MAY DAY DEMONSTRATIONS IN PORTUGAL.

1. AS PREDICTED THERE WERE HUGE POPULAR DEMONSTRATIONS IN LISBON AND OTHER TOWNS IN PORTUGAL TO CELEBRATE MAY DAY, THE FIRST TIME FOR NEARLY FIFTY YEARS THAT THIS HAD BEEN LAWFUL. DESPITE FEARS THAT EXTREMISTS MIGHT TRY TO PROVOKE INCIDENTS WITH THE ARMY, THE JUNTA’S APPEALS FOR CALM, WHICH HAD BEEN ECHOED BY THE PRESS AND PROMINENT POLITICAL LEADERS, WERE HEEDED AND THE CROWDS WERE HIGH-SPIRITED BUT PEACEFUL.

2. THE PREDOMINANT POPULAR SLOGAN, COINED BY THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST LEADER DR ALVARO CUNHAL, WAS 'THE UNITED PEOPLE SHALL NEVER AGAIN BE DEFEATED'. IT WAS BY NO MEANS OBVIOUS THAT THE COMMUNISTS OR SOCIALISTS, WHATEVER THEY MAY NOW CLAIM, WERE THE PRIME MOVERS OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS, THOUGH THEIR SUPPORTERS WERE CONSPICUOUS. RATHER, THE POPULACE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE RESTORATION OF LIBERTY WAS A GREAT DAY FOR PORTUGAL. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, MARIO SOARES’ CALL FOR PUTTING THOMAZ AND CAETANO ON TRIAL STRUCK A DISCORDANT NOTE.

3. THE JUNTA HAS CLEARLY PASSED THE MAY DAY TEST WITH FLYING COLOURS. POPULAR SUPPORT FOR ITS RADICAL PROGRAMME HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED INCONTRAVERTIBLY, AND THE HOEYMOON BETWEEN THE ARMED FORCES AND THE POPULATION CONTINUES.

TRENCH

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