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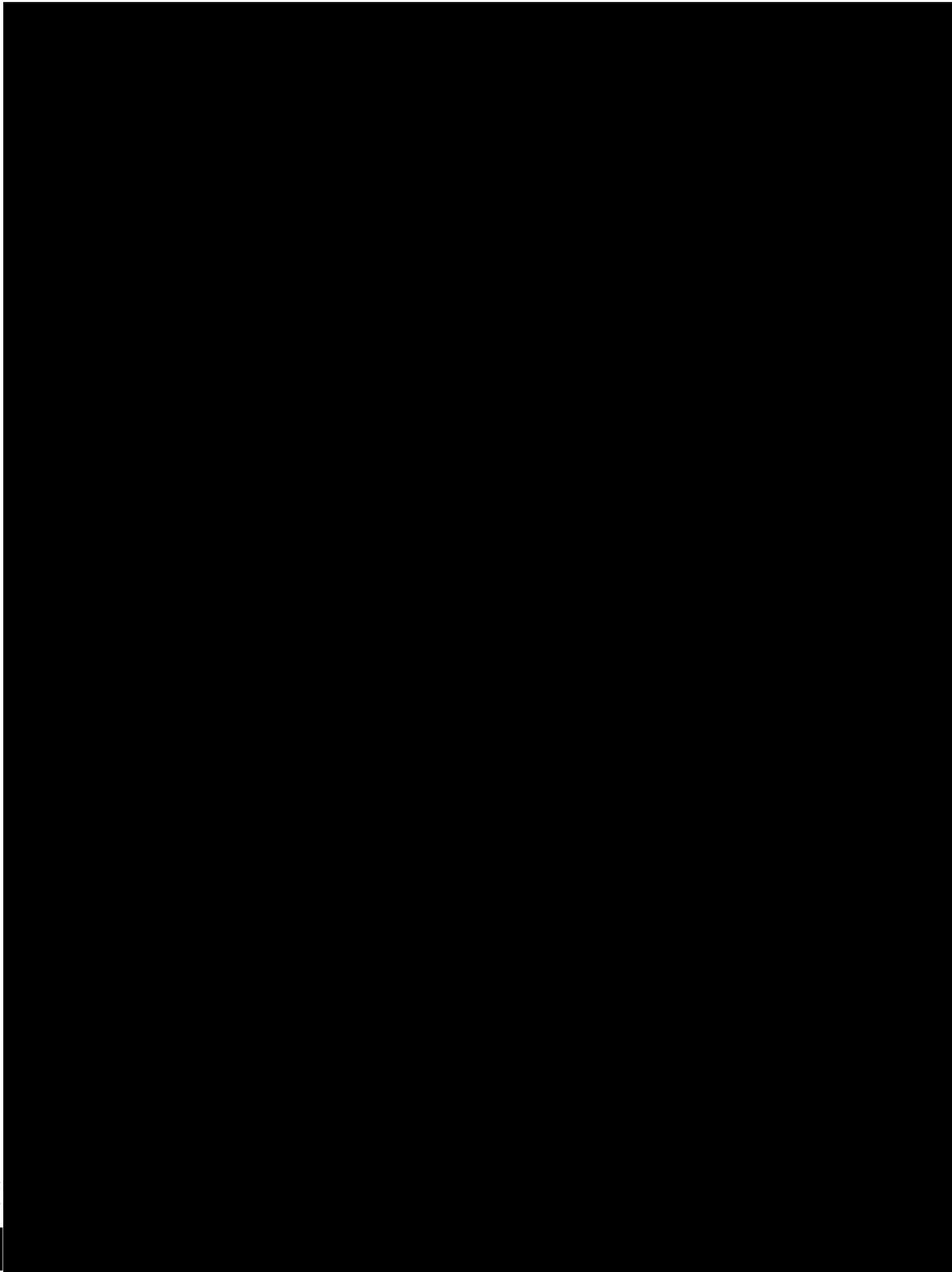
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EUROPE

Judgments from Alert Memorandum

Crisis of Authority Threatens Azevedo Government in Portugal

The Daily draws on an intelligence alert memorandum for an assessment of the viability of the Azevedo government in Portugal, October 10, 1975.

The Azevedo government is caught in a crisis of authority that threatens its continued viability. It would be premature to count out Azevedo and his allies, but they face some critical challenges.

The chance of widespread violence is

enhanced by the inability of the Lisbon government to impose order. Our information on the loyalties of specific units is not complete, but many of the army units in Lisbon—with the exception of the comandos—appear to sympathize with various leftist groups.

North of Lisbon, the army tends to support the government, but even there dissident far-left organizations, such as Soldiers United Will Overcome, have been able to subvert the orders of commanders in some units. The southern military region is divided, and it probably would not play a major role in a conflict.

The closely knit navy generally follows a leftist line. Only the marines, whose political sympathies are divided, have the capacity to respond to a challenge to the government.

