶¹ *Pátria!* (Oporto), 5.11.1917 & 7.11.1917.

⁶² *Pátria!* (Oporto), 20.11.1917.

The scale of the country's indifference to the elections can be measured by the electoral results in Coimbra, the country's third city. The relatively apolitical *A Gazeta de Coimbra* described the local elections as having taken place amid a total lack of interest. In the city itself, of 3,202 registered voters, only 942 participated in the electoral act, giving the Evolutionists a victory, a pattern repeated throughout the whole Municipality: only 2,404 votes were cast by the 6,769 electors.⁶³ *A Capital*, now openly representing republican opposition to Afonso Costa claimed that through their stranglehold on politics, the present government was destroying the Republic, which, nevertheless, was still sufficiently strong to ward off its enemies. On the 5th of November *A Capital* called for the government's resignation, and two days later it asked,

“How can policies which the entire country has repudiated, especially the main focus points of republicanism, continue to prevail? How can policies that have not gained a majority of the country's municipalities continue to prevail? Those policies were defeated, and defeated at the ballot box, something which has never happened in Portugal (...)”⁶⁴

Daeschner, interpreting the electoral results, came essentially to the same conclusion. The monarchists' good results were a warning to the Republic, but they had not been the result of a popular desire to return to the previous regime: “Le nombre des votants est proportionnellement insignifiant.”⁶⁵ What was significant in the result, for the French Minister, was the abstention rate among republicans, and especially the Democrats,

⁶³ *A Gazeta de Coimbra* (Coimbra), 7.11.1917.

⁶⁴ *A Capital* (Lisbon), 7.11.1917.

⁶⁵ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 635, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 22.11.1917.

a sign that the government's partisan policy was alienating its supporters, anxious for social peace in wartime. Unfortunately, Daeschner predicted, the conditions for a proper 'Sacred Union' government simply did not exist in Portugal.⁶⁶ Afonso Costa had no intention of resigning, as *A Capital* urged him to do, or of carrying out a cabinet reshuffle, for he believed, as we saw in ch.VI, that he was on the verge of finding the solution to Portugal's economic problems. He was never able to announce this triumph to the country, however, because of Sidónio Pais' *coup*. By the time that Afonso Costa returned to Portugal, moreover, many other Democrats - those Deputies who had been fighting in France - had already done the same, although the purpose behind their return was unprecedented.

VI. Opposition within the Democratic party.

The aim of these men was to use their prestige as the parliamentary voice of the C.E.P. to demand the formation of a new, and national, government, one which might put a halt to the domestic political disputes which were sapping the morale of the Portuguese troops in Flanders. Their intended action, which never took place as a result of the 5 December movement, would have been the culmination of the growing rift within the Democratic party, chronicled by Jaime Cortesão in his *Memórias da Grande Guerra*, a frequently cited source. This rift appeared following the creation of the second Sacred Union cabinet, in the shape of a group of Deputies (Cortesão himself, António da Fonseca (despite his role in the collapse of the first Sacred Union government), João de Deus Ramos, Ramada Curto, João de Barros, and Sousa Rosa) who, with the blessing of two party heavyweights (António Maria da Silva, the future party leader and former Labour Minister, and António Macieira, President of the Chamber) drafted a critical message to Afonso Costa.⁶⁷ The Premier, hearing of the growing dissent within the party, decided to

⁶⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁷ "(...) We the undersigned deputies, recognizing the grave political and economic situation expressed in the complaints and worries of popular opinion and of the press, sure of the need to obtain the trust and the

bring it into the open before it could spread, at a meeting of the parliamentary party. The document was not read out, but João de Barros presented a motion similar to it in content, which called for a mixed commission, made up of Senators and Deputies, to consult with the other parties, in order to create a more representative cabinet. Afonso Costa brushed aside these suggestions, along with the call for the inclusion of a moderate Catholic voice in the cabinet and for taxes on war profits, and successfully appealed to party unity and for trust in the government, which could not be seen to back down at such a crucial moment.⁶⁸ Daeschner was informed of the rebellion, as was the whole of Lisbon's political world; according to the French Minister, there was widespread speculation among the opposition and among Afonso Costa's enemies about the size of the rumoured secession within the Democrats. Daeschner also identified António Macieira as the leader of the move, adding that the potential rebels wanted the immediate trial of political prisoners, the revoking of all exceptional laws, and the setting of limits to Portugal's participation in the war. Daeschner concluded,

“La scission attendue n'a pas eu lieu et la situation de M. Costa parmi les siens semble plutôt fortifiée par cet incident. Mais le President du Conseil reste cependant en présence de grosses difficultés à l'intérieur du parlement. L'attribution

cooperation of the country's majority in order to meet the situation's urgent needs and to create the basis for a national resurgence, the thought of which constitutes the source of our vigour and of our strength, and certain that only through the respect for truth and for the free expression of opinion can Portuguese democracy arrive at the solutions that might meet our national interests, have come to inform Your Excellency of our decision to put into practice the following political programme:

Immediate constitution of a national government in which, as far as possible, all parties and productive classes may be represented, in order to ensure that governmental measures may have the support of those charged with carrying them out.

A campaign for public enlightenment, run by the government in as systematic and complete a fashion as possible, devoted to national questions, (which we see as) the indispensable base for the collaboration of others and the necessary sacrifices.

Study and revision of our current problems, particularly in what concerns our military effort and the corresponding international compensation, in harmony with the absolute need to ensure the country's financial life and to promote, starting immediately, even if at the cost of immediate financial sacrifices, the moral and material development of our potentialities (...)" Cortesão, *op.cit.*, 47.

⁶⁸ Cortesão, *op.cit.*, 51.

ou la promesse d'attribution de postes en vue et bien rémunérés vaincra certaines résistances, mais la situation ministérielle n'est pas à l'abri d'un coup de surprise.⁶⁹

Jaime Cortesão left for France in August 1917, and so we do not know how the conflict within the party he called the “great organised strength of the Republic”⁷⁰ evolved. In his entry for December 1917, however, Cortesão referred to a meeting of Democratic Deputies who belonged to the C.E.P., during which it was decided to attend the forthcoming reopening of parliament in order to correct the “serious defects and errors” in the C.E.P.’s organisation and to replace the government.⁷¹ Cunha Leal, Deputy in the 1918 Chamber, was to state that not all Democrats were bad, for some had prepared a dossier, in 1917, with which to overthrow the government, or two or three of its key men.⁷² This intention to overthrow the government was also seized upon, decades later, by Teófilo Duarte, collaborator and apologist of Sidónio Pais, as clear evidence of Afonso Costa’s failure as war leader.⁷³ *A Capital*, not surprisingly, speculated feverishly as to the composition of a future cabinet:

“We do not think that we will surprise anyone when we say that, despite everything, the government is in crisis (...) In São Bento its fall will be a fatal one, caused more by the government party’s own members than by its enemies. Political passions will burst forth as soon as Parliament reopens.”⁷⁴

⁶⁹ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Ribot, 8.7.1917.

⁷⁰ Cortesão, *op.cit.*, 44.

⁷¹ Cortesão, *op.cit.*, 105.

⁷² *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 1.8.1918.

⁷³ Teófilo Duarte, *Sidónio Pais e o Seu Consulado* (Lisbon: Portugália, 1942), 63.

A Capital also advanced the possibility of an exclusively Evolutionist government. On the 3.12.1917 a quorum was not reached in parliament, which *A Capital* interpreted as a time-gaining maneuver by the party leader's supporters, allowing Afonso Costa time to head off the rebels in person. On the 5.12.1917, the last day of the 'old' Republic, *A Capital* reported the arrival of some front-line deputies (Sá Cardoso, Álvaro Pope, Vitorino Godinho, Joaquim Ribeiro, and the independent Costa Dias) and claimed that others were on their way. The 4.12.1917 had been a day of rumours and counter-rumours, and *A Capital*, sensing the government's defeat, printed them all: that Afonso Costa had the plans for a reshuffle in his briefcase, that he would fight on without altering the government, or that he would resign. With the press's attention focused on the impending crisis, Sidónio Pais made the final preparations for his assault on power, intelligently carried out while Afonso Costa had not yet arrived in Lisbon, and raising the interesting questions of whether or not a different government might have been able to call upon the support, civilian and military, required to overcome the forces at the disposal of the future President, and of whether or not this point was a consideration in Sidónio Pais' calculations.

The political crises of 1917 were the result of two factors which could not be reconciled. A partisan government could not carry out what was termed a 'national' policy, yielding the supreme power entrusted to the Executive branch by the parliament in 1914, especially when the party whose members composed the government was seen as the main instigator of Portugal's participation in the war. To opposition politicians, and to many serving in France, it seemed as if the Democrats had led Portugal into an emergency situation in order to avail themselves of limitless power, and the fall of the first Sacred Union cabinet, for the sake of parliamentary prestige, was a key element in this pessimistic scenario. Parliamentary prestige, however, counted little when appealed to by the opposition during the secret sessions held in July: the government continued to delay the

⁷⁴ *A Capital* (Lisbon), 23.11.1917.

publication of a White Book covering Portugal's entry into the conflict and the official reports of the initial African expeditions, and to allow parliament to investigate the organisation and the command of those expeditions, as well as the organisation of the C.E.P.⁷⁵ By not making any concessions to the parliamentary opposition, the government succeeded only in diminishing the parliament's role as an expression of voices legitimately dissonant to its own, channeling those voices into illegitimate means of altering the country's course. The Unionists' nomination of Machado Santos as their candidate for the vacant Lisbon senatorial seat was a clear indication that for them there was no longer any value in a parliamentary system totally controlled by the Democratic party. The creation of the Centrist party, with its attempt to appeal to as broad an audience as possible, also revealed a willingness to mobilize all of those sections of society which had so far refused to exercise their right to vote, for either ideological or personal reasons, from unionised workers to monarchists, thus allowing for the Democrats' unbreakable hold on power. The success of these tactics, along with the unpopularity of the war policy and the economic hardship produced by the conflict, were the cause of the Democrats' poor showing in the 1917 elections. It is difficult, with hindsight, to understand why these elections were held, as they had already been successfully postponed before. They allowed for a manifestation of apathy in relation to politics, of which the government must have been aware, through the Democratic party's machine, and which was to allow Sidónio Pais to claim to be acting in defense of the fragile republican regime, now that the monarchists had staged a successful reappearance in the political arena, becoming a credible opposition.

⁷⁵ Even Bernardino Machado's projected visit to the front was attacked, allegedly in defense of parliamentary prestige. Celorico Gil objected to the decree which allowed the President of the Republic to visit the troops in France, for article 2 stated that expenses were to be set by the Council of Ministers. In an extremely violent speech, Celorico Gil stated that Bernardino Machado's presence would bring no comfort to monarchists in the trenches, and went as far as stating that Bernardino Machado, who had been born in Brazil, was not truly Portuguese. *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 16.8.1917.

CHAPTER VIII - OVERT COUNTER-MOBILIZATION, 1916-1917

In ch.IV an examination of Portugal's attempted wartime political mobilization was made, and the weakness, and the disparate nature, of the efforts made by the State, by organisations, and by individuals, was highlighted. The immediate consequences of this failure to capitalise on the war in order to affirm the Republic have also been examined. We will now turn our attention to the process of counter-mobilization that was taking place concomitantly: the attempts by various individuals and organisations to discredit politicians, the 'Sacred Union' governments, the war policy, and the Republic itself, in the eyes of politicised opinion, of the army, and of the rural and urban working populations. Because of the often covert methods employed by those in the process of counter-mobilization, it is difficult to provide a description of such methods, and of their ideological and intellectual contents. One of the strengths of the counter-mobilization campaign was the ability of its agents - local notables or priests - to reach rural populations directly; this immediate contact, however, left few traces for the researcher. Nevertheless, enough evidence has remained, essentially in the form of reports emanating from local authorities and the State's security apparatus, which, when coupled with the bitter criticism of all government initiatives, including the actual management of the war effort, in the monarchist, conservative republican, and syndicalist presses, provides a glimpse of the ferocity and the scope of the counter-mobilization campaign.

What was counter-mobilization fueled by? The most immediate answer was the desire for power, among deposed monarchists and defeated conservative republicans: the desire to return to the monarchy, or to reformulate the Republic, to prevent the Democrats, through their control of the electoral process, from having a stranglehold on

political power. There was the desire to restore the Catholic Church to the central role it had held in Portuguese life before the law of separation. Agricultural producers wanted the freedom to sell their products abroad or internally, once price restrictions had been lifted. Industrialists saw the progress being made by their neutral Spanish counterparts and feared for the post-war world; the majority of the country did not know what the war was about. Claims from the government that the war was a national one, and should as a result lead to the union of all, were brushed aside; as we have seen Portugal's entrance into the war was too controversial for belligerence to create a focus of unity. By late 1917, as losses in Europe began to be added to those in Africa, opposition sources formulated the idea that Portugal's sacrifice had been too great; in other words, that the country could not do any more for the Allied cause. The incessant increase in the price of consumer goods, and the intolerance shown by the government to trade union demands attracted ever greater segments of the public, politically active or not, to the anti-war banner. By late 1917, therefore, Right and Left were waging a concerted campaign against the Democratic government, a development which became obvious once Sidónio Pais took power. In the next two chapters we shall divide the counter-mobilization campaign into its visible, public side, aimed essentially at the politicised opposition to the government, and into its invisible, and conspiratorial side, aimed essentially at the army and at the rural populations.

I. Intellectual rejection of the war policy.

The intellectual rejection of the government's arguments for Portugal's entry into the war was the necessary continuation of the debate, begun in 1914, over whether or not Portugal should enter the conflict, or remain outside it, as even Britain seemed to favour. There were many different strands within this argument, including the nature and the benefits of the British alliance, the wisdom of going to war against a nation as powerful as Germany which, even if defeated, would one day rise again, and, of course, Portugal's unpreparedness for such an undertaking. *O Dia* first voiced conservative concerns about the results of the war policy during the amnesty debate, in April 1916, claiming that

monarchists had accepted the war in a display of patriotism, and had refused to say “one word about the responsibilities which belong exclusively to those who brought us to this situation.”¹ This duplicitous stance was soon dropped in favour of a more openly antagonistic position; Norton de Matos was compared to Kitchener and found wanting,² while the ‘national’ character of the war was rejected by a call for volunteers to form the first units to be sent abroad: all the ‘friends of Serbia’ who had held demonstrations in Lisbon calling for participation in the war could enlist and defend the honour of the Republic.³ Rejection of the government’s call for political unity also arose from the Left; as we saw, *Trabalho e União* delivered a stinging criticism of the decision to accept the British request for the seizure of the ships, and was suspended as a result. In Oporto, another syndicalist newspaper, *A Aurora*, claimed that the Portuguese could not form a united front against the enemy, because workers, “ragged, hungry, to whom no solidarity was shown in their struggle against exploitative bosses and owners of foodstuffs”, had not been consulted in the matter of Portugal’s foreign policy.⁴ Parliamentary approval of the government’s decision counted for little, because as a body it represented only a few hundreds of thousand voters.⁵ A week later the same newspaper published the Zimmerwald manifesto, and described the ongoing battle of Verdun in the most tragic of terms: “Poor human cattle,” who had no conception of international politics, were being sacrificed “by the same birds of prey.”⁶ In April, finally, Clemente de Vieira Santos pointed out that the people did not know what the war was about, but that the government was, at best, too arrogant to explain the reasons for Portugal’s belligerence:

¹ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 8.4.1916.

² *O Dia* (Lisbon), 8.6.1916.

³ “Just a few days ago a Portuguese volunteer returned from France, and told this newspaper that out of the 45,000 volunteers who made up the Foreign Legion, 43,000 had already died or disappeared. All the more reason for the 2,000 who are left to be joined by our numerous ‘friends of Serbia.’” *O Dia* (Lisbon), 5.9.1916.

⁴ *A Aurora* (Oporto), 14.3.1916.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *A Aurora* (Oporto), 21.3.1916.

“We must walk, like the Nazarene to his Calvary, in the direction of the fighting, to defend Freedom and Civilization, caring not that such things do not exist in our country (...) the government suddenly, out of the blue, told us that the German savages had declared war against us and that we had no right to ask any questions. We just have to march!”⁷

The campaign questioning the wisdom of the war policy was continued at other levels. Zeferino Cândido, a historian, added intellectual support with his *Aliança que Esmaga, Beligerância que Desonra* [Crushing Alliance, Dishonouring Belligerency,] the follow-up to 1915's *O Canhão Vence...A Verdade Convence* [The Cannon triumphs...Truth Convinces.] Zeferino Cândido presented, in these works, a one-sided account of the nature of the alliance between Portugal and Britain,⁸ while suggesting, at the same time, that relations between Portugal and Germany had always been excellent. German goodwill had been demonstrated by the willingness to endure two years of insults in parliament and in the Press, and behaviour entirely inconsistent with the status of a non-belligerent: all because the Imperial government knew that the Republic did not represent Portugal. As for the war itself, Britain was responsible, having repeatedly turned down German offers of *rapprochement*, aided by treacherous nations such as Belgium:

“Disguised by its treacherous neutrality, arming itself to the teeth, having joined this league, working out with England

⁷ *A Aurora* (Oporto), 23.4.1916.

⁸ “Let England or anyone who wishes to defend her cite one sole instance in which she helped us, in which for the benefit of Portugal, of Portuguese independence and Portuguese integrity she made the smallest sacrifice.” Zeferino Cândido, *O Canhão Vence...A Verdade Convence* (Lisbon: Livraria Ferreira, 1915), 59.

the arrangements for the invasion of Germany through its territory.”⁹

Portugal, according to Cândido, also had to be included in this treacherous plot: this was the necessary result of the republicans’ subservience to the British government. Even the republicans, however, had suffered at the hands of British treachery, because Britain refused to acknowledge its responsibilities in the seizure of the merchant vessels (a chain of events we examined in ch.III) as a result of the ‘universal’ condemnation for Afonso Costa’s action. The Portuguese explanation for the seizure of the ships was not acceptable; had Portugal really required the ships for its own economic necessity, and had it maintained good relations with Germany, then an arrangement could have been arrived at.¹⁰ Despite his avowed monarchist beliefs, lastly, Zeferino Cândido claimed that Manuel II was wrong when he urged monarchists to support the war effort, for it was a “dogma” that if “demagogues” and “conservatives” worked together, one side would be sacrificed; as the war was a “demagogic” policy, the conservatives would be used by their enemies.¹¹ The time had come, in other words, to hold up the differences between the two camps for the rest of the country to see and judge.

Another influential figure to deny the government any authority in its efforts to lead a united nation to war was Machado Santos, who was to lead the rising of 13.12.1916. His action was not limited to the publication of *A Ordem Pública e o 14 de Maio*; in a series of interviews, the naval officer cast doubts on the nature and the benefits of the government’s policy. *O Dia* was more than delighted to reprint these interviews, despite Machado Santos’ reputation as the hero of the revolution that abolished the monarchy, because they were largely uncensored. In one of these interviews, Machado Santos claimed that António José d’Almeida could never be accepted as the head of a

⁹ Zeferino Cândido, *Aliança que Esmaga, Beligerância que Desonra* (n.p., 1916), 48.

¹⁰ Cândido, *op.cit.* (1916), 62.

¹¹ Cândido, *op.cit.* (1916), 50.

'Sacred Union' government, asking "Portugal's women to hand their men over to him", because he had insulted the Kaiser, "as a result of which Germany declared war against this country."¹² In another interview, with *A Vanguarda*, Machado Santos cast doubt on the good news arriving from Mozambique, where Portuguese troops had taken the offensive. Censorship prevents us from reading his declarations concerning the sanitary conditions in General Gil's army, but not the exchange that followed between Machado Santos and his interviewer:

"But that is horrendous!"

'It is. But rest assured that my calculations are not far from the truth.'¹³

II. *The exploitation of military failure.*

Criticism of the way in which the war itself was being conducted was another powerful weapon against the government, although this criticism had to be framed in such a way as to attribute all responsibility for the repeated mishaps to the government, in order not to alienate the army. In 1916, the war meant the Mozambique campaign, which, as we have seen, culminated in the defeat of Newala. *O Dia* was to pay special attention to this campaign, which soon proved to be a constant source of embarrassment to the hard-pressed government. On 6.12.1916, as news of the Newala defeat began to filter back to Portugal the monarchist daily hailed the soldiers, who had marched for 8 days in order to return to their lines; the following day General Gil's courage and patriotism was reaffirmed by *O Dia*, which nevertheless questioned his experience of African campaigns. By 9.12.1916, however, *O Dia's* fire was turned clearly against the government, with the accusation that either António José d'Almeida, as Minister for the Colonies, was unaware of the "campaign of conquest" being conducted, or that he had ordered it; either way, the

¹² *O Dia* (Lisbon), 13.9.1916.

¹³ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 16.11.1916.

responsibility for what had happened in Africa was his. Cunha e Costa, one of the newspaper's leading commentators, made dark predictions regarding the future of the colony, because the South Africans, who had long coveted it, were probably going to collaborate in its defense. Once they held Lourenço Marques, it would be very difficult for the Portuguese government to regain control of the city. Cunha e Costa also pointed out what the government could not admit: that

“our soldiers need excellent officers and leadership, because their civic education is next to nothing. For many of them, the Fatherland is not Portugal: it is their little adobe or brick house, their pig, their local market. If that handful of property is attacked, they will defend it tooth and nail. They will kill for five minutes of rain on their land. But the notion of a greater Fatherland will be held confusingly, if at all, and as for fighting for Justice, what can they know of it?”¹⁴

The above quotation is the best illustration of the nature of the rift that separated republicans and monarchists during the war. There was no offer of help, on the writer's part, in order to correct what he must have seen as a shameful fact: that most Portuguese had no conception that they were just that, that Portugal existed as an independent nation, and that it had a long history and a large colonial empire. That such a state of affairs was doubly dangerous at a time of war must have been obvious; but because it was the Democrats' war, because the monarchists had declined any and all responsibility for it, they were going to act as spectators while the 'Sacred Union' tried to act on too many fronts, eventually discrediting itself and the Republic. The dangers which such a refusal to cooperate implied for the country itself were not acknowledged, what mattered was the inevitable collapse of the government, as embarrassment followed embarrassment.

¹⁴ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 11.12.1916.

The irony present in Cunha e Costa's article was obvious: having gone into the war in order to preserve its colonies, Portugal was now faced with the possibility that it would lose those colonies not to Germany, its nominal enemy, but to one of its own allies.¹⁵ The questioning of the war's conduct began again in the summer 1917, when losses in France were already being suffered,¹⁶ although the criticisms again referred to Mozambique. Brito Camacho, in June 1917, stated that it was vital for Portugal's long-term interests that German forces should be driven out of Mozambique by Portuguese troops, not those of other countries: "all efforts must converge on Mozambique, whatever the cost."¹⁷ A series of letters signed "An Afrikander" appeared in the monarchist daily, pointing out that the Germans had now overrun Portuguese Nyassa and threatened to do the same to the whole colony, sparking off serious native rebellions as they had done in Angola in 1914; to make things worse, certain tribes in Angola were again in open revolt. One of the letters stated that "according to the newspapers, some Democratic politicians are calling for solid instruction to be given to the next expedition to Mozambique (...) Why did they not think of this in 1914?"¹⁸ The campaign to demonstrate Portugal's unpreparedness for the war, and to hurt the public figures most closely associated to the interventionist position, also included the navy, led by Leote do Rego. The 'friends of Machado Santos' claimed, in their *O Treze de Dezembro* that the crews of British merchant ships carrying the C.E.P. to France had refused to be escorted by Portuguese warships, and that the commanding officers of British destroyers had refused to be led by in convoy missions by Portuguese officers more senior than them. Naval shortcomings were further demonstrated in July, when Ponta Delgada, in the Azores, was shelled by a

¹⁵ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 17.4.1917, revealed how the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, in an extensive article on the war in Africa, had largely ignored Portugal's participation; the following day, it stated that Lloyd George had left out Portugal in a speech in which Britain's allies had been listed. The implications were obvious: despite the country's efforts, the Democratic leadership was failing to attract the world's attention.

¹⁶ 43 killed, 285 wounded, and 132 gassed by then according to *O Dia* (Lisbon) 25.6.1917.

¹⁷ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 19.6.1917.

¹⁸ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 3.7.1917.

U-boat; Hermano de Medeiros, who had already spoken out after the shelling of Funchal, issued a strong protest, and called for a secret session of the Chamber of Deputies.¹⁹

The public campaign to discredit the 'Sacred Union' governments did not halt at military affairs. An attempt was made to link all the woes caused by the war, and anything else, in fact, that might alarm public opinion, with the Democratic and Evolutionist leadership. Not only had those parties ensured Portugal's belligerency, it was argued, they now seemed intent on achieving the highest possible number of casualties, by making a lavish contribution to the Allied cause. At no time was the thrust of this campaign more obvious than in July 1917, when Norton de Matos finally announced the full extent of the Portuguese commitment to the war in Europe: 55,000 men to cover the Portuguese sector, who would be supplemented by a monthly force of 4,000 men, to make up for casualties. *O Dia* reacted by finally making public the allegation which, as we shall see, had been repeated covertly across the whole of the country for over a year: that the government was making a profit from the sale of soldiers to the Allies:

"The Minister of War, who returned from abroad having received the Great Cross of St. Michael and St. George, as well as the French Légion d'Honneur - and how well he deserved such distinctions! - did not have what one would call a triumphal reception."²⁰

Another monarchist newspaper, Oporto's *Pátria!*, took this argument further, claiming that for Afonso Costa and his followers, "the war has represented an ultra-profitable mine, an inexhaustible fountain of wealth and luxury."²¹ The prediction of 4,000 casualties per month took the whole country by surprise. It was also a gross

¹⁹ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 4.7.1917.

²⁰ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 7.7.1917.

²¹ *Pátria!* (Oporto), 3.10.1917.

exaggeration; only in April 1918 did casualties overtake that mark, which meant that public opinion was unduly alarmed by the scale, and the open-ended nature of the commitment.²² Norton de Matos also claimed that Portugal would not be relying on the charity of the Allies: everything, including new equipment bought for the sake of standardisation with the British army, was to be paid for by Portugal after the end of the war. Finally, Norton de Matos announced the creation of an Independent Artillery Force, designed to cooperate with the French forces; ten batteries had already been earmarked for departure, and another five to twenty would follow at a later date. *O Dia* criticised the Minister's speech from all angles: As there was no guarantee of when the war would end, there was no way of knowing how many would perish in France,²³ beyond the obvious matter of the grief that the monthly departure of 4,000 men would cause, the monarchist daily also pointed out that it would be impossible to maintain current levels of production, and defend Portugal itself, if 55,000 men were in France and another 30,000 were in Africa.²⁴ The article's undoubtedly gloomy predictions for the future were destroyed by the censor, but the newspaper still managed to disassociate itself, once and for all, from the war: "Not even the smallest shred of responsibility for what is happening can be attributed to us."²⁵ As we have seen, the Unionists' reaction to Norton de Matos' speech was as hostile as that of the monarchists. *A Opinião*, a conservative republican newspaper, was shocked by the cost of the enterprise, whose overall dimension it deemed to be excessive, and whose goals were not clearly laid out; if, as the Minister of War had claimed, the sending of 4,000 men to the front every month was necessary for the preservation of the Portuguese empire, then the enormous sacrifice it entailed was

²² It was also to prove impossible for the Portuguese government to ensure that 4,000 men arrived in France every month: it simply did not have the necessary shipping at its disposal.

²³ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 7.7.1917.

²⁴ "Where will all of those arms be found? In all professions, but especially in agriculture. What then?" *O Dia* (Lisbon), 7.7.1917. Nearly a month later, the same newspaper was to claim that "the war can no longer be resolved by military means" and that responsibilities for Portugal's belligerence would be determined one way or another: "there exists the infallible and eternal justice of God." *O Dia* (Lisbon), 4.8.1917.

²⁵ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 7.7.1917.

necessary simply in order to maintain the “*status quo ante*”. The Minister had used the verb ‘to give’ many times, but never had he employed the verb ‘to receive.’ The accusation being made by *A Opinião* was clear: the very economic future of the country was being mortgaged by the government’s excessive commitment to the war.²⁶

III. Exploitation of the continuing threat to the colonies.

If the price to pay for the maintenance of the colonies (4,000 casualties per month on the Western Front) seemed, to the opposition, far too high, then such a sacrifice became absurd if the possibility of losing the colonies after the war continued to exist. Unfortunately for the Democratic government of 1917, such a possibility was aired at the 1917 London conference of socialist parties from the Allied countries. Among other topics, the creation of a large, neutral, African state was discussed, one which would include Angola and most of Mozambique. Portugal’s two man delegation, led by Costa Junior, spoke out against the plan and, upon returning to Portugal, warned of the possibility that the colonies would be lost after the war. The *Partido Socialista Português* (P.S.P.) had outflanked the government, showing it to be ignorant of the risks to the colonies, and again raising the question of why it was that Portugal was so eager to make such a large contribution to the war. *O Dia* warned that currents of opinion in Britain should not be ignored, because such currents had considerable influence in the shaping of foreign policy;²⁷ *Pátria!* took its criticisms further:

“The socialist, dr. Costa Junior, spoke yesterday, and said what, in any case, everybody already knows: that our colonial empire will be taken from us, if not as a whole, then at least in its greater part. It is for this goal that Portugal is

²⁶ quoted in *O Dia* (Lisbon), 9.7.1917.

²⁷ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 3.10.1917.

sacrificing the lives of thousands of men and impoverishing the nation's existence."²⁸

Costa Junior's assertion that Portugal would probably lose the colonies after the war, and that South Africa would take for itself the southern part of Mozambique stunned even the pro-war, republican, *A Capital*, which suggested that either the government knew nothing of the plans to deprive Portugal of her empire, as a result of which it was incompetent, or that it was keeping a harsh truth from the public: indeed, it made things worse by its refusal to comment the British Labour party's proposals for Africa, now that the Labour party was represented in government. These proposals, *A Capital* added, if carried out, "would imply the absolute ruin of our nationality."²⁹ Fortunately for the government, the opposition was not aware that Belgium and France were speculating over the future of certain Portuguese colonies, notably the enclave of Cabinda, Portuguese Guinea, and northern Angola.³⁰

The reception given to Costa Junior's remarks on the future of Portugal's colonies was symptomatic of the most interesting development of the counter-mobilization campaign: the coming together of two very distinct groups, united now by their opposition to the 'Sacred Union' parties and the war policy: the Catholic/monarchist bloc, antagonised by the law of separation, the rising of 14.5.1915, and the 1916 amnesty, and the trade-union movement, for whom the Republic had quickly developed into a regime as unfriendly as its predecessor to working class aspirations. We must therefore turn our attention to the process which brought these considerable forces together in an ultimately successful attempt to destroy the government of Afonso Costa.

