

THEME OF THE QUARTER

a closer look at . . .



THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE

ADVISORY GROUP - PORTUGAL

[Submitted by COL Norman M. Smith, USA, Chief, US MAAG-Portugal]



Main Entrance, US MAAG-Portugal
Rua do Pau de Bandeira, Lisbon

Dateline: Lisbon, Portugal. Depending on your age and interests, this dateline may make you think of fishermen, cork, Vasco de Gama, international spies (remember Bogart and Bergman), or maybe even Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Portugal is a relatively small country, but once "owned" half the world. Although it has a population of only ten million people, its language is the world's fifth most commonly spoken tongue. When you check the map of Europe, one of the first things you note about Portugal is its relatively small size and

the fact that it faces seaward to the Atlantic Ocean. It is thus unique from the rest of Europe. Let us see how that has influenced Portugal's historical evolution.

The Historical Perspective.

Portugal has a long and distinguished history. Particularly noteworthy were its prominence and hegemony in the late 15th and early 16th century. With the overwhelming majority of its population located on the Atlantic coast, the Portuguese preferred navigating outward on the seas, rather than overland on crusades as did many of the other Europeans. Their first discoveries were in Ceuta, in Northern Africa in what is now Morocco. Portuguese explorers subsequently continued around the African coastline, eventually reaching India.

In early European history, the Pope dispensed power and territory in the known world. Following Columbus' initial discoveries in the Americas, the Pope's "line of 1493", which was devised by the Spaniard Alexander VI, divided the world between two countries. Spain was given title west of a level passing near the Cape Verde Islands, and Portugal given title to those lands to the East. A year after the line was drawn, it was revised by the Treaty of Tordesillas, which moved the line 1000 miles westward to what we now know as Brazil. Speculation persists that Portugal had known this before Tordesillas. In any case, six years later, the Portuguese explorer, Pedro Alveres da Cabral, reportedly blown off course while following Vasco da Gama's route to India, struck land in Brazil and claimed it for Portugal, since it lay east of the revised line. Cabral took the discovery so routinely, he dispatched only one ship back to Portugal and continued himself on to India. (An interesting side story is that there are residents of the Portuguese fishing village of Cascais who believe that Portuguese fishermen had actually discovered the Americas in the 1480's. They, in turn, reportedly relayed this information to Columbus, an Italian married to a Portuguese. Columbus was unable to convince the Portuguese King to fund a trip, and he subsequently turned to the Spaniards who financed his voyage of exploration.)

Portuguese greatness was buoyed by the richness of their colonies. At the peak of their power almost 500 years ago, Portugal controlled the oceans well enough with their outstanding sailing ships and high weapons technology that the then underpopulated country of Portugal ruled half the known world, despite indefensible geography, a coastal cluster population, and a traditional rival at its back. Portugal then, as well as today, looked away from Europe, toward what we now refer to as the Third World.

Portugal maintained her colonies (other than Brazil) without any great problems for over 450 years. As we know, world politics changed drastically in the Twentieth Century. Contrastingly, the Portuguese strongman, Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, leader of the country from 1926-1968, remained economically and politically conservative. He felt that one should not buy anything on credit but rather

save one's money and buy with cash. With the colonies providing enormous financial support to Portugal, this economic concept was very beneficial. But as the age of decolonization dawned following the conclusion of World War II, Salazar's conservatism did not change with the world around him.

The Origin of U.S. Assistance.

Neutral during WW II, Portugal still managed to become an original NATO member in 1949. Flowing from this commitment, the U.S. developed a bilateral Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement with Portugal, which went into effect on 5 January 1951. This agreement established the basis for what we refer to today as the United States Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) - Portugal. It also provided "for the furnishing of military assistance to nations which have joined with it in collective security arrangements." In the early 1950s, as part of this program, the U.S. equipped a NATO-designated division within the Portuguese Army, primarily from WW II surplus equipment. The Navy received ships and small craft which enabled it to participate in NATO training exercises. The Air Force received fighter aircraft (F-83 and F-86) and trainers (T-33 and T-37). Doggedly, Salazar held on to Portugal's colonies in the face of both NATO opposition and a 1960 United Nations declaration opposing colonialism. The U.S. ceased support of the Portuguese Armed Forces in 1961 when, as a result of their involvement in colonial African wars, we imposed an arms embargo. The American-provided equipment could not be used in Africa; and due to personnel shortages, the Portuguese Army division, and other units using NATO designated material for the Iberian air defense system, quickly became inactive. Thus, the Portuguese Armed Forces' role in NATO between 1961 and 1976 was a paper commitment only.

