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MARCELLO CAETANO
PRIME MINISTER

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NOR HAVE DONE TOO LITTLE

SPEECH DELIVERED
IN THE PALACE OF S. BENTO
ON 27 SEPTEMBER 1969

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SECRETARIA DE ESTADO DA INFORMAÇÃO E TURISMO

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INCORPORAÇÃO

COMPANHIA DE CEMENTOS PORTUGUEZES

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REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMPANY

Gentlemen:

I am very grateful for your presence and I wish to express my thanks for the statements that have just been made on your behalf by such eminent personages. But I am above all happy to have an opportunity to express my gratitude to all who have collaborated with me during this year of hard work.

In the first place I would mention the members of the Government. I have demanded much of them; in our common effort there has been created a real sense of solidarity and a spirit of mutual understanding that has been put to the test on several occasions. My intentions, plans and even decisions would have been of little worth had they not found collaborators to understand them, develop them and carry them out. So that I cannot, in expressing my thanks to the Government, omit to mention those officials who, under their leaders, have made so valuable a contribution to the common achievement. The Administration is undergoing a period of crisis: its

methods need to be brought up-to-date, its norms need to be simplified, and its personnel needs to be better remunerated and also to meet up to the demands of greater productivity. The Government is fully aware of these facts; but it is also aware that the mass of civil servants have a clear sense of the public service and will continue faithfully to seek to meet the needs of the general interest.

The Head of the General Staff has brought me the message of the Armed Forces. He is a witness to the interest that I have shown since the very outset in the problems of national defence and, above all, in the operations being carried out on the various fronts in three overseas provinces. I am sure that I have done my duty in this sphere. I am quite unable to forget my visit to those provinces, during which I made contact with commands and with the troops, all anxious to do their duty to the Homeland. The Government knows that in defending the Overseas Provinces from subversion supported and encouraged by foreign powers it is meeting the real desires of the Nation as a whole. What is being defended is the wholeness of the territory, and also personal safety, a right to live in peace, the work of centuries, a way of civilization itself. The fact that some Portuguese people living there, with their wives and families, and holding Portuguese values, seem not to understand this fact and provoke a form of opposition to the Government likely to weaken national unity causes us sadness and should make them ashamed. But this does not cause us to hesitate in deciding to go on with the good fight, which in this instance, there can be no doubt, is to

save our Africa from the catastrophes of factitious forms of independence, proclaimed by illusory expressions of self-determination that pay a tribute to the current mythology, sacrifice the real interests of the peoples and seriously endanger the peace of the world.

Lastly I must express to the National Union organization the Government's thanks for the support given by it during this year, which has just been confirmed by my dear friend Dr. Albino dos Reis. At one time I was for some years a leader in that civic organization, which sets out to bring together all those Portuguese who are ready to act in accordance with the basic principles of the Constitution, regardless of their political leanings or their positions. The experience of the parties up to 1926 led to the creation of an association where people of various tendencies could meet and collaborate, without any spirit of party interest, united only by the common denominator of the national interest. What has linked the National Union to the Government is submission and fidelity to the imperative calls of this supreme interest. The support it has given the latter shows agreement with the principles that it defends and the steps it takes to put them into practice. Now that they are fully aware of the principles and methods that I have adopted, I hope that the members and collaborators of the National Union will continue to guarantee me their indispensable collaboration.



It is one year today since the President of the Republic called on me to take up the position of Prime Minister. Under the Constitution the latter is in the sole confidence of the Head of State, to whom he is responsible for the general policy of the Government. This principle calls for a perfect unity of views between the two, which has never ceased to exist. As we are both guided by the same thought, led by the same aims, and both respecters of the Constitution, there has on no occasion been any difficulty in understanding one another: each has realized the significance of the problems affecting the other, and both have agreed in the solution of the problems affecting them both, which accounts for most of them. I am very willing indeed to pay my tribute to Admiral Américo Thomaz, whose balanced outlook, good sense, feeling of responsibility, dedication to the common weal and his extensive knowledge of the country, its inhabitants, their needs and their aspirations, have made so great a contribution to the most dignified manner in which he has carried out his high duties in all spheres.

Looking back over these twelve months I cannot say that I am entirely satisfied with what I have done, because I would like to have achieved more, but I think I am entitled to feel an easy conscience.

I have not given up what I promised the Nation one year ago. Some who have forgotten what they heard then, or who have read into my words what was not there, have

already accused me of deviating from the policy laid down in that speech. This is an unjust charge. I neither promised too much, nor have done too little. I am, in any case, always cautious in making promises, from elementary prudence and also because it is intellectually more honest. When I accepted this heavy burden I had no illusions about the circumstances in which I should have to bear it, or about the difficulties awaiting me.