²⁸ *Pátria!* (Oporto), 28.9.1917.

²⁹ *A Capital* (Lisbon), 24.11.1917.

³⁰ See Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (M.A.E.), Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Afrique, Possessions Portugaises I, Dossier Général, 1613, especially a study of Portugal's colonies carried out by the French Colonial ministry on 18.10.1917 and forwarded to the M.A.E., which suggested allowing Belgian expansion into Angola in return for French control over Cabinda.

IV. The Catholic Church's role in the counter-mobilization campaign.

When the German declaration of war was handed to Portugal in March 1916, it seemed to some commentators within Catholic ranks that the time had come to establish a truce with the Republic, a truce similar to the one that had taken place in republican France.³¹ The Church, present in every locality across the country, had a lot to offer to what remained an essentially Catholic nation at war; offers of Catholic participation in a national government were correspondingly made, as we have seen, by newspapers such as *A Ordem*.³² That newspaper had even begun to formulate a brand of Catholic patriotism, and, on the basis of this patriotism, an inventive interpretation of the war and of Portugal's role in it: the war would be the continuation of Portugal's glorious military tradition, which had been closely linked to religious belief and the expansion of that belief, from the very beginning of Portugal's independence. As a supreme example of the religious nature of Portugal's armed endeavours stood the figure of Nun'Álvares Pereira, the victor of Aljubarrota, a gifted commander and a pious believer, who could be exploited for propaganda purposes in the same way that French Catholics exploited the figure of Joan of Arc.³³ Catholic offers of participation in the forthcoming 'Sacred Union' government were not accepted, however, and conflict soon erupted between that government and the Church, a conflict in which the Church was allowed to enjoy the moral high ground. The first wartime clash between Church and State took place on the question of military chaplains. It was the government's view that in a republican army there could be no room for chaplains of any denomination. The Church, led by Lisbon's Cardinal, António

³¹ For a description of the French Catholic Church's reaction to the outbreak of the war, see Jacques Fontana, *Les Catholiques Français pendant la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1990), ch.I, "Et ce Fut la Guerre."

³² *A Ordem* (Lisbon), 12.3.1916, contains an interview with Dr. Martins Pontes, the Cardinal of Lisbon's private secretary, in which a revision of the law of separation was put forward as a condition for Catholic participation in government: "the republicans, if they are as patriotic as they claim to be, should place their love for this blessed land above party politics (...)"

³³ The similarity to events in France is obvious. As Fontana writes, "les catholiques donnent l'impression de jeter une exclusive sur l'idée de la patrie. (sic)" Fontana, *op.cit.*, 77.

Mendes Belo, argued that, as the overwhelming majority of the soldiers about to be sent to the fighting would be Catholics, it would be in their interest, and therefore in the interest of the army itself, to include, in the expeditionary forces, priests capable of carrying out their ministry under harsh conditions.³⁴ Norton de Matos announced in Parliament that religious assistance would be made available on the battlefield, but the Minister of War did not specify how, or by whom, this assistance would be provided, and he did not act on the matter in any visible way. In July Cardinal Mendes Belo wrote to Bernardino Machado, in a letter published by *Vida Católica*, the official press organ of the Lisbon patriarchate, stating that it was “now nearly a month since the most excellent Minister of War gave the assurance, in parliament, that religious assistance would be provided to our soldiers”, adding that nothing was being done.³⁵ Thousands of men were being trained for modern war in Tancos, and it seemed urgent, to the Cardinal, to allow priests to undertake such training; for this there was need of quick legislative action on the part of the cabinet. The Cardinal added that the Church was aware that the presence of chaplains was “incessantly called for by our soldiers,”³⁶ and that it felt compelled to come to their aid:

“It would be so barbarous, and so inhuman, to refuse our soldiers, who are about to duel with death itself, the sacred comforts which they call for, that it would constitute a mark never to be erased from the pages of our History, where so much light and greatness are to be found.”³⁷

³⁴ “It seems to us that our country’s public powers will arrange matters so as to allow our soldiers to be accompanied by military chaplains (...)” *Vida Católica* (Lisbon), 20.3.1916.

³⁵ *Vida Católica* (Lisbon), 5.7.1916.

³⁶ *ibid.*

³⁷ *ibid.*

O Dia, sensing that the government was about to become the victim of its own intransigence, joined the campaign for the inclusion of chaplains among the troops to be sent from Portugal to any battlefield: military chaplains, it claimed, were demanded by “the country’s Catholic conscience, the will of millions of people.”³⁸ Only in January 1917 was legislation on the inclusion of chaplains in the Expeditionary Corps passed,³⁹ and when it came it was a source of disappointment to the hierarchy. The number of chaplains to be included in the C.E.P. was small, they would not be paid by the government, and their nomination, and acceptance, would not be made by the Church itself. In another letter to the President, the Cardinal of Lisbon enumerated the complaints: legislation had come too late, and it would now be difficult for priests to leave their congregations and prepare themselves to depart with the soldiers; only wealthy priests could meet the conditions set out by the government; but, worst of all, “priests without the competence necessary to serve the interests of our brave Portuguese soldiers, who are going to honour the Fatherland on the field of battle” could volunteer for the C.E.P., as the Hierarchy was in no way included in the selection process.⁴⁰

The deep distrust of the Catholic Church on the part of the government was clearly demonstrated by the issue of the military chaplains. By denying the Church any role in their selection, the Ministry of War seemed to fear the creation of a dedicated corps of priests that would turn the C.E.P. from a republican into a Catholic army - which it probably was already. *O Mundo*, mouth-piece of the Democrats, had described the demands for the inclusion of chaplains in the army as “absurd and impertinent,”⁴¹ and claimed that the whole campaign was being exploited by some of the regime’s enemies: “It is merely a case of speculating with religion and the religious feelings of the careless in

³⁸ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 13.5.1916.

³⁹ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 18.1.1917.

⁴⁰ *Vida Católica* (Lisbon), 19.1.1917.

⁴¹ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 24.6.1917.

order to (...) promote discontent, feuding, and bitter arguments.”⁴² Again we are confronted by a deep misunderstanding of the country on the part of the republican government, a misunderstanding recognised by some republicans themselves. Homem Cristo wrote, in 1916,

“This is definitely a country of madmen! What do the free thinkers have to fear from the priests? Are their convictions so feeble that they will vanish simply through contact with the priests? If that is not the case, why do they care, why does it matter to them that those who are Catholic should receive the priests’ spiritual aid?”⁴³

Homem Cristo went on to add that not only was it impossible to “know what an illiterate people really want,” but also that it was undeniable that many desired the presence of a chaplain on the field of battle. As the priority for the government should be that the army fight bravely on the world’s attention had been fixed upon it, the non-inclusion of the chaplains in any force to be sent to the Western Front was a serious error for the government.⁴⁴ As we have already seen, a large proportion of the officer corps was hostile to the Republic; to fear the reactionary influence of chaplains among soldiers, when those soldiers were in direct contact with monarchist officers was simply a demonstration of blinkered vision. It was also a development which allowed the Church to undertake a national campaign, having captured the moral and patriotic high ground: funds were needed for the maintenance of the chaplains at the front. Led by *A Ordem*, Catholic newspapers launched subscriptions for the chaplains in a first, and ominous, demonstration of union and strength. *A Paz*, an Oporto Catholic weekly, described the efforts to fund the chaplains in glorious terms:

⁴² *ibid.*

⁴³ *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 4.6.1916.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

“It is heart-warming to see the Portuguese Catholics’ movement! From every part of the country contributions, offerings, subscriptions! The subscription in favour of military chaplains marches on triumphantly! Oh! The generosity of the good Portuguese people!”⁴⁵

By the end of March 1917, according to *Vida Católica*, sixty priests had volunteered to accompany the troops, and, thanks to the large donations which had been made, some had already taken their place among the troops. By provoking a confrontation with the Church, the government allowed it to demonstrate its strength, under the banner of patriotism and support for the troops; the Church had been allowed to carve out a role for the duration of the war: to minimize suffering, among the troops and at home. The Church’s influence was revealed, for example, by the growing popular conviction that the sacrifice demanded by the war effort was excessive. By emphasizing the virtues of peace, rather than of victory, throughout the whole country, the Church created a subtle, but significant, mood of agitation. Peace and Victory were still equated in the title of the Cardinal’s epistle, published in *Vida Católica*, in March 1917, but an examination of the text reveals that Peace was seen as the priority:

“We can rest assured of the Portuguese Army’s military honour, and of its final victory. The Race will never betray itself. But how many of our brothers will pay with their lives for victory!”⁴⁶

⁴⁵ *A Paz* (Oporto), 27.1.1917. See *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 26.4.1917, for the Bloc’s proposed legislation on military chaplains, which addressed all of the Hierarchy’s criticisms.

⁴⁶ *Vida Católica* (Lisbon), 9.3.1917.

This impending tragedy created the duty to pray for a short war; God must be asked “to shorten the days of the war.”⁴⁷ The Portuguese, Cardinal Mendes Belo claimed, had a special intermediary with God in the form of St. Isabel,⁴⁸ and it was through her that prayers for peace should be channeled. Once a month, the Cardinal ordered, and for the duration of the war, prayers for peace and victory should be held. To these would be added special prayers to St. Isabel every Sunday and holiday. There are numerous newspaper reports that suggest that these prayers became very popular, and that indeed a small religious revival was taking place, natural in a time of uncertainty and hardship. The *Noticias d'Évora* reported one such Mass, in July 1917, in an article partially destroyed by censorship, and a week later one of its writers described the motive behind the Mass as “the reawakening of a creed not dead but asleep, which grows, spontaneously and strong, from the shock of a violent moral emotion, like the impetuous and smouldering lava surges through a half-extinct volcano (...).”⁴⁹ The ‘War Godmothers’, according to the same writer, also contributed to this mood, by arranging for masses to be said for their proteges at the front (although it is not stated if these were the ‘War Godmothers’ created by the Portuguese Women’s Crusade.) *O Mundo*, ever sensitive to matters of religion, alerted the authorities to the occurrences in Évora, claiming that soldiers had been forced to attend the July Mass, wherein religious medals and rosary beads had been distributed to them.⁵⁰ Through the *Gazeta de Coimbra* we learn that the religious revival was not limited to Évora, and that it was probably a national phenomenon,⁵¹ its reporting suggests, however, that the priests were collaborating with the authorities in the attempt to raise morale:

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ Isabel of Aragon, 13th century Queen of Portugal, whose ‘Miracle of the Roses’ halted an impending battle between her husband, King Dinis, and their son, the future Afonso IV.

⁴⁹ *Noticias d'Évora* (Évora), 11.7.1917.

⁵⁰ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 7.7.1917.

⁵¹ “Everywhere the great sentiment of faith, dedicated to the Portuguese troops about to depart for the war and to those who have done so already has accentuated itself. Masses, prayers, and other ceremonies have

“Many ecclesiastics have made, during these religious ceremonies, sermons full of patriotism, which have gone a long way towards restoring the morale of those who have to depart and of their families, who are forced to watch them to do so.”⁵²

Once again, however, examination of the surviving prayers and sermons reveals that it was peace, honourable and quick, that was desired. The same newspaper reported, in March 1917, a Mass, led by the Bishop of Coimbra, which was followed by a patriotic conference, entitled “Love of the Fatherland”, an event which attracted over 4,000 people, including members of the university, students, officers, and local administrators; the final prayer offered, to the Virgin Mary, was not particularly bellicose: “Virgin and Mother (...) do not allow the tears of too many mothers, of too many wives, of too many sons and of too many brides to fall on this land, by You blessed and to You consecrated.”⁵³ Oporto’s *A Paz* described, in June, a pilgrimage organised by the ‘Catholic Defense and Propaganda Group’ to a local shrine called ‘Virgin Hill,’ in order to “implore Heaven’s aid in favour of our arms.”⁵⁴ Describing the reasons which had led to the pilgrimage, the writer of the account described national and international events not as a source of hope through the possibility of victory, but rather of gloom and despair:

“The war is bleeding Europe in a cruel way; the whole world is being affected by these horrors; God is punishing us for our offenses against Him.

been celebrated, in order to ask for Portugal’s triumph and for the return of our troops, covered with glory.” *Gazeta de Coimbra* (Coimbra), 12.2.1917.

⁵² *ibid.*

⁵³ *Gazeta de Coimbra* (Coimbra), 3.3.1917.

⁵⁴ *A Paz* (Oporto), 9.6.1917.

Homes are becoming empty, the national economy is deteriorating alarmingly, the sacrifice in blood is enormous (...)”⁵⁵

According to this commentator, therefore, the war was not the outcome of a diplomatic crisis, or of one nation’s desire to dominate the continent: it was simply the punishment of mankind by its creator, tired of insults and attacks on His Church; the lesson, once applied to the Portuguese case, was simple to grasp: the secular Republic, led by masons and atheists, was at the root of the country’s woes. Prayer, and an understanding of the spiritual content of the war, of its true nature, was necessary in order to bring it to an end. In June 1917, after many delays, the *Livro de Orações do Soldado Português* [Portuguese Soldier’s Prayer Book] appeared, offered to the men by the “Catholic women of your heroic and most Christian country.” The cult of St. Isabel, and hence of peace, is continued in this work, and one of the central orations is in fact an unashamed prayer for the end of the war: “St. Isabel, mother of peace and of the Fatherland, You who reign triumphantly in the heavens, give us peace.”⁵⁶

V. Fátima.

As we saw ch.VI, it was with the events in Fátima that the Church’s part in creating an expectation of, and a desire for, immediate peace, became clearest. The period of the First World War had already witnessed a number of Marian apparitions in Portugal.⁵⁷ This is not surprising. According to David Blackbourn, writing of the 19th

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶ “Prayer to St. Isabel (Asking for Peace)”, in *Livro de Orações do Soldado Português* (Lisbon: Tip. do Anuário Comercial, 1917), 70-71. The prayer continues in the same tone, “Most Merciful God, who, among the other qualities You gave the most fortunate Queen St. Isabel, included the prerogative of calming the fury of war, allow us, through Her intervention, to, having enjoyed in this mortal life the peace that we so humbly ask for, reach everlasting Glory (...)”

⁵⁷ A.H. de Oliveira Marques (Coordinator), *Nova História de Portugal* vol.XI *Portugal da Monarquia para a República* (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1991), 510.

century, “the link between the real or perceived political persecution of Catholics and the incidence of apparitions was not confined to France. Successive waves of apparitions in Italy followed the contours of political conflict, increasing in number at times when church autonomy, religious orders, and the integrity of the Papal States were most at risk.”⁵⁸ Blackbourn adds that the Marpingen visions occurred during Bismarck’s Kulturkampf, “when many Catholics were gripped by panic.”⁵⁹ According to Joao Ílharco, in his *Fátima Desmascarada*, the priests who were behind the events in Fátima had three basic objectives: the creation of a new centre of pilgrimage which might rival Lourdes, the harnessing of funds for Catholic propaganda, and the use of the apparitions as a “weapon against the republican regime.”⁶⁰ According to Ílharco, four of the priests in the region of Fátima, who were to be directly involved in the apparitions, had been detained previously by the civil authorities, as a warning against their anti-republican propaganda. More important, for the purpose of this work, than the actual nature and the causes of the supernatural events of Fátima, apart from the message of peace already highlighted in a previous chapter, was the speed at which news of the apparitions spread throughout the country, and the number of people in all areas of Portugal who set out for Fátima, month after month, despite the fact that only the three children could actually see the Virgin. On 13.10.1917, before the last apparition, *O Século*’s correspondent, wrote,

⁵⁸ David Blackbourn, *The Marpingen Visions: Rationalism, Religion and the Rise of Modern Germany* (London: Fontana Press, 1995), 39.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ Joao Ílharco, *Fátima Desmascarada: A Verdade Histórica Acerca de Fátima Documentada com Provas* (Coimbra: Tip. Comercial, 1972), introduction. David Blackbourn’s claim that the political response to the apparitions at Fátima was motivated by the spectre of communism is only partially correct: Fátima began to be used for *domestic* political reasons as early as 1917. Blackbourn, *op.cit.*, 36-37. Blackbourn outlines, in this work, discusses both the popular Marian cult of the 19th Century, which expressed itself in, among other phenomena, apparitions, and how the Church had adapted to this cult, eventually incorporating and mastering it: “apparitions were incorporated into the papacy’s fight against the nineteenth century (...) the extraordinary organisational flair with which the church exploited the major apparitions showed how selectively it rejected the nineteenth century (...) the organization of mass pilgrimages to the apparition sites and the development of the sites themselves provide classic examples.” Blackbourn, *op.cit.*, 53-54.

“No matter where you look, from the Algarve to the Minho, the apparitions at Fátima have caused a stir. Every thirteenth, after the Feast of Ascension, the pilgrims arrive by the thousands, from near and from afar, and all the means of transport are full, there is nowhere to sleep or to eat, and all seem happy and amazed, despite not having seen anything that might amaze them (...)”⁶¹

On 15.10.1917 *O Século*'s famous account of the last apparition was published, and it registered an enormous movement, by all available means of transport, in the direction of Fátima: thirty to forty thousand people from all corners of the country, guided, as we have seen, by priests, members of lay organisations, and even, according to *O Século*, well known monarchist figures. Such a concentrated burst of activity required preparation and coordination, and *O Mundo*, while dismissing the actual events taking place in Fátima, warned of what lay behind them: clerical propaganda was being intensified, persecutions against republicans and all defenders of the law of separation had become normal, and the Republic and its leaders were being insulted; the authorities meanwhile, observed “very little of what is happening.”⁶² As events in Fátima unfolded, the government and the Church's leading figures became involved in the clashes which we examined in a previous chapter, with the result that the Cardinal of Lisbon, the Bishop of Oporto, and the Archbishops of Évora and Braga were banned from their dioceses. This action naturally fed the feeling of persecution among Catholics, and led them to strengthen their opposition to Afonso Costa and his government. The most recent mouthpiece for Oporto's conservatives, *Pátria!*, highlighted the many expressions of anger which resulted from the expulsion of the city's Bishop, António Barroso. On 8.8.1917 it claimed that a demonstration against the Bishop's departure had been prevented by the authorities. *A Paz*, meanwhile, had stated that the protest against the expulsion had become as grandiose

⁶¹ *O Século* (Lisbon), 13.10.1917.

⁶² *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 22.8.1917.

as the welcome the city had given Bishop Barroso upon his arrival, 18 years previously, and that clear battle lines had been drawn by the government's action: "(...) Today's protest movement joins, in a single thought, all men of good, in a legitimate and vehement indignation at the outrage that is being attempted."⁶³ On 18.8.1917 *A Paz* blamed the expulsion of the prelate on the secret designs of the Masonry, which had proved stronger than the wishes of the people, despite the fact that from all across the country protests had been addressed to Bernardino Machado, imploring him not to sanction the expulsion order; threateningly, the Catholic newspaper stated that "Mr. Alexandre Braga's despotic act was a deadlier blow to the Republic than any conceivable conspiracies (...)"⁶⁴ Two weeks later, *A Paz* issued its call to arms, scarred by censorship: the expulsion of prelates had made it impossible for Catholics to remain indifferent to their own fate; it was now their duty to join the 'Catholic Centre', to mobilize themselves in order to defend their rights.⁶⁵

The municipal and parish elections, postponed for over a year, were finally held in November 1917, and the electoral campaign which preceded them afforded yet another opportunity for the Catholic press to urge its readership to organise itself in an effective manner in order to defeat the Masonic, and hence unpatriotic, government. Spurred by the Democrats' poor performance in the Lisbon by-election, *A Paz* exhorted its readers to capture the municipalities and parishes which, "above all else, form(ed) the vital political elements of a nation."⁶⁶ Voting the Democrats out of power had now become a responsibility before Portugal and God Himself. "To the ballot box, therefore, for God and for the Fatherland."⁶⁷ Another article spoke of the "sacred right" of voting, and

⁶³ *A Paz* (Oporto), 4.8.1917.

⁶⁴ *A Paz* (Oporto), 18.8.1917. This newspaper also compared the exiled bishop with the Minister of Justice, Alexandre Braga, whose reputation for integrity was, at best, mixed: censorship, however, made it illegible.

⁶⁵ *A Paz* (Oporto), 1.9.1917.

⁶⁶ *A Paz* (Oporto), 6.10.1917.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*

argued that that right had now become “an undeniable duty for all Catholics, and all good men who love their Fatherland;”⁶⁸ through the ballot box, therefore, and beginning with the municipalities, “the restoration of the traditional Portuguese nation will be carried out.”⁶⁹ November 1917 also saw the appearance, in the pages of *A Monarquia*, of the darker side of Integralist thought. António Sardinha began to develop the idea that there were, in Portugal, two distinct races: one which had provided the country with its pantheon of heroes, and another, “bastard, cosmopolitan, and judaic”, which had begun to flourish at the time of Pombal and which had triumphed in 1910. *A Paz* applauded Sardinha’s extreme views, stating that “this is, in fact, our present situation. However, flashes of hope can be seen and in the Lusitanian subsoil can be felt the firm, slow, and irresistible ascension of the *National Race* (...)”⁷⁰

VI. Counter-mobilization on the Left.

Like the reactionary Right, the revolutionary Left, whose most active groups were of an anarcho-syndicalist nature, carried out its own process of counter-mobilization against the government and against the war policy. As might be expected, this campaign was essentially a covert one, because of lack of means available to these groups and the fear of government reprisals. There were, nevertheless, occasions when the Left proclaimed its defiance openly. Its willingness to do so, and the successes achieved through strike action, along with the common anti-Democratic grounds, led to a tacit cooperation between syndicalists and the forces on the far-Right which, throughout 1917, attempted to capitalise on the struggle between the government and the unions. Besides the war itself, the shortage of food and the ever-increasing cost of living provided the

⁶⁸ *A Paz* (Oporto), 3.1.1917.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰ *A Paz* (Oporto), 17.11.1917. See also *A Monarquia* (Lisbon), 4.1.1918, for a further development of this argument: the struggle between monarchists and republicans on the subject of the war was thought not to represent “a betrayal of Portugal”, but was instead “one of the many facets (...) of the great struggle that has been taking place in the last seven years between the two races into which the once united and strong Lusitanian race was divided.”

most important rallying points for syndicalist action. Nevertheless, other topics, such as the re-introduction of the death penalty, the departure of workers for France and Great Britain (and the conditions which these workers had to face in their destinations,) and the government's undeniable hostility towards the trade unions and their demands allowed for further propaganda on the Left, and for the coming together of the two political extremes.

Defiance, in times of war, can include the presentation of an alternative viewpoint on the nature and the origins of the conflict. The syndicalist press did not shy from presenting the war as a clash of imperialisms, fueled by the greed of arms manufacturers and other speculators. *A Greve*, in August 1917, likened the war to the apocalypse, adding that "today, as on its first day, we cannot make out, in the horizon, the *terminus* of this frightening war, which continues, day by day, to widen its sphere of action across the whole world."⁷¹ A week later, the same newspaper decried bourgeois calls for sacrifice, heard in Portugal as in the rest of the belligerent nations. Capitalist rivalries had sparked off the conflict, "the greatest war of all time", and now those same bourgeois who called for sacrifices to be made were profiting heavily from the war, be they industrialists, landowners, or engaged in commerce. Similar views had been put forward in May 1916 by Oporto's *A Aurora*, in an article entitled "The Patriots":

"They see in the present conflict a struggle between Liberty and Barbarism; we only see in it a struggle for the conquest of a new hegemony on the world's markets; the triumph of financiers and diplomats, of political, economic, social, and religious parasites, of the militarist and religious castes."⁷²

Trabalho e União, the syndicalist daily suspended for eleven weeks after the German declaration of war, expressed its support, in December 1916, in a heavily

⁷¹ *A Greve* (Lisbon), 12.8.1917.

⁷² *A Aurora* (Oporto), 7.5.1916.

censored issue, for the Kaiser's offer of peace negotiations: "For the third time since this unsurpassable slaughter was unleashed on the Earth Germany has proposed peace negotiations. Equally for the third time, England has refused to even discuss peace negotiations."⁷³

A police report, written on 31.8.1916, described a meeting held at the anarchist "27 de Abril" centre, in Lisbon, which was attended by 900 people. The topic for discussion was the proposed constitutional reform, designed to allow for the re-introduction of the death penalty, deemed necessary by the army for the maintenance of discipline at the front. The mood of the meeting was an angry one, and speaker after speaker denounced the proposed reform, claiming that it was merely the means by which the government hoped to quiet those who spoke out against its "political errors and great swindles."⁷⁴ One speaker, representing the civil construction workers, whose militancy would be demonstrated in 1917, assured the meeting of his union's support, and called for the drawing up of a list of politicians who supported the death penalty, for one day the final reckoning would come. Those present agreed to take their protest to the parliament, and to prevent the reform of the constitution by force; their vehemence caught the country's attention. Jaime Cortesão, in his *Memórias da Grande Guerra*, described the chaos that ensued:

"All those who have fought against our intervention in Europe have come together as a result of the death penalty (...) the opposition was so fierce that during the session of parliament, typed pamphlets, full of insults and perfidious allegations, and with the sole aim of inciting the murder of

⁷³ *Trabalho e União* (Funchal), 16.12.1916.

⁷⁴ Arquivo Nacional (A.N.), Lisbon, Ministry of the Interior (M.I.), Direcção Geral da Adiministração Política e Civil (D.G.A.P.C.), stack 71 (1916) report, Polícia Cívica de Lisboa, 31.8.1916.

the 'thieves' who wanted the death penalty, were distributed in the galleries."⁷⁵

Open support for the unions from the conservative Right appeared only as a result of the wave of strikes that gripped Lisbon in the summer 1917, which followed the U.O.N.'s congresses of the same year. These shows of strength and defiance earned the U.O.N. the admiration of monarchists and opposition republicans, all of whom searched for an alternative to the Democratic-controlled Republic, an alternative which could also gain the allegiance of the unions. A series of articles appeared, in newspapers ranging from the republican, but anti-Afonso Costa *A Capital*, to the Integralist *A Monarquia*, in which this solution was sketched; the emphasis was on a corporative solution, one in which the unions, clearly one of the nation's 'living forces', could be represented. *A Capital*, describing the "Corporative Spirit", claimed that the parties had exhausted themselves and abandoned their programmes; across Europe, it claimed, the time had now come for the corporations, a development already apparent in Spain. "The associative link", the newspaper claimed, "is becoming the strongest of all fraternal links. The corporative spirit derives from the great emancipationist current of thought which has been conquering the world for over a century."⁷⁶ In Portugal, the article continued, the signs of corporatism were now clear, with the unions, state corporations, and even the press stepping forward to make their demands. Paiva Couceiro, the exiled monarchist leader, wrote of the need to enlist the unions' support for any future political solution, such recognition, he argued, would lead syndicalism to lose its revolutionary nature and to become instead "a great nationalist force consciously integrated in the centripetal band of national forces."⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Jaime Cortesão, *Memórias da Grande Guerra (1916-1919)* (Oporto: Renascença Portuguesa, 1919), 28.

⁷⁶ *A Capital* (Lisbon), 5.9.1917.

⁷⁷ *Pátria!* (Oporto), 27.9.1917.

The wooing of the U.O.N., which would lead to that organisation's limited support for Sidónio Pais, can be seen as the climax of a policy of *rapprochement* between Left and Right, already noticeable, for example, in the campaign against the departure of Portuguese workers, recruited by the French and British governments. By November 1917, 10,050 and 4,605 men had left for France and Britain respectively, and these figures raised concern in many quarters, including the State apparatus itself. On 13.10.1917, for example, the Civil Governor of Viseu informed the Minister of the Interior that "the constant flow of workers hired by France and by England is seriously affecting both agriculture and industry and justly alarming this District's population."⁷⁸ The press campaign against the departure of the workers had begun in August 1916, with a series of articles in conservative newspapers such as *A Luta*, *A Opinião*, and *O Dia*. The monarchists warned that this emigration would lead to increases in domestic wages;⁷⁹ Brito Camacho warned that these workers would be seen as shirkers, and that the measure would affect the army's morale;⁸⁰ and *A Opinião*, pointing to the high wages being offered by the French government, claimed that the country's best and most highly skilled workers would leave, with disastrous consequences for Portugal's industry.⁸¹ The following year the campaign returned to the fore, this time with the added support of the socialist and syndicalist press which, despite various reports to the contrary, warned of poor conditions being endured by workers abroad.⁸² *Pátria!* addressed the issue, overstating the number of men involved (15,000 had, it claimed, departed for France, even more had left for Britain,) from the twin point of the workers, carried to England "in the unsanitary hulls of merchant ships", and of the nation's economy: "This disorganisation of the country's productive forces, paying no attention to local unpostponeable needs, is a mistake, no,

⁷⁸ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 78 (1917), telegram, Civil Governor of Viseu to Minister of the Interior, 13.10.1917.

⁷⁹ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 17.8.1916.

⁸⁰ quoted in *O Dia* (Lisbon), 18.8.1916.

⁸¹ quoted in *O Dia* (Lisbon), 17.8.1916.

⁸² See *Trabalho e União* (Funchal), 3.6.1917, *A Voz do Operário* (Lisbon), 6.5.1917, and *O Combate* (Lisbon), 12.8.1917.

even more than a mistake - it is a crime against the Fatherland.”⁸³ Once again, therefore, the government found itself attacked both from the Left, according to which it was tolerating the exploitation of Portuguese workers abroad and the disregard shown for their needs by French and British employers, and from the Right, which charged it with sacrificing the country’s economic future for the sake of immediate personal prestige, achieved by agreeing to every Allied request.

On 26.11.1917, two weeks before Sidónio Pais’ *coup*, the administrator of the municipality of Lamego presented the Civil Governor of Viseu with a dismal picture of his townsmen’s attitude towards the Republic and its agents:

“At the present moment there is absolutely no respect either for the authorities or the public servants. The working classes, as the result of a miserable sort of propaganda, carried out openly by the institutions’ enemies (...) blame the authorities and the public servants for the high price of foodstuffs. Everyday large groups form and provoke all who pass before them, continuously causing disorder.”⁸⁴

This disrespect for the Republic, the refusal to see the Republic as a legitimate regime and its agents as legitimate vehicles of authority, was the ultimate aim of the counter-mobilization campaign. The belief that the government and its administrative machine no longer represented the popular will, or, rather, that it had never done so, had become, by the end of 1917, very widespread. In this chapter we have seen the public questioning of the ‘Sacred Union’ governments, and the public attempts to create an alternative account of the war and of possible responses to it. In order to understand the

⁸³ *Pátria!* (Oporto), 13.10.1917.

