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Continuity and Change in Portuguese Politics: Ten Years after the Revolution of 25 April 1974

Thomas C. Bruneau

The regime based upon the Constitution of April 1976 in Portugal continues to change although within the general parameters of a liberal democratic model, rather than outside it. There is little question at the present as to the continuity of this form of regime, but its precise nature and dynamic remain very much in question. The purpose of this short article is to characterise this regime, present its background and current dynamics, and highlight in particular the elements of continuity and change within this overall model.

PRE-1976 REGIMES

The present liberal democratic model of regime in Portugal stands in stark contrast to the governments which preceded it. We must touch upon these, however, so as to provide the material whereby the present regime can be understood, for the nature of the collapse of the earlier regimes has strongly conditioned it and its dynamics.[1]

The conservative-authoritarian regime founded in 1928 by Premier António de Oliveira Salazar grew out of the extremely unstable First Republic of 1910–26. In most respects the *Estado Novo* of Salazar was a direct contrast to the previous regime, and intentionally so. Many excellent books and articles have been published on the *Estado Novo,* and we need not dwell on it here but must indicate its bases: the system was explicitly anti-modern and anti-democratic; it sought to secure in Portugal an idealised vision of a simpler nineteenth-century society and political system without conflict and without threats; it relied on elements of Catholicism and nationalism for its legitimacy and negated the value of liberalism and ideologies arising from the Industrial and French Revolutions; the system did not allow the structured access to political power by the general population, either through the corporatist system or the parallel system of territorial representation; political decisions were made in the Council of Ministers, which was dominated by Salazar from the early 1930s until his incapacitation in 1968.[2] In sum, between 1930 and 1968 one political regime was in place, changed very little internally, involved a very small group of people which did not renew itself, and was the creation and project of one man – an austere, reclusive and strongly religious economist. When Marcello Caetano was appointed Prime Minister in 1968, there were promises and plans for a change within the system, for innovation and reform. However, Caetano never did master the system, considered himself its captive, and instituted no real reforms beyond the symbolic of changes in names and involving a handful of new politicians and bureaucrats, at least for a time.[3]

Most importantly, political inertia prevailed in this avowedly corporatist and non-democratic regime and innovation was not allowed, although the state did expand in size and responsibilty. It was particularly discouraged with regard to the most important policy, namely Portugal's commitment to retain an empire in Africa (twenty times the size of Portugal), despite the outbreak of guerrilla wars from 1961 which by 1970 led to the commitment of approximately one-half of the national budget for defence, a mass mobilisation of the population, emigration and continuing disruption of the economy. Change was clearly not possible within the political system, and it came from the only possible source which was the military, particularly the middle ranks of the officer corps, who knew the wars could not be won. The *Estado Novo,* then, was brought to an end on 25 April 1974 by means of a military coup, which immediately received the enthusiastic support of the vast majority of the population. As they had been denied a role in politics for the previous half a century, the Portuguese people greeted the complete overthrow of the regime with high expectations that Portugal would soon resemble other more modern countries.

The two years following the overthrow of the *Estado Novo* were characterised by a wide variety of models, strategies and tactics promoted by diverse social and political actors, all seeking to promote one or another political regime and socio-economic order. This period saw the emergence of fifty political parties, hundreds of pressure groups, and a score of factions within the armed forces. It was, in retrospect, a period of sorting through the possible systems which could be implemented in Portugal following the long period of the conservative-authoritarian regime and the resultant social and economic underdevelopment. There is no need to review all of the models which were bandied about in this period of effervescence and enthusiasm, but rather to indicate that most of them were completely unrealistic and were proposed only because there had been no previous opportunity for the people to participate in politics.[4]

The fact that a liberal democratic regime emerged is due to a combination of factors: the stalemate of other models; the impracticality of the vast majority of them; foreign involvement and support; and a commitment by a core group of Armed Forces Movement (MFA) officers and a small group of emerging politicians to this type of regime as they recognised its strengths in the light of weaknesses in the previous regime. It must be emphasised that the liberal democratic system emerged from a political, and at times military, process, and was not an outgrowth of the *Estado Novo* nor had it been previously worked out by those making the coup of 25 April. It was, in short, an improvised and tenuous process which carried tremendous implications for political participation in a society which had previously been denied almost all forms of participation.