In 1968, when Salazar was incapacitated (as a result of complications due to a fall), he was replaced as Prime Minister by Marcello Caetano, a long-time associate and, like Salazar, a former university professor. However, the dictatorship could not be changed by fiat. Even had Caetano wanted to, he could not have exerted the power and influence of his predecessor. Furthermore, he chose not to, opting instead for a gradual political evolution to democracy.

Meanwhile, the problem of colonial wars contributed to domestic unrest since such conflicts lacked popular support in Portugal. The wars drained the military which, in many cases, spent such long tours in Africa that they began to empathize with the popular desires of the people. Portuguese military expenditures per capita were second only to those of Israel. All of this contributed to the publication of a book by a Portuguese General, Antonio de Spínola, which clamoured for a change in the status of the colonies. A military overthrow, or revolution, occurred in 1974, led by young career military officers. This myriad group, attempting to act as administrators of the Government of Portugal, brought about abject confusion. Provisional governments succeeded one another in rapid

fashion; left-wing coups, right-wing coups, national elections, new constitutions, communists, and facists -- all were on the scene in the period 1975-1976. Following the withdrawal of the Portuguese from Africa, the armed forces were drastically reduced in size, with the goal of attempting to professionalize and depoliticize them. The military looked for a renewed NATO mission.

On a slightly larger scale, political events in France, Italy, and Spain helped coin the use of the term "Eurocommunism," with various interpretations by scholars and others. Let there be no doubt that in Portugal, one variety of government was communist, and in the strictest sense, with its ties linked directly to Moscow. The reader may recall the concern this caused the American government, as the U.S. observed a NATO partner conceivably becoming a communist nation directly linked to the Soviet Union. The United States and other NATO member countries attempted to react rapidly and strongly in a military assistance effort.

Renewal of the U.S. Assistance Effort.

Independence for the colonies resulted in a lifting of the U.S. arms embargo. The new effort was designed to assist Portugal's armed forces in achieving a sense of purpose, pride, and professionalism through a modernization program. Revised NATO planning was then begun, based on Portuguese desires. The order of priority as recipients of assistance was the Army, the Air Force, and finally the Navy. There was also a new JCS concept plan. The Portuguese Army was to have an independent mixed brigade with a NATO mission on the NATO southern flank. A NATO Ad Hoc Working Group was formed to provide assistance in the modernization of the Portuguese Armed Forces, to include the formation of the brigade. Secondly, the Air Force was to receive assistance and provision of a C-130H squadron to provide airlift for the brigade. Follow-on plans called for a fighter-interceptor squadron and a P3C squadron. The final priority went to the Navy, with a frigate modernization program.

In rapid order came armored personnel carriers from the U.S. and M48A5 tanks provided by both the Federal Republic of Germany and the U.S., with considerable attendant publicity. The arrival of the equipment and the allied effort which sent it to Portugal has been viewed by many as instrumental in electing Army General Ramalho Eanes as President and winning Portugal back into the democratic camp. This perspective is shared, for example, by such people as Secretary of State Haig and Deputy Secretary of Defense Carlucci. (We in the U.S. MAAG-Portugal have continued to publicize U.S. grant aid to the Portuguese Government; and the media has continued to give front page coverage to such publicity, even on 21 January 1981, with such competing events as the inauguration of President Reagan and the release of the U.S. hostages from Iran.)