⁸⁴ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 78 (1917), letter, administrator of the municipality of Lamego to the Civil Governor of Viseu, 26.11.1917.

full dimension of the counter-mobilization campaign, aimed at rural and urban populations, but especially at the army, the only organisation capable of defeating the 'civil revolutionaries' loyal to the Democratic party, we must abandon the press, and try to find a better, and less censored, account of the mood of the country: that which is found in the files of the State's security apparatus.

CHAPTER IX - COVERT COUNTER-MOBILIZATION,

1916-1917

In the previous chapter it was suggested that in order to understand the full force of the political counter-mobilization against the war in 1916-1917, the responses of the majority excluded from the visible, public debate conducted by 'informed' public opinion had also to be taken into account. It was also suggested that the necessarily covert, and verbal, nature of this campaign rendered the historian's descriptive and explanatory task doubly difficult; nevertheless, enough material can be extracted from the files of the *Direcção Geral da Administração Política e Civil* (D.G.A.P.C.), the Ministry of War's Information Service (M.G.S.I.), foreign diplomatic services, and occasionally, the press itself, to allow a picture of the political campaigns, carried out by syndicalists, opposition republicans, monarchists, and priests, to emerge.

I. Subverting the army.

The most obvious target for anti-war propaganda was the army, or rather, the soldiers who would make up the *Corpo Expedicionário Português* (C.E.P.) Not necessarily understanding the motives for the war, or Portugal's part in it, they were mobilized, grouped together in barracks, trained in the army camp at Tancos, and led by a deeply divided officer class, whose views were often diametrically opposed to those of the government, and whose enthusiasm for the war was mixed. A letter forwarded to the M.G.S.I by the Democratic Party's Directorate, to whom it had been addressed, illustrates how military mobilization served to turn previously politically apathetic men into enemies of the Republic:

“When, some time ago, soldiers were mobilized for the manoeuvres in Tancos, from this village (Vila Nova de Ourém) were called, among others, a corporal, Luís Baptista, and a soldier, José Baptista, for the 15th Infantry regiment in Tomar (...)

Now these soldiers (...) before being called up had never manifested any signs of disloyalty towards the regime. It so happens that having been for only a short while in the barracks of Tomar, they returned, saying the worse things of the Republic and its men.”¹

Worse still, the two men predicted that Afonso Costa, whom they referred to, among other insults, as a thief, would be shot upon his return from France. The concerned Democrats of Vila Nova de Ourém warned their Lisbon colleagues that “it seems that something sinister is being plotted in Tomar against the Republic, and there must be a germanophile military element behind it.”² Something sinister being plotted was not the preserve of the 15th. A M.G.S.I. report from July 1916 stated that “rare is the military unit where treasonous propaganda, aimed at the weakest recruits, is not carried out.”³ In May 1916, chaos had broken out in Covilhã when the local infantry regiment (the 21st) had been ordered to set off for Tancos; the troops, drunk and disorderly, had marched to the rail station in the company of civilians, and many had refused to board the train, intimidating those who attempted to carry out their orders. According to the official report into the events, only one corporal had behaved correctly, coming to the rescue of the colonel, who had been surrounded by angry civilians. An investigation carried out into

¹ Arquivo Histórico Militar (A.H.M.), Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, letter, 29.7.1916, to Directório do Partido Republicano Português, Lisbon. The 15th (Tomar) Infantry Regiment was going to be at the heart of Machado Santos’ revolt in December 1916.

² *ibid.*

³ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, M.G.S.I. report, 10.7.1916.

the events spoke of large scale contacts between syndicalist agents and the troops, which, according to some of those interviewed, were convinced that the front, and not Tancos, was the final destination of their journey; the same report stated that the troops were angry with the fact that not all were being sent; one soldier, the son of the vice-president of the Municipal Chamber, controlled by the Democrats, was being allowed to stay behind in Covilhã.⁴ In July 1916, the French Military Attaché in Madrid, Colonel Tillon, reported that two refusals to leave for Tancos had taken place, although he neglected to mention where and when; these refusals had been the result of “une violente propagande anti-belliqueuse.”⁵ A third demonstration, according to Tillon, had taken place, again in an undisclosed location, as a result of the announcement that students would not be mobilized: troops from Lisbon had been called on that occasion to restore order.⁶ Following rumours of monarchist activity among the officers of the 5th Cavalry Regiment, based in Évora, an M.G.S.I. investigation was carried out in July 1916; according to one sergeant, “with the exception of Captain Praias” (who was asking for a transfer to another unit), “all officers have abandoned the instruction of the soldiers to the sergeants, spending their time in continuous meetings where they discuss only monarchist politics.”⁷ In September the M.G.S.I. warned that “Constant propaganda against the regime and against the war is being carried out amongst the soldiers of the 2nd Infantry regiment.”⁸ In

⁴ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1118, report, 31.5.1916, 1st Brigade HQ, Tancos.

⁵ Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (M.A.E.), Paris, Archive, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 633, letter, Colonel Tillon to Ministry of War, 10.7.1916.

⁶ *ibid.* Tillon went on to add that “Il n’y a pas lieu d’y attacher une trop grande importance et de s’en inquiéter outre mesure. Au surplus, d’après les nouvelles reçues du camp de Tancos, la discipline n’aurait rien laissé à désirer.” This last judgement was too hasty; the M.G.S.I. recommended, in July 1916, that strict vigilance be observed in Tancos, because of the work of germanophile propagandists. See A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, M.G.S.I. report, 12.7.1916. Moreover, in his report on the 1917 Évora riots, the local G.N.R. commander claimed that the officer at the heart of the disturbances, Captain Quadros, had told him that “the soldiers were more undisciplined after their contact with the 1st Infantry, during the manoeuvres in Tancos.” Arquivo Nacional (A.N.), Lisbon, Ministério do Interior (M.I.), Direcção Geral da Administração Política e Civil (D.G.A.P.C.), stack 76 (1917), report, G.N.R. Commander, Major João Augusto da Costa, July 1917.

⁷ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, report, 24.7.1916.

⁸ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, M.G.S.I. report, 1.9.1916.

October, shortly after the riots in Oporto, soldiers in Torres Vedras rioted at the lack of food in the training camp, having been disarmed only a 24 hour stand-off. According to Daeschner, 800 soldiers were moved out of the camp, many under arrest.⁹ December saw the rising led by Machado Santos and Daeschner, describing the movement and its origins to Aristide Briand stated what by then had become obvious to most commentators: that propaganda, was aimed first of all at the soldiers; its “action dissolvante” was made easier by the fact that “les quelques semaines que passent au corps les soldats Portugais ne suffisent pas a leur donner l’esprit et la discipline militaires.”¹⁰ Daeschner went on to add that while many soldiers and n.c.o.s were vulnerable to the propaganda, it was among the officers that it had its greatest effect, and he found it significant both that the insurrection was carried out in the general vicinity of Tancos, and that the troops assembled there were not employed in its quelling.¹¹

The riots in Oporto, in October 1916, also led the investigators into their origins to the conclusion that military mobilization was actually helping the spread of revolutionary and pacifist ideals. The police commissioner charged with the inquest into the riots stated that until the method of recruitment had changed, soldiers from Oporto would be constantly exposed to that city’s ‘undesirable’ elements, drafted with the others, and busy converting previously law abiding men to the theories of men like “António de Almeida Mourão, known syndicalist, opponent of our intervention in the war and a great enemy of the police.”¹² The author of an early report made the crucial observation that “officers

⁹ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Coopération Militaire et Matériel de Guerre, 639, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 29.10.1916. Daeschner had already stated that the delays caused by British ambivalence over the advantages to be gained from Portuguese participation on the Western Front were spurring anti-war propaganda; the outward appearance was of a Portuguese government trying its best to impose participation on its recalcitrant allies: “La propagande contre la guerre ne fait que redoubler et sa prolongation” (of the waiting period before troops were sent to France) “peut faire appréhender qu’un ordre de départ ne soit l’occasion en bien de points de refus d’obéissance.” M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Coopération Militaire et Matériel de Guerre, 638, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 19.9.1916.

¹⁰ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 15.12.1916.

¹¹ *ibid.*

opposed to the war or to the regime” could be found among the elements ‘alien’ to the soldiers, urging them to riot.¹³ We have already seen that many officers, being monarchists, were opposed to the Sacred Union governments, and believed that Portugal had been dragged by the Democrats into the war; allowing the soldiers under their command to fall prey to anti-war propaganda was one way to carry out their goal of disrupting the war effort. The French Consul in Oporto stressed the importance of Socialist, syndicalist and monarchist propaganda in the run up to the riots, but also raised doubts about the officer corps: “leur état d’esprit devrait nous dissuader de faire fond sur leur concours.”¹⁴ The inquest into the events of Covilhã found the officers to have been guilty of negligence; events in Oporto raised the suspicions of the police; in Évora, the following year, officers actually armed the soldiers against the police, as we saw in ch. VI: in other words, by mobilizing men for the war in Europe, the government was, paradoxically, creating more enemies against itself. What is perhaps the most interesting example of the power of the propaganda campaign against the departure and the resupply of the C.E.P., although it was only identified as such by Daeschner, was the week of disturbances in Lisbon, in May 1917. The opposition, as we saw, blamed the government for its failure to feed the capital; the government blamed, as we have seen, anarchists and other revolutionaries. The French Minister, however, added a new element:

“D’autre part, on était a la veille de l’embarquement pour la France des premiers contingents de troupes du Corps Expeditionnaire du recrutement de Lisbonne, et nombreux

¹² A.N., Lisbon, M.I, D.G.A.P.C., stack 69 (1916), report, General Commissioner to Civil Governor of Oporto, 18.11.1916. The Commissioner added that during the riots, known trouble-makers had been very busy: “There were all kinds: socialists, syndicalists, monarchists, everywhere mixed with the soldiers.”

¹³ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 69, (1916), report, from Inspector of the security services and Administrative Police to Civil Governor of Oporto, 9.10.1916. See also M.A.E., Paris, Grande Guerre, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, Consul in Oporto to Briand, 11.10.1916.

¹⁴ *ibid.* When, in Penafiel, mobilized soldiers assembled prior to their departure for Lisbon, and committed various acts of indiscipline, agitators told them that nobody from Oporto or Lisbon had been willing to set off for France, and that no troops from those cities had boarded the ships; their example could be followed by all men returning to their houses. A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1279, M.G.S.I. report, Penafiel, 8.7.1917.

sont ceux qui ne manquaient pas de prédire que contrairement à ce qui s'était passé pour le contingent des provinces, le départ des bataillons de la capitale ne s'effectuerait pas sans désordre; de fait la police a constaté parmi les individus arrêtés, un nombre considérable d'hommes qualifiés pour être mobilisés, et depuis quelques jours deux des régiments de Lisbonne ont vu fondre de 75% les effectifs des bataillons constitués pour le départ."¹⁵

Daeschner went on to describe the pamphlets, probably printed in Spain, which accused the government of selling soldiers to the Allies, and which, purporting to be written by the Russian soviets, advised the people of Portugal to follow their example, electing themselves their political and military leaders.¹⁶ While, as we have already seen, desertion and avoidance of military duties cannot be blamed exclusively on anti-war propaganda, massive desertion immediately prior to the departure for France must be taken as a sign of that propaganda's strength. Homem Cristo, who in *O de Aveiro*, ran a constant campaign urging action against desertion, claimed, in August 1917, that from one shipment of men alone, 1,102 soldiers and corporals, 37 n.c.o.'s, and 6 officers, were missing, and asked, "how many thousands of deserters are there already?"¹⁷ All of this propaganda aimed at the recently mobilized soldiers was designed to prevent their departure for France, which would forever discredit the Republic in the eyes of the international community and facilitate the creation of a conservative regime. It was successful, insofar as the question of whether or not the C.E.P. would depart absorbed the energies and attention of the government, to the detriment of all of its other tasks. Homem Cristo, writing after the collapse of the first 'Sacred Union' cabinet, described the

¹⁵ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Ribot, 31.5.1917.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 26.8.1917.

departure or non-departure of the C.E.P. as “the great question, the life-or-death question for the Republic and for the country, the question upon which all others depend, the question whose resolution worries all minds, the question which had everyone worries, some for and others against.”¹⁸ Raul Brandão, a writer, also noted in his diary the real sense of doubt that hung over the departure of the C.E.P. until the very last minute: “The real question is whether it will be possible to make the troops destined for Flanders to board their ships (...) these next few days are dramatic - for republicans as well as monarchists (...)”¹⁹

Portugal’s commitment to the war, as we shall see, was severely altered by Sidónio Pais’ *coup*, in December 1917. The troops which were involved in that operation, notably those belonging to the 33rd Infantry regiment, had been fully exposed to anti-war and anti-Democratic propaganda, and were convinced that success would bring the shipment of troops to France to a halt.²⁰ One of the most remarkable features of Sidónio Pais’ movement was the lack of support for the government offered by the various units stationed in Lisbon. An excellent eyewitness account of the army’s mood in the days following the *coup* is provided by Oliveira Marques and Marques da Costa in their *Bernardino Machado*: Lopes de Oliveira, accompanied by the then President’s son and Bernardino Machado’s private secretary, toured Lisbon, only to see soldiers dancing and celebrating the government’s defeat, and deserting their barracks, without any action being taken by their officers to enforce discipline; the soldiers “told me that what they wanted to avoid was going to France, that they would rather die here, and that they would not return to their barracks, where there was nobody left.”²¹ According to the same source, when

¹⁸ *O de Aveiro* (Aveiro), 6.5.1917.

¹⁹ Raul Brandão, *Memórias* vol.II, *Vale de Josafat* (Lisbon: Seara Nova, 1933), 89.

²⁰ See, for example, João Ferreira do Amaral, *A Mentira de Flandres... e o Medo* (Lisbon: J. Rodrigues, 1922), 372.

²¹ *Bernardino Machado*, eds. A.H. Oliveira Marques & Fernando Marques da Costa (Lisbon: Montanha, 1978), 181. Lopes de Oliveira concluded that as most republican officers were in France, the government “found itself without the means for an immediate and efficient offensive against the Park, and that the great republican mass, indifferent to the government, and ignoring the rebels’ objectives, watched the

General Bernardiston, the head of the British military mission to Portugal joined Sidónio Pais at the latter's H.Q., in the 'Rotunda', which dominated Lisbon, he was greeted by the soldiers with cries of "Para Verdun não vai nenhum!" [not even one/for Verdun!]²² Satúrio Pires, a military contributor to *A Monarquia* and the banned *O Liberal*, wrote, in the very different public mood of 1918, that "the reluctance in going to war, common to the whole of the army and to the whole of the country never implied cowardice or lack of *élan*. Nobody wanted, however, to go to war without knowing why."²³

II. Subverting the cities.

In urban areas anti-war propaganda appeared from the very first days of belligerency. As might be expected, syndicalists played a leading role, although all of the Republic's enemies seem to have been lumped together in intelligence and diplomatic reports, to the extent that it is often impossible to determine who, or what organisation, was responsible for what action. Only a detailed examination of German intelligence sources, moreover, will reveal the extent to which the different opposition groups within Portugal were linked among each other and to the German espionage network operating out of Spain. German gold, as it was often referred to, either flowed in large quantities into the country or provided a simple explanation for the apparent reluctance of the country to embrace, as a whole, the war effort. *O Mundo*, for example, in July 1917, wrote of the need for a political police to be created, because present security forces were unable to counter German agents and plans.²⁴ Perhaps more importantly, French

fighting indifferently, believing that what was being played out was merely the future of Afonso Costa and not of the regime." Oliveira Marques & Marques da Costa (eds.), op.cit., 183. Lopes de Oliveira also described a pathetic telephone conversation between Norton de Matos, in Lisbon, and Afonso Costa, in Oporto, in which the Minister of War told Afonso Costa that "you have nobody here." Oliveira Marques & Marques da Costa (eds.), op.cit., 185.

²² Oliveira Marques & Marques da Costa (eds.), op.cit., 188.

²³ *A Monarquia* (Lisbon), 12.4.1918.

²⁴ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 24.7.1917. A similar campaign was a constant feature of *O de Aveiro*'s wartime coverage of domestic events.

diplomatic and military sources were convinced that German agents were active in Portugal; Daeschner, writing to Briand in December 1916, stated that

“J’ai eu maintes fois l’occasion de denoncer à votre excellence les méfaits de l’or allemand en Portugal. Il poursuit son oeuvre démoralisatrice. Je n’y reviens pas.”²⁵

The account of Machado Santos’ rising given by Colonel Denvignes, the military attache in Madrid, who had gone to Lisbon after the event, stressed the crucial role played by German action in Portugal. According to Denvignes, the Germans had doubled their propaganda output in Portugal over six months, with the sole aim of preventing the departure of the C.E.P: their propaganda was aimed especially at the families of the mobilized men (although Denvignes did not specify what men and where) who were told that the soldiers had been sold by the government, that the Allies were doomed, and that Portugal had no part to play in the war.²⁶ In March 1917, lastly, French military intelligence warned the Quai d’Orsay that Portuguese monarchists were preparing an armed movement across the northern provinces of Portugal, and that Germans in Spain were providing arms and ammunition; the report concluded that these events “semblent prouver que les Allemands, aidés par les elements monarchistes, continuent leur campagne d’agitation en Portugal.”²⁷

Some figures, nevertheless, emerge from the confusion as having played a crucial role between the various opposition groups. Machado Santos was one such man, his links with the syndicalist *milieu* allowing for coordinated protest actions. From the moment

²⁵ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 24.12.1916.

²⁶ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Colonel Denvignes to Ministry of War, 18.12.1916.

²⁷ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, report, Etat Major de l’Armée, 2* Bureau R.G. to M.A.E., 28.3.1917.

that Portugal entered the war, Lisbon and other cities were subjected to crude forms of propaganda, such as leaflets and graffiti, in a campaign denounced by the republican press. *O Século*, on 29.4.1916, mentioned the release of four men who had been arrested for distributing anti-war manifestoes, and on 5.5.1916, commenting on the parliament's decision to grant the government the power to suspend constitutional guarantees, claimed that "At every step one hears monstrous demonstrations of sympathy for the German cause (...) germanophile propaganda has not eased off - in fact, it has become stronger lately."²⁸ Two Democratic Senators, Arantes Pedroso and Agostinho Fortes, spoke out against graffiti and pamphlets distributed outside theatres and left in mail-boxes.²⁹ On 25.6.1916 *O Mundo* again called for action against the germanophiles who seemed to be carrying out their propaganda with impunity, a propaganda which "tends to sap our strength, to drag our name into the mud (...) and to break our faith in the future." By October, *O Mundo* had begun to criticise the police, calling it too expensive a force to be so useless against the distributors of anti-war propaganda.³⁰ The actual leaflets, few of which survive, ranged from simple poems,³¹ to more sophisticated arguments about the nature of the war, such as the ones contained in the pamphlet *Ao Povo*, reproduced by Afonso and Guerreiro in their article "A Revolta de Tomar (13 de Dezembro de 1916.)"³²

²⁸ *O Século* (Lisbon), 5.5.1916.

²⁹ *O Dia* (Lisbon), 25.4.1916. These early warnings often verged on the ridiculous; José do Vale, writing in *O Mundo* (Lisbon), claimed that "I do not know how, or why, or even by whom, but the words 'down with the war!' have appeared on the city streets, on walls and sidewalks, so methodically spaced that only a German could be their author, or the mentor of their authors." *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 24.4.1916.

³⁰ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 20.10.1916.

³¹ "That the Portuguese, without regrets
Should fight the Germans
In the colonies
Who could object?

But that they should leave behind this land
And go to France, there to die,
Just to save England's hide...
NO WAY!" A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1279 (n.d.)

³² Aniceto Afonso & Marília Guerreiro, "A Revolta de Tomar (13 de Dezembro de 1916)", in *Boletim do Arquivo Histórico Militar*, vol.LI (1981.)

In this pamphlet, blame for Portugal's participation in the war was laid squarely at the feet of the Democrats, for whom the seizure of the German ships had been a mere pretext to bring the country into war to strengthen their personal power. So far, the pamphlet's authors argued, the people had not demonstrated clearly their opposition to the war because they had not been ordered to fight, but

“on the day that the ‘War Syndicate’ (the Democrats and war profiteers) decide to put the criminal idea of selling the lives of thousands of Portuguese into practice, cynically negotiating with our sufferings and our misery, on that day of despair, in which resolution will grip even the most timid, you can rest assured that nobody will refuse to bear arms to defend himself and his family, to impose respect for his liberties, to safeguard his children's bread, to impose respect for his right to determine the course of his life, and to make the war profiteers pay dearly for the unprecedented arrogance of their criminal enterprise.”³³

The government, not surprisingly, had placed Machado Santos, deported after the revolution of 14.5.1915 but later allowed to return to Lisbon, under surveillance, and was aware of his involvement in writing and distribution of pamphlets such as the one already described.³⁴ Raul Brandão, in his memoirs, claimed that while the ‘living part’ of the population in Lisbon and Oporto, which was always ready to endure all sacrifices, and which, “perhaps unconsciously, knows a Fatherland,”³⁵ supported the war, the others, who stood against the Republic, did all in their power to destroy the war effort.³⁶

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1279, M.G.S.I. reports, 2.10.1916 & 11.12.1916.

³⁵ Raul Brandão, *op.cit.*, 86-87.

In urban areas, the counter-mobilization campaign did not rely exclusively on the war and its lack of popularity in order to achieve its means. Economic hardship, easily linked to the war, to the question of the German ships, and to the 'betrayal' of the working class by the republican leadership, who neglected the 'social question', was also exploited. As we have already seen, the government came under attack from even loyal newspapers for its handling of food supplies. Daeschner was equally scathing, and restated the allegations that corruption was rife, and partially to blame for the lack of bread and sugar in the capital. The war was therefore portrayed by the Left as a money-making concern, protected by the special powers the government had been handed by parliament, and ultimately by the re-introduced death penalty. Increasing brutality in dealing with strikes and food riots merely added weight to the syndicalists' arguments. The Oporto riots of October 1916 had been preceded, according to the General Commissioner's report, by a first outbreak of violence in September. Shops had been looted, policemen attacked, and anti-war, anti-government, and anti-republican cries were heard from the crowd. This first outbreak had occurred, in turn, after what the Commissioner called a duplicitous campaign by the Socialists: on the one hand, an open campaign calling for the resolution of the foodstuffs problem; on the other hand, manifestoes urging the sacking of shops and general rioting.³⁷ The French consul in Oporto merely reported the two sides of clash, socialists and conservatives blaming the government's inability to feed the city, while republicans accused the syndicalists of being paid by German agents to disrupt the country. Similar events, according to the M.G.S.I., were planned for Lisbon. A report, emanating from the Civil Governor's office,

³⁶ "Poems, pamphlets, and rumours are distributed out of sight, and nobody knows where they come from; they dredge up corrosive mud. 'What they want is to preserve the Afonso Costa dynasty.' 'Those in charge are rich. So-and-so earns 40,000 Escudos for every shipment made in one of the ex-German merchantmen.' 'So-and-so has already bought the house in which he lived.' (...) of Norton de Matos, who lives in the greatest of simplicities, it is said that he has hundreds of thousands." Brandão, *op.cit.*, 87.

³⁷ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 69 (1916), report, General Commissioner to Civil Governor of Oporto, 13.10.1916. It seems unlikely that the staid P.S.P. could have been involved in a campaign urging violence; the Commissioner was probably lumping all Leftist strands into one mass. According to the M.G.S.I., agitators had attempted to start riots in Lisbon on the same days, by exploiting anger with the shortages of the cheaper variety of bread, which, it was claimed, had been reserved for the soldiers. A.H.M., 1st Division, 35th Section, box 1296, M.G.S.I. report, 11.10.1916.

stated that a delegation of syndicalists (from the Civil Construction union) and anarchists was about to set off for Amadora, a suburb of the capital, “to call the people to revolt,”³⁸ and that other actions were being planned for the future.

A Verdade na Guerra (The Truth in Wartime), an anonymous newspaper which appeared in Portugal at the end of 1917, provides an excellent illustration of how the war, and the Democrats’ role in the war, was portrayed in the wider campaign of counter-mobilization. Addressed to a working class audience, but written with a conservative slant, *A Verdade na Guerra* stressed the government’s unwillingness to listen to the reasonable complaints of the population, because, the newspaper alleged, it was concerned only “with sending to their deaths the nation’s strongest arms.”³⁹ Behind the government’s move was corruption and greed: there was enough food for the entire country, but it was being hoarded; meanwhile Afonso Costa signed a 500,000 Franc check to his wife (for the Portuguese Women’s Crusade), untold wealth was spent on Bernardino Machado’s trip to the front, and jobs were handed out for political reasons only; in a later issue it was claimed that Bernardino Machado was a millionaire.⁴⁰

III. Subverting the countryside.

In rural areas, especially in the North of the country, the agents of counter-mobilization were the traditional local power figures, whose authority had been undermined by the advent of the republican regime: village notables and priests. As Telo points out, small landowners and what he describes as the “agricultural semi-proletariat”, under the influence of larger landowners and the clergy, turned “towards (their) traditional Sebastianism” when confronted with a succession of crises: the war, a succession of poor

³⁸ A.H.M., 1st division, 35th Section, box 1281, report, Serviço Especial do Governo Civil, 8.9.1916.

³⁹ *A Verdade na Guerra* (n.p.), 30.12.1917. This covert newspaper claimed to appear fortnightly, and the quoted issue was its fifth number.

⁴⁰ *A Verdade na Guerra* (n.p.), 15.1.1918.

harvests, and a gloomy economic outlook.⁴¹ Elements within the Catholic Church, as we saw in the last chapter, did not shy from confrontation with the weakening Lisbon government throughout the war. Confrontation, in fact, had anteceded Portugal's belligerence. In Leiria, in October 1914, an attempted insurrection, to coincide with the rising in Mafra, was led by priests - António de Sousa Barreto and Manuel Faria Lopes, described by the district judge as "the principal intermediary between all those in Leiria who are accused of conspiring."⁴² Father Faria Lopes was exiled from the country for two years as a result of his involvement in the plot; another priest, Cândido Nery Sanches, involved in the same conspiracy but in Braga, was also exiled and subsequently rearrested near Bragança.⁴³ The disturbances in Lamego, in July 1915, caused by the so-called Douro question, which left 12 dead, were largely led, as we have seen, by priests who were deeply involved in the marshalling of public opinion. It is only by examining the actions of local priests, therefore, that one can grasp the full extent of the Church's involvement in stirring up hostility to the republican government and to its war policy. In the amateurish report on public opinion carried out in the district of Viseu, sole of its kind to be found in the Arquivo Histórico Militar (A.H.M.), the role of the priests in keeping the population ignorant of the progress heralded by the Republic was highlighted:

"That part of the population which is under the direct influence of the priests and of monarchist individuals considers it (the Republic) harmful to the well-being of the

⁴¹ António José Telo, *O Sidonismo e o Movimento Operário (Luta de Classes em Portugal 1917-1919)* (Lisbon: Ulmeiro, 1978), 131. See also César Oliveira, *A Revolução Russa e a Imprensa Portuguesa da Época* (Lisbon: Diabril, 1976) 132, for his views on the spreading of news throughout the countryside: "I am convinced that the action of the various structures of the Church and the permanence of the paternalist *caciquismo* on the non-urban population (...) were factors which served the interests of the dominant classes better than a press which did not arrive and did not have influence outside of a small rectangle along the coast."

⁴² A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 56 (1915), district judge Oliveira Coutinho to Ministry of the Interior, 2.12.1914.

⁴³ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 56 (1915), telegram, Civil Governor of Bragança to D.G.A.P.C., 3.2.1915.

State, but if anyone enumerates the achievements of the new institutions, and what can still be expected from them, then easily, and sincerely, their opinion will change.”⁴⁴

The optimism inherent in the second half of the quotation begs the question of why the Republic’s leaders, with their achievements and hopes for the future, had not attempted to bring news of what was being accomplished to a substantial part of the population of the district of Viseu. The report continues, describing popular attitudes to the war,

“Their weak culture leads them to either accept it or not, depending on the opinion of those who step forward to guide their judgement.”⁴⁵

Those who did step forward, of course, were the already referred to priests and monarchists, who spread the word that “Dr. Afonso Costa will receive a certain sum of money for every soldier he sends to the war.”⁴⁶ In November, the Evolutionist daily *A República*, published what it claimed was a round-robin letter forwarded to monarchist figures around the country, by other monarchists, urging them to disobey their King’s requests for social and political peace during the war. Social instability would be achieved by exploiting the rural population’s fear of the war - by demonstrating the danger posed by Spain, once the army had left Portugal, and by explaining the effects of the soldiers’ absence on their families and their villages, adding that it was more than likely that all those who departed would never return.⁴⁷ Although the monarchist press denounced the

⁴⁴ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1279, report, to Luís Galhardo, head of the M.G.S.I., on the conditions of civilian and military morale in the district of Viseu, 8.12.1916.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁷ *A República* (Lisbon), 28.11.1916.

document as a forgery, a list of names to whom it was sent can be found in the *Arquivo Histórico Militar* (A.H.M.), and there were 12 priests in the total of 46 names.⁴⁸ The action of such men was made easier by the delay in the departure of the C.E.P., due essentially, as we have seen, to British concerns over its military worth. As Daeschner pointed out to Briand, in October of 1916, the men who had been mobilized in Tancos were subsequently allowed to return to their homes, where they lost the military spirit. “Les hommes qui la composent (the mobilized division) sont évidemment ‘travaillés’ et leur rappel peut être l’occasion de troubles, car la population, sensible à l’excès, s’apitoye volontiers sur leur sort éventuel surtout à l’approche de l’hiver.”⁴⁹ According to the French Minister in Lisbon, interventionists had to contend with the natural sentimentality of the Portuguese as a whole, which rendered them vulnerable to all counter-propaganda which stressed the difficulties and sufferings which the soldiers would endure at the front.⁵⁰ Perhaps the most famous of all the tools of the monarchist campaign to discredit the war effort in France was the 1917 pamphlet, *Rol da Desonra* [Dishonour Roll.] The pamphlet, which claimed to be written by front-line officers, detailed life in the trenches and the realities of modern war, stressing however, that those Democratic politicians and their family members who belonged to the C.E.P. were never exposed to any danger at the front: men like Sebastião Costa, son of Afonso Costa, who was a translator in the C.E.P. While monarchist officers held the lines, interventionists enjoyed themselves in Paris and other cities. The government took immediate measures to repress the printers and the distributors of the pamphlet - who included the seasoned conspirator Júlio Costa Pinto⁵¹ -

⁴⁸ A.H.M., 1st Division, 35th section, 1262, round-robin letter to monarchists, 22.11.1916; bears the seal of the 5th Infantry Regiment.

