



Liason

The Great Fear in Europe:

Will There Be Another Chile?

On July 19, 1945, Stalin had an idea. At the Third Plenary Session of the Potsdam Conference he proposed that “the regime of Franco represents a grave danger to the freedom-loving peoples of Europe and America” and suggested that the Allies break off all relations with Franco in order to support “the democratic forces in Spain and enable the Spanish people to establish such a regime as would respond to their will.”

Reasonable sounding, perhaps, but not quite what Winston Churchill had in mind. He detested the Franco regime, he said, but was even more opposed to interfering in the internal affairs of another nation. Then Harry Truman spoke: he too thought a change, however desirable, must be left to the Spaniards. So Stalin suggested a somewhat milder, though still critical approach. At this Churchill became a little angry.

“It is not a domestic affair, but an international danger,” claimed Stalin. “That could be said about almost any country,” retorted Churchill. (One can imagine him spitting the tip from his cigar to the floor in disgust.) “No such regime remains in any country in Europe,” replied Stalin. “Isn’t Portugal such a dictatorship?” countered Churchill. But Stalin had an answer even for that. “The Portuguese Government [of Salazar],” he declaimed (with an eye perhaps on the future of Eastern Europe as he would like it to be seen) “arose from an internal development. That of Franco arose out of intervention by Hitler and Mussolini.”

Debaters’ points aside, the real effect of Potsdam and Yalta was a *realpolitik* division into spheres of influence which has given Europe thirty years of what Henry Kissinger and many others would call peace, but to many Europeans is more properly called order. This system may

Civilian prisoners herded into Santiago stadium after coup

by William Shawcross

finally be weakening. And the erosion is most visible where it once seemed most unlikely. In Stalin's phrase, "the Portuguese government arose from an internal development." Portuguese socialism has become the symbol and in many ways the test of this erosion.

Europeans find it difficult to believe that Washington will accept such a development passively. The desperate unwillingness to let go of control in Cambodia and Vietnam hardly points to a policy of equanimity. The real model for European fears, however, is not the Indochina intervention, but the experience of Chile.

After all, the CIA itself had never thought what it was doing under Kissinger's direction in Chile was meant to be a one-time thing. According to the secret testimony of Director William Colby before the House Armed Services Committee (as disclosed by Congressman Michael Harrington), the adventure was seen precisely as a "prototype or laboratory experiment to test the techniques of heavy financial investment in efforts to discredit and bring down a government."

[THE CHILE MODEL]

This "prototype" notion of the Chilean "destabilization" program was widely reported and taken perhaps more seriously than in the U.S. As it is, even if the CIA had been totally innocent of interfering in Portuguese politics over the past year, Kissinger's Chilean policy would have made it impossible for such U.S. intervention to be plausibly denied.

On September 18, 1974, just after Harrington's account of Colby's secret testimony was published, Kissinger gave a background briefing at the United Nations, and blandly justified the adventure against Chile's government on grounds of "national security." A European reporter then asked him if this argument could not be extended to justify U.S. intervention anywhere else. Kissinger replied simply, "That's an interesting philosophical question, which is worth debating. Let's move on. Next question." Kissinger, of course, has never been long on public policy debate.

But two days later Kissinger and Ford privately briefed nine congressional leaders, one of whom later reported that Kissinger had dwelt at length on Italy. He had argued that, whatever criticism was being made about the CIA in Chile, the United States would be bitterly attacked for not having done enough to save Italy, if the Italian Communist party did indeed gain control.

President Ford himself publicly defended the Allende overthrow effort in expansively open-ended terms: "It's a recognized fact that, historically as well as presently, such actions are taken in the best interest of the countries involved."

Throughout the entire course of the anti-Allende "experiment" Kissinger made it as clear as he ever can, in his private briefings at least, that he was afraid not only for the instability and consequent threat to detente that a successful marxist government would create in a wholly American sphere of influence, but also for the imitative effects it would have in Europe. As far back as January 13, 1971, C. L. Sulzberger published in the *New York Times* what was understood to be a classic Kissinger leak entitled "Spaghetti

with Chile Sauce." Without, I hope, being unfair to Mr. Sulzberger by misnaming his source, it is worth quoting. The analysis presented by the source cited Regis Debray's argument that the Chilean experiment would have repercussions in Europe. It cited an interview with Luis Corvalan, the leader of the Chilean Communist Party, which had appeared in *L'Unita*, the Italian Communist paper. Corvalan had declared that the people of Chile must "consolidate their victory and advance further so that the whole of the political and state apparatus will come into their hands."

There were two inferences to be drawn according to the source: first that the Chilean Communists were determined to gain absolute control, and second that a "repetition is possible for Italy — which is why *L'Unita* is so apt a propaganda vehicle." Italy was politically sick and "The Italian Communist Party . . . is slowly inching toward seizure of power by elections just as Allende did." (Don't democrats in fact believe that power is transferred rather than seized if an election is the instrument?)

Four years later, Italy is, by these standards, at least as sick as in 1971 — the Italian government has been so obliging a headline writer as to practically declare itself bankrupt — but the Communists as yet have neither seized nor even simply won power. They have even declared that, if they did take part in government, they would remain in NATO.