With the consolidation of power by President Eanes and the establishment of the Revolutionary Council, all that remained to complete the sequence of events was to select an acceptable leader for

the government, i.e., a Prime Minister. The election of the conservative and charismatic candidate Sa Carneiro in December 1979 proved to be vital in obtaining continuity in that area. Despite his tragic death in an airplane crash a year later, the political situation has remained relatively stable, increasing confidence throughout the government, including the economic sector.

The Contemporary Situation.

Somehow during this period, Portugal had managed to assimilate almost one million "retornados" (Portuguese citizens who previously lived in the colonies) into a total population of less than ten million during a time when the free world was suffering the effects of rapidly escalating inflation. Today, Portugal still is not strong economically, but rather remains a very poor country by European standards. It has weathered a severe economic storm without being crushed on financial rocks. That in itself speaks well about the resiliency of not only the economy, but also the people. The political situation today is that the present Prime Minister, Pinto Balsemao, has been in office since the December, 1980 election. He suffered a crisis in the government during August, 1981, but remained in place as Prime Minister. The mantle of authority has been passed, but only time will tell if, once again, the recipient will be unable to wear it effectively or permanently.

There is still a faction in Portugal today which looks back nostalgically to the former colonial days and urges stronger ties with the old colonies. In a way, this faction would gladly leave NATO and the European Community, if Third World, Arab, and ex-colonial ties could be properly melded into a neat package for Portugal. They refer to their platform as the "New Order," a striking similarity to Salazar's "New State." So, even today some in Portugal look outward to the sea and the Third World. Regardless, the primary criteria for U.S. security assistance today are tied to the NATO mission and the apolitization of the Portuguese military.

Since 1976 there has existed a serious contradiction in U.S. strategic interests relative to the Portuguese force modernization program. The prime strategic interest of the U.S. concerning Portugal is geographic and transcends the Portuguese economy, the democratic process, and many other considerations. This strategic interest has endured since World War II and will likely continue indefinitely. We refer to this geographic area as the Portugal triangle, i.e., that area in the Atlantic traced by a line from the European continent to the Azores, Madeira, and back to Europe. Virtually all life lines to the Mediterranean or to Western Europe must pass through, over, or at least near this triangle. Our strategic interest in Portugal focuses primarily on this triangle because herein rests our access to the strategic air base in the Azores. We wish to achieve continued access to and control of this triangle in collaboration with a democratic, free Portugal assisting us in the defense of the maritime area. It is toward this end that our security assistance programs so closely support the goal and objectives set forth by the

Ambassador with the country team. It is equally obvious that the primary role in which Portugal may assist the U.S. is in its maritime orientation, and therein lies Portugal's traditional strength. In contrast, the force modernization program was politically oriented, based on the fact that the Army was, is, and will continue to be the most politically influential service in Portugal.

To review the U.S. assistance effort, the NATO Brigade program for the Army is nearing completion; the expensive Air Force program has consumed the bulk of the MAP monies and has not fully satisfied Air Force needs; and the Navy program has not yet begun. Portugal received the majority of worldwide MAP funds and a large share of IMET during Fiscal Year 1981. With the demise of MAP on 30 September 1981, the U.S. entered into a different relationship with the Portuguese; but in their perception, this is only for a limited period. Regardless of the nature of the FY 82 security assistance legislation, Portugal is well aware that the Lajes base agreement expires in February 1983. They are equally aware that we have interests in the use of an airfield at Beja; in the establishment of a geodetic survey site; that we have surveyed other mainland airfields for deployment use; and so on. They are watching the Spanish base negotiations with great interest and are learning a great deal about the price, process, and Spanish interests. The Portuguese do not attach a price, or a rent for the U.S. use of the facilities at Lajes. Rather, they are looking for assistance which will enable them to perform in an active, effective, and efficient manner in playing a meaningful role which they consider to be unequivocally theirs because of the accident of strategic geography. They consider the FY 82 security assistance package as merely an interim step, an element of good will or a bridge between the cessation of MAP and the beginning of a newer, and better arrangement, beginning not later than February, 1983.

The Role of Chief MAAG-Portugal.