THE CONSTITUTION OF APRIL 1976

Much of the enthusiasm, the structural changes brought about by revolutionary activity, long-range goals in the economy and society, as well as the liberal democratic regime, were formally enshrined in the Constitution of

April 1976. The constitution, with its 312 articles, was formulated by a Constituent Assembly which had been elected on 25 April 1975 – during the height of the radical transition and involvement. It was written by members of parties which had received the following votes in these elections: Socialist Party (PS) 38 per cent, Social Democratic Party (PPD and then PSD) 26 per cent, Communist Party (PCP) 12 per cent, and Social Democratic Centre (CDS) 8 per cent. In the 250-member Constituent Assembly, the PS had 116 members and the PCP 35 – a majority, although it must be noted that it was approved by all the parties in April 1976 except the CDS with 16 members, which had in fact participated in the elaboration of the document. The constitution enshrined the goals and gains from the coup of 25 April 1974 as well as the revolutionary processes which followed it.

According to one of the most respected constitutional experts, Dr Jorge Miranda, there are five main themes in the constitution: (1) National Independence which is dealt with in at least twelve articles defining the independence of Portugal in political, economic, social and cultural terms; (2) Fundamental Rights and Liberties which are treated in at least three articles, and in this form have no parallel in the constitutions of other countries, for they include an extensive series of guarantees, and indicate that all the rights must be interpreted in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; (3) Political Democracy which is dealt with in at least twenty-three articles, specifying the liberal democratic system in terms of ideological and party pluralism. Guaranteed here are universal suffrage, the separation of powers, a central role for political parties, and a proportional representation electoral law. These guarantees apply not only to the national but also to the local level and to trade unions; (4) The State of Law is mentioned in at least five articles. They concern the protection of fundamental rights and limitations on government over the people; (5) The Transition to Socialism is dealt with in at least ten articles, which stipulate that Portugal is to move democratically toward a socialist economic system. This is not only an abstract statement, but includes specific and concrete items such as rights of workers, the role of workers' commissions, unions and the process of nationalisation. It must be emphasised that the movement toward socialism is viewed in the 1976 constitution as an integral part of the process of democratisation.[5] These 'transition' items loom large in the constitution and achieve prominence from the beginning with Item One on 'transformation into a society without classes', Item Two 'ensuring the transition to socialism', Item Nine on 'socialising the means of production', and Item Ten providing for the 'collective appropriation of the principal means of production'.

With the proclamation of this extremely detailed, programmatic and far-reaching constitution, Portugal in the spring and summer of 1976 also held elections for the Assembly of the Republic and the Presidency. In the Assembly elections on 25 April 1976, the PS with 35 per cent of the vote received 107 deputies and the PSD 73, the CDS 42, and the PCP 40. The PS of General Secretary Mario Soares decided to rule as a minority government rather than forming a coalition with the PCP to its left or the PSD or CDS to its right. Soares would not form a coalition with the PCP because the main claim of the PS was its opposition to the PCP during its struggle for hegemony

during the height of radicalisation in 1975. Also, the foreign supporters of the PS, particularly in the Federal Republic of Germany, were adamantly against a coalition with the PCP. He did not form a coalition with the PSD, which was in fact encouraged by the Germans, because he, and several American embassy officials, thought that the PSD would lose its basis of support if not in the governing coalition. In addition, Mario Soares and the president of the PSD, Dr Sá Carneiro, were not on friendly terms. In the presidential elections General Ramalho Eanes, who had played a key role in putting down a left-wing military coup in late 1975 and had begun to professionalise the armed forces, became the candidate of the three main political parties, save the PCP which ran its own candidate. In these elections Eanes received nearly 62 per cent of the vote (against 16 per cent for Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, his closest competitor who was a populistic military figure of the left, who had been central in the coup of 25 April 1974).[6]

GOVERNMENTS AFTER 1976

Between 25 April 1974 and the proclamation of the constitution two years later there were six provisional governments.The shifts from one provisional government to another, and particularly from the Second to Third, and Fifth to Sixth, represented shifts in potential regime types. From mid-1976 there have been nine constitutional governments which do not represent shifts from one type of regime to another, but rather reflect the balance of power among the political parties and different groups in the military. Thus, the theme of change was predominant between 1974 and 1976, and since then there has been substantial continuity within fairly broad limits.

