

War Abroad and War Within: a British Military Officer's View of Portugal's Revolution of 1917

António Lopes
Universidade do
Algarve/ CETAPS

Introduction

General Nathaniel Walter Barnardiston (1858-1919), who first set foot in Lisbon in August 1916 as the Chief of the British military mission to Portugal, became a privileged witness to some of the most important events that marked that which Fernando Rosas (2007) called “the intermittent civil war”, triggered by the regicide on 1 February 1908 and which characterized the whole period of the First Republic. In the end of July 1916, he was appointed Chief of the British Military Mission to Portugal, where he was commissioned to supervise the training of the Portuguese troops for the war on the Western Front. He wrote reports on the political and military situation of the country and kept a diary where he recorded events and his impressions of the people he met and the parts of the country he visited. This article aims to contextualize Barnardiston's mission and to present not only his views on Sidónio Pais's coup in December 1917, but also the opinion that he entertained of the Portuguese in general.

1. On the Verge of Ungovernability: the First Period of the First Republic (1910-1917)

If, shortly after the revolution of October 1910, people could still harbour some hope in the country's political regeneration, the fact is that, after the adoption of the Constitution of 1911, the glow of the Republican promise gradually gave way to a feeling of disappointment and dismay. The country was permanently embroiled in political disputes and plots, some of them culminating in bloody armed uprisings. The various formations that made up the Portuguese political spectrum, from the most radical to the most conservative, sought to forge coalitions, invariably of a fragile and fleeting nature, with unusual alliances dictated by the political constraints of the moment.

Evidence of this instability was the Portuguese Republican Party (PRP) itself, whose prominent members had integrated the provisional Government of 1910. Unable to carry out the reforms called for by the country's social and economic underdevelopment, the party ended up disintegrating. The dissident figures of Brito Camacho and António José de Almeida gave birth to two other parties – the Republican Union and the Evolutionist Party, respectively. Nevertheless, it would still be the PRP's hard core, embodied in the figure of Afonso Costa, that would unite most of the Republicans. In effect, the subsequent change of the party's name to Democratic Party would not entail any significant renovation of the old party apparatus.

The apparent position of strength of this formation, however, did not hide the contradictions that were mining their ideological density: at the same time as it gave way to an increasingly marked Jacobin radicalism, very much to the taste of electorate of Lisbon and Oporto, former monarchists from the ranks of the constitutional monarchist parties, which had been dissolved in the meantime, were appointed to its leading cadres. Despite the inner-party tensions that resulted from this move, both unionists as evolutionists, who claimed to be to the right of the Democratic Party, were unable

to form a consistent and ideologically appealing alternative, which turned out to be an impediment to the democratic change-over of the regime. The monopoly of political power was thus placed in the hands of Afonso Costa. The Government that he led as prime minister and finance minister from January 1913 to February 1914 was, despite the strong opposition of the other political forces, able to introduce major reforms in several areas. They introduced the principle of progressive taxation, managed to secure the reform of the monetary system, created the Ministry of Public Instruction, succeeded in overturning the government deficit and achieved budgetary balance. Nevertheless, Afonso Costa's project was far from being consensual and he himself was unwilling to make too many concessions. He actively opposed the tolerance granted to the clericalist and monarchist forces, as well as to the Right-wing Republicans. At the same time, he tried to keep labour under tight control, but the harder he tried the more difficult it became.

The labour movement, now divorced from the Republican project – which was believed to serve mainly the interests of the bourgeoisie –, was now seeking in anarchism and revolutionary syndicalism alternative courses of action. Compared with other European counterparts, the National Workers' Union (União Operária Nacional – UON), founded in March 1914, was an organization which emerged rather late, but it constituted an effort to reorganize the working class, as demanded by country's industrial development. However, unable to break free of the utopianism that formed its ideological basis, it lacked a solid political programme and failed to address the substantive issues that affected the Portuguese working class. Not even the Socialist Party itself, reunited in 1908, would succeed in capturing a significant number of votes from the workers of whom it claimed to be the rightful representative; in fact, only one MP would be elected in the 1911 election.