This brings us to what may be considered a reordering of the priorities of the role assumed by Chief MAAG today in Portugal. As the reader may be aware, no two MAAGs are alike. The differences have to do not only with the nature of the foreign government economies, geographic locations, and the international organizations to which countries do or do not belong, but also to a variety of other factors as well. In fact, there are only about 3 basic similarities. The first is that MAAGs have U.S. military personnel working with host country military personnel. The second is that the EUCOM MAAGs report to and are rated by the J4, at least in most cases. The third is that MAAG Chiefs really work for the head of the country team, the Ambassador. The similarities end there. The Ambassador's guidance can substantially affect the mission and role performed by the MAAG as compared to other elements of the country team. He distributes tasks and responsibilities based on his desires as to substantive areas and the extent of individual responsibility in dealing with the host government. This appears to be gratuitous advice, but one is always impressed as to how the different MAAGs are called upon by their respective Ambassadors to perform their

jobs. In Portugal today, Chief MAAG considers it his major mission to assist the Ambassador in shaping U.S. strategy in promoting U.S. interests in Portugal, especially with regard to the interplay between our security interests (i.e., use of facilities for NATO support) and the Portuguese Armed Forces. His second priority is to manage our security assistance program efficiently and effectively so that the program produces the intended results. With our lean, but efficient organization of 27 personnel, which has handled the largest MAP program and the third largest IMET program worldwide, the Section Chiefs very much run the security assistance programs for each of the services, with Chief MAAG providing guidance and management by exception. The third priority is to provide a central point of coordination and control for all U.S. military units and personnel in mainland Portugal, except the Defense Attache Office and the Marine Security Guard. This role, oriented toward the future, is run by the Chief through the Plans and Policy (and Administrative) section in an attempt to eliminate unnecessary burdens on the Service Chiefs.

Of the many issues confronting the MAAG, perhaps the most frustrating has been a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for industrial cooperation. The MOU is an outgrowth of the Jackson-Nunn amendment, and was initiated by the the Office of the Under Secretary for Research and Engineering in the Department of Defense. EUCOM J4/J7 personnel are embarked on a major effort to improve assistance in this arena. The MOU has the possibility of becoming a major program with Portugal. We have had limited success with the Portuguese, despite the intensity of the effort we have put into this program. We are still optimistic, for reports from other countries in a similar economic status reveal that the seed time is always long but the benefits may still be there.

This leads to the major time-consuming action which affects our MAAG. The Ambassador was authorized to begin discussions in July 1981 with the Government of Portugal on our bilateral mutual security interests. These are broad formal discussions, but do not encompass opening the current Lajes agreement to negotiation until early 1982, about one year prior to the expiration of the current agreement. The current discussions include: (1) the identification of U.S. security interests in Portugal, both those which are firm and those of a contingency nature; (2) an elicitation of the elements the Government of Portugal will seek, in order of priority; (3) an exchange of acts on form and timing for various possible agreements; and (4) an orientation on the security challenge in Southwest Asia and on the development of military planning for the potential deployment of the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force (RDF). On the U.S. side, our peacetime interests revolve about: (1) the expansion of the POL capacity at Lajes; (2) limited but regular access for U.S. tanker aircraft at Beja; (3) contingency access to Portuguese facilities for transiting; and (4) the installation of a GEODSS deep space tracking unit. The Ambassador has given number one priority to these discussions and to this function.

By CINCEUR Directive, we have certain functions as representatives for both the SECDEF and CINCEUR. There is, of course, some overlap in this area with the Defense Attache. However, he and Chief MAAG have worked out a logical game plan. We assume responsibilities for those officials whose visits are deemed most appropriate to our functions. If there is a conflict or a question, it is resolved by the Ambassador.

Another aspect of our work that has proven very worthwhile has been our liaison and coordination with officials of the Federal Republic of Germany with reference to our respective security assistance programs with the Government of Portugal. We have established bi-annual meetings with the Germans in Washington and Bonn, at which time we not only discuss mutual programs but also mutual problems. As a natural outgrowth of these meetings, we keep in close touch with German officials in Portugal to determine any interim changes affecting our programs.