The composition of the nine governments is indicative of these limits. The First Constitutional Government was a minority government of the PS which lasted from July 1976 until December 1977 when it fell on a vote of confidence (of 100 to 159). The Second, from January 1978 until July 1978 was an incohesive coalition of the PS and the CDS, which was presumably a party to the right and which had voted against the constitution. The next three governments were not based on party politics but were rather governments of 'presidential inspiration', which still had to have support in the Assembly if legislation were to be passed and, at least with the first two, stay in power. From the interim elections of December 1979 a coalition, the Democratic Alliance (AD) of the PSD and CDS, together with the very minor Popular Monarchists (PPM), ruled and this coalition was retained by the regular elections of October 1980. The AD continued, even after a shake-up in August 1981, until late 1982 when it collapsed internally. From the inability of the AD to regroup, elections were held on 25 April 1983 and the PS with 36 per cent of the votes and 101 deputies emerged as the largest party. (PSD 27 per cent and 75 deputies, PCP 18 per cent and 41 deputies and CDS 12 per cent and 30 deputies.) Following almost two months of negotiations and discussions,the Ninth Constitutional Government emerged as a coalition of the PS and PSD – or 'central block'.

This brief review highlights the 'flexibility' in the governments since 1976. Of the four main parties all but the PCP have been in power, and even the very

minor PPM which had received only 0.52 per cent of the vote in 1976 has also been in government.The PS has entered into coalitions with both of the parties to its right, and these parties have been in coalition with each other as well. It is clear that, based upon a reading of the party platforms between 1976 and the present, the parties are very malleable in terms of goals and programmes. They can be in coalition with almost any other party, which in turn is also flexible. The exception, of course, is the PCP which was predominant for the part of the period of 1974–6, is consistent in its goals and platform, and is not a democratic party in any case. It exerts its influence through parallel organisations of workers in the urban and even rural areas. One outcome of the parties' flexibility in governing as well as their factions and instability is the opportunity for a wide variety of would-be politicians to participate. This observation is based not on statistics, but on the personal familiarity of many politicians, which suggests that the great majority of the intellectual elite (at least those with political aspirations) have now had the opportunity to take part in government. At a broad elite level, in any case, opportunities exist for political involvement in a manner undreamt of during the *Estado Novo.* This is not to imply that involvement leads to effective policy-making, but rather that the politicians at least can become identified with a system which they have been, are presently, or may be involved with again. It also suggests that there is still flexibility within the parties themselves. The PCP remains constant with the same general secretary and key elements of the secretariat; the PS, after extensive dissensions, has moved into line with Mario Soares; the PSD is currently in accord with Mota Pinto, vice- Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, but the party is severely split, wracked by crises and likely to evolve substantially in the near future; and the CDS is in fact without agreed-upon leadership. It should be noted that the president of the PSD, Sá Carneiro, and one of the two main leaders of the CDS, Amaro da Costa, were killed in an air crash in late 1980. If either had lived, there may have been more stability within the parties and in the relationships between them, but this is not certain either. In any case, two of the four parties are currently unstable, as is the party system itself generally speaking.

ELECTIONS AND PUBLIC OPINION

As the politicians have had substantial opportunities to participate in politics, so, too, has the general population been able to vote and become involved through parties and groups. This is in stark contrast to the *Estado Novo,* where the suffrage was severely restricted, in fact stagnant, and groups as well as parties were either outlawed or created and controlled from above. The country has thus experienced a major change in moving from the *Estado Novo* to the unstable period following it, and certainly continuing through the constitutional period. There have been presidential elections in 1976 and in 1980 in which Ramalho Eanes was elected and then re-elected. There have been elections for the Assembly of the Republic in 1976, 1979, 1980 and 1983. Local elections were held in 1976, 1979 and 1982. Without comparable surveys over time on voting intentions, it is difficult to say with certainty – but the regional breakdowns suggest – that there is great stability in voting. This

seems obvious from the figures on the distribution of votes for the parties, and while there are shifts they are not in only one direction. We can note that between the national elections of 1976 and 1983 the percentages for the PS increased by 1 per cent, for the PSD by 3 per cent, for the PCP by 4 per cent, and decreased for the CDS by 4 per cent. Between the elections of 5 October 1980 and 25 April 1983 the results showed that the AD decreased by 7 per cent, the PS increased by 8 per cent, and the PCP increased by 1 per cent. There would seem to be no secular trend of change in anything but abstention rates, which have increased from 8 per cent of registered voters in 1975 to 16 per cent of registered voters in 1980 and 21 per cent in 1983. Continuity seems predominant, then, in the voter's participation, but there is a more important concern relating to continuity with the past.