Nonetheless, the analysis was probably correct, if for "NATO" one reads "Kissinger". "NATO is desperately worried . . . NATO thinks of Italy when the word Chile is mentioned. Normally NATO would not feel intimately concerned with developments in the distant southeast Pacific, but it cannot help feel alarmed when it recognizes how paralyzed it might be in trying to prevent a repetition in strategically located Italy . . . NATO reads the South American lesson in European terms."

Last October, Kissinger and Ford met in Washington with Mario Soares, leader of the Portuguese Socialist Party, and Vasco da Costa Gomes, who later succeeded Spínola as head of the Armed Forces regime. According to one Portuguese diplomat, Kissinger indicated directly at that

Michael Laurent/Gamma



Paris, September 1974: Strikers march along Champs Elysee

time that a Communist government in Portugal would simply not be tolerated by the United States.

(Perhaps at this point the reporter should make his own prejudice even clearer. Should the question of a Communist Government somehow actually arise in Lisbon, I would not like to see the Caetano regime succeeded by one approximating Dr. Husak's which came to power with the destruction of Dubcek, another Communist. There are Communists and there are Communists, in Portugal as elsewhere. One must hope that the Portuguese Communist Party's endorsement, unlike their Spanish and Italian comrades, of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, was a mistake of the past and not an indicator of the future.)

[GEARING UP IN EUROPE]

When the April 25 coup took place in Portugal last year, the State Department was taken completely by surprise. One Kissinger aide said last Fall: "Portugal has caused absolute panic here. Largely because we just have no one who knows anything about these people. There was no one of quality in the Embassy who could report properly on the attitudes of the captains; the military attachés had always considered it beneath them to speak to anyone below the rank of colonel."

The Sheraton Hotel in Lisbon suddenly had many heavily bagged U.S. guests determined, one supposes, to put right this defect; and the staff at the Embassy immediately began to grow. The ambassador was later removed — apparently because his reports were too favorable — and in September Kissinger sent his own brain trust to tell him how serious the threat really was.

Some of Washington's help was more imaginative than effective. Last October a group of Portuguese were flown around the U.S. to meet and observe such men of stature as Marvin Mandel, Ronald Reagan, and Gary Hart. The Portuguese were the campaign managers of several of that country's non-Communist parties, and their host, the State Department, was anxious to show them just how a demo-

cratic election was conducted. At the same time, the State Department was funding a special course in jurisprudence for a group of five Portuguese judges, conducted in that center of legal learning — Reno, Nevada.

Then, as now, CIA yarns were freely swapped in the cafes on the *Rossio*. But although many of them are undoubtedly true, none so far has seemed terribly imposing. On the *Tagus* there was the S.S. Apollo, formerly owned by Ron Hubbard, the king of scientologists, and now said to be a sophisticated CIA radio post operation. In July, both Brazilian and American money was said to be floating around Lisbon, intended to shore up a new television station to counter the state-run system which, as Kissinger complained, favored the left. In August, General Vernon Walters, Colby's deputy and a fluent Portuguese speaker, turned up in Lisbon; the CIA declared he was "on holiday."

Another old CIA friend has been in Lisbon too, and he at least acknowledged that he was hard at work — Irving Brown is back on his old beat. In the late 40s and early 50s, Brown played an important part in setting up right-of-center trade unions in France and Italy and helped to create the Italian Christian Democrat Party. He was at that time a



Rome, March 1974: "The food my pension will buy"



October 1974: General strike in Milan, Italy

well-known and popular bagman, often to be seen on the overnight expresses from Rome to Geneva, Geneva to Paris, or Paris to Toulouse. Last summer he was back in Europe, now in charge of the AFL-CIO's European section; George Meany, he says, felt that not enough was being done to strengthen the center here.

Brown is a crusty but not unfriendly fellow who has become rather bored at being asked if he is a CIA agent. "If I was or if I wasn't, I would say no, so what's the point?" he asks, reasonably enough. Last May, just a few weeks after Caetano fell, he arrived in Lisbon with Michael Boggs, deputy director of the AFL-CIO's international section, to see what they could do for Portugal's long-suppressed unions. Until then, the AFL-CIO had tried to keep contact with Portuguese workers through the 750,000 in France.

In Portugal, says Brown, he was disappointed to find that most of the union leadership was dominated by Communists and owed allegiance to the World Federation of Trade Unions. But he did see some hope in at least the building unions and the metal workers. "They do not want to be integrated into such a controlled body," he declared last fall.

He travelled to Italy where he found things even more troubling. "Twenty-five years ago the West would not have allowed a Communist takeover in Italy, but now we seem to have lost our political will. There's no Ernie Bevin to pick up the Marshall Plan." No George Marshall either, for that matter. In Italy, Brown was accompanied by Howard Molissani, head of the "Italian-American Labor Council," an ethnic, generous, and slightly curious organization which is affiliated with the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) and has given a lot of money to right-wing Italian unions. Brown wanted to give more.