Let us briefly examine the Iberian Atlantic Command (IBERLANT). At present, RADM Tyler Dedman, USN, has the top billet of this US-UK-Portuguese subordinate SACLANT command. Upon his departure in the spring of 1982, a Portuguese three-star Admiral will assume command, and an American two-star will become deputy. Our role with IBERLANT is strictly one of coordination. Chief MAAG meets periodically with the Commander, IBERLANT, to keep him informed of the status of such major projects as the A7P and frigate program, as well as such minor operations as the Navy Exchange, which is located in the MAAG building. An element of the command that is most important to the Portuguese is the fact that it is a part of SACLANT, and, therefore, somewhat removed from the remainder of the European Continent. Since Spain has never been a NATO member, this appears a logical solution. With the probable entry of Spain into NATO within the coming year, Portugal continues to express concern that their historic enemy will in some way obtain an air, sea, or land command (now that the land area would be contiguous to the remainder of SACEUR's area of responsibility) over some Portuguese forces. This is anathema to Portuguese interests. They have asked and will continue to ask us to do our part to insure that Portuguese Armed Forces do not serve under Spanish Command. We have suggested to them that this is a NATO matter. Portugal is a NATO member and the matter will certainly be discussed within NATO.

The Environment and Culture.

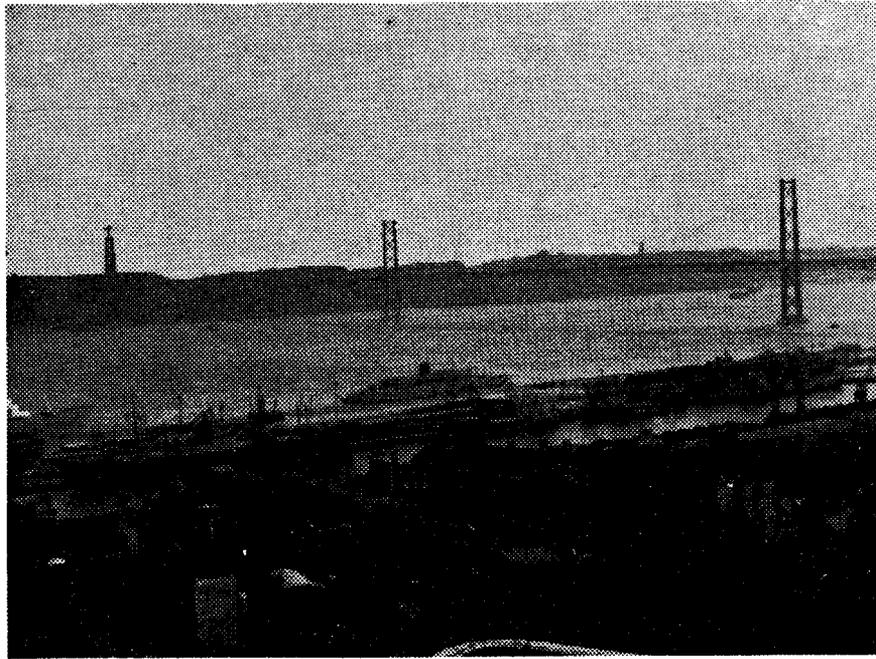
To this point we have discussed historic and official Portugal. Earlier, the article conjured up visions of cloak and dagger scenes, exotic beaches, and lilting melodies. Except for the spy bit, Lisbon is all of those and more. It is the cradle of navigation, fine wines, good food, and friendly people. The restaurants in Lisbon are numerous, and in a normal three-year tour, one could not begin to eat in even half of those which are within walking distance of the MAAG.