⁴⁹ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Coopération Militaire et Matériel de Guerre, 639, letter, Daeschner to Briand, 29.10.1916.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁵¹ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1262, letter, *Policia Judiciária* to Military Commander of the Santarém District, 12.11.1917. Costa Pinto travelled on the Lisbon-Oporto train, alighting at various stations and distributing bundles of the pamphlet to “individuals who seemed to await him, some of the uniformed officers.” *ibid.* Copies of the pamphlet can be found in the same box.

but, as the M.G.S.I. informed the Ministry of the Interior in November, the *Rol da Desonra* continued to be distributed in Lisbon and in the countryside.⁵²

The correspondence between the Civil Governor of Viana do Castelo and the D.G.A.P.C. shows the extent to which a priest could take advantage of his position, and of local hardship, in the attempt to harm the republican regime. Writing from the town of Monção in November 1916, he warned that “the people, instigated by clerical and monarchist elements”, had caused disturbances as a result of the rumour that foodstuffs were being exported from the area, which local authorities had forbidden.⁵³ In June 1917, a wave of mutinies occurred, when maize was collected in the municipal cellars. The Civil Governor wrote,

“I was informed that there was no reason for the mutinies, seeing as how there is no shortage of that cereal in the rural parishes, and the municipal chamber sells it on demand at prices lower than those of the markets. The same source says that the mutinies were instigated by monarchists like abbot of the parish of Gondoriz, who in his sermons advised the people to take the maize for themselves.”⁵⁴

One person died in the mutinies, and the abbot of Gondoriz was banned from the municipality, but his sermons had made quite an impact, for, the Civil Governor continued, the prohibition of residence imposed on the priest had led to a new wave of disturbances. “The administrator of Arcos de Valdevez, maintains that he cannot maintain order or

⁵² A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1262, M.G.S.I., letter, M.G.S.I. commander to the chief of cabinet of the Minister of the Interior, 13.11.1917.

⁵³ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., D.G.A.P.C., stack 71 (1916), telegram, Civil Governor of Viana do Castelo to D.G.A.P.C., 2.11.1916.

⁵⁴ A.N., Lisbon, M.I., stack 76 (1917), telegram, Civil Governor of Viana do Castelo to D.G.A.P.C., 29.6.1917.

ensure respect for the Republic's institutions without the presence of G.N.R. soldiers."⁵⁵ The administrator of the municipality of Mirandela warned the M.G.S.I., in April 1917, of the actions of a local priest, José Maria de Mendonça Negreiros, who had been a conspirator against the Republic from the earliest days of the regime, and who could be numbered among its "most entrenched enemies."⁵⁶ When the Civil Governor was consulted on the matter of Father Negreiros, he reported that the situation was even more alarming: hostility to the regime and to the war stemmed from the local prelate, Bishop José Leite de Faria, "a convinced conspirator", and throughout the district it was rumoured that "our eminent statesman, Dr. Afonso Costa, had sold our soldiers for 4.50 Escudos per head to the Allies."⁵⁷ This bishop, claimed the Civil Governor, was creating the backdrop to the whole campaign; in a recent Mass for the soldiers, he had neglected to even mention the Fatherland, maintaining a tone of despair and sadness throughout the ceremony, which had led a more liberal priest to hold a counter Mass, in which duty to the Fatherland and the benefits to be expected from an Allied victory were stressed. Finally, the Civil Governor warned that the bishop's influence was now extending to the army: two officers, from the 30th Infantry, in full dress uniform, had recently attended a mass held by one of the bishop's closest aides, "another conspirator," to the "enormous surprise of the liberal element of this city."⁵⁸ *O Mundo* warned in August that its readers were reporting a "furious" clerical propaganda around the country, which both attacked the Republic and its leaders and singled out for persecution local republicans, liberals, "and all those who defend the law of separation."⁵⁹ The administrator of Santo Tirso, investigating claims about the curate of Guidões, a reputed germanophile, relied on the

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th Section, box 1295, letter, Administrator of the municipality of Mirandela to M.G.S.I., 17.4.1917.

⁵⁷ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th Section, box 1295, letter, Civil Governor of Bragança to M.G.S.I., 2.5.1917.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ *O Mundo* (Lisbon), 22.8.1917.

opinion of another priest, a republican, “the only one in this municipality.”⁶⁰ In November 1917 a priest, Nemésio Rodrigues dos Reis, resident in Barbadães de Baixo (municipality of Vila Pouca de Aguiar,) known for his monarchist opinions, was arrested in possession of assorted firearms and ammunition. He was described by the M.G.S.I. as an “agitator”, who had let it be known that he wished to cross the border to join with other conspirators.⁶¹ Rocha Martins, in his very detailed *Memórias Sobre Sidónio Pais*, described how Machado Santos, held without trial in Fontelo (near Viseu) and local priests plotted to kidnap Afonso Costa, a plot foiled by the postal and telegraph workers’ strike which forced the Prime Minister to return to the capital earlier than planned.⁶² Finally, there were accusations that the Jesuits, having been driven out of the country by the republicans, were now helping to house and hide deserters.⁶³

In June 1917, the soon-to-be exiled Bishop of Oporto, António Barroso, held a Mass for the victory of the Portuguese forces in the war. The French Consul, in attendance, noted the large congregation, despite the absence of monarchist families. Describing the event to Ribot, he added,

“il est juste de noter ce témoignage de sentiments loyalistes, bien différents de ceux qui animent la majorité du monde religieux, surtout dans la région du Minho, ou

⁶⁰ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1295, letter, administrator of the municipality of Santo Tirso to M.G.S.I., 29.7.1917.

⁶¹ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1295, M.G.S.I. report, n.d.

⁶² Rocha Martins, *Memórias Sobre Sidónio Pais* (Lisbon: Sociedade Editorial A.B.C., 1921), ch.III.

⁶³ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1295, Consul in Ciudad Rodrigo to Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros (M.N.E.), 16.1.1917. See also, in the same box, M.G.S.I. report n.131, wherein an intercepted letter to a Portuguese priest in Spain is detailed; in this letter a young man asks for details on how to cross the border with two others, stating that “I cannot find a passport (...) it remains to be seen whether or not your excellency’s request will see me across the border.”

l'opinion ne prend que difficilement son parti de la coopération du Portugal aux hostilités.⁶⁴

The Consul continued, explaining that the loyalty of the officer corps could not be counted on, and that many officers in Braga (the largest city in the Minho province) had deserted over the border;

“En resumant, le régime actuel ne jouit pas d'une grande sympathie dans la région du Minho, ou la population est en majorité conservatrice et catholique. Le clergé peut y adopter - et souvent il n'y manque pas - une attitude hostile à l'intervention militaire du Portugal dans le conflit européen.”⁶⁵

The government's frustration with the Catholic Church can be measured by the tone of the Minister of Justice's comments to the Chamber of Deputies following the sentence passed against the Bishop of Oporto in 1917. Criticizing the Church for its intransigence, and its willingness to resurrect political questions at a time of emergency for the country, Alexandre Braga went on to add that “Catholics, taking advantage of the war, and under the cover of a hypocritical charity, used the money supposedly raised for the families of soldiers to buy and offer to those soldiers blacks' trinkets and amulets, seeking to dominate, through superstition, the simplicity of minds (...)”⁶⁶ This statement can be read in a variety of ways, but perhaps it is most useful when used as an illustration of the chasm that divided not only the government from Catholics, but the republicans from the majority of the population. The distribution of religious images and medals was seen as an

⁶⁴ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 634, letter, Consul in Oporto to Ribot, 2.6.1917.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 8.8.1917.

attempt by the Church to subvert the easily impressionable peasant soldiers of the Republic, to win back, at a difficult moment, those who had been converted to the civic and secular virtues of the new regime - when no such conversion had taken place. Criticizing the Church for attempting to provide its brand of comfort to the departing soldiers, which the government saw as an incitement to rebel against the regime, the Democratic party failed to provide those same soldiers with an alternative, and acceptable, form of comfort. The basic anti-clericalism of men like Alexandre Braga effectively stood in the way of any truce with Catholics for the duration of the war, and his statements and actions provided opponents of the regime with wonderful opportunities to rally popular support against the Lisbon government.

The government's inability or unwillingness to act upon the rural population left it in the hands of the clergy and of local notables for information on the war and Portugal's role within it.⁶⁷ Worsening economic conditions, accompanied by widespread corruption and contact of mobilized men with their future officers, indifferent or hostile to the Republic, made the situation even bleaker. The M.G.S.I., in its reports, repeatedly called for propaganda in rural areas: it was no secret to the government that its enemies had gained the rural population's support in, at least, the north of the country. One report stated that "in the whole of the Minho: propaganda against the Republic and, above all, against the present government is most intense. It is imperative to reply with a strong counter propaganda."⁶⁸ Two months later, the M.G.S.I. reported possible agitations in the Minho province, where "in the majority of the municipalities, the united oppositions, including the monarchists, enjoy a great majority."⁶⁹ Another report, written two weeks

⁶⁷ "Facts speak louder than words (...) and they show that the republicans, in these past few years, have neglected propaganda completely; they did not even republicanize the country, and by their crimes and waste have thrown the nation into the clutches of the monarchist and clerical reaction (...)" *O Combate* (Lisbon), 5.5.1918.

⁶⁸ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, M.G.S.I. report n.950, 25.8.1917. See also Colonel Alexandre Malheiro's *Da Flandres ao Hanover e Mecklenburg (Notas de um Prisioneiro)* (Oporto: Renascença Portuguesa, 1919) 36: "The truth, however, is that, necessarily, propaganda counter to our intervention in the great European conflict must have fallen upon favourable ground in our villages, where the mobilization of soldiers was mainly carried out."

before Sidónio Pais moved against the Democratic government, stated that in Chaves a conspiracy was being planned, with the cooperation of the clergy, and that it would be “advantageous for a mission of republican propaganda” to be sent to the municipality, to make “the hidden germanophiles and the enemies of the Republic retract their claws.”⁷⁰ The text of these reports suggests the way in which anti-war propaganda was in fact part of the wider, anti-republican political counter-mobilization.⁷¹ The Republic’s leaders had staked the fate of the regime on the success of one policy, intervention in the European conflict. By destroying that policy, the regime could be brought down. As we shall see in the next chapter, Sidónio Pais did not come to power with a clear mandate: the propaganda which sapped the country’s will to fight (if that will had ever existed) did not present an alternative to the Republic, acceptable to all of its enemies and to the politically disenfranchised. Opposition forces agreed only on one objective: the immediate removal from power of their common enemy, the Democratic party.

⁶⁹ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1281, M.G.S.I. report no.1257, 10.10.1917.

⁷⁰ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1296, M.G.S.I. report, Chaves, 21.11.1917.

⁷¹ The figure of the monarchist conspirator is exemplified by José d’Azevedo Castelo Branco, “député d’Arganil” (in the 1918 Chamber of Deputies) “royaliste germanophile (...) ancien Ministre des Affaires Etrangères sous la monarchie, (il) a réclamé l’intervention de l’Espagne au moment de la proclamation de la République. A fait en province, particulièrement dans le Nord, une propagande très active contre l’intervention de Portugal dans la guerre.” M.A.E., Paris, Europe 1918-1929, Portugal, 15, Ministère de la Marine to M.A.E., 12.6.1918.

CHAPTER X - COUNTER-MOBILIZATION

TRIUMPHANT:

THE PRESIDENCY OF SIDÓNIO PAIS, DECEMBER 1917-DECEMBER 1918

Nineteen eighteen, the last year of the First World War, was also the year in which Portugal witnessed an attempt to reconcile two very different aims: the creation of a working and stable alternative to parliamentary democracy as adopted by the First Republic and, at the same time, the preservation of the coalition which had brought Sidónio Pais to power, notably through the adoption of a more discrete, and less demanding, approach to the war. In this chapter we will consider the tensions which arose from the contradictory elements of the two aims rather than providing a summarized account of Sidónio Pais' year in power, a task already attempted, with varying degrees of success, by many historians. We will therefore examine the attempts made to find new modes of national representation, to encourage the reconciliation of the 'Portuguese family', and to promote the personality cult of Sidónio Pais, perhaps the most enduring legacy of the short-lived regime. We shall also examine Sidónio Pais' practical approach to the war, designed to extract the greatest possible propaganda value from Portugal's position as a member of the Allies while drastically reducing the scale of the country's commitment to the Western Front. Finally, we shall account for the break-up of the coalition that brought Sidónio Pais to power, the necessary result of the tensions and differing aims within that coalition.¹

¹ The best description of the plotting that preceded the *coup*, and even of Sidónio Pais' year in power, despite obvious methodological faults, remains Rocha Martins' detailed *Memórias Sobre Sidónio Pais* (Lisbon: Sociedade Editorial A.B.C., 1921), which reveals the small number of officers and men upon whom Sidónio Pais counted on the 5th of December, and the fact that the government was aware of the

Sidónio Pais' year in power can only be understood in the context of both the war and the attempts to break the Democratic party's hold on power, by reformulating political legitimacy in such a way that it would not be derived from the electoral will of the politicised minority. That Sidónio Pais was expected by his followers to reduce Portugal's involvement in the war is beyond question. The President's apologists, however, were to remain steadfast in the conviction that Sidónio Pais had attempted to maintain the scale of that involvement, but had been prevented from doing so by the lack of shipping and by French fears of typhus. We must therefore demonstrate that Sidónio Pais' use of the military, both at home and abroad, was determined by political motivations, and that it would have been a grave political mistake to continue sending troops to France.

I. Sidónio Pais abandons the C.E.P.

According to military documents and to the testimony of the C.E.P.'s members, lack of men and especially of officers had plagued the Portuguese army in France since its arrival at the front, especially once the decision to turn it into an independent army corps had been made. For months before the December *coup* the target for reinforcements set by the government - 4,000 men per month - had not been met (which the government could not make public, as the difficulties arose from the sensitive questions of lack of shipping and difficulties in recruitment.) There was, among the C.E.P.'s leadership, an initial hope that Sidónio Pais might rectify the shortage of men. Colonel Vasco Martins, of the C.E.P.'s Territorial H.Q., advised the Ministry of War, immediately after the seizure of power, to either send more men to the front or to reduce the Portuguese front, adding that the C.E.P. needed wine, brandy, winter uniforms, and to be relieved of its wounded.²

plot, waiting for it to come into the open before moving to crush it. The *coup* followed the tried and tested lines of previous movements - the military occupation of the *Rotunda*, which dominates the city, an artillery duel with the navy, and the collapse of the units loyal to the government, whose will to fight was weakened by conspiracies and the absence of committed republican officers, fighting in France with the C.E.P.

More chaplains were also needed because, of the projected 36, only 9 remained among the troops.³ According to Colonel Martins, the 1st Division alone needed 75 officers and 2,307 men: a large transport and a hospital ship had to be made available immediately.⁴ The C.E.P.'s commander, General Tamagnini d'Abreu, wrote, on 16.1.1918, to the Ministry of War, highlighting the scale of the shortage of men which he was facing: this was the fourth time he did so since the *coup* of 5.12.1917. According to the General, there were shortages of men in all branches, and casualties at the front were not being replaced.⁵ This was aggravated by the large number of men who, having arrived in France in earlier shipments, had been deemed unfit for service immediately.⁶ General Tamagnini's correspondence with Lisbon provides evidence for the scale of the problem of desertion and corruption: the difficulties faced by the second Sacred Union government in upholding its promises to the Allies were not merely caused by the lack of transports. Tamagnini asked for an astounding 9,000 men to be sent as quickly as possible, in order to bring the front lines up to strength and to constitute the promised 4,000 man reserve which had never been created.⁷ Tamagnini d'Abreu also added that although the C.E.P. had produced 50 officers from the ranks, the number of officers was still low, and as a result the C.E.P.'s commander asked for graduates of the military academy to be sent directly to France, where their training would be completed. Finally, Tamagnini d'Abreu warned that it would be impossible to keep the C.E.P. in the front-line with so many soldiers missing, and that more care should be taken with the men being sent to France. Allegations had been made in the secret sessions of parliament, in July 1917, that there was a discrepancy

² Arquivo Histórico Militar (A.H.M.), Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1019, report, Vasco Martins, Chefe do Estado Maior, Quartel General Territorial to Repartição do Gabinete da Secretaria de Guerra, 22.12.1917.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1268, "Falta de Pessoal nas Unidades", report, General Tamagnini d'Abreu to Chefe de Repartição do Gabinete da Secretaria de Guerra, 16.1.1918.

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *ibid.*

in the physical quality of the men being sent to the war - the fit and healthy to France, and the others to Mozambique. From Tamagnini's correspondence, however, we see that this was not the case, for the quality of the men being sent to France was equally poor:

“Today I received a note from the English military authorities in which I was asked to give the necessary orders for a rigorous inspection of the men who arrive and to send back to the Metropolis all men who arrive with venereal disease, who in the last batch of 720 men numbered 54 (officers and men.)”⁸

Sidónio Pais, however, was to deny Tamagnini d'Abreu his reinforcements, and soon after the General's letter the C.E.P. lost its autonomy, keeping only the 2nd Division at the front as part of a British army corps. According to the French Minister in Lisbon, Sidónio Pais' unwillingness to send more troops to the front coincided with the British desire to limit Portugal's active participation in the war.⁹ By March 1918 the figures for the lack of men had increased dramatically, losses being aggravated by the non-return of many officers on leave in Portugal. This near desertion of the men at the front, denied by Pais' apologists, is confirmed by army documents. On 14.3.1918 a telegram from Tamagnini d'Abreu stated that

“I find it completely indispensable to have nine Artillery captains or lieutenants and twenty four permanent or

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ “Le concours des troupes Portugaises n'avait pas en effet donné les résultats qu'on pouvait s'en attendre; les officiers en effet se seraient montrés en dessous de leur tâche. Ils seraient insuffisants comme nombre et le plus souvent comme qualité.” Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, (M.A.E.), Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 635, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 29.12.1917. See Augusto Casimiro, *Sidónio Pais (Algumas Notas Sobre a Intervenção de Portugal na Grande Guerra)*, (Oporto: Livraria Chardron, 1919), Chapter III, for a discussion of the convention of 21.1.1918 between Portugal and Great Britain, which reduced the C.E.P.'s front, and its aftermath - the abandonment of the C.E.P. and the refusal to reinforce it.

reserve subalterns of the same branch arrive by land immediately.”¹⁰

Five artillery officers had recently failed to return from their leave, and the C.E.P.’s commander spoke of “large numbers of officers” who were absent and who, as a result, were causing “grave disturbances in the corps.”¹¹ Exact figures for the shortage of men are given in a document dated 31.3.1918: 5,352 privates and 2nd corporals, 352 1st corporals, 322 2nd sergeants, 48 1st sergeants, 45 2nd lieutenants, 27 lieutenants, 36 captains, and 6 majors, from the Infantry branch alone.¹² 8 Artillery captains and 30 subaltern officers of that corps were also needed, as well as significant numbers of specialised soldiers.¹³ Worse still, according to João Ferreira do Amaral, was the damage caused to the morale of the troops by the simultaneous Democratic and *Decemberist* propaganda:

“‘You’re stuck here forever, no-one is coming to replace you, and you’ll be stuck here in Flanders until the end of your days’, said the Democrats (...) ‘The Democrats brought you here like sheep - blame them. Sidónio Pais won’t send another soldier to France, and, if he can manage it, he’ll bring you all back to Portugal, even if he has to do it at snail’s pace.’”¹⁴

¹⁰ A.H.M., 1st Division, 35th section, box 1268, telegram, Tamagnini d’Abreu, 14.3.1918.

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² A.H.M., Lisbon, 1st Division, 35th section, box 1268, Mapa das Faltas, Depósitos de Infantaria, 1a e 2a Divisões, 31.3.1918.

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ João Ferreira do Amaral, *A Mentira de Flandres...e o Medo* (Lisbon: J. Rodrigues, 1922), 367.

After the defeat of 9.4.1918, a battle used extensively for purposes of domestic propaganda, the C.E.P. fell into disarray, and no attempt was made by the Lisbon government to rebuild it into an effective fighting unit capable of rejoining the front lines.¹⁵ Using pretexts such as the lack of shipping, or the typhus epidemic in Portugal, Sidónio Pais was content to hold troop levels at an all-time low and to allow Portuguese troops to be used as trench diggers; at home a news blackout ensured that knowledge of this employment was restricted. Moreover, the President encouraged speculation about the troops' return with measures such as the decree on 'roulement' (23.3.1918) - the systematic replacement of the troops in France by fresh men - to be carried out "in harmony with the resources, the men, and the transports assigned to the task."¹⁶

II. Bypassing the Democrats: the corporative solution.

In the previous chapters we examined the reasons for the constitution of the broad coalition which was to give Sidónio Pais support after the *coup* of 5.12.1917, a broad front which extended from monarchist to syndicalist, and from industrialist to agricultural worker, held together by dislike and fear of the Democrats and their policies, of which participation in the war was the most important. In order to understand the events of 1918, a closer study must be made of this coalition, which was to break up during that same year, leaving the embattled President without any real political support but still an enormously popular figure. This paradox shows how little Portugal changed under Sidónio Pais. Such a study is attempted by A.J. Telo in his *O Sidonismo e o Movimento Operário*. According to Telo, working from a Marxist perspective, the economic climate of the First World War had made the Portuguese bourgeoisie permeable to the idea of an interventionist state, which would direct the economy, cutting out competition, and protect the bourgeoisie from the increasingly active working classes. For Telo, 1917 had

¹⁵ For a full description of the battle and of the difficulties faced by the Portuguese commanders, see General Gomes da Costa's *A Grande Batalha do CEP: A Batalha do Lys* (Lisbon: Livraria Popular de Francisco Franco, n.d.)

¹⁶ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 23.3.1918.

seen, among the “ruling classes”, the development of “the need for union so as to overcome the war crisis, dominating the workers and the popular movement and forcing it to pay the bills for the crisis.”¹⁷ The União Operária Nacional (U.O.N.), for whom the Democrats seemed the bitterest of foes, fell in line with the rest of the coalition only to find that none of its demands was met by Sidónio Pais, whose main interest was the maintenance of order. On 9.12.1917, with the country still unaware of the true nature of the *coup* which had taken place, the U.O.N. held a rally in Lisbon. *O Século* described the event in great detail, which in itself was significant, as it demonstrated the goodwill that the U.O.N. had generated in half a year. Whereas one of the motions at the rally was a simple list of demands to be put to the new government, another of the many passed on 9.12.1917 was more conciliatory:

“The U.O.N. offering thus, with all of its loyalty, its cooperation and help to the new government, manifests its ardent desire for a new era of peace and harmony within Portuguese society, and considers the refusal, or the misuse, of that offer to be a betrayal of the promises made by the revolutionary junta and of the aspirations of the whole people.”¹⁸

It seemed possible for the U.O.N., therefore, that the alternative to the electorally undefeatable Democrats had been found. For the U.O.N., Machado Santos’ participation in the revolutionary movement seemed a guarantee of its concern for the plight of the working class, for “various times, by the pen and by the spoken word, Mr. Machado Santos has shown his interest in the workers’ problems and proclaimed his consideration for the justice of their demands.”¹⁹ In rural areas, their counterparts, disenfranchised,

¹⁷ António José Telo, *O Sidonismo e o Movimento Operário*, (Lisbon: Ulmeiro, 1978), 129.

¹⁸ *O Século* (Lisbon), 10.12.1917.

under the threat of military mobilization, and undergoing considerable economic hardship, naturally followed the lead of local notables and of the clergy, pledging their allegiance to the strong man who had defeated the Democrats, delivering the Messianic blow which Fátima had seemed to promise.²⁰

Sidónio Pais, in order to keep such a disparate coalition intact, was forced to pursue his ambiguous war policy, but also to find political alternatives to the parliamentary model adopted by the First Republic. Corporative doctrines, which, as we have seen, were becoming increasingly popular with many sectors of public opinion, were seized by the President as the means by which to allow for a more direct, and official, link with the economic interests which had brought him to power, as well as bringing the apolitical U.O.N. into the parliamentary fold, an ambition highlighted by F.C. Rocha and M.R. Labaredas in their *Os Trabalhadores Rurais do Alentejo e o Sidonismo*. How corporative ideas reached Portugal, to influence republicans and monarchists alike, remains unclear; partly inspired by Catholic social doctrine, and by the reform of local government carried out by Maura in Spain, they had been grasped as an alternative to simple numerical representation, which alienated the bulk of the population from political life and was easily manipulated, so that the parliament reflected only the interests of the narrow social band which composed the Democratic party. Machado Santos, who, in his quest for republican unity, had always sought to build a link with the syndicalist world, had already defended the idea of a corporative Senate in his *A Ordem Pública e o 14 de Maio*. Alongside a directly-elected President capable of initiating legislation through the ministers that he alone appointed (another of Sidónio Pais' innovations in 1918) Machado Santos envisaged an upper house whose representation would defy orthodox democratic procedures, being conceived as the voice for the nation's 'living forces'.²¹

¹⁹ *O Movimento Operário* (Lisbon), December 1917, quoted in Francisco Canais Rocha & Maria Rosalina Labaredas, *Os Trabalhadores Rurais do Alentejo e o Sidonismo. Ocupação de Terras no Vale de Santiago*, (Lisbon, Um de Outubro, 1982), 33.

²⁰ There were exceptions, notably in the province of Alentejo, where the continued existence of latifundary estates resulted in a high number of landless labourers. See Rocha & Labaredas, *op.cit.*

Sidónio Pais' adoption of corporative representation was not without precedent in Portugal. The ill-fated *Conselho Económico Nacional* (C.E.N.), which caused the fall of the first Sacred Union government, had been defended in parliament by Fernandes Costa (the Minister of Development) and by Júlio Martins precisely as the means by which to call on the collaboration of the country's 'living forces', "so that they may indicate and suggest any measures which they may find helpful (...)"²² All of the forces which were to find themselves in the 1918 parliament seemed to favour corporative representation. António Sardinha's Integralists, on the far-Right, and usually (and wrongly) cited as the President's sole source of inspiration for the revised upper house, saw corporatism as the means by which to build a bridge to Portugal's distant past: "the more one traveled back in history (...) the clearer became the impression of popular liberties ensured through corporations."²³ Teófilo Duarte described how these were shared by the rest of those with political representation in the 1918 parliament:

"The monarchist Integralism of some, the republican authoritarianism of others, and the neo-syndicalism of a third group, indifferent to the nature of the regime, were reflections of the same need felt by many, that of replacing liberal concepts, which had yielded such poor results, by others, which were the inheritance of centuries (...)"²⁴

²¹ According to Machado Santos' plan, representation in the Senate would be distributed in the following manner: 6 university professors, 6 secondary school teachers, and 3 primary school teachers; 5 members of academies and other artistic and scientific institutes; 6 members of the liberal professions; 6 representatives each for industrial, commercial, and agricultural associations; 10 representatives of the trade unions; 6 clergymen of all denominations; 6 representatives of the municipalities; 8 officers; 16 representatives of the various colonies; and, finally, 5 representatives of Portugal's emigrant communities. Manuel Villaverde Cabral describes Machado Santos' project as "a gigantic theoretical step in the attempt to overcome parliamentary liberalism, one which predates many of the features of Sidónio's plebiscitary populism." Manuel Villaverde Cabral, "Fernando Pessoa e o 14 de Maio", introduction to *Eh Real!* [facsimile] (Lisbon: Contexto, 1983), xii.

²² *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 20.4.1917.

²³ Teófilo Duarte, *Sidónio Pais e o Seu Consulado* (Lisbon: Portugália, 1942), 109.

This ready acceptance of the direct representation of economic interests, bypassing the seemingly sterile fights of political parties, dominated by personality clashes, must be understood in the context of recent Portuguese history: a rotativist monarchy, whose parties alternated in power and unerringly won elections afterwards, followed by the Republic, in which electoral practices were not reformed and in which conservative opinion was splintered, leading to successive Democratic triumphs. It is also significant in that it shows that Sidónio Pais was not content with becoming a mere military dictator, as his young supporters urged him to do,²⁵ but desired instead to alter fundamentally the nature of the republican regime in Portugal.

A Monarquia, the Integralist newspaper, published a series of articles in the summer of 1918, entitled "Monarchy and Syndicalism", which were designed to demonstrate to the syndicalist world that the unions would carry out their functions in a more effective manner in the forthcoming corporative monarchy. Syndicalism, the newspaper claimed, would be a pillar of that monarchy, as it was, by its very nature as a defender of a narrow interest, opposed to "all that is democracy, socialisation of wealth, social equality, and other such ideas that have ruined the minds of many good people."²⁶ Syndicalism represented the sacrifice of the individual for the interests of his class, and the logical consequence of this stance was the sacrifice of class interests to those of the ultimate collectivity - the Fatherland.²⁷ The King, alien to and above all class interests, acted as the sole power broker. In the second article, *A Monarquia* adopted a patronizing tone towards the workers it was trying to attract or conciliate,²⁸ and claimed that the

²⁴ Teófilo Duarte, op.cit., 195

²⁵ M.A.E., Paris, Grande Guerre, 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 636, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 23.2.1918.

²⁶ *A Monarquia* (Lisbon), 14.6.1918.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ "(...) the worker, as a rule, cannot read - which is bad - or reads badly, interpreting wrongly ideas and terms in light of his intellectual mediocrity - which is worse." *A Monarquia* (Lisbon), 20.6.1918.

constitutional monarchy, through the introduction of the elected parliament, had been responsible for the severing of the contact between the King and the corporations, which had, as a result, turned to false prophets and leaders, acquiring a revolutionary nature alien to their interests. Once this nature had been discarded, unions could take up the mantle of the old corporations.²⁹ The third article had as a theme the common interests of syndicalism and corporatism, which had to stand together against the principle of democratic representation, which was a “formidable intrusion by the political world into the social and economic world.”³⁰

Very similar ideas were put forward by Alfredo Machado, a Deputy in 1918, and a member of the *Decemberist Partido Nacional Republicano* (P.N.R.). Machado considered it an honour for Portugal to have put corporatism on the map, for it had been an idea defended “in all the principal countries such as Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, England, Spain, and even Portugal, through Oliveira Martins.”³¹ Like the Integralists, Machado added that until the syndicalist movement had adopted an acceptable, non-revolutionary posture, class representation should be limited to one third of the Senate. The appeal of these ideas to Sidónio Pais, eager to legitimate his rule but aware of the strength of the Democratic electoral machine, is obvious. To other republicans (and Sidónio Pais was a republican) the acceptance by economic interest groups of a strong power broker, the sole holder of a direct, popular mandate, would put an end to the partisan strife they saw as having been at the root of the Republic’s woes. Decree 3997 (30.3.1918), the revised electoral law, created a transitional legislature, the lower house being elected directly, as were the Senators representing their respective provinces (who, in future elections were to be elected by the Municipal Chambers of those provinces, a process made impossible by Sidónio Pais’ closing down of those Chambers.) The decree’s preamble provided the explanation for the move towards corporatism:

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ *A Monarquia* (Lisbon), 6.8.1918.