What emerges most clearly from opinion poll after opinion poll is the distance between the general population and the structures of government. Thus, while a broad group of the elite has been deeply involved in politics since 1974 and the general population votes, may appear in demonstrations and freely discuss politics, in fact the latter is terribly ignorant of politics and has yet to identify with the liberal democratic regime. This is not to say that the people have identified with another possible model, except possibly the *Estado Novo,* but that they are reserved in their support for and identification with the present regime.

This ignorance and distance was obvious in our survey of early 1978, and has been found in virtually all surveys since then. Typical was a result of a survey conducted in late 1982. When asked about the most important or most positive action by a political figure in recent time, 58 per cent could not respond. After the constitutional revision, which was *the* stuff of politics in 1981 and much of 1982, 58 per cent of those interviewed did not know that it had been revised and 6 per cent indicated that it had not been. Only slightly more than one-third – 36 per cent –were aware of constitutional revision.[7] These kinds of results are commonplace in Portugal, and indicate an ignorance of key political actors and institutions as well as continuing lack of identification with the regime.

The combination of these two characteristics – governmental instability due to party fragmentation, and the political ignorance and reserve of the population – could be serious for the continuity of the democratic regime were it not for the President of the Republic. In elaborating the political system defined in the constitution of 1976, it was realised that the country had slight democratic traditions and faced severe socio-economic difficulties. The system, then, was formulated in a semi-presidential or bi-polar executive format.[8]

Item 193 states 'The Government is politically responsible to the President of the Republic and the Assembly of the Republic'. The President is popularly elected, and the Assembly presumably operates according to the will of the political parties (the existence of which is guaranteed in Item 47), which enjoy representation according to the results of the parliamentary elections. Authority is thus shared, and to the President's popular election were added his position as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and President of the Revolutionary Council. The President lacked executive powers except

with regard to the armed forces. However, in conjunction with the Revolutionary Council with which he had to consult, his formal powers were extensive. They included the nomination of the Prime Minister after 'consulting with the Revolutionary Council and parties represented in the Assembly', 'and holding in mind the electoral results' (Item 190); dismissal of the Prime Minister; dissolution of the Assembly; (Item 136) an explicit veto which could be overridden by a majority or, in some cases, two-thirds; (Item 139) declaration of war, a state of seige or of emergency. In addition, due to the ambiguity of the text, the president also had a pocket veto and could dismiss the Prime Minister even though he might hold the confidence of the Assembly. The President presided at the Revolutionary Council which had exclusive jurisdiction regarding the armed forces, was the constitutional tribunal, and served as a council for the President. Thus, formally, particularly in recalling that the President presided at the Revolutionary Council, the political system was semi-presidential. However, as Duverger has shown, practice can vary greatly where formal powers are not utilised and where political parties can play supportive or opposition roles.[9]

In the five constitutional governments between July 1976 and January 1980, the President played an increasing role which served to draw power away from the Assembly as he sought to ensure some stability and effectiveness. However, he did not institutionalise this situation either through the formation of a presidential party or a revision of the constitution. That is, he employed the powers (broadly understood) of the constitution, but did not seek to identify them with himself or modify them for utilisation under different (non-minority government) situations.

The experience of the Second to the Fifth Constitutional Governments demonstrated that the powers of the President could be very great indeed. Not only did he dismiss Mario Soares (who lost his majority in the Assembly) in 1978, but he formed three governments on his own initiative with varying degrees of consultation with the political parties. He met extensively with ministers in the three governments of his initiation as well as the first two governments, utilised the pocket veto, and through public statements influenced policy as well. In foreign affairs he played important roles in defining Portugal's position on important issues. And, through visits within Portugal itself, he defined key issues of regional and even national policy. The Revolutionary Council did not veto any important legislation until May 1980, when it twice vetoed legislation on the delimitation of public and private sectors. However, even before this, the Revolutionary Council influenced policy as the assembly anticipated what it would veto, through statements by its members on legislation and through the President himself. The Council was particularly concerned with legislation regarding agricultural reform and nationalisations. It was, of course, predominant on legislation regarding the armed forces. It seems accurate to state that from 1976 to 1981 the Revolutionary Council acted as a balance or flywheel in providing a certain orientation to the unstable political system, and utilised a variety of means for doing so. These included its operations as an organisation as well as the involvement of its members in both the government and the armed forces.

