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The overall exemptions for this document are (b)(1) and (b)(3).

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BRIEF

76-042

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DATE: SEP 2000  
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2		5		8	
3		6		9	

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PAGE OF PAGES  
 2

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MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

CONF: INFO: FILE

INDEX DISSEM BY:  
 NO INDEX  
 RETURN TO PER  
 IP FILES #

EUROPEAN BRIEF CI EB 76-042.4

1. PORTUGAL: THE PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY LAUNCHED ITS CAMPAIGN FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION ON APRIL 25 WITH A DISPLAY OF EUROPEAN SOCIALIST SOLIDARITY IN PORTO THIS PAST WEEKEND, BUT THE SOCIALISTS MAY HAVE PAID A HIGH PRICE IN TERMS OF FUTURE COOPERATION WITH THE RIVAL CENTRIST POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY.4

SEEKING TO CAPITALIZE ON HIS STATUS AS THE MOST EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE OF PORTUGAL'S INTERESTS ABROAD, SOCIALIST LEADER MARIO SOARES HOSTED A MEETING OF EUROPE'S MOST PROMINENT SOCIALIST AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LEADERS. TAKING THEIR CUE FROM AN APPEAL BY SOARES FOR A BETTER ECONOMIC DEAL FOR PORTUGAL, THE ASSEMBLED LEADERS-INCLUDING HEADS OF GOVERNMENT FROM THE NETHERLANDS, SWEDEN, NORWAY, AND AUSTRIA AND PARTY LEADERS FROM WEST GERMANY, FRANCE, ITALY, AND SPAIN-RESPONDED BY PROMISING TO WORK FOR INCREASED ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL'S BELEAGUERED ECONOMY.4

ALTHOUGH SOARES SKILLFULLY MANIPULATED THE MEETING FOR HIS

DATE:  
 ORIG:  
 UNIT:  
 EXT:

# OUTGOING MESSAGE

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2	8	8
3	9	9

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PAGE 3 OF PAGES

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 MESSAGE HANDLING INDICATOR

DATE-TIME GROUP

CITE

MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

CONF. INFO: FILE

- INDEX DISSEM BY:
- NO INDEX
- RETURN TO PER
- IP FILES #

OWN POLITICAL ENDS, HE ALSO MANAGED TO ALIENATE THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS, PARTNERS OF THE SOCIALISTS IN THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT OF PRIME MINISTER AZEVEDO AND POSSIBLE PARTNERS IN A FUTURE COALITION.4

CHARGING THAT THE PORTO MEETING CONSTITUTED UNWARRANTED FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN PORTUGUESE DOMESTIC POLITICS, POPULAR DEMOCRATIC LEADER FRANCISCO SA CARNEIRO LODGED FORMAL COMPLAINTS WITH THE EMBASSIES OF THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED. HIS STRONG PROTESTS UNDOUBTEDLY PROMPTED PRIME MINISTER AZEVEDO'S LAST-MINUTE DECISION NOT TO ATTEND.4

FOLLOWERS OF THE TWO PARTIES CLASHED IN THE STREETS OF THE NORTHERN CITY AND AT THE PORTO AIRPORT. IN BOTH CASES, SOCIALISTS REACTED VIOLENTLY TO ATTEMPTS BY POPULAR DEMOCRATS TO LAUNCH THEIR OWN DEMONSTRATIONS, WHICH THE SOCIALISTS SAW AS AN ATTEMPT TO DETRACT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL GATHERING.4

ALTHOUGH SA CARNEIRO SAID ON SATURDAY THAT THE DOOR WAS STILL OPEN TO COOPERATION WITH THE SOCIALISTS IN A POST-ELECTION COALITION, THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS' CONDITIONS FOR SUCH COOPERATION

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2		5		8	
3		6		9	

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PAGE OF PAGES

4

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DATE-TIME GROUP

CITE

MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

CONF INFO: FILE

INDEX DISSEM BY:  
 NO INDEX  
 RETURN TO PER  
 NO FILES #

ARE NOW LIKELY TO HARDEN.4

THE COMMUNISTS ALSO PROTESTED THE SOCIALIST MEETING, ALBEIT IN MUCH Milder TERMS THAN THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS. COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER ALVARO CUNHAL SAID THAT THE MEETING WAS "IN BAD TASTE" AND THAT IT WAS AN ATTEMPT TO PRESSURE THE VOTERS PRIOR TO THE ELECTION.4