³¹ Alfredo Machado, *Presidencialismo, Parlamentarismo* (Lisbon: Imp. Henriquina, 1918), 38.

“The political expression sought in electoral suffrage does not correspond to the indications of the real interests whose tutelage is one of the Public Power’s tasks, with the result that the legitimate representatives of the most useful and productive social and economic bodies do not participate in the Government initiatives or in administrative services.”³²

The decree also claimed to be part of the intellectual inheritance bequeathed by Oliveira Martins, the nineteenth century historian and politician who “had been led to realise that ‘the people’ are not merely the crowd, the brute sum, but rather the Nation organised in families, communes, districts, or provinces.”³³ Accordingly, representation in the Senate would be granted to the provinces and to economic and social bodies.³⁴

³² *Diário do Governo (Lisbon)*, 30.3.1918.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ There were 5 Senators from all provinces, with the exception of Beira Alta, Beira Central, and Beira Baixa, which would each receive 3; 1 Senator from the Azores and 1 from Madeira, and 1 from each colony (which mean that Lisbon and Oporto were diluted in their respective provinces.) The other Senators were divided in the following manner:

Central Association of Portuguese Agriculture (Lisbon): 3

Owners and Farmers’ Association of Northern Portugal: 2

Agricultural unions and associations: 4

Portuguese Industrial Association (Lisbon): 1

Oporto Industrial Association: 1

Legally recognised unions and class associations: 3

Lisbon Commercial Association: 1

Oporto Commercial Association & Oporto Commercial Centre: 1

Shopowners’ Association of Lisbon and Shopowners’ Association of Oporto: 1

All other commercial associations and commercial unions: 1

Directors General and heads of service of all the Ministries: 1

All other public servants: 1

Lawyers’ Association of Lisbon: 1

Association of Portuguese Doctors: 1

Association of Portuguese Civil Engineers: 1

Universities: 1

Secondary Schools: 1

Art Schools (Lisbon & Oporto), Musical Academy & Drama School, National Society for the Fine Arts: 1

III. The attempt to create a single party.

For Sidónio Pais, and the framers of the new electoral law, the Chamber of Deputies could keep its old method of election, because of the nature of the recently formed P.N.R., which, they hoped, would encompass all political opinion, becoming the sole party of the country (aided by male universal suffrage, enshrined in the electoral law of 30.3.1918.) The creation of the party was a controversial move, which dismayed those sectors of public opinion which had called for the end of all political parties,³⁵ but it also suffered from a lack of clear objectives. In a regime as hastily improvised as that of Sidónio Pais, which suffered from frequent policy U-turns, no party could maintain both loyalty to the President and its own internal coherence. It was in Évora that the President first mentioned the plan to create a political party that would welcome Portuguese of all political creeds:

“(...) the revolution was carried out in order to create a new regime in which monarchists and republicans might coexist. The routine of political parties is an evil. It is necessary to form a political party constituted by all in order to carry out the tasks of the Republic.”³⁶

³⁵ See, for example, *O Século* (Lisbon), 20.1.1918 (“the country is sick of politics”) and *Pela Grei*, the review of the newly formed *Liga de Acção Nacional*, in whose first number António Sérgio wrote, “there is (...) an unpostponeable need to double the country’s production, allowing at the same time for a better equilibrium among its classes, a fairer distribution of duties and benefits, and activities aimed at the welfare of the community (...) Who can carry out such reforms?”

Competent specialists supported by a national government, which, in its own turn, is supported by a movement of public opinion throughout the country.”

³⁶ Sidónio Pais, *Um Ano de Ditadura: Discursos e Alocuções de Sidónio Pais* Edited by Feliciano de Carvalho (Lisbon: Lusitânia Editora, 1924) 15.2.1918. According to Daeschner, political jealousy of the President had already appeared, and it would destroy him “s’il n’arrive pas à se constituer une base solide par l’organisation d’un parti emprunté aux éléments jeunes et les plus actifs des anciens partis républicains (...)” M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 636, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 19.1.1918.

The creation of the P.N.R. came as a blow not only to existing parties (especially the Unionists, still collaborating with Sidónio Pais in government) but also to all those who had hoped to see Portugal run independently of political parties. In April 1918 the Unionist party's congress rejected motions calling for continued collaboration with the President and for the party's participation in the forthcoming elections, while Brito Camacho attempted to play down the party's role in bringing Sidónio Pais to power. Moura Pinto, who had been Sidónio Pais' Minister of Justice, accused the President of altering his initial, praiseworthy stance, after the enormous welcome he had received in Oporto and the rest of the country. A boycott of the elections, called for by the three republican parties, was not as serious a problem for Sidónio Pais' plans³⁷ as was the constitution of a parliamentary opposition, resulting from the monarchists' decision to contest the elections, rejecting participation in the P.N.R.³⁸ Instead of stifling debate through its universality, the P.N.R. suddenly became another political party, albeit one with absolute control over the Chamber of Deputies, but, unlike the Democrats before it, without a coherent body of doctrine. According to Egas Moniz, Sidónio Pais defended a type of presidentialism wherein the Head of State could dissolve parliament, a form of government which Egas Moniz, parliamentary leader of the P.N.R., found "odious."³⁹ Machado Santos was also deeply opposed to the Presidentialist system, and to the increasingly dictatorial methods employed by the 'New' Republic. The Chamber did not legislate, and its debates became sterile discussions which ignored both the political dangers besetting the regime and the urgent need for economic development, the topic

³⁷ Daeschner points out that the electoral machines were loyal either to the Democrats or to the monarchists. M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 636, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 9.2.1918.

³⁸ The eventual monarchist representation in the Chamber of Deputies attracted the attention of the Allied Intelligence machine, as it contained the directors of *O Dia* (Lisbon) (José Augusto Moreira d'Almeida), *A Monarquia* (Lisbon) (António Sardinha), and *O Liberal* (Lisbon) (Antonio Telles de Vasconcellos), as well as others who had campaigned against the country's intervention in the war: former Minister for Foreign Affairs, José d'Azevedo Castelo Branco, and Feliciano Costa Junior, who had collaborated in the movement of 5.12.1917. M.A.E., Paris, Europe 1918-1929, Portugal (15-16), report, Ministère de la Marine to M.A.E., 12.6.1918.

³⁹ Egas Moniz, *Um Ano no Poder* (Lisbon: Portugal-Brasil, 1919), 143.

which could most easily attract support for the regime.⁴⁰ On 9.8.1918, Egas Moniz wrote to Sidónio Pais, warning him that the P.N.R. was on the verge of collapse, while the various oppositions were going from strength to strength:

“Words spoken by Your Excellency and the decisions your Excellency has made seem to indicate that you do not attach value to parties and would in fact prefer to see the P.N.R. break down due to lack of stimulus to develop it (...)”⁴¹

According to Teófilo Duarte, whom Sidónio Pais had appointed Governor of Cabo Verde, Sidónio Pais’ real intentions were precisely to let the lower chamber lose all of its authority; the P.N.R. was a mere smoke screen to prepare public opinion for the new regime, a dictatorship to be supported by the corporative chamber and by the mass appeal of the President. “Colossal demonstrations”⁴² would suffice to renew the President’s mandate. Teófilo Duarte’s testimony is suspect, however, for he was writing at the peak of Nazi power in Europe, and attempting to make Sidónio Pais the first link in the chain of dictatorships that swept through Europe, the precursor of not only Salazar, but also of Mussolini and Hitler. A.J. Telo describes the P.N.R. as merely the attempt to bring together all wealthy sectors of Portuguese society in order to create an efficient organisation for the distribution of favours and the airing of grievances away from the public gaze, again with Sidónio Pais as the supreme arbiter; the party need not act as a mobilizing force, for “the President’s image, his prestige, and his charisma carried out that role.”⁴³ In Telo’s view, therefore, the personality cult developed by Sidónio Pais, which

⁴⁰ One of its most infamous debates was on the wisdom, or the cowardliness, of King John VI’s retreat to Brasil during the first Napoleonic invasion.

⁴¹ Egas Moniz, *op. cit.*, 144-145.

⁴² Duarte, *op. cit.*, p.200. According to the French Consul in Oporto, Sidónio Pais’ journey to the North of the country, in January 1918, “n’a été qu’une longue ovation, une affluence comme il est donné rarement d’en voir, dans des occasions semblables.” M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 635, letter, Consul in Oporto to Pichon, 15.1.1918.

⁴³ Telo, *op. cit.*, 152.

we shall examine shortly, was sufficient to attract the broad mass of voters, while the party itself would be restricted to those representing important economic interests, presumably with a view to focusing the attention of the lower Chamber on the economic questions of the day. This view is, however, open to question, as it is hard to reconcile with the widening of the franchise, the setting up of official party newspapers, and the actual parliamentary composition of the P.N.R. “João Verdades”, writing in *O Século*, pointed out that not only was the great majority of Deputies unknown in political circles (which, he added, was not necessarily a bad thing), they were also unknown in professional circles. Moreover, instead of representing the ‘living forces’, its representation in the Chamber of Deputies was made up of 30 lawyers and judges, 17 doctors, 5 teachers, 4 engineers, 2 naval officers, 2 civil servants, 2 shopkeepers, 1 accountant, 1 journalist, 1 veterinary, and only 2 landowners and 1 industrialist.⁴⁴ It seems fairer to describe the P.N.R. as a real attempt to create a mass party, which failed to attract the interest of the politicised circles, on which it concentrated its attention, leaving it with no time to mobilize the broad mass of the population, and which was subsequently abandoned by the President, ever anxious to find a political formula that would allow him to consolidate his hold over the country.

IV. A cult of personality.

Sidónio Pais’ attempt to build up a mass party, or even a more limited organisation, might have ended in failure, but his enormous popularity nevertheless assured him of great support throughout the country. The personality cult which was to develop around the President is, arguably, one of the more interesting features of his year in power.⁴⁵ The P.N.R.’s press, not surprisingly, was the main promoter of the cult. According to the first issue of *O Norte*, Sidónio Pais was

⁴⁴ *O Século* (Lisbon), 24.4.1918.

⁴⁵ See João Medina, *Morte e Transfiguração de Sidónio Pais* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1994), for a discussion of the cult’s survival of Sidónio Pais’ death.

“One of those figures whom Destiny singled out to come forth at decisive points in the History of a people, to save and redeem it.”⁴⁶

Certain themes were constantly emphasized in contemporary accounts of Sidónio Pais. He was, above all, a man of action and not of words. He had risked his life on 5.12.1917, leading a much smaller force than that at the disposal of the government. He had repeated the feat on 8.1.1918, personally directing the fire of the artillery in St. George's castle in Lisbon against the rebellious navy (whose guns usually decided the fate of revolutions in Lisbon). He was fearless, traveling the length and breadth of the country, constantly exposing himself to the suspected plots to murder him - political violence not being uncommon in Portugal - and not hesitating to enter hospital wards to visit typhus and flu patients. He was charitable, contributing to prisoner of war relief funds and creating the “5th of December” charity organisation, intended as a temporary measure to alleviate the suffering of the working classes by distributing free meals. As a former lecturer of Mathematics in Coimbra (curiously coinciding with Afonso Costa, who lectured in Law) he was a man of great intelligence, as a former Ambassador he possessed the skills necessary to present a good image of the country, and to move at ease in the highest circles (as evidenced by his days in Sintra, courting Lisbon's social elite.) In opposition to the stereotypical republican politician of his day (notably Brito Camacho), Sidónio Pais was immaculate in his appearance, and his uniform bore the newly designed insignia of the presidential office. The members of his military household, another innovation, also bore the insignia. The President's military bearing (he had risen to the rank of Major) was admired by all, as was his horsemanship. Finally, Sidónio Pais was surrounded by youth: patriotic junior officers and cadets gave the regime an air of energy, optimism, and honesty that it did not in fact possess. *O Norte* wrote,

⁴⁶ *O Norte* (Braga), 22.4.1918.

“Surrounded by a group of stoical young men, as if reliving heroic legends, Sidónio Pais appeared, his face covered by a shroud - the martyrdom of a whole people - great, as a Liberator, and formidable, as an avenger of a scorned people (...) It is around this man that Portugal’s youth is closing its ranks, offering the dying Fatherland its young blood and the redeeming light of its faith.”⁴⁷

Some newspapers and magazines, not directly linked to the P.N.R., collaborated, at least initially, in the fabrication of the Sidónio Pais myth. *Pela Grei*, in its first issue, showed itself to be shamelessly *Decemberist*, calling the President’s actions on 8.1.1918 “energetic, decisive, and far-sighted”, and adding that his actions had been responsible for the successful defense of Lisbon against the navy. *A Monarquia*, the Integralist daily, claimed that the President’s decisiveness on that same occasion had demonstrated “the qualities of firmness and of prudence necessary in a leader.”⁴⁸ Local newspapers, such as *Noticias d’Évora*⁴⁹ and *A Gazeta de Coimbra*,⁵⁰ heaped praise upon Sidónio Pais during his brief stays in their respective localities. Not even the Socialist press resisted the appeal

⁴⁷ *ibid.* Sidónio Pais’ bearing in public was impressive, as was the President’s disregard for his security. Describing the parade held in commemoration of the Allied victory, Colonel Bernard, of the French army, wrote, “Monté sur son beau cheval bai, svelte, élégant, souriant aux dames, et plus en forme que jamais, Sidónio souleva un enthousiasme indescriptible, d’autant plus vif que, toutes les forces de police ayant défilé en tête des troupes, il resta, deux heures durant, voisinant avec la foule, et sans autre défense éventuelle contre un attentat (dont il est menacé tous les jours) que ses aides-de-camp et les attachés militaires rangés a ses côtés.” M.A.E., Paris, Europe 1918-1929, Portugal (15-16), letter, Coronel Bernard to Ministère de la Guerre, 13.11.1918.

⁴⁸ *A Monarquia* (Lisbon), 9.1.1918.

⁴⁹ “Ever since his energy, so characteristic of a man of action, organised the triumphant movement welcomed throughout the whole country (with the exception of the politicians defeated by that movement) thereby making His Excellency the first among all Portuguese, the name of Dr. Sidónio Pais has echoed everywhere as that of a true liberator. No-one who desires to work and live honourably in peace will deny His Excellency the applause for the work which was unveiled by the December revolution.” *Noticias d’Évora* (Évora), 14.2.1918.

⁵⁰ “Coimbra showed that it knew how to appreciate the moral and intellectual qualities of the new President, supreme embodiment of an ideal for which Portuguese hearts have long been waiting - *the pacification of the Portuguese family.*” *A Gazeta de Coimbra* (Coimbra), 19.1.1918.

of the new President, *O Combate* recognising that the *Decemberist* movement had a program design to enlist “the living forces of the country” in order to develop Portugal’s wealth, and describing Sidónio Pais as a statesman of quasi-Pombaline status.⁵¹ This comparison with Pombal was taken up by the rabidly anti-war underground newspaper, *A Verdade na Guerra*, which stated that

“Dr. Sidónio Pais (is) (...) serene, sober in words, in programmes, in promises, he is firm in his actions, cautious in his means. He is living up to his motto: honourable men against crooks and thieves - without hasty judgments or legal trappings. The country trusts him, and is beginning to live again (...)”⁵²

The last element of the manufacturing of the President’s image was the inflation of his electoral score in April 1918, which allegedly surpassed the half a million figure. To Daeschner, this total was “parfaitement invraisemblable” as a result of the traditional apathy towards elections, manifested in the rate of abstention. According to Daeschner, the real total was 182,000.⁵³ João Medina, in his *Morte e Transfiguração de Sidónio Pais*, argues that Sidónio Pais’ power was essentially charismatic, following the Weberian definition. While there cannot be any doubt that there was a charismatic element to Sidónio Pais’ rule, and that this charismatic aspect formed the basis for his posthumous cult, it does seem, nevertheless, that Sidónio Pais tried to give his rule an element of legitimacy, one which went beyond the simple plebiscitary nature of charismatic rulers - hence the decision to maintain a Chamber of Deputies, and to constitute the corporative Senate. That he failed in his attempt to do so, as will be shown, was essentially the result

⁵¹ *O Combate* (Lisbon), 20.1.1918.

⁵² *A Verdade na Guerra* (n.p.), 15.1.1918.

⁵³ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 636, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 3.5.1918.

of the deep divisions among even his conservative supporters, many of whom saw him merely as a stepping stone to the restoration of the monarchy.

V. Exploiting the notion of 'sacrifice'.

Although the policy of not sending men to France was central to the stability of the 'New Republic', the plight and the deeds of the soldiers was ever present in the regime's rhetoric. The C.E.P. was portrayed as a key element in the national revival of the country, not because of what it was fighting for, but because it was made up of gallant and patriotic soldiers who, despite having been betrayed by a government willing to barter with their lives, continued to fight on to defend their national honour. However, once the C.E.P. was destroyed by the German army on the Lys, on 9.4.1918, a news black-out was imposed on its activities, be they negative (the soldiers' employment as trench diggers, and mutinies) or positive (the ultimately successful attempts by certain officers to lead their units back to the front line.) Sidónio Pais' speeches contain various references to the men at the front. At the opening of parliament, on 22.6.1918, the President claimed that "the greatest reward" that could be offered to the members of the C.E.P., while awaiting the chance "to shed our blood, for the Fatherland, alongside them", was to "dedicate all of our efforts and our very lives to the happiness of the Portuguese."⁵⁴ Egas Moniz presented the parliamentary majority's salute to the heroes of the Lys battle, who had fought "for the cause of justice and liberty."⁵⁵ Such rhetoric, almost indistinguishable from that of the Democrats, uttered in the presence of the diplomatic corps of Portugal's Allies, has to be contrasted with the regime's treatment of the C.E.P.'s soldiers and the way that their plight was used as a political weapon to rally support for the regime, by denigrating even further the image of the Democrats. *O Norte*, on 6.5.1918, described what it supposed was the glee of Afonso Costa and Norton de Matos upon reading the

⁵⁴ Sidónio Pais, *op.cit.*, 79.

⁵⁵ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 22.6.1918.

casualty lists of the 9.4.1918 battle, among whom were counted high numbers of officers. Describing the two as tyrants, the *Decemberist* newspaper added that they had

“wanted to increase their own prestige with the blood of those who, with the full understanding of a sacred duty, raised abroad, through their noble sacrifice, the dear name of Portugal (...)”⁵⁶

The most significant example of this continued attack on the Democrats’ war policy was the speech of Amílcar Mota, Secretary of State for War (who had been involved in the 13.12.1916 rising, spending 48 days on a prison ship on the Tagus), to the Chamber of Deputies, on 1.8.1918. According to Amílcar Mota, the whole history of the C.E.P., from its costly and inefficient preparatory stages in Tancos, had represented a tragic mistake, finally compounded by its upgrading from an independent division to a full army corps. Norton de Matos and Afonso Costa, the Secretary of State explained, were fully aware that the army was not prepared for such an undertaking, for it exceeded its human resources. There had been, from that moment, a shortage of men, and especially of officers, and, of course, of shipping, which had made the monthly reinforcement target of 4,000 an unrealistic one. To back up his arguments, Amílcar Mota read out some of the very damning correspondence between the two former Ministers, in which Norton de Matos, in London, implored the Prime Minister to send all available officers to France, whatever their branch, their age, or their present posting, and to produce as many officers as possible in order to convince the British military authorities that Portugal could indeed field an Army Corps of its own.⁵⁷

Other occasions relating to the C.E.P. which were exploited for propaganda purposes were the frequent arrivals of ships carrying men returning from France. On

⁵⁶ *O Norte* (Braga), 6.5.1918.

⁵⁷ *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* (Lisbon), 1.8.1918.

11.3.1918, the hospital ship *Glengorn Castle* returned with 560 men, 350 of whom were consumptives.⁵⁸ The following month the auxiliary cruisers *Gil Eanes* and *Pedro Nunes* returned with 1,120 men, to be welcomed personally by Sidónio Pais.⁵⁹ In May 408 men arrived in Lisbon⁶⁰, and so it continued for the duration of the war: 400 in July,⁶¹ 1,379 in August,⁶² 2,000 in September,⁶³ 1,380 in October,⁶⁴ and, finally, 485 in November.⁶⁵ Sidónio Pais was usually present at the arrival of the returning soldiers, treating all like heroes.

The promised decree on the *roulement* of troops, lastly, kept the soldiers' families in the hope of having their fathers, sons, or brothers return before the end of the war. The decree was Sidónio Pais' response to a campaign waged by *O Século* and the families of the men at the front, but it was merely a time-buying device. The criteria for the replacement of the men were numerous - time spent at the front (a minimum of one year), medals and distinctions won, wounds suffered, previous combat duty, family status, number of family members at the front, and age, but all were meaningless, because there was no political will to send new men to France.

VI. Reconciling the Church and the Republic.

⁵⁸ *O Século* (Lisbon), 11.3.1918.

⁵⁹ *O Século* (Lisbon), 11.4.1918.

⁶⁰ *O Século* (Lisbon) 22.5.1918.

⁶¹ *O Século* (Lisbon), 30.7.1918.

⁶² Aboard the Russian transport *Kursk*; *O Século* (Lisbon), 26.8.1918.

⁶³ Aboard the *Gil Eanes* and an undisclosed transport; *O Século* (Lisbon), 9.9.1918, 13.9.1918.

⁶⁴ *O Século* (Lisbon), 4.10.1918.

⁶⁵ *O Século* (Lisbon), 24.11.1918.

Sidónio Pais also used the fate of the expeditionary force to further boost his standing among Catholics and relations with the Church generally. On 1.2.1918, a Mass was said in the church of São Nicolau, in Lisbon, for the souls of those already fallen in the war, the first such religious ceremony in the republican era to be sponsored by the government: some Ministers attended, being accompanied by the commanders of the Lisbon garrison, naval and army cadets, and members of the diplomatic corps. This first Mass was a dress rehearsal for May, when a solemn Mass for the souls of those killed on 9.4.1918 was attended by Sidónio Pais; a Te Deum celebrated after the signing of the armistice in November was also attended by the President. On the last day of his life, 14.12.1918, Sidónio Pais attended Mass yet again, this time in honour of the sailors killed aboard the patrol ship *Augusto Castilho* while battling a German U-boat.

Sidónio Pais' standing in the country did not depend exclusively on his cautious war policy. The improved relations with the Catholic Church, which were to culminate in the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican (July 1918), were to ensure him the blessing of that Church, still capable, as we have seen, of mobilizing or calming popular revolt. On 22.12.1917 all interdictions of residence to priests were lifted, the relevant decree pointing out that the cases against priests had been elaborated "without any respect for the most basic principles which in all legal codes regulate and ensure the defense of the accused (...)"⁶⁶ The greatest step towards reconciliation was the revision of the law of separation, published on the 23.2.1918, and drafted by Moura Pinto, the Unionist Minister of Justice. Although the monarchist commentator Cunha e Costa, in his *A Igreja Católica e Sidónio Pais*, was to find the revision to fall short of Catholic hopes, it proved sufficient to launch the reconciliation of the Republic with the Catholic Church, which was to withstand the return of the 'Old' republic in 1919. The preamble to decree 3856 stated that abuses, notably on the part of religious orders, had led to a widespread feeling of revolt among men of all political persuasions, but that the law of separation had gone too far as an expression of that feeling. Calling the government which had emerged

⁶⁶ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 22.12.1918.

from the December revolution “the faithful and impartial interpreter of public opinion”, Moura Pinto saw in certain excessive measures of the law of separation potential sources of instability, for they were designed to attack the “liberty of conscience”, which meant that they had to be altered for the sake “of justice and appeasement.”⁶⁷ The lay organisations which had been intended to regulate religious affairs - the *cultuais*, were abolished, and the government decided to allow congregations to organise themselves as they saw fit, allowing the parish priest to take his place in any possible organisation. The tribute of one third of the revenues which religious organisations had to pay to charity was reduced to one tenth. Permission from civilian authorities was no longer required for the scheduling and holding of religious ceremonies, while churches and religious objects now belonging to the State or to local authorities were to be handed back without charge to their previous religious owners: only after a period of 5 years without a claimant stepping forth would they become public property once again. The State was not to interfere in the teaching of theology, and priests would henceforth be tried in normal courts, the only exception remaining cases of anti-patriotic or anti-republican propaganda. Finally, the wearing of religious clothing in public was again tolerated.⁶⁸ A final gesture of legislative goodwill towards the Church came in June, when the sphere of action of army chaplains was widened to include military transports and hospitals, and when the chaplains were accorded the same pay as lieutenants.

VII. Populist policies of Sidónio Pais.

The ‘pacification of the Portuguese family’ did not end with the Catholic Church. As early as 9.12.1917, the controversial reform of the secondary school system was abandoned, press censorship was abolished (and all exile orders decreed against journalists were revoked), and all those still in jail as a result of the 13.12.1916 *coup* were

⁶⁷ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 23.2.1918.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

released.⁶⁹ On 14.12.1917 all officers and public officials who been relieved of their duties, or who had retired, following the 14.5.1915 rising, were readmitted into public service.⁷⁰ Many prisoners jailed for 'social crimes' were released during the first days of the revolution, and again in January (98)⁷¹ and February (38).⁷² Some of these men had been in jail since the rural strikes of 1912.⁷³ Monarchists returned unharmed from exile, and many were given prominent positions in the army on which they had previously turned their backs. Charity and kindness also played their part in the President's attempted 'reconciliation' of the Portuguese with each other. The duality of the stern leader/charitable man was the key to Sidónio Pais' appeal and to his popular canonisation after December 1918. In one of the most famous propaganda coups of his year in power, Sidónio Pais, suddenly struck by the horrible treatment being meted out to political prisoners in the jails of Oporto, demanded their immediate release. Interviewed by the friendly *A Situação*, the President claimed that "what was happening in Oporto with the political prisoners demanded clear action: it was necessary to make it clear that one cannot, today, strike a prisoner."⁷⁴

Sidónio Pais, who promised widespread social reforms, had to rely on charity to attract the support of the working classes, unable or unwilling as he was to defy established economic interests. The "5th of December Association" was the interim measure designed to relieve the poverty imposed by the war, and an April decree created

⁶⁹ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 9.12.1917.

⁷⁰ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 14.12.1917.

⁷¹ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 23.1.1918.

⁷² *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 18.2.1918.

⁷³ César Oliveira, *O Movimento Sindical Português - A Primeira Cisão* (Mem Martins, Europa-América 1982), 36.

⁷⁴ Sidónio Pais, *op.cit.*, 60. See also *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 9.5.1918, for details of Sidónio Pais' amnesty, necessary because, as the preamble put it, "Humanitarian concerns cannot be foreign to intelligently organised institutions or to profoundly patriotic spirits."

the Lisbon branch and endowed it with 100,000 Escudos per year.⁷⁵ In June its activities were extended to Oporto (50,000 Escudos per year) and Viana do Castelo (6,000 Escudos).⁷⁶ In July, lastly, the “5th of December Association” was allowed to borrow up to 1,000,000 Escudos. The association allowed the President, who attended the openings of its soup kitchens, to make repeated and direct appeals for unity and for loyalty to the government by the lower classes, whose needs he was believed to understand. This belief was made possible by the Sacred Union governments’ inability either to ensure the supply of cheap foodstuffs to the cities or to provide free meals for those who simply could not afford to feed themselves. All Portuguese, the President claimed, had a part to play in the building of the new Fatherland.⁷⁷ Often allowing his automobile to be used as an ambulance during trips to poorer neighbourhoods, Sidónio Pais used these meetings to reinforce the direct link with ‘the people’, who, he stressed, were the real source of his authority:

“I believe that the Head of State must seek out among the people precise indications as to whether or not his actions are being well received, finding out, at the same time, the needs which he must attend to with urgency. If this is true, then the applause which you have given me indicates that the path which I am taking is the true one, the one most in accordance with the interests of the country.”⁷⁸

⁷⁵ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 13.4.1918.

⁷⁶ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 1.6.1918.

⁷⁷ “The Fatherland is the land in which we all live, it is all of us - let us not be of no use to the Fatherland.” Sidónio Pais, *op. cit.*, 84.

⁷⁸ Sidónio Pais, *op. cit.*, 81. Daeschner was of the opinion that these contacts with the population, whose liking for the President was genuine, did reinforce Sidónio Pais. See M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 636, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 10.5.1918, for Daeschner’s reflections on, and description of, Sidónio Pais’ inauguration ceremony.

The government also dedicated considerable sums to fighting the two epidemics which spread through Portugal in 1918 - typhus and flu - and Sidónio Pais' visits to hospitals again lent themselves to propaganda use. The one attempt to go beyond charity and into actual social action was unveiled in April, in the form of a plan to stimulate the construction of low income housing for the working class of Lisbon and Oporto. The decree's preamble considered the State responsible for "studying the best methods for dealing with the greatest sources of unhappiness and misery of the unfortunate."⁷⁹ The preamble also suggested that this kind of practical improvement was the best way of integrating the working class into the Republic: in other words, political mobilization could be achieved by social intervention, and, in the case of housing, moral regeneration could also be added to the equation, by stealing men back from "the tavern, the brothel, and the gaming parlour."⁸⁰ According to the same decree, the government was to encourage building societies, municipal authorities, industrial and mining companies, and charity organisations to build low income housing, whose rents would be determined by the government, which would also inspect their quality prior to their allocation.

VIII. The continuing search for foreign support: propaganda abroad.

Aware of the need to combat the influence of exiled republican leaders, anxious to turn the Allies against the 'New' Republic, Sidónio Pais extended his propaganda activities to include France and Great Britain, naming Homem Cristo Filho as his director of propaganda abroad. For the British audience, A.G. Loraine, a British expatriate living in Portugal, wrote, in 1918, the pamphlet *Portugal and the Allies*, a seemingly damning indictment of the Democrats' use of power and a negation of the claims that the new President was a germanophile. According to Loraine, Bernardino Machado was an "inveterate schemer", an anglophobe, "hated by the Portuguese people,"⁸¹ secretly

⁷⁹ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 25.4.1918.