The President, then, in the face of weak governments and unstable

majorities in the Assembly became prominent at all levels of the governing process. However, it must be emphasised that he reacted strictly within the interpretation of the constitution and in line with the programmatic elements of this document. It could be argued otherwise, but my reading of the documents and my interviews indicate that the President would have been content to maintain a more limited role in governing – had there been a stable and effective government. There was not, and he thus assumed a much larger role. It must be emphasised that he did not form a presidential party which would have defined the political system along the lines of the French Fifth Republic. There were at least five proposals from a variety of politicians for such a solution which would have involved the formation of a party, revision of the constitution, and presidential support for certain candidates in the elections to the Assembly. He entertained the proposals, but remained aloof and did not offer support. His response was that he was the 'President of all the Portuguese' (and not only those of one party), and further that a political role would conflict with his position as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. Until 1980 the presidential orientation of the political system was not institutionalised, but was rather the result of a particular conjuncture arising from the elections of 25 April 1976. This conjuncture changed radically with the interim elections on 2 December 1979.

In preparation for these elections, the PSD and the CDS joined with the miniscule PPM to form the Aliança Democrática. They received 45 per cent of the votes (against 27 per cent for the PS, and 19 per cent for the PCP), and obtained 128 deputies in the 250-seat Assembly. In the agreement for the formation of the Aliança, the three parties envisioned a common proposal for revision of the constitution and a joint candidate for the Presidency who would not be the incumbent. From January 1980, when the Sixth Constitutional Government took office, the tensions were clear between the Aliança Democrática government on the one side and the President and Revolutionary Council on the other. The President travelled within Portugal and abroad, used the pocket veto, and the Revolutionary Council vetoed the key item in the AD programme on the delimitation of economic sectors. The orientations of the President and those of the government were clearly distinct and conflicting, and it is not difficult to provide evidence in this regard.[10] The resulting institutional arrangement was ambiguous: while the government, now based on a majority in the Assembly, tended to operate in a parliamentary fashion, the overall regime did not, as the President and the Revolutionary Council also enjoyed legitimacy and had broadly-defined roles in the system. What is more, their orientation was more in line with the legacy of 25 April, while the AD sought to change it. The AD increasingly presented itself in opposition to the system defined in the constitution, the Prime Minister – Sá Carneiro – proposed to revise the constitution, and the President and the Revolutionary Council continued to guarantee precisely this system.

It was hoped that the solution for the AD would be found in the elections to the Assembly in October and the Presidency in December 1980. The AD remained intact, while the PS continued to splinter, and received 47 per cent of the vote (against 28 per cent for the FRS (PS+), and 17 per cent for the APU (PCP+)) with 134 seats. The AD also backed a common candidate for

President – General Soares Carneiro. He promised if elected that the constitution might be revised by referendum if the Assembly could not provide the two-thirds vote required for revision (of more than a majority of deputies then serving). This candidate was clearly a creation of the AD and never generated popular support as a campaigner or spokesman for the right. Not only did President Eanes win easily with 56 per cent of the vote (against 40 per cent for Soares Carneiro) in the 7 December elections, but Sá Carneiro and the Minister of Defence from the CDS – Amaro da Costa – died in a plane crash just before the elections.

CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION

A constitutional referendum, on the initiative of the President was now out of the question, as Eanes had especially stressed his opposition to it during the campaign, and thus revision would have to be accomplished through the Assembly of the Republic. Revision required two-thirds of the Assembly, and there was no veto for the President or the Revolutionary Council. However, with its 134 deputies, the AD needed support from another party in order to achieve the 167 votes necessary for revision . The AD found this support from the PS which underwent an internal split as Mario Soares broke with President Eanes; Soares had promised President Eanes in the autumn of 1980 that the PS would not support a constitutional revision which diminished the powers of the presidency. During most of 1981 and the first half of 1982 constitutional revision, and the negotiations involved in achieving it, was *the* topic of politics in Portugal. Finally, revision was passed in the Assembly in August 1982 and promulgated by the president in late October. The main elements of this revision are as follows: the Revolutionary Council is eliminated and replaced by a Council of State which, given its composition, is likely to represent the party elites and the parliamentary majorities;[11] the President's power to dismiss the government is formally decreased to 'when necessary to assure the regular functioning of the democratic institutions, and consulting with the Council of State'; the pocket veto is abolished; it is forbidden to dissolve the Assembly six months after its election and in the last semester of the President; and the elimination of the political responsibility of the government before the President. According to a constitutional expert, who is also a politician, there were six items in the revision which strengthened the powers of the President and twenty-one which weakened it. It should be noted that the former are qualitatively as well as quantitatively less important.[12] Although the main public debate before the revision concerned the opposition of the AD to socio-economic items in the constitution, revision itself left these elements to ordinary law and focused mainly on changing the balance of powers between the presidency and the Assembly/government. From a semi-presidential or bi-polar system the system was turned much more clearly in the direction of a parliamentary system. It should be noted, however, that the President can still dissolve the Assembly almost at will.

However, in light of the earlier observations on the fragility of the political parties and the distance from them of the population, the facts (again) have not followed the theory of the constitution (now revised). Shortly after the

revision was promulgated, the AD government collapsed due to internal conflicts and personality clashes, and only with great difficulty was it able to propose another Prime Minister. The President, despite the fact that the AD still held a majority in the assembly, did not accept the AD's suggested candidate for Prime Minister, dissolved the Assembly and called elections. More recently, the President has tended to ignore elements of the revision concerning the appointment of the Chief of Staff of the Army. After several months of tension the President and Prime Minister came to an agreement whereby a Chief of Staff must enjoy the confidence of both the President and the Prime Minister. It is obvious that the revision of the constitution is not in line with the cultural and political factors which created and continue to allow for greater presidential powers, regardless of constitutional details. What has been obvious since 1976, even after revision, is the role of the President which increases or decreases depending on the stability of the party system and the presence or absence of a majority in the Assembly. At present there is indeed a majority in the Assembly, for the PS-PSD coalition, but the President still exercises his powers in a fairly broad mode. This may be due to the well-known fact that the Prime Minister, Mario Soares, is interested in becoming President in 1985, and would prefer not to occupy a position without power. Revision, in any case, with this different coalition in power has not had such serious consequences as many had anticipated.

The key political issue at present is whether the President will form a party on his own inspiration. Were he to do so, it would probably become the predominant party as the President's popularity, and his continued exposure, is unquestioned. The formation of such a party would substantially modify the current configuration of the party system, as it would necessarily draw support from at least the PS and PSD, and it would almost certainly benefit from the fluidity of the party system. There are proposals now, as there were in the past, for such a party, but so far there are no indications whether President Eanes will in fact act on this issue.

CONCLUSION

It should be emphasised that the context within which the political activities and strategies are played out is extremely confining in the sense of policy implications. Portugal is the most underdeveloped country of western Europe, has the lowest per capita income and her industries are not competitive. The country currently owes $13 billion, has an inflation rate of 25 per cent, and her trade balance in 1982 had a severe deficit of $3.2 billion or 14 per cent of GDP. Until now the previously-cited factors of political involvement and popular distance (or alienation) had much to do with this situation, and the policies of the nine governments in these regards have been either weak or inconsistent, or both. The EEC was previously viewed as some sort of panacea, but now serious reservations have arisen due to awareness within Portugal of the economic implications of opening the country fully to the outside and the problems involved in entry due to France's concern with Spain. The country is currently searching for some other solution, but is not likely to find one.

The acute awareness of constraint and these confining conditions are obvious from the very sombre and pessimistic party platforms for the 25 April 1983 elections. Little was promised but more austerity and difficult times ahead. The elections were followed by Mario Soares conducting an internal party referendum on the proposed coalition, requests for involvement by not only the PSD but also social forces such as unions and owners' groups in discussions, and an opinion by the Council of State. Through an extensive process of posturing, negotiating and consulting, Mario Soares sought to take over as head of government without oppositon except from the PCP and CDS, and with all other relevant political and social forces involved. He has, in short, sought to broaden the base of responsibility for what promises to be a difficult period in Portuguese history. The government has been formed, is governing, and times are indeed difficult. So far the government has not been effective and the future of the coalition of the PS and PSD remains in doubt. Within this context the themes of continuity in the liberal democratic regime remain, and there is no indication of a rupture in this model of regime.