The chronic governmental instability, exacerbated by the authoritarian excesses of a Pimenta de Castro, was further aggravated by the declaration of war of imperial Germany on Portugal in March 1916. In contrast with the political forces, both to the left and the

right, that immediately opposed the military confrontation, the PRP and the Evolutionist Party expressed their pro-British orientation. Whitehall, however, had no intention of precipitating Portugal's involvement in the war and initially they abhorred the idea. (Gomes, 1960: 199; Ramos, 2011: 100) For the British, it was clear that the Portuguese armed forces were incapable of defending the country and its colonies, let alone engage in large scale military operations. Lord Edward Grey, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, would write in his memoirs that the British Government did not see the need to expose the old ally to the dangers of war, which would affect its maritime trade and would turn its colonies into an easy target for the Germans. This would end up imposing an extra burden on the British fleet that should be avoided at all costs. Grey would have preferred to preserve the Portuguese neutrality, but as the conflict wore on he was forced to review his position. (Grey, 1925: 226-227)

Portugal's willingness to contribute to the Allies' war effort was far from being a display of grandeur or an act of heroic generosity. On the one hand, the Government was well aware that the best way to ensure the preservation of the overseas colonies would be to seek the protection that only the British could provide. On the other hand, sending Portuguese troops to France would strengthen the legitimacy of the new Republican regime. Last but not the least, a loan of two million pounds provided by H. H. Asquith's Government was expected to help consolidate public finances. These factors weighed heavily on the Portuguese Government's decision to send an expeditionary force of 45000 men to Flanders.

In the meantime, the Evolutionists of António José de Almeida accepted to participate, along with the Republicans and the Unionists, in a National Union Government (the so-called "Sacred Union"), which, despite the initial sympathy with which it was greeted, quickly found itself discredited by the growing war effort, the increasing cost of living and the constant difficulties with the supply of essential goods and materials. The insurgency that Machado Santos – one of the proclaimed strategists of 5 October 1910 –, would lead in Tomar on 13 December 1916, although quickly suppressed,

already foreshadowed the inglorious decline of a regime that was increasingly powerless to quell the gathering social unrest, marked by protests, strikes and other forms of civil disobedience.

One year after the incidents in Tomar, on 8 December 1917, the Government would be forced to step down at the hands of Sidónio Pais. As a former development minister and finance minister between 1911 and 1912, and as the Ambassador to Berlin at the time of the German declaration of war on Portugal, Sidónio Pais was too familiar with the weaknesses and uncertainties of the regime. In his speech at the opening ceremony of the Parliament on 22 June 1918, the already sworn-in President of the Republic spelled out the motives that had led him to the *pronunciamento*: the latent spirit of revolt, widespread corruption, the anarchist threat, the risk of disintegration of the Republican regime and the danger of restoration of the monarchy. To save the country, he believed it to be essential to bring social and political forces together in a movement for change centred on a set common revolutionary ideals, grounded on the values of 'Justice', 'Truth', 'Beauty' and the 'Happiness of the People'. (Carvalho, 1924: 69-76) The UON, monarchists, Catholics, unionists and some evolutionists identified themselves with this project. Equally important in Sidónio's ideological framework and which also allowed him to widen his support base were corporatist doctrines coming from France and Spain, and that were becoming increasingly popular across significant sectors of public opinion: a political solution that appeared to circumvent the problems of alienation posed by representative parliamentarism. (Menezes, 2000: 221) This rather wide support base would not be long-lived, although the immediate popular adherence to his cause might have led him to believe otherwise.

2. Barnardiston's Mission

Nathaniel Barnardiston soon learned to deal with the political upheavals that were mining the stability of the regime and to play it to the advantage of the British Government. Born into a family of aristocratic origins of Essex, he had received his training at Merton College, Oxford, and later, in 1878, joined the 77th Infantry Regiment. During the period spent in South Africa, in the course of the Second Boer War, he lived the harsh reality of armed conflict in the service of the Middlesex Regiment, and was later placed in Brussels and The Hague as Military Attaché. After a spell in Sandhurst as Assistant Director of Military Training, he would end up getting back to the war scenario at the head of a small contingent of British troops who, alongside the 18th Infantry Division of the Japanese Army, would participate in the capture of Tsingtao, a port built by the Germans in northern China and that served as a naval base to their Fleet in the Pacific. This feat earned him his promotion to the full grade of Major-General, the rank with which he came to Portugal in 1916, after a year in command of the 39th Division, which had been transferred in the meantime to the Western front.