⁸⁰ *ibid.*

⁸¹ A.G. Loraine, *Portugal and the Allies* (London: Hayell, 1918), 9.

carrying out the work of German agents as he defended the thesis that Sidónio Pais' movement "was due to class action and was pro-German."⁸² Sidónio Pais was in fact the "most representative man Portugal has seen for many years,"⁸³ whereas the Democrats had been a Lisbon clique, and his was an honest and efficient government. Moreover, whereas the Democrats' constant trumpeting of the British alliance was actually endangering the popularity of that alliance, the relationship between the two countries would blossom under the new President.⁸⁴ Lastly, the pamphlet's author attempted to dispel any possible fears that Portugal would send no more troops to the Western front, adding that the C.E.P.'s strength would probably be increased. The British press, which had welcomed the Pimenta de Castro dictatorship in 1915, was unswerving in its support for the new President. Commenting the promotion of Britain's representation in Lisbon from Legation to Embassy, *The Times* stated that it would put an end to speculation concerning Portugal's commitment to the war. The same newspaper added that Sidónio Pais had restored order to Portugal, enjoyed the support of the army, the Church, and many republican movements, and while the President might be a *de facto* dictator, he was not a reactionary figure: he considered good relations with Great Britain to be a national aspiration.⁸⁵

Greater efforts were needed to convince French opinion of Portugal's continuing commitment to the war, because Portugal's exiled leadership was closer, ideologically and personally, to the French political class than to its British counterpart. Portugal's new Minister in Paris, Bettencourt Rodrigues, wrote to the Portuguese Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in August, describing Homem Cristo Filho's activities as "most

⁸² *ibid.*

⁸³ Loraine, *op. cit.*, 12.

⁸⁴ "Now that the Portuguese nation is free to act in its own name, it will show with the eloquence of facts that it is essentially pro-ally and that it thoroughly hates German methods and fears German ambitions." Loraine, *op.cit.*, 16.

⁸⁵ "Now that President Pais has opened for his fellow citizens the path of ordered liberty, we look forward to the efforts which he expects from all for the happiness of the Portuguese people." *The Times* (London), 30.7.1918.

appreciable and at times of the most valuable sort, notably during the first months” when he had been trying to undo the work of “some well known conspirators.”⁸⁶ The greatest success of the propaganda mission had been a conference in the *Société de Géographie de Paris*, held on 27.8.1918, in the presence of various Portuguese dignitaries, Lebrun (the French Minister for the Blockade and for the Liberated regions), Maurice Barrès, and the personal representatives of Clemenceau and other Ministers, both French and Belgian. At the conference, Bettencourt Rodrigues highlighted the magnitude of Portugal’s commitment to the Allies - it had fought on three fronts - and added that this effort was not slowing down.⁸⁷ Barrès spoke of the camaraderie between all Allied nations, of the future League of Nations (“Une société contre l’Allemagne (...) Une société pour désarmer l’Allemagne”) and concluded by thanking the Portuguese, who were adding “encore à un magnifique passé des pages de gloire.”⁸⁸ Homem Cristo Filho’s lecture was a masterpiece of disinformation. According to the propagandist, Portugal had been wholly united in favour of the Allied cause and of intervention since August 1914. Any rumours to the contrary were the result of unscrupulous politicians trying to convince the Allies of their importance and of the magnitude of the task they had accomplished by sending an army to France. Portugal’s contribution to the war had preceded the efforts of these men, and had been immense, especially in Africa:

“J’insiste, messieurs, de propos délibéré sur ce point, parce que j’ai l’impression qu’on ne se rend pas assez compte de l’effort que représente notre campagne coloniale, des sacrifices qu’elle comporte, des difficultés presque insurmontables que nous avons surmontées et des services

⁸⁶ Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros (M.N.E.), Lisbon, Archive, File “Missão de Homem Cristo Filho”, letter, Minister in Paris to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 16.8.1918.

⁸⁷ Homem Cristo Filho, *Le Portugal Contre l’Allemagne* (Paris: Éditions Fast, Lang, Blauchong, et Cie., 1918), 17-18.

⁸⁸ Homem Cristo Filho, *op. cit.*, 31.

incalculables que nous avons rendus à la cause commune de tous les Alliés.”⁸⁹

Homem Cristo Filho also read out an impressive list of the casualties suffered on 9.4.1918, a defeat unsubtly blamed on a partial British withdrawal which, in the midst of the battle, had exposed the flank of the Portuguese division, seeming almost to rejoice in the scale of the tragedy, thereby establishing an interesting parallel with the supposed wish of Afonso Costa for high casualties. The speaker closed with what he saw as Portugal's essential war aim: “La libération de l'Alsace-Lorraine arrachée à la France il y a un demi-siècle a pour lui autant de prix que sa propre indépendence.”⁹⁰ In the already quoted letter to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Bettencourt Rodrigues was eager to add that his Legation had also been active on the propaganda front, having successfully negotiated the inclusion of a Portuguese contingent in the Bastille day parade and the renaming of a Paris avenue to “Avenue des Portugais”.

IX. Enforcing consensus: the growing repressive apparatus of the State.

There was a reverse side to Sidónio Pais' calls for order and for a united nation, in the shape of the State's repressive machine, which was considerably reinforced in 1918. The Democrats might have been toppled from power, but they were at their strongest, as had been proved in 1915, when in active opposition; in addition, the government had to control the syndicalist movement. The security apparatus was reformed, and much of it had to be created out of nothing, because agencies like the Ministry of War's Information Service (M.G.S.I.) had been so closely linked to the Democrats. Major Luís Galhardo, its head, fled to Spain immediately after the December *coup*. In military terms, the navy, always a thorn in the side of conservative forces in Portugal, was forced to send a

⁸⁹ Homem Cristo Filho, *op. cit.*, 100.

⁹⁰ Homem Cristo Filho, *op. cit.*, 120. See also M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 636, for a publication of the Bureau de Presse Portugais, *La Situation au Portugal* which 'demonstrated' not only Sidónio Pais' loyalty to the Allies but also the Democrats' links with Germany.

battalion of men to Mozambique, while in the army a transfer of power took place, loyal (usually monarchist) officers taking over the duties of republicans. More importantly, Sidónio Pais sought to protect Lisbon, and to prevent an armed rising, by turning the troops which had collaborated in the December *coup* into the "Lisbon Garrison Corps,"⁹¹ which led to comparisons with the Praetorian Guard in various newspapers. More significant, however, was the reform of the police forces, a process which culminated in May. A new Directory General was created within the Ministry of the Interior (Public Security) to coordinate the different police forces - Security, Investigation, Administrative, Preventive, Emigration, and Municipal. The Preventive police was the regime's new secret police, limited to twenty agents by the decree which created it, but able to recruit "auxiliary agents" from both sexes and "all social classes." These auxiliary agents would be entrusted with tasks of "vigilance and information." The Preventive police was made responsible, in the same decree, for vigilance and prevention of political and social crimes, the investigation of such crimes, the arrest and detention of individuals implicated in them, the vigilance of suspects of all nationalities, the creation of files on individuals and political and social organisations, and the carrying out of searches. Moreover, the director of the Preventive Police was the highest paid policeman in the country - 200 Escudos per month, which represented more than the double of any other officer.⁹² The position was given to judge Veiga, who had held a similar post under the dictatorship of João Franco, in the closing years of the monarchy.⁹³ Existing police forces saw their salaries increased and a daily subvention added to those salaries for an open-ended period - until the sixth month of peace in Europe.⁹⁴ The security forces served Sidónio Pais well, the army remaining loyal in October, during an attempted Democratic *coup*, and in November, during the

⁹¹ Four Infantry battalions, two Cavalry regiments, two groups of batteries, one group of horse-drawn batteries, a company of sappers, and a machine gun group.

⁹² *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 2.5.1918.

⁹³ M.A.E., Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 636, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 11.5.1918.

⁹⁴ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 9.3.1918; 28.6.1918; 25.9.1918.

U.O.N.'s general strike; in November, Daeschner estimated the total number of political prisoners at between 4,000 and 5,000.⁹⁵

The final element in the State's security apparatus was the most controversial: the covert organisation of bands of armed civilians, reminiscent of the *Carbonária* upon which the Democrats' power ultimately rested. These bands were used for the intimidation of the regime's opponents, including the Democratic press (*A Montanha*, whose offices in Oporto were raided on 26.7.1918) to the extent that complaints were voiced in the Chamber of Deputies by Cunha Leal, who warned that a new 'Black Ant' was replacing the hated 'White Ant', against whose power the revolution had been carried out. Despite the complaints, the actions of these groups continued, and in November 1918, during the general strike, armed civilians destroyed the U.O.N.'s offices. While these bodies were being assembled, the government attempted to silence, by legal means, its opposition. Machado Santos, as the first Minister of the Interior, granted himself power to decide which newspapers should or should not reopen after the 5.12.1917.⁹⁶ Moreover, Machado Santos called on all administrative authorities to forbid "the publication of manifestoes, motions, petitions, and bulletins of the Democratic party", which was "also known, wrongly, as the Portuguese Republican Party." In January Machado Santos decreed the closing down of all political centres which overstepped the legal limits to their actions, and of their publications if they included incitements to cause disorder.⁹⁷ The following day decree 3738 dissolved all municipal chambers and parish juntas, calling on Civil Governors to appoint executive commissions to take over the functions of the dissolved bodies. The reason given was the often found "hostile attitude against the Republic's government aggravated by incitements to revolt."⁹⁸ Finally, within months of

⁹⁵ M.A.E., Paris, Europe 1918-1929, Portugal (15-16), letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 14.11.1918.

⁹⁶ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 28.12.1917.

⁹⁷ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 9.1.1918. See Arquivo Nacional (A.N.), Lisbon, Ministério do Interior (M.I.), Direcção Geral da Administração Política e Civil (D.G.A.P.C.), stack 81 (1918), for correspondence pertaining to the closing down of political centres in Oporto, Braga, and Beja.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*

having abolished press censorship, Sidónio Pais reestablished the 1916 law regulating the apprehension of newspapers, manuscripts, drawings, and books⁹⁹ and eventually reintroduced full censorship of the press, through legislation similar to that of the first Sacred Union government.¹⁰⁰

X. The inevitable clash with the U.O.N.

Having examined the make-up of the coalition that pledged its support to Sidónio Pais late in 1917, and the various means employed by the President to keep that coalition intact, we must now turn to its dissolution, a process due largely to the economic policy adopted, which could not but alienate the support of the U.O.N. The repeated calls for law and order made by industrialists and landowners were really calls for a strong stance against union demands. The U.O.N.'s call for cheaper and more widely available foodstuffs, as well as its continued campaign for higher wages placed it directly in the path of the industrialists and landowners, eager to be free from state intervention in the setting of prices for their products. Sidónio Pais could not act as the impartial power broker of the ideal corporative regime, because the two sides were irreconcilable, and because his political support was strongest among conservative circles. The President was therefore to take strong actions against the unions, carrying out merely symbolic actions against the more established financial interests.

Sidónio Pais' principal economic objective seems to have been the stimulation of agricultural production by allowing for greater profits to be made by the producers, while squeezing out the middlemen who might hoard, and speculate on the prices of, the necessary foodstuffs. In this manner, more would be produced, and less smuggled out of the country or stored away from the consumers' reach. 1918 was the year of the war which saw the greatest increase in the prices of key agricultural products. If 1914 = 100,

⁹⁹ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 14.4.1918.

¹⁰⁰ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 21.6.1918.

then overall agricultural prices rose from 192.8 to 300, wheat rising from 260 to 400, maize from 242.8 to 371.4, rice from 247.8 to 426, bread from 242.8 to 331.4, and potatoes from 200 to 350. In Escudos, this implied an increase in the price of bread from 17 cents to 26 cents/kg., rice from 28.5 cents to 49 cents/kg., and potatoes 6 cents to 10.5 cents/kg.¹⁰¹

Sidónio Pais' government employed a variety of means in order to stimulate agricultural production. The most important was the recognition of agriculture's importance through the creation of a separate ministry, entrusted to the latifundary estate owner, and leader of the *Associação Central da Agricultura Portuguesa*, Eduardo Fernandes de Oliveira. Ludovico de Meneses, writing for *O Século*, claimed that the Ministry of Agriculture's programmes were being elaborated according to the principle of cooperation between civil servants and outside experts.¹⁰² While this move was not carried out, successive decrees from the Ministry of Labour allowed for price increases. In March, for example, one decree stated that "the importation of cereals is one of the most important factors in the unbalancing of our trade figures" and that "the establishment of a remunerative price for nationally produced cereals is the sole form of stimulating agriculture and of intensifying the production of grain."¹⁰³ On 23.9.1918 another initiative was launched - prizes for increased production in the 1919 harvest, as well as for conversion of land to agriculture. Moreover, A.J. Telo points out that the availability of credit for rural ventures was significantly increased.¹⁰⁴ In an interview with *O Século*, Machado Santos outlined his views on combating hoarding: not through more price limits (which were nevertheless introduced) but rather through more direct state intervention in the sale of agricultural products. The recently created municipal cellars¹⁰⁵ would have the

¹⁰¹ *Anuário Estatístico de Portugal - 1919* (Lisbon: Ministério das Finanças, 1924), 35.

¹⁰² *O Século* (Lisbon), 1.4.1918.

¹⁰³ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 22.3.1918.

¹⁰⁴ Telo, *op.cit.*, 170.

¹⁰⁵ *O Século* (Lisbon), 25.4.1918.

responsibility for acquisition, storage, and distribution of cereals (barley, maize, and wheat) throughout the country. Each cellar director would inform the recently created Ministry of Foodstuffs and of transport of the municipality's cereal needs for the next 12 months, and to purchase the grain directly from the producers. Any remaining cereal, would then be distributed to other cellars. The cellars' directors would also have the responsibility of setting bread prices in their area. By July 1918 the cellars had been reformed, responsibility being transferred from a single director to a board consisting of the respective municipal chamber's president, a delegate from the chamber, and the local delegate from the Ministry of Finance. Moreover, according to the reform, the sale of cereals to producers would revert to the cellar, unlike in the original decree, according to which the proceeds were destined for the ministry.¹⁰⁶ The significance of this change was that power shifted from the central government to local authorities, which represented the interests of the producers.

In a further interview with *O Século*, shortly before resigning, Machado Santos spelt out his four priorities for the Ministry of Foodstuffs and Transport: "outright stimulus to producers, so as to increase their ability to produce to its full potential, with the resulting drop in imports," increase in maritime tonnage so as to permit the imports of raw materials and the export of wine, cork, and tinned foods; as perfect a knowledge as possible of the quantity of food, raw materials, and products for export existing throughout the country; and state intervention to inhibit speculation. According to Machado Santos,

"We need to change course, making our national objective the adoption of a policy aimed at great economic achievements. This is the only policy that can unite the efforts of all Portuguese, as it is in the interest of all of them. To capitalise on our metropolitan and overseas

¹⁰⁶ *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 13.7.1918.

wealth we need greater technical capability and wider financial resources (...)”¹⁰⁷

As we have seen, Sidónio Pais, through the creation of two ministries, Agriculture, and Foodstuffs and Transport, seems to have decided to concentrate his efforts on solving the economic problems facing the country, allowing for conflicting interests (producers and consumers) to be represented at government level.¹⁰⁸ Such moves momentarily earned him the support of entities such as the *Liga de Acção Nacional* [National Action League] and its journal, *Pela Grei*, and the newspaper *O Século*, which, in an article published on 23.3.1918, claimed that the creation of the two ministries and a meeting between the President and the League’s members pointed to a greater concern for the economic, rather than strictly political, problems.¹⁰⁹ The creation of the two ministries, however, was misleading, for it was a part of a series of confused and often contradictory attempts to master the economic situation, reconciling irreconcilable interests. The Ministry of Foodstuffs and Transport, for example, began life as the *Direcção de Servicos de Subsistência* [Directory of Supply Services] within the Ministry of Labour; in March it became a separate ministry; in July it was downgraded to the *Direcção Geral de Subsistências* [General Directory of Supplies] within the Department of the Interior. In September decrees were issued by the General Commission for Supplies, which was abolished on 10.10.1918 by the presidential decree creating the Department of Supplies. The much vaunted ‘order’ created by Sidónio Pais did not apply to public administration.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ *O Século* (Lisbon), 29.5.1918.

¹⁰⁸ Rocha Martins, op.cit., 189, listed the members of the President’s Economic Council, who represented the most powerful economic groups - Alfredo da Silva, of the C.U.F. group, António Cidrais, a latifundary estate owner, and Anselmo de Andrade, a Minister in the last monarchist cabinet.

¹⁰⁹ See the first issue of *Pela Grei* (Lisbon): “There is (...) the unpostponeable necessity of doubling the country’s production, securing, at the same time, a greater equilibrium of its classes, a fairer distribution of duties and rights, and activities more suitable for the good of the community. Who can carry out these reforms? (...) competent specialists supported by a national government, itself supported by a movement of public opinion across the country.”

Moreover, no significant reforms ever emerged from the two ministries to deal with the economic problems facing Portugal.¹¹¹ Eye-catching exercises in attempting to curb the power of economic groups did, however, take place. The most important of these was the series of raids conducted by Second Lieutenant Botelho Moniz, another of the young officers who flocked to Sidónio Pais' side. Botelho Moniz headed a flying squad created to enforce the decrees on hoarding and the official price limits. On 18.7.1918 243 grocery shops in Lisbon were closed for not displaying the official price list, or for storing unaccounted goods - sugar, olive oil, etc. According to *O Século*, Botelho Moniz acted on informers' tips, also closing down taverns, coal deposits, and raiding secret caches of goods. *O Século* commended the move, but warned that the wholesale traders and producers were escaping unharmed. Even the U.O.N. made the momentary truce with the government - in an official note it claimed that it registered "with pleasure the warm welcome given by the public to the government's present energetic action, long called for, against the stockpilers."¹¹² The U.O.N. added that such action should be extended to the whole country and to high commerce. By the end of the month, however, the operation had run out of steam, after moves by Botelho Moniz to enlist the U.O.N.'s participation, its partial extension to other areas of the country, and the sale of captured goods. A planned public demonstration of support for the President never took place, and on 30.7.1918 *O Século* published an article revealing the limitations of what had been accomplished: 203,507 liters of olive oil had been seized, whereas Lisbon's monthly consumption was 870,000 liters. Sugar, normally consumed at the rate of 370 tons per month (not counting the sweets industry), had been seized to the amount

¹¹⁰ See M.A.E., Paris, Europe 1918-1929, Portugal (15-16), letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 7.10.1918, for a damning description of the government's lack of initiative and the lack of authority of the individual Secretaries of State, most of them young officers with no preparation for the task before them.

¹¹¹ Alfredo Pimenta, a monarchist, wrote, in his *A Situação Política* (Lisbon: Imp. Libanio da Silva, 1918), that Sidónio Pais' prestige was due largely to his ability to maintain order, but he warned that "there are more problems to be solved than just that of order: there is the financial problem, the economic problem, and the international problem, which is extremely grave. Can Mr. Sidónio Pais solve them, or even solve any of them? I don't know." Pimenta, *op.cit.*, 19.

¹¹² *O Século* (Lisbon), 19.7.1918.

of only 21 tons; only 2,240 kg. of rice had been seized, out of a daily consumption of 200 tons. A.J. Telo points out that Lisbon's commercial associations complained about the actions being undertaken by the flying squad, whose actions were, as a result, curtailed.¹¹³ This interpretation can, however, be questioned, when one considers the lack of commitment to other measures to curb speculation.

Rationing, a measure which was of great importance in other belligerent countries, for it helped to popularise the idea that the war affected all equally, was introduced in September, all heads of families being required by the Rationing Service's first edict to register at their parish junta in order to receive their rationing card and their coupons.¹¹⁴ Parish juntas were also empowered to avail themselves of the services of other local officials and school teachers in order to make the system's inauguration a smooth affair. Rationing, which had been called for by *O Século* and by the U.O.N., was welcomed in principle, but very quickly the system ran into problems which were never solved - corruption by local officials, who overcharged for the cards and for their services, and, above all, shortages of sugar and petroleum, the only two items being rationed, which made the cards and the coupons essentially worthless. The final propaganda move of the *Decemberist* regime regarding the foodstuffs battle was the opening, in October, of 'price-regulating warehouses', intended as a state-owned alternative to the normal grocery shops, and which would always sell their products at the prices fixed by law, undercutting store owners who sought to profit illegally. On 19.10.1918 *O Século* reported the opening of four such warehouses, and the government's intention to open another sixteen. No more were, however, opened, and the quantities of goods sold by the first four fell well short of the total necessary to present a serious challenge to grocers. *O Século* described one of the warehouses as having sold, in its first day of operations, seven sacks of sugar, one sack of rice, and sixty liters of olive oil.¹¹⁵ Actions such as those of Botelho

¹¹³ Telo, op.cit., 175.

¹¹⁴ *O Século* (Lisbon), 2.9.1918.

¹¹⁵ *O Século* (Lisbon), 19.10.1918.

Moniz's flying squad must therefore be seen as a political decoy, necessary to appease momentarily the population of Lisbon, especially after the resignation from the cabinet of Machado Santos.

Sidónio Pais' attempts to curb war profits, a measure adopted in other belligerents but which Afonso Costa had consistently opposed, can also be included in the category that we have been examining - that of popular or populist measures quickly withdrawn, once the established interests affected began to mount a counter-campaign. The actual decree taxing exceptional war profits, like the measures introducing rationing of some essential items, was only introduced near the end of the war (26.9.1918.) Four brackets of war profits were introduced, and taxed at different levels.¹¹⁶ At the same time, another decree was passed, stating that payments made by firms to the State had to be made in gold. As had taken place with commercial interests hurt by raids on grocery shops, A.J. Telo points out, the backlash was quickly felt. Curiously, the backlash included a damning article in *O Século*, which as recently as 11.6.1918 had called for a tax on war profits, but which reacted strongly once the measure was introduced:

“Industrial and sumptuary tax, register tax, land tax (which has not yet shown itself but which is ready), exchange law, tax on war profits (...) all products of the same mind, as devoid of sense as of shame.”¹¹⁷

All such measures were, to *O Século*, war taxes,

¹¹⁶ The first 5000 Escudos in war profits were exempt; from 5,000 to 10,000 Escudos, war profits were taxed at 25%, rising to 50% from 10,000 to 50,000, and 80% for profits above 50,000 Escudos. *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 26.9.1918.

¹¹⁷ *O Século* (Lisbon), 3.10.1918.

“but of a war against labour, against the economy, against private and public wealth, offending rights, bringing down principles, extorting possessions, and stifling initiative.”¹¹⁸

Great violence had already been carried out against commerce and industry, argued the author of the article, in the form of inheritance and industrial taxes, while exporters had to deposit 50% of the value of the exported goods before the transaction was complete. No more could be expected from industry. *O Século* closed with a warning to the President which it had so far backed on most questions:

“These repeated cases of the executive power taking over the functions of the legislative, decrees appearing and disappearing again (...) deeply affect not only the State’s prestige, but also the willingness of the public to accept what might come afterwards and might be worthy of that trust.”¹¹⁹

With prices rising, civil rights being curtailed, and none of its essential demands being met, the U.O.N., after its success against the Democrats, had to challenge the *Decemberist* regime in order to preserve its prestige among the country’s workers. Its challenge, which culminated in the failed general strike of November 1918, was the most visible element in the break-up of the coalition that had supported Sidónio Pais in December 1917. The policy of striking for immediate salary improvements, unveiled in 1917, was maintained throughout 1918, a year of constant strikes and intense propaganda activity. The anarchist *A Sementeira* published a monthly list of ongoing strikes, the most important of this period being the strikes of tobacco workers (December 1917 and again June 1918), Lisbon port workers (February 1918), Coimbra municipal workers (April

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*

1918), and the South and Southeast railway workers (August 1918). In March, the U.O.N.'s Central Council approved a motion according to which government inaction, as well as the curtailment of elementary freedoms, including mass deportations "under the pretext of cleaning the city of incorrigible delinquents and professional agitators",¹²⁰ meant that the working class should no longer expect anything from the present government. This tone of defiance was maintained when, in April, the U.O.N. refused to participate in the Senate elections in order to claim the seats which it had been allotted by the new electoral law. According to the Central Council,

"Such electoral capability has never been demanded by the Portuguese proletariat. What our workers have demanded and will continue to demand is in no way comparable with what was offered by the new electoral law."¹²¹

The reasons offered by the U.O.N. for its refusal to participate in the Senate were the exclusion of rural workers from the Chamber, the workers' overall small impact on the Chamber as a whole, and the fact that, as a result of regional representation, the Chamber was not strictly a professional body.¹²² The Senate, to the U.O.N., was a mere decoy, by which the workers' attention was to be diverted from more pressing issues. The disappointment felt by the U.O.N. over the government's handling of relations with the workers was intense, and explained to public opinion in a *communiqué* made public in June.¹²³ The climax of the U.O.N.'s propaganda campaign was to have been a series of

¹²⁰ See *O Século* (Lisbon), 10.3.1918.

¹²¹ *A Greve* (Lisbon), 14.4.1918.

¹²² *ibid.* This shows that the U.O.N. was not opposed to corporative representation *per se*, but rather to the type of corporative representation proposed by the government.

¹²³ "Those in government have met the demands of priests, of casino owners, of landowners, of financiers, and of the army, but have not had the time, to this day, to meet any of the demands made by the organised proletariat (...)

Not one!

rallies, to take place on 15.9.1918, in an impressive list of towns and villages across the whole of the country,¹²⁴ with smaller propaganda sessions being held in other localities. The official purpose of these meetings was to approve a new list of demands to be put, by the U.O.N., to the government. This list included a revision of the price set for essential items (rice, olive oil, potatoes, onions, beans bread, coal, meat, fish, milk, etc.), according to which such items were to be brought down to their 1914 levels + 50%. Rents were also to be revised downwards, to the formula of 1914 levels + 20%. Foodstuffs should be rationed, and a single type of bread (a mix of wheat, maize, rye, oats, and barley) should be introduced. On a national level, the U.O.N. called for better use of maritime and rail transport; for the intensification of agricultural production through the handing over of unused land to rural workers' unions, and through the provision, by the government of modern equipment, training, credit, cattle, seeds, and fertilizers; and for the release of all political prisoners, the payment of prisoners' lost wages, the abolition of the 1891 law which still regulated the running of the unions, and total freedom of the press.¹²⁵

This projected nationwide show of strength was banned by an apprehensive government, which led the U.O.N. to call for a general strike, initially set for October, but changed to November after a failed Democratic *coup* had put the security forces in a state of alert. The general strike was a failure, A.J. Telo points out, because the U.O.N. had set itself an impossible task: the toppling of a regime single-handedly. According to Telo, the number of workers who took part was similar to that of the September 1917 strike which followed the military mobilization of the postal and telegraph workers. The failure to attract more strikers, Telo claims, was due to the flu epidemic, the end of the war, and, of course, the more efficient security apparatus.¹²⁶ On the morning of 18.11.1918, the date

And this despite the fact that the working class was the first to be heard immediately after the events of December." *A Greve* (Lisbon), 16.6.1918.

¹²⁴ Lisbon, Barreiro, Almada, Parede, Setúbal, Évora, Montemor-o-Novo, Beja, Estremoz, Serpa, Portalegre, Lagos, Faro, Alpiarca, Tomar, Covilhã, Oporto, Gondomar, Coimbra, Guarda, Aveiro, Viseu, Lamego, Guimarães, Viana do Castelo, Braga, and Vila do Conde. *A Greve* (Lisbon), 8.9.1918.

¹²⁵ *O Século* (Lisbon), 15.9.1918.

¹²⁶ A.J. Telo, *op. cit.*, 210.

set for the strike, 300 arrests were carried out in Lisbon and its suburbs, a total which included the whole of the first strike committee,¹²⁷ and by 20.11.1918 Sidónio Pais was sufficiently in control to stage a triumphal military parade in the capital. On that day the second strike committee was also arrested. Outside Lisbon the strike continued for another few days before it was brought under control. Those who had taken part (South and Southeast and Vouga Valley railway workers, Lisbon construction workers, printers, and some factory workers, notably in the city's southern suburbs, the majority of the Alentejo's organised rural workers, some rural workers in the Ribatejo and Algarve provinces, and the fishermen in some coastal towns) suffered arrests,¹²⁸ the closure of their organisations and newspapers, and the criticism of the once supportive mainstream press. *O Combate* quickly disassociated itself from the strike, and *O Século* once again revealed the growing control that established economic interests were exercising over its editorial position. It conceded that the working class had the right to protect its interests and to strengthen its organisation, but this did not mean that it had the right to engage in "subversive action," especially after the sacrifices that the country had endured during the four and a half years of war. Its action had threatened

"the world's consideration, the fruit of the blood and the lives sacrificed by our soldiers, the tranquillity of the nation, the national wealth, maybe even our independence (...)"¹²⁹

The general strike, therefore, had allowed Sidónio Pais to raise the 'bolshevik peril' where there was none to see, in the hope that this peril might continue to make 'order' the first priority for the majority of the country. This was, at least, Daeschner's

¹²⁷ According to Daeschner's 'conservative estimate', 5 were killed, 50 wounded, and 300 arrests were carried out. M.A.E., Paris, Europe 1918-1929, Portugal (15-16), letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 24.11.1918.

¹²⁸ According to Rêgo, in his *História da República* vol.IV *Do Sidonismo ao 28 de Maio* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1987) 54, these arrests added up to 1,000 during the strike and 100 immediately after.

¹²⁹ *O Século* (Lisbon), 22.11.1918.

interpretation of events, to which he added that the strike, in numbers, had been no different from previous efforts.¹³⁰

XI. Sidónio Pais and the monarchists.

The U.O.N. was not the only group that abandoned Sidónio Pais in the course of 1918. Monarchists, increasingly relied upon by Sidónio Pais not only in the cabinet but also in the economic council which advised the President, in the army, and in other appointed positions such as Civil Governorships, decided, in the closing months of 1918, that the time had come to affirm their opposition to the 'New Republic' and to hasten the return of the monarchy. The monarchist opposition boycotted the reopening of parliament in November, and began to plot the restoration of the monarchy, believing the two republican camps to have weakened each other over the course of 1918. The most ominous sign for the regime was the creation of military juntas on the Spanish model which appeared in the North, centred in Oporto, and in Lisbon.¹³¹ Most commentators agree that Sidónio Pais' planned visit to Oporto, on 14.12.1918, was an attempt to come to terms with the city's junta, but no historian has been able, up to now, to detail what demands the monarchist officers in the northern capital had put to the President. Such demands are known only for the period following the murder of Sidónio Pais in the Rossio train station on 14.12.1918, and before the 1919 monarchist rising, when the juntas attempted to influence the composition of the governments created by Sidónio Pais' immediate successor, Admiral Canto e Castro. As in Spain, therefore, it seems that the army, having become the ultimate source of support for the regime in the wake of the October Democratic rising, decided to become heavily involved in the political sphere, making demands on the future course of the regime. Rêgo suggests the possibility of an

¹³⁰ M.A.E., Paris, Europe 1918-1929, Portugal (15-16), letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 24.11.1918.