This cautious optimism about the future of the new Portuguese democracy follows a decade of much uncertainty about the exact form it would eventually take, certainly more so than in the case of the other two southern European democracies under review; for, unlike in Spain and Greece, democracy was itself questioned. Portugal has only just, it seems, passed through a prolonged decision phase (if the constitutional revision represents a final stage in formulating the structure of her new political system which is an open question), and she has therefore hardly embarked on the habituation phase. In the formal sense, both the political elites and the general population have had ample opportunity to participate in the new system, but it cannot be said that Portugal has experienced the kind of 'remaking' of her political culture that would buttress the new democracy.The political system inaugurated after the 1974 revolution has continued to evidence serious elements of instability, notably those identified in the party system; but, nevertheless, it has shown as a whole a certain durability not least by surviving in unfavourable social and economic circumstances. So, while change was the predominant theme in the years immediately following the revolution, factors of continuity have gradually and sometimes hesitantly come to the fore-front of the new Portuguese polity.

NOTES

1. For an extensive treatment of the pre-1976 regimes and political processes during the constitutional governments I-VIII, see my *Politics and Nationhood: Post-Revolutionary Portugal,* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984).
2. The corporatist system and political dynamics of the old regime are analysed perceptively in the articles by Lucena, Schmitter and Wiarda in Lawrence S. Graham and Harry M. Makler (eds.) *Contemporary Portugal: The Revolution and Its Antecedents* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1979), and in Lawrence S. Graham, *Portugal: The Decline and Collapse of an Authoritarian Order* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975).
3. For the Caetano period see Marcello Caetano, *Depoimento* (Rio de Janeiro: Distribuidora Record, n.d. but 1975) and José António Saraiva, *Do Estado Novo à Segunda República: Crónica Política de um Tempo Português* (Amadora: Livraria Bertrand, 1974).

4. For the various models see my 'The Left and the Emergence of Portuguese Liberal Democracy', in Bernard E. Brown (ed.) *Eurocommunism and Eurosocialism: The Left Confronts Modernity* (New York: Cyrco Press, 1979), and the mood is captured well in Phil Mailer, *Portugal: The Impossible Revolution?* (London: Solidarity, 1977).
5. Jorge Miranda, *Expresso* 1 April 1977. See also his *Constituicao e Democracia* (Lisbon: Livraria Petrony, 1976).
6. This period is dealt with reasonably well in Robert Harvey, *Portugal: Birth of a Democracy* (London: Macmillan, 1978).
7. The survey results on the recognition of political leaders may be found in *O Jornal* 11 February 1982, and for the revision of the constitution in *Expresso* of 19 February 1983. For a comprehensive discussion on the results of our 1978 survey, see Mario Bacalhau and Thomas Bruneau, *Os Portugueses e a Política Quatro Anos Depois do 25 de Abril* (Lisbon: Editorial Meseta, 1978). The data are summarised in my 1984 book.
8. On this type of system see Maurice Duverger, 'A New Political System Model: Semi-Presidential Government', *European Journal of Political Research* 8 (1980), pp. 165-87, and Werner Kaltefleiter, *Die Funktionen des Staatsoberhauptes in der parlamentarischen Demokratie* (Köln: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1970).
9. Duverger, passim. 1980.
10. For the details and a good discussion of the political structures see Pedro Santana Lopes and José Durão Barroso, *Sistema de Governo e Sistema Partidário* (Amadora: Livraria Bertrand, 1980). Another very useful political science-type book on Portugal is Emídio da Veiga Domingos, *Portugal Político: Análise das Instituições* (Lisbon: Edições Rolim, 1980).
11. For this argument see Joaquim Aguiar, *A Ilusao do Poder: Analise do Sistema Partidário Português 1976-1982* (Lisbon: Publicações dom Quixote, 1983), pp. 179-82.
12. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, *O Sistema do Governo Português Antes e Depois da Revisão Constitucional* (Lisbon: Cognito, 1983).