Housing, although differing from Stateside standards, has the charm and beauty of the variety of Mediterranean architectures, the Manueline (traditional Portugal), and sometimes an ultra-modern mix of all types of architecture. Portuguese housing varies from closet-sized apartments to great mansions with landed estates. One American military family lived for a while in a castle in Sintra, some 15 miles from Lisbon. He likely would have stayed there forever had he not had to awaken at 0400 to stoke the hot water heater. Almost everyone has servants, mostly a day maid and a gardener, not as a luxury but as a necessity to meet the periodic electric meter man, the myriad of tax collectors, and to provide a presence against break-ins or interlopers. On that score, although crime exists in metropolitan Lisbon as in other large cities, the crime rate is relatively low, and is generally limited to acts of vandalism. A minor but growing threat of terrorism is present, but so far no such activities have been directed against Americans. We enjoy the confidence and respect of the Portuguese. Anti-Americanism is almost non-existent.

A word about the Portuguese culture. Like all other major European cities, Lisbon abounds with cultural events -- concerts, opera, ballet, and art museums. Additionally there is the unique style of singing called "Fado", a blues-like, lamenting style which has long existed in the Portuguese culture. There are plays in the local international schools and committee groups, and also an international chorus founded in recent years by the U.S. community. Folkloric festivals take place throughout the country, featuring folk dances, songs, and other cultural events unique to Portugal.

Many Americans' knowledge of one of Portugal's most prolific products is limited to the plug in a wine bottle. Cork comes from the bark of a tree that grows in the central and northern regions of the country and comprises the largest Portuguese export, aside from wine products. Within a day's drive from Lisbon you can see such sights as the shrine of "Our Lady of Fatima", bullfighter farms, fishing villages, working farms, and wineries. Costs begin at 30¢ a liter for some of the finest tasting wines in the world. In addition to red and white table wines, Madeira, and the famous red and tawny Ports, we also find the unique "Vinho Verde" (green wine), and a white variety of Port virtually unknown in the States. Portuguese wines which are well-known in the United States are disdained here as "artificial" wines.

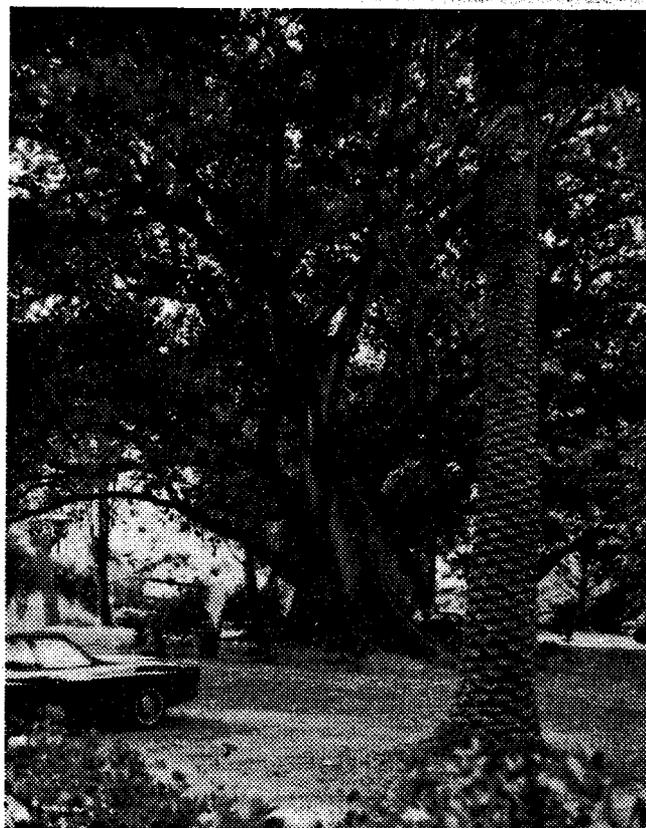
There are presently five international schools accredited by U.S. standards that teach in English, and follow either an American or British system, or a mix of the two. Grades taught include pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Adult education is available on a limited basis through an on-site branch of the University of Maryland, and there are a variety of opportunities for correspondence study through many accredited universities and colleges throughout the U.S. The quality of in-country education is comparable to Stateside schools, with facility improvements occurring every year. For military dependents, the tuition and transportation is fully funded at no cost to the individual sponsor.