¹³¹ More work needs to be carried out on the development of these juntas, as historians disagree on their timing. Raul Rêgo, *op.cit.*, seems to claim that the juntas appeared throughout Portugal while Sidónio Pais was still alive, while Medeiros Ferreira in his *O Comportamento Político dos Militares* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1992), suggests that only the Oporto junta was active in the last days of Sidónio Pais' life.

understanding between the Oporto junta and Sidónio Pais along the lines of a harsher, more dictatorial regime, with the cutting of all ties with the original Republic - for which the officers required the popular appeal of Sidónio Pais - and which would resemble Salazar's 'New State'.¹³²

Like the U.O.N., therefore, monarchists - especially those in the army - had benefited from the chaos of 1917 to consolidate their power across the country. The strength of the counter-mobilization campaign of the war years is demonstrated by the ability of the groups that benefited from it to bring down both Afonso Costa and the 'New' Republic. Like Afonso Costa before him, Sidónio Pais found himself under an increasingly damaging fire from both the Left - which culminated in the General Strike of November 1918, and the Right - which culminated in the military juntas. He was able to deal effectively with the first, and died before he could come to terms with the much stronger threat presented by a defiant military.

Sidónio Pais remains to this day an enigmatic figure, capable of generating controversy and considerable disagreement among historians. Some contemporaries thought him a martyred hero, others a traitor in the pay of Germany. Despite being relatively unknown when he came to power, he acquired, in a matter of months, a popularity that made him unique in the history of the First Republic. A committed republican, he governed with the aid of monarchists. The u-turns in his policies make it impossible to determine where precisely he wanted to take Portugal (and his murder meant that he was never ever able to continue down, or even explain, his intended course,) but in the desperate attempt to legitimize his rule and to bypass the Democratic electoral machine Sidónio Pais adopted solutions that would soon be replicated throughout Europe: a single mass party, a corporate chamber, and a cult of personality. The adoption of these solutions, in 1918, do not necessarily make him a proto-Fascist, a precursor of Benito Mussolini, because they were adopted in order to reformulate the Republic, not to destroy

¹³² Rêgo, *op. cit.*, 57.

it completely. It would be difficult, however, to portray Sidónio Pais merely as a typical military strongman, or as a reinvented Napoleonic figure. Daeschner may have referred to him in these terms, but Sidónio Pais' experiment in power was often of a new age, which bypassed Daeschner: not once did the French diplomat, in his correspondence with the Quai d'Orsay, refer to the corporative electoral law and its implications for the future of politics in Portugal. It seems imperative, therefore, to insert Sidónio Pais and the factors which brought him to power into a wider European setting: and that is the purpose of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XI - CONCLUSION: THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND THE COLLAPSE OF DEMOCRACY IN SOUTHERN EUROPE

The purpose of the last section of this thesis is to set its central development - the collapse of the First Republic as a result of its failure to mobilize the Portuguese around its ideals and institutions - in a European context: in other words, to ask if events in Portugal from 1914 to 1918 were part of a broader trend, applicable to Southern Europe, or whether they must be seen in isolation, the Portuguese case being so distinctly unique that the conclusions to be drawn from it cannot be compared with the collapse of the limited liberal regimes of Italy (1922) and of Spain (1923). Moreover, a personal and ideological link will be established between the presidency of Sidónio Pais and the final collapse of the First Republic, in May 1926. This attempt must not be equated with Teófilo Duarte's simplistic assertion that Sidónio Pais was the forgotten precursor of Mussolini and Hitler. Rather, it is a way of demonstrating that all three regimes fell as a result of the tensions sparked by the First World War, which unleashed forces that could not be channeled by elected governments into the limited representative capability of existing political structures, forces which, once in power, sought an alternative process of self-legitimization. Nevertheless, there are aspects of *Decemberism* which allow it to be included in the current debate on the nature of Fascism. As Stanley Payne writes, in his article "Fascism and Right Authoritarianism", "one of the peculiarities of Portuguese political development has been a certain precocity in the introduction and consolidation of certain new political forms compared with some other countries of Southern and Eastern Europe."¹ This precocity was demonstrated by the authoritarian governing experiences of

¹ Stanley Payne, "Fascism and Right Authoritarianism in the Iberian World: The Last Twenty Years", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. XX1, no.2, (1986), 170.

João Franco, Pimenta de Castro, and, of course, Sidónio Pais: “at mid-point in its brief history, the Republic temporarily broke down altogether when the former army officer Sidónio Pais essayed his charismatic and populist form of ‘República Nova’ in 1917-1918.”²

Shlomo Ben-Ami, in his *Fascism From Above*, discusses whether or not Primo de Rivera’s *coup d’état* in 1923 was a typical *pronunciamento* or whether it envisaged, from the start, an attempt to carry out a fundamental reform of national life, as a result of the intense social struggle which characterized post-war Spain and the gradual collapse of the *Canovist* system. Quoting a Spanish commentator of the 1930’s, Ben-Ami writes, “Primo’s (regime) was the second attempt made in Europe to advance the primacy of moral, social, and economic problems, and put aside merely political issues,”³ the first being Mussolini’s. The parallel with Sidónio Pais’ attempt to neutralise existing political parties and factions by attracting their members into the *Partido Nacional Republicano* (P.N.R.), and by channeling discussion into the corporate Senate is, however, clear. The Portuguese President’s attempt to bring morality and order (and a reconciliation with the Church) into public life also falls into this pattern. Before we continue to discuss the similarities between the three cases, however, some distinctions have to be spelt out clearly, in order to qualify the rest of the discussion.

I. Differences in the Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese cases.

The first, and most obvious, was the different war experience of the three countries. Italy was one of the leading European belligerents; its armies fought continuously for three and a half years and endured 600,000 mortal casualties alone; of the three countries with which we are concerned in this study, only Italy experienced directly

² *ibid.*

³ Shlomo Ben-Ami, *Fascism From Above: The Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera in Spain 1920-1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 67.

the full rigours of mass warfare on its soil. In the wake of Caporetto, Italy was faced with absolute defeat, a situation overcome with harsh discipline at the battle and the home fronts and the aid of the Allies, which allowed for a steadying of the front and the eventual resumption of offensive operations. Caporetto also sparked off, in the Italian government, the awareness that it had ignored propaganda and civilian concerns at its own peril. The war experience of the 5.75 million men mobilised by Italy sets it apart quite clearly from the Iberian countries, as does the emergence of the disenchanting veteran, officer or *arditti*, eager to act on the political plane in order to claim the promised benefits of victory - especially land - and to undo the harm caused by the perceived weaknesses of the liberal state. Portugal, as we have seen, fought three different limited wars (Angola, Mozambique, and the Western Front), enduring slight losses (7,000+ killed), most of these in Africa.⁴ The collapse of the Republic, moreover, took place before victory had been achieved, and before the return of the soldiers (who were never to be able to speak, after 1918, with a unified and respected voice.) Spain was neutral during the Great War, but its army was active in Morocco, where it was to suffer the embarrassment of defeat at Annual (losses in Annual being more important than Portugal's total losses in the Great War.) As its military commitments in Morocco grew, Spain began increasingly to rely on reservists - and political tensions rose as a result. Increasing political unease with the Moroccan campaign led segments of the Army to view the political class as unreliable and as defeatist.

Another crucial difference between the three countries was their economic, and especially industrial, development. Giovanna Procacci, in her article "A 'Latecomer' in War: The Case of Italy", makes the point that Italy was among the ranks of the 'second latecomers', countries which had arrived late at the process of industrialization, which had begun, in the Italian case, in an uneven fashion at the very end of the nineteenth century.⁵

⁴ Nevertheless, as we have seen, even this limited commitment had led to the notion of unacceptable sacrifice, and the 9th of April battle did lead to a very high number of prisoners - over 10,000 officers and men.

According to Procacci, 'latecomers' such as Italy shared common traits, "such as the state's support for the new industrial concentrations, their conditioning of government policy, and parliament's limited control over the executive power."⁶ Procacci goes on to argue, in the same article, that Italy's war experience was determined by her nature as a latecomer; her industrial output was sufficient to meet the needs of mass war, but at a terrible price for the industrial and the rural working classes. The figures for Italy's industrial output in the war years bear out her argument.⁷ Italy's ability to meet the needs of her armed forces, however much coercion was employed, set her apart from Spain and Portugal. One could argue that it was during the war that Spain joined the ranks of the 'latecomers'; the same could not be argued, as we have seen, for Portugal, whose economy did not undergo major structural changes as a result of the conflict. Spain's economy was transformed by the war, and this transformation had an immediate social impact. According to Carlos Seco Serrano, Spain's trade deficit in 1914 (144.8 million Pesetas) had become a considerable surplus by 1917 (589 million Pesetas)⁸ Suddenly delivered from foreign competition, Spanish industry was not only able to profit from import substitution, but was also able to mount a considerable offensive on the exports front, providing consumer goods at a time when Spain's competitors were engaged in the manufacture of arms. Basque iron mines increased their output by a factor of 14 during the war; the number of miners in the Asturias rose from 14,000 to 40,000; and if in 1910 the index of steel and electrical production stood at 100, then by 1918 it stood at, respectively, 1,072 and 560. Spanish capitalists also took advantage of the First World War to buy out foreign investments in Spain, thereby 'nationalising' the economy. This wealth, as we shall see, was not effectively distributed, and the effects on the syndicalist movement were immediate. Adrian Shubert writes, "the growing impoverishment of the

⁵ Giovanna Procacci, "A 'Latecomer' in War: The Case of Italy", in Franz Coetzee & Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee (eds.), *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the Great War* (Providence, Oxford: Berghahn books, 1995), 3.

⁶ Procacci, *op.cit.*, 4.

⁷ For a summary of these figures, see Shepard G. Clough, *The Economic History of Modern Italy* (New York, London: Columbia University Press, 1964), 181+.

⁸ Carlos Seco Serrano, *Alfonso XIII y la Crisis de la Restauración* (Madrid: Rialp, 1974), 118.

working classes, side by side with the ostentatious affluence of the wealthy, triggered both a newly intense labor militancy during the war and ongoing class conflict during the conversion back to a peacetime economy.”⁹ The general strike of August 1917, despite its chaotic nature, can be interpreted as the dawning of the age of mass politics in Spain.

The third major difference between the three countries was the nature of the political regimes that existed prior to the authoritarian take-overs. In Italy, the nominally liberal system had moved from the excesses of the Crispi era to Giolitti’s unsatisfactory ‘absorptionism’, which, despite the introduction of a wider franchise in 1912, had not managed to mobilize the whole of the population around its fundamental values. Only the anti-liberal Socialists and Nationalists (before and after the First World War), and Catholics and Fascists (after the conflict) were able to attract wide support, but the government’s control of the electoral process and the public administration, notably the prefects, ensured that the Liberals remained in control of the country’s destiny, navigating a middle course between rival groups. Spain, another constitutional monarchy, had long accepted universal male franchise but its ‘rotativist’ system ensured that Conservatives and Liberals alternated in power, while the King remained the undisputed master of the political scene, making and unmaking governments. By 1923, however, the ‘rotativist’ system was breaking down, as Ben-Ami and Carr have shown, as a result of the emergence of political forces capable of defying the will of the local *caciques* that had previously controlled the electoral system. The Spanish case was complicated by regionalist tendencies: Catalonia and the Basque country, Spain’s industrial and financial centres, had benefited most from the war, and were more eager than ever to restructure their links with the Madrid government, which was determined to protect the rural interests of Castile. Finally, as we have seen, Portugal was one of the few European republics at the time, its governing elite driven on by increasingly outdated jacobin tendencies: an anti-clericalism combined with a refusal to act on the so-called ‘social question’. A severely limited franchise (due to a high illiteracy rate) was made worse by

⁹ Adrian Shubert, *A Social History of Modern Spain* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 21.

the refusal to participate in politics of a considerable section of the country's politicised minority. These two conditions meant that despite having parliament as the central political institution, Portugal had, arguably, the lowest level of political mobilization of the three countries; its electoral machinery was completely in the hands of the Democratic party, whose network of centrally appointed Civil Governors and local *caciques* ensured the party successive victories at the polls. A political awakening of the bulk of the population did not take place during the war, however. As we have already seen, what did take place was merely an increase in the existing distrust of the Lisbon government, as evidenced by a series of disjointed protests which did not reflect an active participation in national politics. There was no equivalent, before 1918, of the impact of Caporetto, often interpreted as the political awakening of the Italian population; lack of economic development did not allow for successful syndicalist growth, as happened in Spain. After the U.O.N.'s creation in 1914, its actions in 1917 were fueled by government distraction and support from conservative sources, which momentarily, and for their own immediate advantage, portrayed it as a useful and legitimate social partner.

Another major difference between the three cases was the stability, and longevity, of the authoritarian regimes created during, or immediately after, the First World War. In Italy, Mussolini's hold over the country was largely undisputed until belligerency in the Second World War had shown itself to be a tragic mistake. The Fascists enjoyed the support of industrialists and landowners, while workers were lured by the corporatist system while their syndicalist leadership was crushed. The twin government and party bureaucracies created a plethora of administrative jobs, while a truce with the Church and the support of the armed forces provided added stability. In Spain, Primo de Rivera's dictatorship lasted 7 years, and naturally enjoyed the support of the Army (officers being employed at all levels of the central and local administration, and a 'peace with honour' having been arrived at in Morocco), the Church (in a prelude of its support for Franco), Catalan industrialists, and even the reformist socialist party and some syndicalist forces. Public works projects proved to be popular around the country, and added ideological and

propagandistic value could be gained from the Italian example.¹⁰ In Portugal, however, the authoritarian experiment lasted only one year. Sidónio Pais' murder sparked off the final clash between republicans and monarchists, with the former reverting, for the sake of immediate victory, to the 1911 constitution, which inevitably led to the return of the Democrats to power in 1919. Sidónio Pais, whose charismatic rule did not permit the nomination of a successor, had to contend with the Democrats, at their most dangerous when underground, and with a very shaky coalition, whose disparate objectives led to its rapid break up. The U.O.N. was not bought off with vague promises of corporatist representation, and the attempted general strike in November was the clearest demonstration of the President's failure to turn the coalition that had supported him in December 1917 into an effective political force. While Sidónio Pais' murder meant that he did not have time to experiment socially and politically, it also ensured, however, that his popularity among certain sectors of the population remained intact, and that his cult of popularity assumed greater proportions after December 1918, casting its shadow over the resumption of the First Republic.

II. Relevant similarities.

Having set the above limitations to any comparison between the wartime and authoritarian experiences of Italy, Spain, and Portugal, we can now attempt to trace the similarities between the fall of the liberal regimes in those three countries. For all their differences, Portugal, Spain, and Italy were still nominally liberal regimes with restricted franchises, imposed upon a population largely apathetic towards them. The war, with the social convulsions it unleashed, revealed their narrow representative ability to be outdated. Neither the Italian and Spanish constitutional monarchies nor the Portuguese Republic could accommodate mass action, and the three regimes were no longer seen by economic elites as sufficient to protect their status. Although there were differences in how this

¹⁰ According to Ben-Ami, Primo de Rivera felt "electrified" by his meeting with Mussolini in November of 1923, stating that "Fascism is a universal phenomenon that ought to conquer all nations...Fascism is a living Gospel." Ben-Ami, *op.cit.*, 131-132.

mass action was exercised and to what extent it was politicised (and although in Portugal one cannot speak of mass action), it can nevertheless be stated that there was no popular support for the preservation of the existing semblance of democracy, especially after the October revolution in Russia. It can be stated, moreover, that many political groupings were actively looking for an extra-parliamentary solution (in Spain and Italy the revolutionary Left, and in all three conservative forces.) Italy and Portugal failed to use the First World War as a mobilizing tool, while the same applied to Spain, insofar as the governments prior to 1923 failed to re-distribute the wealth generated by the war, both socially and geographically. Spain also faced the added difficulties posed by the expensive, unpopular, and maladroit war in Morocco.

Another striking similarity between the programmes of Sidónio Pais, Primo de Rivera, and Mussolini is that all three men needed to find a new form of legitimization that simultaneously allowed the participation in government of the forces that had helped them to take power - and, significantly, some form of corporatism was attempted in all three cases. As Fernando del Rey puts it, "the post-war era witnessed a revitalization of corporatism on a European scale."¹¹ In the Italian and Spanish cases, it can be argued, this was the result of the war's impact on production. Individual and geographical representation in a parliament was no longer seen as sufficient to articulate the interests of the different bourgeoisies, the working classes, civil servants, and the army. National 'producers', in order to strengthen their ability to make a leap forward and catch up with the more developed economies of Northern Europe and the U.S.A. had to avoid, internally, the "anarchy of competition".¹² In Portugal, corporatism served a more political purpose, insofar as the war had not awakened mass political curiosity and action. Corporatism was essentially a political solution that allowed for the representation of all the social forces that had welcomed Sidónio Pais' *coup* while circumventing the

¹¹ Fernando del Rey, "La crisis de una sociedad: el protagonismo de los poderes economicos," in *La Crisis de la Restauración: España entre la Primera Guerra Mundial y la II República*, ed. J.L. Garcia Delgado (Madrid: Siglo Veintuno, 1986), 41.

¹² del Rey, *op.cit.*, 43.

Democrats' electoral stranglehold.¹³ Primo de Rivera and Mussolini, as avowed dictators (especially the first, who did not have to destroy a liberal regime from within) felt able and entitled to bypass constitutional safeguards. Sidónio Pais, after his initial days in power, tried to create the basis of a 'constitutional dictatorship' - a form of presidentialism supplemented by the power of dissolution of parliament. Since liberalism was not a popular cause, all three men stressed the virtues of a new form of representation: the Nation as represented by its 'Living Forces', its 'producers', etc. All three men made obvious attempts to replace class conflict with class collaboration and paternalism. It is interesting that the same solution was arrived at by D'Annunzio in the much more limited setting of Fiume. All three men, finally, shared an awareness of the importance of absorbing the labour movement, once tamed and controlled. Hence in Spain the reformist P.S.O.E. and U.G.T. were accepted as 'partners'; the more intransigent C.N.T. was not. Was there a common intellectual root to all three experiments? Integralists in Portugal were modelled closely on their French counterparts, and they collaborated in the attempt to provide *Decemberism* with an ideology, but they were not the only ones to do so - there was a clear input from the Left, through the figure of Machado Santos, at odds with the republican leadership since the revolution of 1910. Both currents clearly believed in a Republic wherein political life was devalued in the face of the social and economic concerns. Spain had its own corporatist tradition, as evidenced by Maura's attempted reform of local government, but as Fernando del Rey points out, the whole was heavily influenced by European Catholic social teaching, notably the work of La Tour du Pin, as well as "the corporative legacy that predated the triumph of individualism"¹⁴ - the source, of course, of Integralist corporatism. Moreover, as Ben-Ami points out, developments on the corporative front in Italy were monitored closely in

¹³ The manner in which it was presented, however, was that of an improvement on the limited, individual, suffrage that had existed previously, one which embodied the long-term interests of the nation: "(...) the generality of universal suffrage is the fundamental principle of a sound democracy, but all recognize that it is not enough, in the majority of circumstances, to secure the genuine representation of the different interests of the national whole." *Diário do Governo* (Lisbon), 30.3.1918, decree 3997 (Ministry of the Interior.)

¹⁴ del Rey, *op.cit.*, 42.

Spain,¹⁵ even if in Spain the U.G.T. was accepted into the corporative fold, rather than being replaced by a state-led corporation.

A third similarity in the actions of Mussolini, Primo de Rivera, and Sidónio Pais was that they portrayed themselves as fighting a perceived threat to Order - and in all three cases it can be argued that this threat was diminishing. In Italy, the supposed threat came from the Left. The *biennio rosso*, characterised by land occupations and strikes, which were largely tolerated by the weakening Liberal regime, was identified by the Fascists as clear evidence of a desire, on the part of the socialists, who had already 'sabotaged' Italy's war effort, to carry out a Bolshevik-style revolution. In Spain, the threat was mixed: the C.N.T., which had been reduced to the inefficient but unsettling tactic of assassinations, continued to be identified as a force potentially capable of launching a revolution. While Basque and Catalan nationalisms threatened the very integrity of Spain, the rejection of the Moroccan war seemed to make a mockery of the army's authority and sacrifice (and the parliamentary inquiry into the Annual disaster was rumoured to be targeting Alfonso XIII.) Finally, anti-clericalism seemed to question Spain's identity as seen from the conservative Right: for Primo de Rivera and the rest of the officer class, 'eternal Spain' was unified, militaristic, and Catholic. For Sidónio Pais, lastly, the threat to Order in Portugal came from those already in power: the divisive effects of an anti-clericalism ill-suited to national conditions (even though Sidónio himself was a Mason), a war perceived as a money-making enterprise for those in government, and a government held in place, ultimately, by the armed civilians who had toppled the monarchy and Pimenta de Castro. In such conditions, the threat of political violence and armed risings was constant (nevertheless, the Democrats had shown themselves to be reliable defenders of private property.) In 1918, the U.O.N. was added to the list of the sources of disorder, supposedly presenting a 'Bolshevik' threat when there was none - as the dismal results obtained in the November general strike showed.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ben-Ami, *op.cit.*, 291-292.

The First World War and the years that followed were a time of heightened nationalism of the Right wing variant. In Italy, where it was strongest, pre-war nationalism was fueled by the unfulfilled expectations created by the war (the notion of sacrifice, which allowed for a witch-hunt of those allegedly responsible for the mutilated victory, and which gave added legitimacy to the Fascist regime) and given a new and potent fighting force to impose its aims - the *arditti*; the Liberals were revealed by the War not to have the long term interests of the country at heart - and they were willing to sacrifice Fiume. Pre-war nationalists like D'Annunzio were reinforced by the wave of converts which the interventionist crisis and the war had created: the men who, like Mussolini, replaced their internationalist beliefs of class solidarity by the attraction of nationalism as a unifying, revolutionary force, the means by which to accomplish the task of national integration that the Italian bourgeoisie had failed to carry out.¹⁷ In Spain, the army was angered by the indifference and the hostility to the war in Morocco, as well as by the growing anti-clericalist and regionalist sentiment. The feeling of inferiority experienced since the 1898 war with the U.S.A. also played its part in this nationalist reawakening - the downwards slide had to be halted at some point. In Portugal, the Integralists were attracting intellectual support, as was the idea of favouring links with the colonies over links with Europe. There was also an attempt to preserve traditional values, notably the influence of the Church. Nationalism was to be the preserve of Sidónio Pais' followers, who described it as the 'last hope for the race', (but it was still largely incoherent as a doctrine in 1918.) The Integralists apart, the most visible sign of the rise of nationalism in Portugal was the establishment of the *Cruzada Patriótica D. Nun'Álvares Pereira*, which was to last, in various shapes, until 1938, attempting to bridge the republican/monarchist divide and using the cult of Nun'Álvares Pereira as a

¹⁶ The *Partido Socialista Português* (P.S.P.) presented no threat to the government of Sidónio Pais, whose legitimacy it recognised, as it had recognised the legitimacy of Pimenta de Castro: "That revolution" (Sidónio Pais' *coup*) "was not the work of a party; it has assumed the character of a great national movement." *O Combate* (Lisbon), 20.1.1918. The P.S.P. participated in the legislative elections of April 1918, failing to elect a single deputy.

¹⁷ A.J. Gregor, *Young Mussolini and the Intellectual Origins of Fascism* (Berkeley, London: University of California Press, 1979), ch.9, "War and the Doctrine of First Fascism."

unifying force,¹⁸ as Ernesto Castro Leal points out, however, the monarchists, in 1918, still believed in their ability to seize power, and resented the appropriation of the figure of Nun'Álvares Pereira (a "hero and saint who is the most important figure in our history"¹⁹) by an organisation open to republicans.²⁰ As a result, the League's cultural and political activities were still negligible.

The final similarity between the actions of all three men was the nature of their arrival in power - through a simple *coup* - whose portrayal was altered subsequently in order to create the myth of an irresistible wave of public opinion. The 'March on Rome', as is well known, was a fraud; Mussolini was invited by Vittorio Emanuele to form a government, but the army and the nationalist blueshirts could have crushed the *squadristi* with ease. Primo de Rivera plotted openly against the government, and met with the King prior to the actual *coup*. Alfonso XIII removed his support from the existing government when most of the army was still undecided; there was no precedent in the Canovist system for the existence of a government against the expressed wishes of the monarch, and it was thus Alfonso XIII who resolved the crisis by siding with armed force against the legitimate government. In Portugal, finally, Sidónio Pais, the Unionists, and certain officers plotted for a year, a development of which the government and foreign diplomats, as we have seen, were aware. The government was confident, however, that the movement could be crushed once in the open. The unpopularity of the war, and possibly conflicts within the Democratic party, neutralised not only the police forces and the army - the defense of Lisbon was coordinated Luis Galhardo, head of M.G.S.I., and the Democratic Deputies who had returned from the front - but also of the civil revolutionaries - the *Carbonari* or,

¹⁸ According to its founder, Lieutenant João Afonso de Miranda, the league was united around the ideals of "defense of the Fatherland" and the creation of a patriotic mentality." See António Costa Pinto, *Os Camisas Azuis: Ideologia, Elites e Movimentos Fascistas em Portugal, 1914-1945* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1994), 62-67.

¹⁹ *A Monarquia* (Lisbon), 27.2.1918.

²⁰ Ernesto Castro Leal, *Antonio Ferro: Espaço Político e Imaginário Social (1918-1932)* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1994), 126.

as they were also known in Portugal, the 'White Ants'. According to Daeschner, Sidónio Pais launched the movement with the support of as few as 250 men.²¹

III. Parallel paths to dictatorships: Italy.

If the premise outlined above, namely that there were certain striking similarities between the 'New Republic' of Sidónio Pais and the dictatorships which followed the Great War in both Spain and Italy, is correct, then it seems clear that the links between the Great War and those dictatorships must be made more explicit. In Italy, as Procacci argues in the above-mentioned article, the wartime model was one of repression accompanied by a lack of preparation of the civilian population for the rigours of mass warfare. Faced by a politically apathetic or hostile population, and by severe doubts in parliament over the wisdom of the war policy, the conservative government of Salandra did not grasp the opportunity of using the war as the means to accomplish the unification of the Italian population around the ideals and institutions of the Italian liberal monarchy. The war waged by Salandra's government was one of 'sacred egoism', of the territorial completion of the Risorgimento dream - but not its of political aspects. Salandra and his successors failed to realize that a war involving six million Italian soldiers, and the complete adaptation of the Italian economy would alter, fundamentally, the nature of Italian politics, and that if the political awakening of the Italian population was not channeled into support for the existing regime - through a clear enunciation of democratic war aims and the promise of dramatic political and social reform - then it would be taken advantage of by other forces. The years 1919-1922 were marked precisely by the struggle for power among those political forces already moving in the age of mass politics - the *Popolari*, the Fascists and other nationalist groups, and the Socialists. The contrast with the Portuguese case is clear - one cannot speak of mass political action in Portugal before, during, or after the war; nevertheless, as has already been argued, the republican leadership in Portugal, despite identifying the conflict as a

²¹ Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (M.A.E.), Paris, Guerre 1914-1918, Portugal, Dossier Général, 635, letter, Daeschner to Pichon.

potential source of internal mobilization, in order to deepen the roots of the young regime, failed to act accordingly, leaving the task of providing an intelligible interpretation of the war to its intransigent foes.

Italy, as a latecomer to the war, underwent, like Portugal, a long and bitter intervention debate. More than the immediate question of immediate intervention was at stake in the Italian case, however. The powerful influence of the idea that the *risorgimento* was a 'failed revolution' added immediacy to the debate and led to a temporary agreement between the 'democratic' interventionists, who wanted political reform in order to democratize Italy, transforming subjects into citizens, and the revolutionary syndicalists among whom Mussolini moved, for whom the war, through the subsequent appearance of a truly united nation, would allow for the completion of the bourgeoisie's 'historic' task. The Italian government, as we have seen, failed to carry out the propaganda needed in order to explain the nature of the war to the peasants - seen as 'bruti eroici', patient, courageous and obedient. Defeat at, and retreat from, Caporetto, showed the limitations of this approach, and the rejection of the government's authority to wage an ill-defined war, engaging in constant murderous offensives was the first mass demonstration in Italian history. Events at Caporetto led to various reversals of policy, notably as regarded the soldiers: conditions at the front improved, as did leave and travel arrangements, and no major offensives were undertaken until the very last days of the war. For the first time, moreover, action was taken on the propaganda front; defeat was blamed on the *emboscanti* [shirkers], the socialists who sabotaged the war effort from behind the lines, democratic war aims were stressed, and the claim that the *risorgimento* would be completed - by giving land to the returning veterans - was made.

Although the 1915 Treaty of London had defined Italy's war as an imperialistic war of expansion, whose ultimate aim - absolute control of the Adriatic sea - went beyond the return to the fold of *Italia irredenta*, Orlando's failure to uphold the Treaty at the Paris peace conference and to obtain control of the city of Rijeka (Fiume) meant that fuel was added to the nationalist campaign to discredit the Liberal government. Orlando's

contradictory policy - his exit from, and eventual return to, Paris, showed, according to nationalist critics, that it was impossible for a parliamentary regime such as Italy's to be concerned with the country's long term, *national*, interests. The post-war threat to the liberal regime in Italy did not come solely from the Right, embarrassing as D'Annunzio's actions in Fiume might have been; the harsh discipline imposed on industrial workers during the war, and their deliberate scapegoating for defeat at Caporetto, along with the failure to act on behalf of the peasants - by distributing the land promised to veterans - led necessarily to social tensions at a time of economic crisis. Even in the centre of the political spectrum the Liberals were challenged. Catholics begin to organise themselves politically according to the new realities of the country, the P.P.I. disputing becoming one of the most numerically significant political forces in the country. Finally, we must realize that even economic liberalism was no longer accepted as desirable by its previous defenders. Employers saw a return to domestic and international competition as a suicidal enterprise. Italy's industry might have met the army's demands, but it did so because it was assured of a steady market, cheap raw materials, and a disciplined workforce. The return to civilian conditions, and the added strength, and increased radicalization, of the labour movement would spell ruin for Italian industry, still unable to compete with its European rivals. Landowners, moreover, demanded protection from land occupations. Economic necessity, the example of the planned war economy, the government's perceived slide to the Left in order to appease the socialist electorate, workers' attempts to run factories and land occupations, all came together to suggest to the country's economic elites that their interests could no longer be guaranteed by the liberal regime, and that an authoritarian, corporative regime was the ideal solution to Italy's pressing problems. The Fascists' ability to turn themselves into a genuine mass movement, attracting discontented veterans and nationalist youths while defending the existing economic order, and eventually into a political party, ensured their alliance with those economic elites, and brought about the collapse of Italy's liberal regime.

