

*Incapacity
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losses. Neither more nor less than any other group are they able to influence decisively the course and pace of events.

The traditional political leadership has proven incapable until now of finding the path of reconciliation, although Prime Minister Rashid Karamah has emerged in the crisis with a heightened measure of prestige. He succeeded in bringing together the spokesmen of various groups in a National Dialogue Committee. The Committee's deliberations were quickly deadlocked by two vigorously-opposed viewpoints. The Phalanges and their supporters insisted upon the primary importance of restoring security in the country, which was generally acknowledged to mean curtailing the strength of the Palestinians. The opposing view was that security would

be best ensured if reform of the system was legislated as a first step. Maronite leaders have made it clear that no changes in the National Charter are acceptable, but only discussion of "reinterpretations". The Committee is unable to break the impasse and the efforts of intermediaries like the Vatican emissary, Cardinal Bertoli, and the diplomat Couve de Mourville at the moment, proved futile.

The dilemma of every rival faction, and, indeed, the tragedy of Lebanon — seems best illustrated by the fact that an estimated 150,000 men are scattered throughout the country, roughly the number in the national army. At the present balance of forces, there can be no winners, only losers.

The choice for Portugal: reformation or revolution?

By Charles David

Faced with a constantly shifting scene in Portugal, it would be foolhardy to make any hasty projections — especially since events in that country have clearly shown that there, as elsewhere, appearances do not necessarily reflect reality. Several visits to Portugal since what has been called the "Flower Revolution" have taught me to be wary of "definitive interpretations" of the Portuguese political situation, especially when the hopes expressed by some and the regrets expressed by others form the basis of such interpretations. This article is intended to be nothing more than a simple statement of facts placed in their context.

In order to grasp the nuances of this revolution and to explain in depth its different stages, it is practically indispensable to place April 1974 in its proper per-

spective, for the erroneous view of Portugal taking place in Lisbon and in the rest of the country is, in fact, the result of a series of persistent misunderstandings — conscious or unconscious.

Primacy of the army

There is a tendency to forget that the exemplary success registered on April 25, 1974, which was to put an end to 48 years of fascist dictatorship, was primarily the result of a military *coup d'état* carried out by a minority of highly-politicized officers who succeeded in convincing a number of their brother officers of the justice of their cause and in quickly winning over extremist elements in the army. This primacy of the army on the political scene in Portugal explains why the political situation is in fact a reflection of the dividing-lines running through a now-fragmented army. Portugal has, in fact, become the stage for a game played by different military factions manoeuvring with the support of political parties.

The events of April 1974 have left their mark on the development of the political parties as well, for while the military *coup* was greeted joyfully



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