THE GUARDED NATURE OF CUNHAL'S COMMENTS, MADE AT A NATIONAL PARTY CONFERENCE, REFLECT HIS CURRENT STRATEGY OF ATTEMPTING TO DRAW CLOSER TO THE SOCIALISTS IN HOPES OF ACHIEVING AN ELECTION ALLIANCE-A STRATEGY THAT THE CONFERENCE FORMALLY RECONFIRMED. CUNHAL SAID THAT THIS WAS THE ONLY WAY TO WARD OFF A RETURN TO FASCISM AND THAT AN ELECTION VICTORY BY THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS AND THE CENTER-RIGHT SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CENTER WOULD PLUNGE THE COUNTRY INTO "A DARK NIGHT OF TERROR AND BLOOD." [REDACTED]

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PAGE OF PAGES

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5

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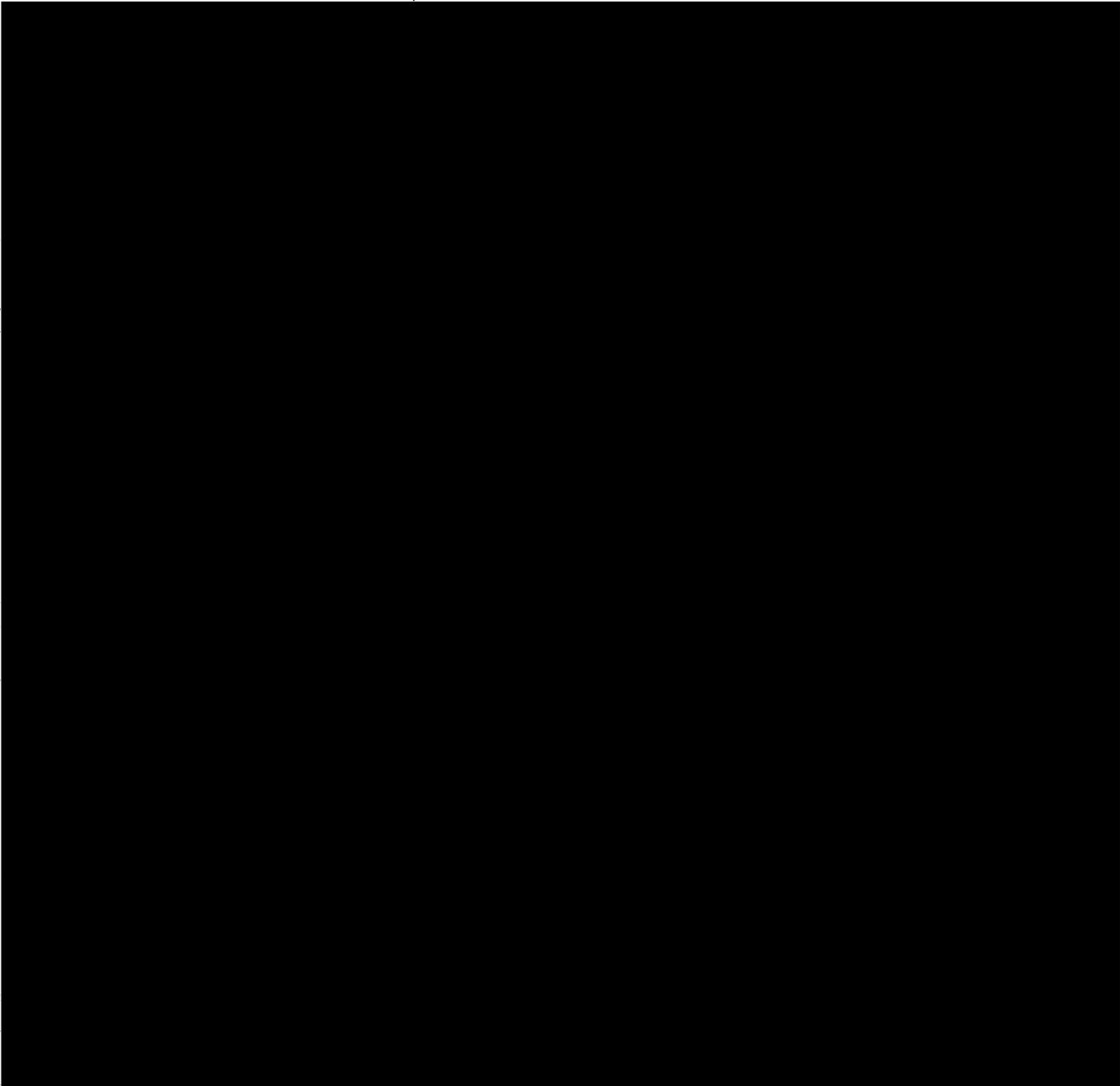
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CONF:

INFO: FILE

INDEX DISSEM BY:  
 NO INDEX  
 RETURN TO PER



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UNIT:  
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