IV. Spain.

In Spain, the relation between the war and the collapse of the 'Canovist' system was less obvious but nevertheless significant. Like Italy and Portugal, Spain underwent an interventionist debate that, not surprisingly, lasted for the whole of the conflict. On the side of the Allies stood the equivalent of Italy's 'democratic' interventionists, those who believed that participation in the conflict on the side of Britain and France would bring about the necessary reforms to the liberal system, transforming Spain into a true democracy - the Socialists, Republicans, and even the Left of the 'Canovist' Liberal party, increasingly fragmented by the tensions unleashed by the Great War. Despite Alfonso XIII's ambiguous position, conservative Spain (the Conservative party and some Liberals, the army, the Church) did not mask its preference for the victory of the more authoritarian Central Powers. This debate, which occurred outside the usually closed *Cortes*, was accompanied by the social transformation of the country, and, as Seco Serrano explains, "it is beyond doubt that that the crisis of supplies and the sudden rise in prices, both of which were the result of the war's impact (...) were not met by an adequate response from the Conservative cabinet."²² While the Conservative party ignored social transformations, some Liberal politicians, notably Alba, seeing the war as a window of opportunity for the development of Spain, attempted a programme of mild reform (including an attempt to tax war profits, which would have gone some way towards alleviating what Raymond Carr identifies as the main problem facing the Spanish state - lack of funds with which to carry out any process of modernization,²³ but ran directly against the interests of the increasingly powerful business community. "The state continued, as a result, to be unable to carry out the structural reforms demanded by events."²⁴ In the face of the mounting syndicalist challenge, the Canovist system found itself based essentially on armed strength (and the army, through the *juntas* movement, began to have a decisive say in politics,

²² Seco Serrano, *op.cit.*, 120.

²³ Raymond Carr, *Modern Spain 1875-1980* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 79.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p.121. Meaker makes essentially the same assertion: "In the face of the domestic pressures generated by the war, his (Dato's) proclivity for inertia could only undermine, in the end, the static Canovite system he wished to preserve. Spain would not interfere in the war, but the war would interfere with Spain." Gerald H. Meaker, *The Revolutionary Left in Spain 1914-1923*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 17.

challenging even the King in his domain of making and unmaking governments). That syndicalist challenge expressed itself most visibly in 1917. By July 1916 the U.G.T. and the anarchosyndicalist C.N.T. had come to an agreement which committed the two centrals to working together "to force the government to take action on the question of living costs and suggesting a general strike as the chief means of exerting pressure."²⁵ This threat was backed up by a successful one day general strike in December, in which the number of strikers exceeded the number of unionised workers. This common front of the syndicalists was undermined by the different aims of the two organisations (the Socialists wanted to help create a bourgeois republic, the anarchosyndicalists saw no need for this intermediary stage), by internal indiscipline, by the State's repressive system, and by the political naivety of the new generation of leaders within the Socialist movement - Besteiro and Largo Caballero - who moved too quickly and who believed that a truly national coalition could be mounted against the Canovist system. The strikes of 1917 were ill-timed and essentially urban (rural strike action would occur a year later;)²⁶ they alienated the modernising Catalan bourgeoisie and other reformist elements; and they served merely to increase even further the Canovist system's dependence on the army.

In the post-war years, the threat of revolution was still perceived as real, as the membership of the trade unions continued to grow. Meaker, despite charting the dismal course of the 1917 strikes and the failure of the labour movement to act in a concerted fashion with other sources of opposition to the Madrid government, points out that "the August strike, for all its disappointments proved less disastrous than it had at first seemed to be. The labour unions, as we have seen, remained intact and in a position to grow rapidly after mid-1918;²⁷ and the P.S.O.E., after the April 1918 elections, came out of the

²⁵ Meaker, *op.cit.*, 41.

²⁶ As Adrian Shubert points out, there is disagreement among historians about the ability of anarchists in rural Spain to organise an effective protest and to mount a revolutionary threat. Shubert, *op.cit.*, 98-99. The rural strikes of 1918 are not necessarily the result of organised syndicalist action: they might still be classic rural protests dictated by the continued belief in a 'moral economy.'

²⁷ According to Ben-Ami, the U.G.T., in 1920, had 211,431 members, while the C.N.T., by 1919, had surpassed the 700,000 mark in membership. Ben-Ami, *op.cit.*, 3-4.

affair with its parliamentary contingent increased from one to six deputies and with the sympathy of much of the nation.”²⁸ It is against this background that all other events in the period 1919-1923 must be judged. Spanish industrialists faced the same downturn in affairs as their Italian counterparts; for all their war profits, they were still unable to compete with their European counterparts. Any hope of the Catalan bourgeoisie reforming the system from within had died with the collapse of Maura’s 1918 national government, in which Cambó had played a most active part. Carr writes, “Cambó saw the possibilities of a ministry that was unique in Europe, in that it gave an opportunity for the rational planning of the whole economy.”²⁹ Antonio Elorza explains, in his article “Liberalismo y Corporativismo en la Crisis de la Restauración,” the change that resulted from this failure of the modernising elements to reform the system from within: “The nationalisation of the economy, the forward leap of Spanish capitalism, and their effects on the mentality of experts, intellectuals, and some employers’ sectors created the perspective of a new equilibrium (...) from which revolution was excluded and the objective was limited to a modernisation (or Europeanisation) of institutions and the blocking of the social powers, whose base was renovated by economic change. For this reform from within to take place a political instrument and, above all, continuity in the processes of capital accumulation and nationalisation sparked off by the war were needed.”³⁰ In order for the accumulation of capital to continue, the wartime boom had to be artificially recreated; the unions had to be curbed or brought into the political fold; the artificial nature of the Canovist system could be entirely done away with. As Ben-Ami clearly demonstrates, 1923 was a year of recovery for Spanish industry, notably minero-metallurgic production and textiles³¹. The C.N.T. was exhausted from years of open

²⁸ *ibid.*, 94.

²⁹ Raymond Carr, *Spain 1808-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 56.

³⁰ Antonio Elorza, “Liberalismo y Corporativismo en la Crisis de la Restauración”, in García Delgado (ed.), *op.cit.*, 7.

³¹ Ben-Ami, *op.cit.*, 34-35.

conflict, and the red scare was over - but the fear of its revival now that the economic picture was improving was still present.

It was from the continuing wound of Morocco that the final blow to the Canovist system came. 1917 had shown that any revolutionary movement needed the support of the inflated and officer-heavy armed forces. In 1923, however, the Canovist system and the army came into open conflict, after the traumatic defeat of Annual, more terrible for Spain's pride than Adowa had been for Italy's. In July 1921 over 8,000 Spanish troops died at Annual, and thousands more were taken prisoner by the troops of the rebel leader Abd el-Krim; further revelations showed that 117 artillery pieces had been lost in the retreat, but that only one artillery officer was missing.³² Parliamentary enquiries followed in 1922, as did the negotiated release (3 million Pesetas) of the prisoners by the Garcia Prieto government. The *Cortes* found themselves working, for the first time, under the close scrutiny of a mass audience; Ben-Ami writes of a "vociferous" campaign "that from the spring of 1922 was being led by Socialists, Communists, Anarcho-syndicalists, and Republicans in public meetings, through the press, and in the Cortes."³³ Primo de Rivera, the Captain-General of Barcelona, brought together, after reversing his *abandonista* stance on the Moroccan question, all the currents of opinion alarmed by the state of Spanish politics; reassuring the Catalan bourgeoisie that their regionalist concerns would be protected by his rule, he promised them modernization and social peace. To the army, he promised improved conditions and an 'honourable' solution to Morocco; to the King, he offered the end of the increasingly damaging parliamentary enquiries into the Annual disasters and the guarantee of support for the monarchy. As for the P.S.O.E. and the U.G.T., as Ben-Ami points out, a reformist leadership, although wary of the new strong government, chose collaboration rather than revolt,³⁴ lured by the idea of being the sole representative of the working class.

³² Stanley Payne, *Politics and the Military in Modern Spain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 171.

³³ Ben-Ami, *op.cit.*, 20-21.

V. Portugal.

In his *Modern Spain 1875-1980*, Raymond Carr writes that “in all countries of Southern and Eastern Europe the strains imposed by the Great War of 1914-1918 proved too great for democratic and quasi-democratic regimes.”³⁵ In this thesis, the collapse of the ‘quasi-democratic’ republican regime in Portugal has been linked firmly to the inability of the Portuguese government to carry out a coherent and consistent campaign of political mobilization during the conflict. Participation in the conflict on the scale envisaged by the republican leadership (which, according to Norton de Matos in his memoirs, involved sending a whole army, and not just an army corps, to France) required one of two options: The first was a massive effort of political mobilization invoking all sectors of national life, such as the press, the Church, the unions, schools, etc., which would have fundamentally altered the nature of the Republic, widening the role of the country’s social elites and making it more tolerant. The second was to carry out a systematic attempt to gather intelligence on all forms of dissent leading to decisive repressive action, as was the case, for part of the war at least, in Italy. Neither of the two options was attempted for financial, political, ideological, and personal reasons.³⁶ Unable to republicanise the country without sharing political power (and as a result not being able to use that process

³⁴ Ben-Ami, *op.cit.*, 81.

³⁵ Carr, *op.cit.* (1980), 81.

³⁶ More work needs to be carried out on the Democratic party - “the great organized force of the Republic”, as Cortesão called it. As we saw in ch.VII there was a current within the party that demanded the widening of the government to include opposition forces and measures stressing the equality of sacrifice before the hardship of war: in other words, taking the first necessary steps for the transformation of Portugal’s participation in the war into a truly national effort. This current, which included some leading party figures, was defeated by Afonso Costa in the first clash, the second never taking place. What remains to be properly established are the internal workings of the Democratic party. On one hand, future research must show what was the correlation of strengths between those with a program to implement and the self-perpetuating party electoral machine, whose force seems to have grown with every election. On the other, the margin for ideological manoeuvre of the party leadership must be established: could it, in the interests of the country at war, revise the constitution of 1911 and reform the law of separation? In other words, what are the precise reasons why Afonso Costa insisted on a narrow ‘Sacred Union’ against the advice of part of his own party?

of republicanisation as the launchpad for the specific necessities of wartime political mobilization) the 'Sacred Union' governments watched as opposition to their rule grew in 1916, and especially in 1917, when all their enemies united and shrugged them off in the simplest of fashions. One determined leader and 250 soldiers were enough to set off the chain of events that destroyed the 'Old' Republic. Lisbon fell easily, no armed civilians acting in the party's defense; and even though Afonso Costa was still in Oporto when Sidónio Pais launched his *coup*, there was no attempt to rally forces loyal to the government in order to take back the capital, or to hold out in some part of the country. Portugal, in 1916 and 1917 had actually been de-republicanised by the strength of the counter-mobilization campaign.

VI. From December 1918 to May 1926.

In December 1918 Sidónio Pais' presidency came to an end as he boarded the train to Oporto. Following the end of the First World War, tensions within the officer corps of the Portuguese Army, between monarchists and republicans, were coming to the fore, with the former creating a Junta, on the Spanish model, to demand a more authoritarian government. It was to meet with this Junta that Sidónio Pais set off on his ill-fated journey. A sharp debate raged for some time as to what the President's last words had been: the sublime "I die without pain - save the Fatherland!" or the more prosaic "Don't hold me so tight, lads." With the death of Sidónio Pais the 'New Republic' came to an end, and civil war began immediately between republicans and monarchists, who held the North of Portugal after being defeated in the capital. With Sidónio's followers in momentary disarray, and with the growing danger of a monarchist restoration, wounds among republicans of all hues, and those to their Left - the socialists and syndicalists - were momentarily healed and the monarchist rising defeated. The 'Old' Republic had returned: its Constitution (slightly modified, as it now allowed the President to dissolve Parliament), its parties, and the majority of its political figures. Sidónio Pais' representatives at the Paris peace conference were replaced by a delegation headed by the former premier Afonso Costa. This restoration, moreover, was to last until 1926, when

the Army took power and ruled the country directly, eventually turning power over to Salazar. It is legitimate to ask, in view of the 'Old' Republic's return, how the war had changed the country: did this step back from Sidónio Pais' *Decemberist* experiment contradict the central theme of this thesis - that it was the failure of the republican leadership to create citizens out of the rural population that led to its inability to assert itself both on a national and an international stage via participation in the First World War? Moreover, it is legitimate to ask, in view of the brevity of that same *Decemberist* experiment, whether Sidónio Pais was the genuine counterpart of Mussolini and Primo de Rivera in Portugal, or whether it is only in May 1926 that a true conservative and authoritarian regime comes into being in Portugal.

One cannot speak of a 'war generation' in Portugal, who returned from the front feeling betrayed by a political system and willing to bring it down violently, because there were not enough veterans, and these were either politically committed to the various political factions, interpreting their war experience in the light of their previously held beliefs, or part of the politically apathetic majority. One cannot speak either of the sudden expansion of an industrial working class, an expansion fueled by exports to warring countries and by import-substitution, and threatened after the war by the gradual return to normal manufacturing and trading patterns. Portugal had no irredentist claims, and its one territorial dispute, with Germany, over the territory of Kionga, on the border of Mozambique and German East Africa, was successfully resolved in Paris (although Afonso Costa failed to create interest in Paris for the town of Olivença, a long-disputed town in Spanish control.) There was no mass movement of refugees across Portugal's borders. The 'Old' Republic was victorious by February 1919, the monarchist resistance in the North having been easily overcome. Although the changes brought about by the First World War in Portugal may not be as immediately obvious as those of other countries across Southern Europe, they nevertheless set the stage, it will be argued, for that country's slide into dictatorship, first at the hands of the army and later of Salazar.

Why was the 'Old' Republic able to reassert itself, if it had been so weak in December 1917? Essentially because the whole army, and not just the remnants of the C.E.P., was divided into various factions which neutralised each other, rendering it unable to act in defense of its own corporate interests and to see itself as a bastion of national virtue on the Spanish model. Moreover, the government, headed now by Tamagnini Barbosa, and attempting to prevent a wider civil war, appealed for civilian volunteers - those same volunteers that had triumphed in 1910 and 1915. It was a mix of soldiers, led by reserve officers who had returned from France, and of civilians, that defeated the monarchist troops, led by professional officers, in Lisbon, on the 24.1.1919. According to Medeiros Ferreira, this victory "remained in the mythology of the regime as a synthesis of the Republic's forces of defense."³⁷ This ability of the Democrats to create an armed militia, and to count upon the support of the navy, was always to ensure their triumph in a straightforward armed confrontation with the monarchists. Lancelot Carnegie, the British Ambassador to Lisbon, was unequivocal in his understanding of the situation: "thanks to the folly of the monarchists the old Republican parties have now returned to power."³⁸ In other words, the monarchist rising in 1919 allowed for momentary healing of the rifts among all anti-monarchist forces, destroying the possibility of a continuation of Sidónio Pais' work, or of some other formula for a conservative Republic. A year of oppression and humiliation under Sidónio Pais had paradoxically saved the Democrats, and the spectre of a monarchist restoration galvanised them into action: they were still the strongest political force in the country, and elections in 1919 naturally resulted in their victory.

Portugal's military failure in Europe and the colonies, and the collapse of the war effort at home discredited the Republic and its leadership. The failure to emerge from the shadow of neutral Spain at Versailles added to the disenchantment. Participation in the war was a policy closely identified with a handful of the most resonant names of the

³⁷ José Medeiros Ferreira, *O Comportamento Político dos Militares: Forças Armadas e Regimes Políticos em Portugal no Século XX*, (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1992), 82.

³⁸ *ibid.*, 84.

republican leadership; these abandoned politics at a national level. Afonso Costa stayed at the League of Nations; João Chagas stayed in France; Norton de Matos returned to Angola as Governor. António José d'Almeida, elected to the presidency, abandoned party politics. The Democratic party's new leadership was never to match the energy and ability to keep the party united shown by their predecessors. The other Republican parties, the Evolutionists and the Unionists also underwent a series of permutations, fusions, and splits. No attempts were made, however, to widen the franchise (despite the fact that this was promised by the Democrats in 1919), in order to bring the obviously apathetic or even hostile rural populations into the political sphere. These changes in leadership and party strategies did not, therefore, bring about an awakening of interest in politics, being rather the logical extension of the pre-war splits in the Portuguese Republican Party. This is clearly borne out by electoral statistics. If in 1915 there were 282,000 voters, or 60% of registered electors, then that same percentage was kept in 1919: 300,000 voters out of 500,000 registered voters.³⁹ That these numbers rose, in the 1921, 1922, and 1925 elections, was largely due to the monarchists' decision to contest the elections.⁴⁰ As we have seen, the Democratic party promised to alter the franchise, in 1919, extending it to all adult males; this promise was never fulfilled, and universal male suffrage remained, curiously, the preserve of the authoritarian Right, as it had been granted by Sidónio Pais. Recent work has shown, lastly, that there was no improvement in the conduct of elections, and that the electoral threat of the monarchists and other conservative elements actually spurred the republican governments to new levels of electoral gerrymandering.⁴¹

Portugal's military shortcomings, and the agitation caused within the army by the First World War, also provoked one of the most important changes in the country: the growing awareness of the officer corps that it was the last moral reserve left in the

³⁹ Although in Lisbon itself the number and percentage of voters collapsed: only 11,500 votes were cast in the capital, or 20% of the registered voters.

⁴⁰ Thus, in the 1922 election, out of 18,314 votes cast in Lisbon, 6,466 votes were cast by monarchists.

⁴¹ Fernando Farelo Lopes, *Poder Político e Caciquismo* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1994), 152-160.

country, that it should never again be used by a civilian government against its will, and that the political divisions within it had to be overcome. As has been pointed out⁴², this greater sense of union among the military, and this greater willingness to act politically as a unified body coincided with the Democratic party's distrust of the professional army (because of its behaviour during and immediately after the war) and its insistence on weakening it, by reasserting the desire to republicanize the army - through the 'nation at arms' principle' - and by creating an armed alternative to the army: the reinforcement of the *Guarda Nacional Republicana* (G.N.R.), given artillery and machinegun units. Although the number of officers serving as ministers increased in the period, their presence was not a sign that the officer corps as a whole approved of the return of the 'Old' Republic, or of the political course that the country adopted in 1919. The final element of union among the military came with the rise to power, in 1923, of Primo de Rivera, which provided the Portuguese army with a shining example of what could be achieved if political infighting ceased. When in 1925, a military rising (with largely political aims) failed, its leaders, who would participate in the successful movement of May 1926, were acquitted by a court-martial, in a clear indication that the army now felt sufficiently strong to defy publicly the government.

VII. The powerful legacy of Sidónio Pais.

The collapse of the 'New' Republic following the murder of Sidónio Pais in December 1918 showed that his work was not sufficiently influential to survive his death. That, however, is a frequent characteristic of personalized and charismatic authoritarian regimes. President Canto e Castro, his immediate successor, and Tamagnini Barbosa, the Prime Minister (a division of labour which in itself reflected the passing of an era), were not sufficiently strong to defend the idea of a conservative Republic from the monarchist threat; the monarchist rising showed that the two men were not considered strong enough by the Republic's enemies to ward off the return to power of the Democrats. The pivotal

⁴² José Medeiros Ferreira, *op.cit.*, ch.IV.

role of Sidónio Pais as the link between competing conservative visions seems clear, but the question can be posed in a different way: was the military junta in Oporto willing to defy Sidónio Pais openly, or could the two sides have come to an arrangement, turning the 'New' Republic into a clear military dictatorship? Could Sidónio Pais' regime have survived if he himself had not been murdered? As we have seen, the *Decemberist* regime was in clear retreat as the Great War came to an end. French diplomatic correspondence provides an impartial insight - worsening economic crisis accompanied by a lack of immediate solutions,⁴³ political inexperience and incompetence of the Secretaries of State,⁴⁴ successive disturbances and risings, dominated with ease by the reinforced security apparatus, and continued widespread apathy for political quarrels and even the armistice demonstrations.⁴⁵ João Medina, in his *Morte e Transfiguração de Sidónio Pais* states categorically that Sidónio's days, after the armistice, were numbered - having relied excessively on monarchist officers in order to maintain the peace, the President was now wholly in the hands of those who had seen him as a mere stepping stone towards the restoration.⁴⁶ However, when considering the actual achievements and potentialities of the regime, French observers parted ways. Daeschner took a dim view: after a year of absolute power, Sidónio Pais had failed to introduce presidential dissolution of parliament, had created no new sources of revenue for the State, and had not carried out any significant reform:

**“(...) il est à craindre que, pour l’Histoire, celle-ci
ne reste que comme une aventure dont M. Sidónio Pais
paraissait symboliser lui même assez bien le caractère à
la fois éphémère et brillant quand, comme Président**

⁴³ Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (M.A.E.), Paris, Europe 1918-1929, Portugal (15-16), report, Naval Attaché to Ministry of the Navy, 8.9.1918.

⁴⁴ M.A.E., Paris, Europe 1918-1929, Portugal, 15, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 7.10.1918.

⁴⁵ M.A.E., Paris, Europe, 1918-1929, Portugal, 15, letter, Consul in Oporto to M.A.E., 13.11.1918 & letter, Military Attache to Ministry of War, 16.11.1918.

⁴⁶ João Medina, *Morte e Transfiguração de Sidónio Pais* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1994), 15.

nouvellement élu il gallopa le sabre en main dans les avenues de la capital à la tête d'un état major en désordre s'efforçant péniblement à le suivre.”⁴⁷

Lieutenant Colonel Bernard, the Military Attaché, presented, in less poetic terms, a different picture. Thanks to his mass appeal, Sidónio Pais “serait peut-être arrivé à faire des grandes choses.” Sidónio Pais had already accomplished, according to Bernard, the first part of his task - the restoration of order - and had done so with great energy, so that the Democrats lost ground with every day that passed. This interpretation, while simplistic, has a grain of truth in it, and even Medina admits that it was the composition of Tamagnini Barbosa's cabinet which transformed the military juntas into an openly monarchist rebellion.⁴⁸ António Costa Pinto bypasses the question, stating simply that “Sidónio's dictatorship, which might have constituted the sociological cement for a mobilizing fascism in the twenties, was shaken by the reopening of the monarchy-republic split, with the creation of the so-called Northern Monarchy.”⁴⁹ This line of argument, however, dependent on an obvious “what if?” question, is possibly misleading; perhaps more important and rewarding is to demonstrate the continuity between *Decemberism* and later forms of authoritarian rule in Portugal.

What were the political links between Sidónio Pais and the army's ‘march on Lisbon’ initiated in May 1926? The most obvious was the insistence on the maintenance of ‘public order’ so as to allow the country to develop its economic potentialities, and the belief that partisan politics were, in Portugal at least, responsible for the absence of that ‘public order’. This was clearly stated in the ten points of the 28.5.1926 programme, which called for a vague reform of the Republic that might ensure its “regular functioning”, as well as administrative, military, and educational reform, a reduction of

⁴⁷ M.A.E., Paris, Europe, 1918-1929, Portugal, 15, letter, Daeschner to Pichon, 28.12.1918.

⁴⁸ Medina, *op.cit.*, 129.

⁴⁹ Costa Pinto, *op.cit.*, 74.

public expenditure accompanied by economic development in Portugal and in the colonies, a speeding up of the judicial process, and "absolute guarantee of the rights of property and the good name of the citizens."⁵⁰ Medeiros Ferreira writes, "this programme is not very different from that presented by the officers of the 18.4.1925, as it was not very different from those of all the forces that wished to present themselves as an alternative to the Democratic party." There was no precise consensus among the officers on the nature of the political reforms to be carried out, only the strong conviction that the Democrats had to be removed from power - very much the same frame of mind that had animated Sidónio Pais and his fellow conspirators, and which resulted in the lack of clear aims that characterised his year in power. From a reform of the 1911 constitution, to a Fascist state, to the prolongation of the military dictatorship, which would be turned into a permanent development: all of these options were competing against each other in the officer corps. One option - the handing of power to a civilian cabinet led by Salazar - eventually won out: and this eventual victory, the victory of the nationalist, Catholic, and corporative tendencies, can be interpreted as the victory of all those who supported, or who mourned, Sidónio Pais. It was the victory of 'Sidónio's cadets', as his young collaborators were known, of a generation of officers raised in the cult of the murdered President and in the contempt of the Democrats' Republic.

This line of thought can be taken further: it seems clear that the ideologues and elites of Salazar's New State emerged from the ranks of the most conservative opponents of the First Republic, who in earlier years had supported Sidónio Pais in his year in power. Among these could be found the Integralists, the assorted nationalists of the *Cruzada Nacional D. Nuno Álvares Pereira*, and the conservative republican sympathisers, who formed, in 1919, the *Partido Republicano Conservador*,⁵¹ in 1921 the *Partido Nacional*

⁵⁰ Medeiros Ferreira, *op.cit.*, 119.

⁵¹ "The fundamental theme of the conservative Republicans' propaganda was marked by the insistence on the exaltation of the political posture and message of Sidónio Pais. Another idea which was persistently repeated was the attribution of responsibility for the participation in the war to Afonso Costa, accompanied by attempts to demonstrate Sidónio Pais' devotion to the Allies. Editorials appealed frequently for the mobilization of the 'indifferent', alerting public consciousness to the State's grave

Republicano Presidencialista, and in 1922 the *Acção Nacionalista*. H. Martins wrote, in his essay for *European Fascism*, that “it should be noted that the corporatist experiment evolved by Sidónio with integralist advice and cooperation preceded those of fascist Italy or Primo de Rivera, which are sometimes regarded as prototypes of the corporative republic defined by the Portuguese Constitution of 1933.”⁵² National representation in that same constitution of 1933 mirrors the arrangements attempted by Sidónio Pais - a corporative chamber alongside “a ‘political’ chamber with members formally elected on the basis of geographical constituencies,”⁵³ who belonged to the single party - now called the *União Nacional*.⁵⁴ Moreover, both Sidónio Pais and General Carmona insisted on being elected directly to the Presidency, thereby reinforcing their legitimacy through a plebiscite. If we consider the early support given by all of the Democrats’ political opponents, and by established economic interests, the policy u-turns, the ministerial reshuffles, and the frequent revolts that occurred during the military dictatorship, we come to the conclusion that the only sizeable difference between 1918 and 1926-1930 was that by 1926 the monarchist elements within the army had realised the impossibility of restoring the monarchy by arms, and had come to accept the kind of regime that the creation of the Oporto junta had destabilized in 1918. Armed civilians could not overthrow a regime backed by the whole of the army, even if the dictatorship’s economic policies, like those of Sidónio Pais, were catastrophic; rival camps of officers no longer neutralised each other. Given the element of time that Sidónio Pais had lacked, and with the added guarantee of continuity that its collective nature ensured - various officers

financial crisis, the exaggerated parliamentarianism, and the strikers’ abuses.” Ernesto Castro Leal, *op.cit.*, 105.

⁵² H. Martins, “Portugal”, in S.J. Woolf (ed.), *European Fascism*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1968), 309.

⁵³ *ibid.*, 315.

⁵⁴ Martins also points out that Salazar never attempted to mobilize the country politically - “The regime has been unwilling or unable to invest resources in mobilizing the limited electorate. Although normally (in fact with only one exception) all presidential elections won over 90% support for the regime’s candidate, the size of the electorate has not increased significantly in thirty years: between 1933 and 1965, it remained at a million and a quarter, even though the illiteracy rate was halved in the same period, and the population increased by two million (...) The ratio of electorate to total population is reminiscent more

jostled for power within the dictatorship - the military regime was able to reinvent itself, evolving into the *Estado Novo*; Sidónio Pais, killed by José Júlio da Costa, never had the chance to experiment. An Integralist claimed, in 1923, that “Portugal could have been, after Sidónio’s revolution, the initiator of Fascism in Europe.”⁵⁵ With the benefit of hindsight, this statement can be qualified - Sidónio Pais’ revolution created the conditions for an authoritarian, corporative, ultra-conservative regime along the lines that Salazar’s *Estado Novo* would later trace, but these were not taken up by the still-divided conservative forces, especially within the army.

The continuity that the ‘New Republic’ lacked, when set against the regimes of Primo de Rivera and Benito Mussolini, is provided once the conceptual links with the military rising of May 1926 are established. Between 1919 and 1926 the supporters of Sidónio Pais and the other conservative elements hostile to the republican regime sought to overcome their differences, a process made easier by the monarchists’ realisation that a violent restoration was now beyond their ability. While they did so, the ‘Old’ Republic found itself unable to resolve the fundamental problem that had plagued it since 1910: the republicanisation of the country. This problem had been cruelly exposed by the First World War. In a time of crisis, the republicans could not count upon the support, or even the sympathy of the largely conservative rural population because the two spoke groups spoke in different political languages, had completely different value systems. Oliveira Marques claims that, in the last years of the Republic, as the country’s financial situation improved, a social agenda appeared in the Democrats’ aims - improved welfare, reformed taxation, and agrarian reform, and that this agenda, along with the exaggerated threat of anarchist action, contributed to the carrying out of the 1926 military *coup*.⁵⁶ Such an interpretation seems simplistic, for the Republic could not have included a social

of classical representative oligarchies or limited democracies than of plebiscitarian, authoritarian, totalitarian and democratic regimes.” Martins, *op.cit.*, 316.

⁵⁵ José Pequito Rebelo, quoted in Castro Leal, *op.cit.*, 118.

⁵⁶ A.H. Oliveira Marques (coordinator), *Nova História de Portugal*, vol.XI *Portugal da Monarquia para a República* (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1991), 736.

dimension without creating an electorate that would support that dimension - which, of course, would have altered the political balance in the same way that political mobilization during the War would have done. The warning delivered to the republicans by *Decemberism* was not heeded, and the Republic continued in the hands of a segment of a narrow political elite; the failure to expand the Republic internally, by creating citizens, was to be felt in Portugal for forty eight years.

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