

ulation and received the support of those that had been driven underground of their exiled leaders, the fact remains the origins of this successful operation were completely foreign to the people the parties. The people, who could not expected so much, particularly from army that was the mainstay of the zar and Caetano regime, were content applaud the *coup*, without trying too to understand it or to fathom the series of the future.

### party game

reaction, the leaders of the political les, with their firmly-rooted traditional s, went no further than engaging in scale manoeuvres to cripple the ight of the Armed Forces Movement heir own advantage and to seize power. propaganda machines of all parties not fail to exploit the political aspects e situation that supported their argu- ts, to the detriment of their opponents us revealing the true purpose of their ns. This gave rise to the various s, or, more exactly, attempts to seize r by different political forces: perma- ly, in the case of the Communist Party varo Cunhal; through legalistic means, e case of the Socialist Party of Mario es; and, in the case of Emilio Guer- 's Popular Democratic Party, by a itive overthrow of the situation pre- ng since April 25, 1974.

Portuguese political life was for a time — indeed still is — centred on elections held on the first anniversary — the April 1974 *coup*. The results are well n: the Socialist Party, with 34.87 per of the votes cast compared to 12.53 cent for the Communist Party, came the big winner. For many people the er was settled — the Portuguese people rendered their verdict.

However, no amount of well-placed aganda could completely veil the er meaning of these elections, which place, indeed, in a climate of honesty integrity noted by all the parties in- ed. It is, in fact, forgotten that the 1975 elections were held with the purpose of choosing the members of stituent assembly, and not to set up islative assembly that would result in ormation of a government. Moreover, he rush of events of March 11, 1975, h led the former President of the blic, General de Spínola, along with e of his supporters, to seek exile and ved the CDS from the election slate, eaders of the Armed Forces Movement the fifth provisional government, led general Vasco Gonçalves, had demand-

ed — and obtained — agreement on a poli- tical platform from all the political move- ments involved in the election battle.

Among other provisions, this platform gave the Armed Forces Movement the right of veto, lasting from three to five years, over the choice of individuals who would occupy the Presidential seat and the position of Prime Minister, as well as the right to oversee the political development of the country.

It is indisputable that this AFM manoeuvre, while allowing the military to keep control of the situation, especially suited the Communist Party, which, because of its superior organization, had chosen from the beginning of the affair to take up the cause of the most politically-committed officers without restriction. This strategy was to prove in the short run to be both profitable and disastrous.

### Communist influence

Until the fall of the Gonçalves Govern- ment, the Communist Party had acquired a political influence out of proportion to its popular support. However, this disproport- ion, which was very evident in the control of the information media in the capital, was the main target of an offensive led by the Socialist Party and right-wing forces to put an end to what they called "the Communist Party's plan to set up a dicta- torship in Portugal". It was the *Républica* episode which set in motion the victorious move against General Gonçalves.

The facts are well known. *Républica* was a socialist newspaper that had taken enormous risks under the fascist dicta- torship; from the time the election results were announced, it had waged an un- ceasing, open struggle against the coalition government of General Gonçalves. Dissen- sion broke out in the ranks of the news- paper staff. The compositors, who were Communists, demanded the right to dis- cuss, and even question, the editorial policy of the newspaper's management. The re- fusals that came from Raul Rego, editor-in- chief of the paper and a member of the managing committee of the Socialist Party, touched off an open battle. The composi- tors took over the paper and expelled its management.

Describing what he called a "charac- teristic violation of freedom of the press", resulting from a decision by the Revolu- tionary Council to appoint a military administrative commission to run the newspaper as a means of settling the con- flict — in favour of the printers, to be sure —, Mario Soarès left the Government.

It was, in fact, the *Républica* affair, following the takeover by the Communist

*Newspaper took enormous risks under fascist dictatorship*