The air force generally is considered the most conservative of the services, but a few leftist sergeants with access to aircraft could sabotage a service response to civil violence or a coup attempt. Neither the police nor the national guard, even though

they may support the government, can effectively maintain order in a crisis since both groups are under armed.

Government efforts to establish a new security force to replace the radical-infiltrated continental operations command have so far had scant success.

The Future

The present government, or one like it, could survive. To consolidate its position, however, it will have to gain greater control over the armed forces.

This poses a dilemma: if it tries harsher measures, as its recent statements suggest it will, it may encounter added resistance and indiscipline. If it seeks to conciliate by relaxing military discipline, it would legitimize dissidence in the armed forces, making for further violence and instability in the longer term.

A more radical government might return, either one led by pro-Communists like those in the Goncalves regime, or by far leftists like security chief General Otelo de Carvalho or Admiral Antonio Rocha Coutinho.

The Communists would support either

type of leader and would certainly regain considerable influence. Such a regime would probably face renewed anti-Communist violence in the north and separatism in Atlantic island possessions. Economic aid would not be forthcoming from the West.

Large-scale civil disorder, involving segments of the civilian population and opposing military units may occur, fueled by the widespread arming of civilians of all political persuasions, and the disunity of the military.

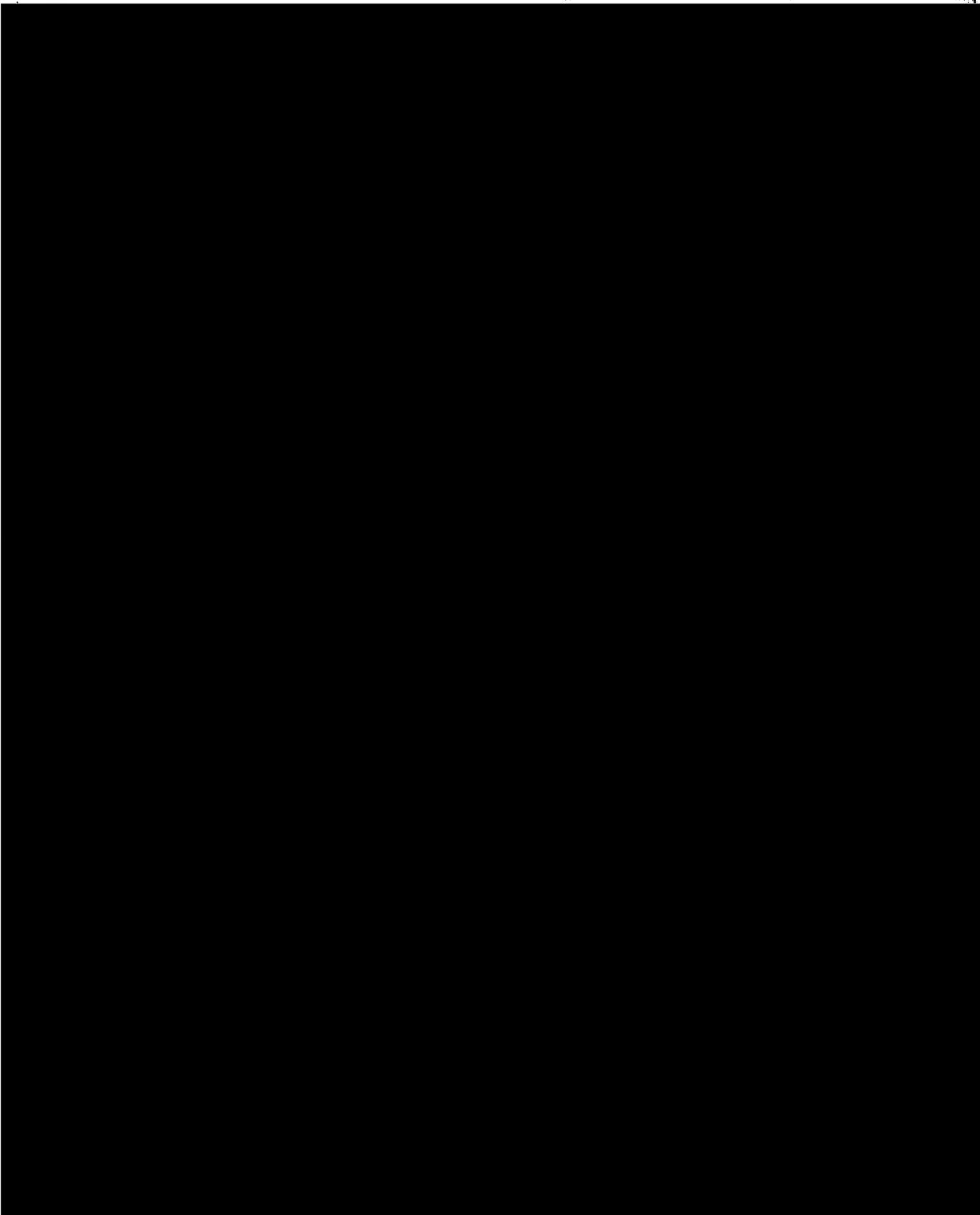
Although this violence could eventually deteriorate into a civil war, it would be more likely to evolve to the point where a leftist government is nominally in power in Lisbon with a state of anarchy in other parts of the country.

