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PORTUGAL

PRIME MINISTER

ANTÓNIO DE OLIVEIRA SALAZAR

Dr. António de Oliveira Salazar, the oldest-established and perhaps least-known dictator in the world, has ruled Portugal since he became Finance Minister in 1928. A man of exceptional intellect, strong religious belief and complete devotion to duty, Dr. Salazar has maintained himself in power with the triple support of the armed forces, the Roman Catholic Church and the Portuguese upper classes. Although he is not an admirer of the US and is resentful of the US tendency toward anti-colonialism, he appreciates American generosity and accepts the necessity of American support for the defense of Western Europe.

"I believe democracy is a fiction. I do not believe in universal suffrage. I do not believe in equality (among men) but in hierarchy." This is the creed of a man who has for 36 years maintained financial stability, largely abolished corruption and preserved internal order in Portugal.

Born 28 April 1889 of a poor, lower-class family, Salazar attended the Jesuit seminary in Viseu, and received a law degree from the University of Coimbra, where he also earned a full professorship in economics. Having earned a reputation as a brilliant economist, he was called in by the governing military junta in 1926 to straighten out the chaotic state

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finances. Called upon again in 1928, he was made Minister of Finance and was successful in bringing stability to the economy. In 1932 his position as actual head of the government was formalized by his appointment as Prime Minister.

Salazar continues to adhere to the political ideology that has characterized his regime for the past 34 years, despite the unfavorable impact it has had on many sectors of world opinion and the considerable opposition it has created at home. Only in the last few years has he reluctantly modified some of his conservative financial policies in order to facilitate implementation of the government's economic development programs.

Dr. Salazar is unmarried and lives a quiet, ascetic life in a small austere apartment behind a walled garden in Lisbon. He does not smoke or drink (except wine), and does not wish others to smoke in his presence. Despite the severity of his nature, he has a sense of humor and considerable personal charm. He speaks English.

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