The money was to try and thwart progress toward the Italian Communist Party's "historic compromise" — which includes the effort to unite the unions of the Christian Democrat CISL and the Socialist CGI with the Communist unions. Brown says he was gratified last summer to find that the movement towards such unity was much less swift than it had been in the early 70s. He had especially high hopes that the electricity workers and agricultural workers could be encouraged to hold out.

Others are less cheerful about Brown's efforts. *Panorama*, a Milan paper which accused him of trying to bribe Italian officials and movements, claimed that Bruno Storti, the secretary-general of CISL, had refused Brown's request for a meeting. The Christian Democrat Unionist was quoted: "If I do, the next day everyone will know and since everyone also knows Brown is in the CIA . . ." Brown left town muttering that "these days people blame the CIA when Mount Etna erupts."

Poor Irving Brown, perhaps he does not realize whose fault that is. Like a few others, he still dreams of the days when he would sit up all night in his Pullman car, somewhere between Milan and Naples, watching the smoke from his cigar curl to the ceiling, as he dealt out the financing to create another union. It could work then, while the lines drawn at Potsdam and Yalta were still thick and unbroken. But now, when those compromises are finally beginning to wear rather thin, at least west of the Oder-Niesse Line, things are not so simple.

There were always those who blamed the CIA every time the central heating broke down: Kissinger has given them reason. He has given substance to fears of American intervention wherever politics are in a state of flux. The result has been to shift the whole framework of political debate in Portugal to the left. There are many who welcome that. Dr. Kissinger presumably was never among them.

As recently as December 1972, when Allende was preparing to visit the U.N., Nathaniel Davis, the U.S. Ambassador, cabled Nixon that the Chilean leader would like to meet him because such an encounter would strengthen him with Chilean moderates. Davis reported that Allende was anxious to use the trip to gain international stature and distract the Chilean people from their domestic problems.

Nixon and Kissinger, of course, had no interest in either strengthening Allende or distracting the Chilean people from the problems caused, *inter alia*, by the CIA-financed truck owners' strike. The request was refused. On his flight to New York, Allende sent Nixon a radio message of good wishes. It was not acknowledged.

The great difference now is that it is inconceivable that any Portuguese social democrat or marxist who wished to form a coalition government, would ever imagine that a meeting with Ford could do him anything but harm. Because of Chile, it was inevitable that the popular reaction in Portugal to General Spinoza's abortive March 11 coup should have been to blame the CIA. And it was predictable that anti-Americanism should have been such that one of the Armed Forces Movement's leaders (in fact the head of CopCon, the security police, Brigadier Goncalves) should demand that the U.S. Ambassador, Frank Carlucci "get out of town because his safety cannot be guaranteed."

In his trips to Europe this spring Kissinger has been careful to find time to give frequent briefings to European diplomats, politicians and journalists. The briefings have been as charming, as eloquent and as unattributable as ever, but they have become much more emotional. On Friday, March 3, he saw a group of British journalists (the *Alsops* rather than the *Hershs* or the *Sterns* of London) and immediately launched into an impassioned denunciation of the United States Congress.

Their refusal to support him made the conduct of U.S. foreign policy impossible. It was a grave threat to world peace. Their action on Cambodia was close to moral perfidy. He might have to resign.

All that has resulted here is that some Western European politicians are beginning to believe that at least until 1977 the United States will not have many ideas or much time for Europe. This has caused some alarm; James Callaghan, the British foreign secretary, has asked his friend Dr. Kissinger for a quick summit conference to restore "a degree of unity and purpose," at least for NATO.

In fact, whatever Kissinger may say, the departure of Greece or Portugal from NATO would not seriously damage an alliance whose ostensible and, presumably, continuing

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A Washington View:

The Portuguese Connection

Falling dominoes are once again the prevailing obsession in official Washington, as the debris of Henry Kissinger's foreign policy initiatives of the past five years litters the landscape in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Europe. The newest center of concern is the newest "loss"—not Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, but Southern Europe, the heartland of the NATO alliance, which was considered to be the most durable bastion of Western non-Communist power against the Soviet bloc.

The single domino which now haunts the Washington foreign policy community most acutely is the European hinterland state of Portugal, where a revolutionary military movement last year ended Western Europe's oldest right-wing dictatorship with a bloodless coup. Since the April 25 revolution in Lisbon, a melancholy litany began to emerge from Foggy Bottom, where Henry Kissinger and lowly desk

officers labor with the fear that as Portugal goes, so goes Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey and perhaps France. The new sense of anxiety along NATO's Mediterranean front was captioned by one state Department wag as a case of "falling dominoes on the soft underbelly *angst*."

Addressing himself to Portugal, Kissinger dourly announced at a news conference that "we are disquieted by an evolution in which there is a danger that the democratic process may become a sham, and in which parties are getting into a dominant position whose interests we would not have thought were necessarily friendly to the U.S."

Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger spoke of the need to take "symbolic" action against Portugal—"Making them outcasts without casting them out." (Actually there is no procedure under the NATO charter for casting out apostate nations.)

Lisbon crowd demanding nationalization of Portuguese banks

by Dan Griffin and
Laurence Stern