View from the MAAG of Bridge "Ponte de 25 April" which spans the Tagus River. Design and dimensions are the same as the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. At the left is the statue of Christ the King.

While MAAG-Portugal is an active and participating part of the U.S. Country Team in Portugal, we are located separately in an 18th century mansion. During world War II, and until May 1945, the building served as the German Embassy in Lisbon, and was obtained by the U.S. as war reparations. The upper ground level contains our receptionist and autovon operator and a large open reception room, flanked by three parlor rooms, the library, and the MAAG ballroom. The three parlor rooms house the Embassy Regional Medical Facility, our administrative and fiscal section, and the transportation section. The ballroom resembles the chamber room of the Palace of Versailles, with large crystal chandeliers and wall sconces which flank cut crystal windows; these windows are separated by gold backed crystal mirrors that reflect each other into infinity. One of the two parlor rooms on either end is used as a Toyland during the Christmas season, while the other serves as our automotive parts room. There is an incongruity of MOPAR and Ford parts in boxes, fanbelts, nuts and bolts, et. al., in a setting of an antique marble fireplace, a chandelier, cut crystal windows and mirrors, but it serves us well. The second floor houses the headquarters, the three service sections, and a Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC) liaison team. In the lower ground floor, we have a small Navy Exchange, the APO, a vault, and additional storage rooms. Equipment for a small weight lifting room, showers, etc., are to be installed soon. The building has an underground tunnel that served during World War II as a

walkway between another nearby building that also belonged to the Germans. Plugged after the war, no one here is sure where it ends. The grounds feature a National Historic Monument immediately to the rear of the building -- a massive rubber tree planted by Vasco da Gama, the famous explorer, upon his return from one of his voyages to India. Over 500 years old, it is one of three planted by Vasco da Gama throughout Lisbon.



The "Vasco da Gama Rubber Tree," a National Monument on the MAAG grounds.

In summary then, the job is challenging, interesting and important. The locale provides a melange of history, craftsmanship, and tourism. The weather makes us the envy of Europe. For those interested in SAO assignments, its a plum.



U.S. MAAG-Portugal Team (Left to Right)

Bottom Row: LtCol Rafael Ramos, USAF;* Mrs. Nydia Holm;
Mrs. Elizabeth Sposato;* Mrs. Helen Galvao; Mrs. Jenny
Pinto; Mrs. Brenda Souto.*

2d Row: Mrs Dulce Hilton;* Miss Ana Lopes; Mr. Domingos
Frade; Mr. Joaquim Ribeiro; Mr. Rui de Almeida;
Mrs. Donna Villarinho.

3d Row: CAPT Mell A. Peterson, Jr., USN;* Mr. Jose
Pereira; Mr. Antonio Carnide; Mr. Idalecio Coelho;
Mr. Teodoro Jose.

4th Row: LCDR Joseph D. Carroll, USN;* LTC Mario A
Burdick, USA;* MSG Alexander Titoff, USA;* SFC Charles
E. Owens, USA.

Top Row: LTC Donald J. Gumm, USA;* Col Stanley K. Bramwell,
USAF;* and Colonel Norman M. Smith, CHMAAG.*

Not Pictured: MAJ Lawrence D. Johnson, USA; CMS
Duane Falos, USAF;* and SKC Duncan Armstrong, USN.*

* DISAM Graduates

About The Author

Colonel Norman M. Smith, USA, Chief, US MAAG-Portugal, has been involved in various aspects of Security Assistance since 1969 when he was assigned to J-3 USSOUTHCOM. In 1971, he assumed command of the US Military Group in Costa Rica. This was followed by another three-year tour as an International Military Affairs Officer in the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. During his succeeding assignment as Director, Americas Studies, at the U.S. Army War College, COL Smith also had faculty responsibility for all arms transfer instruction. He became Chief, MAAG, in August, 1980 after graduation from DISAM. A 1955 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, he holds an M.A. from the University of Florida in Latin American studies. He has authored several articles on arms transfers and Latin American matters.