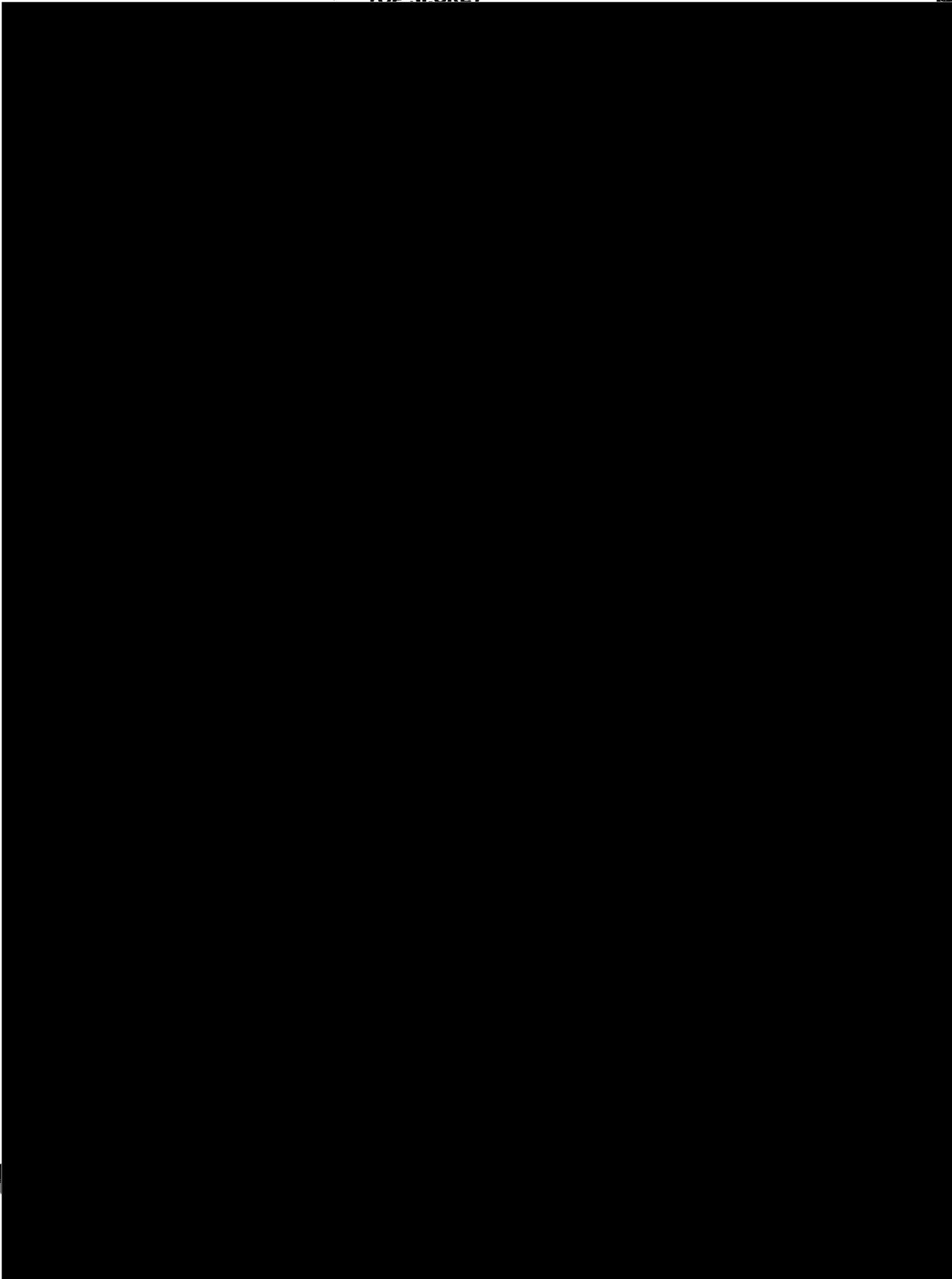
Rightist Takeover Possible

An attempted rightist takeover by forces within Portugal and/or by expatriates based primarily in Spain is possible. The chances that this could be successful are extremely limited due to a lack of arms, personnel, funds, and popular support in Portugal.

The Portuguese talent for last-minute accommodation to avoid final showdowns may once again reassert itself, and head off any decisive resolution of these uncertainties, at least for a time.

The Azevedo government and the anti-Communists in the armed forces and political parties still have assets—including the support of most of the public. But the tendencies toward disintegration of institutions—especially the armed forces and the government's control over them—make the outlook more uncertain than ever.





Revised control abbreviations, effective October 5, 1978
(1-2) Referable to Foreign Security Efforts
(1-3) Recruitment and Control of Information Sources by Foreign Agents
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