In all sincerity it should be said that those difficulties have been lightened by the admirable understanding and the frank welcome given me by the nation as a whole. I do not in the least regret having sought direct, immediate contact with ordinary folk, and being constantly concerned with what they are thinking and what their ambitions are. The result of this is something much more living, real and even wholesome than what we hear from those who make themselves out to be the interpreters and representatives of the common people.

Government implies a wide view of the whole spectrum of the Nation's interests and its future prospects, and this view often entails sacrificing a private interest to the general, or the conveniences of the present to the needs of the future. But on that wide plane of action where general principles predominate, there must be room for a knowledge of daily realities, and above all for human contact, without which politics is no more than a harsh, cold abstraction. It is thus important for leaders to gauge the thoughts of the ordinary people and to explain to them, as frequently

as possible; the policy they are adopting and the decisions they are taking.

Modern communications media allow this relationship to be more direct now than ever before. This leads to a weakening of parliamentary systems. Parliaments were conceived at a time when the most perfect expression of association was in meetings in rooms, halls and assemblies, to facilitate the explanations given by the leaders to the representatives of those governed. But while today such representatives continue to play an important part, legislative assemblies are no longer the sole auditorium in which the Government can make itself heard by the Nation in general. In this fact resides the increasing prevalence of the presidential system in its various manifestations.

On the other hand it is for the State to become increasingly, not the arena in which there is permanent competition in the struggle for power, leading to frequent changes of direction and hesitations in policy, but an instrument which will steadily carry out systematic, coherent plans, drafted to achieve aims on which the solidarity, the welfare and the prosperity of the majority will depend.

This is why I am surprised by the resurgence to be noted in some circles of an already long outdated liberal democracy. Naturally democracy must consist in government for the benefit of the majority, but not for the advantage of the majorities that are artificially formed in party assemblies. Political liberty must be understood to be a simple means of defending the essential liberties

that socialist regimes stifle, beginning with freedom of private enterprise, without which societies are reduced to mere dreary, unleavened bureaucratic apparatus.

As the Constitution lays down we are on the threshold of an election campaign. A wide variety of anti-Governmental factions has already sprung up, announcing their intention to agitate over and beyond the actual elections. They extend from the communists, always anxious to find means to exchange their clandestine existence for the shelter of legality, and the socialists, to some monarchists, who, while proclaiming their fidelity to the Portuguese Overseas Provinces, do not seem to realise that in that case the supreme interest of the Homeland calls for the union of all those that are ready to defend them.

The Government would like this campaign to reveal the civic maturity of those involved, by permitting the calm discussion of points of view and enlightenment of the electorate without stirring up political passions and without emotional clashes.

It is true that the norms that have been announced, in accordance with current legislation regulating elections, do permit the achievement of those aims proper to an election campaign, by eliminating any recourse to arbitrary measures and by reducing the risks of a disturbance of the peace. It is in the candidates' interests to collaborate with the authorities in having these norms respected, and they may be sure that the sole desire of the latter is to allow

all to make use of their freedom without endangering the freedom of others.

Unfortunately the Government has been aware for some time that the intention existed to make use of the election period to increase student agitation, as a kind of trigger, perhaps, for further forms of upheaval. Let us hope that our desire for a calm, law-abiding period of electoral propaganda may not be frustrated.

In view of this range of opposition factions the Government puts its trust in the common-sense of the Portuguese people. You are all aware of what I think and how I work. You know that there is a revolutionary danger which, if encouraged, may imperil internal peace, balanced progress and the physical integrity of the Nation. You know that necessary reforms can be effected without any interruption of an achievement that has many positive qualities, under the aegis of a Constitution that has already assured us thirty-five years of tranquillity. You know that in the Overseas Provinces we have neither declared nor waged wars: we merely maintain the military policing operations necessary for the security of a population that wants to remain Portuguese. You know that this determination, this self-determination, so to speak, is constantly and unequivocally demonstrated — much more clearly shown than it would be if, after withdrawing all the Portuguese security forces, the native population were called to the ballot, on the basis of 'one man, one vote'. You know that such a farce would inevitably lead to the ruin of the economy that we have built up by our toil, the

destruction of a whole edifice, and also the outrage of homes sacrificed to the fury of a racism that we fight by setting against it the most noteworthy examples of multiracial societies.

Since you all know this, I believe that you will also know how to choose. Amidst loud criticisms, curses, claims and promises, the electorate will also be aware that the voice of the Prime Minister will only make itself heard to speak of the interests of the Nation, which belong to no group, no faction, no party, because they simply regard the whole of the Portuguese Nation. It is of the Portuguese people that I am thinking now; in all circumstances my wishes will be guided by their well-being.



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