On 16 August, shortly before his departure from London, he had a meeting with Manuel Teixeira Gomes, the then Minister of Portugal in London, who briefed him on the positions of the Portuguese Government in relation to the conflict with the Germany of Wilhelm II. Immediately after his arrival at Lisbon on 30 August, Barnardiston was introduced to the political and military circles of the Portuguese capital. He met with the President of the Republic, Bernardino Machado, senior members of the Government and the army, including generals Norton de Matos, Fernando Tamagnini de Abreu e Silva and Pereira de Eça. However, in his first meeting with Portuguese military authorities Barnardiston dismally failed to cause a good impression, having merely read the instructions that he had brought from London, apparently without showing any personal commitment to what had to be done. Basically what was expected from Portugal was that she should concentrate her war effort

in Africa and hand over any territory taken from the Germans to direct British rule; any military intervention elsewhere should be allowed only when the Portuguese army was ready to engage the enemy; and since London was at the time unable to properly equip the Portuguese troops with the resources available, Lisbon would have to remain patient. (Menezes, 2015: 238) These instructions, entitled "Object of Proposed Mission to Portugal" and issued by the Foreign Office,¹ further suggested the constitution of a corps of workers to provide manpower to ports, military depots and warehouses would be most helpful, but there is no evidence of Barnardiston proposing this idea to the Portuguese Government, all the more so because the authors of the document cautioned him that the Portuguese might take offence at such proposal. (474) After this meeting, the rumour went round that the Portuguese Army would never take part in the war. (Chagas, 1986: 283; Menezes, 2001: 226)

Regardless of the position of the British Government, the Portuguese Government had already started preparing the training of the troops in May and was eager to have the Portuguese Expeditionary Corps (Corpo Expedicionário Português – CEP) ready for combat in the shortest time possible. Barnardiston closely followed the officers' training that was being carried out at the War College (now Military Academy), at Tancos and Mafra and diligently followed the developments in the constitution of the CEP. He kept regular correspondence with the War Office, reporting on all the difficulties that the Portuguese Government was facing in the preparation, organization and deployment of the contingent. In memos sent to the British Chief of staff, Barnardiston would carefully look into the CEP's degree of preparation and readiness, as well as into the problems related to recruiting, mobilization, organisation and shipment of troops to the Western Front.² The War Office, too, made use of Barnardiston to send to its Portuguese counterpart their decisions

1. Ref. no. NA FO 371-2761.

2. Ref. no. NA CAB/24/6.

regarding military cooperation between the two countries. However, Fraga (2010) shows that the British officer did much more than this. In fact, he was instrumental in bringing the CEP to an end, much later on, when he conveyed to Sidónio Pais the recommendations of the War Office, made in the early days of January 1918, that the Portuguese troops should be organised into two divisions, one of which would be integrated into the British Army and treated just like any other British unit in terms of command and maintenance, while the other one would be used as an army reinforcement training unit and as a support unit to provide assistance to personnel on rest leave from the Front – a proposal that did not meet Sidónio's opposition. (Fraga, 2010: 496-497) In a sense, this shows that from the beginning to the end of the CEP, the British Government always remained wary of the military capability of the Portuguese, (Menezes: 2010: 66) and that they would have preferred to have them serve a supporting role, rather than having them shoulder the burden of the fight. These plans regarding the Portuguese troops had already been vented earlier, when the Secretary of State for War, Sir Edward Villiers, addressed a confidential letter to Norton de Matos on 8 September 1917, where he hinted at the possibility of placing the Portuguese under the direct orders of British Officers. The Minister of the Colonies refused that proposal, as it would weaken the negotiation power of the Portuguese Government in the future. By attempting to subordinate Portugal to its authority, Britain kept open the possibility of using the Portuguese colonies in future peace negotiations with Germany. Barnardiston had instructions to keep Portuguese military cooperation in the Front to a minimum and if possible, to reduce the CEP to a support workforce serving in the rear-guard of the British troops. Barnardiston saw in Sidónio's coup an opportunity to reintroduce the plans that Norton de Matos had frustrated. He approached the new Head of State before 29 December 1917 taking advantage of fact that the latter ignored the previous negotiations with the former Minister. He also took advantage of Sidónio's promise made during the uprising that the *Junta Revolucionária* was reliably pro-British – a declaration that would weaken his bargaining power

in the future. At first, the new President of the Republic partially agreed to the British plans, but only in a very limited way for fear that it might seem an immediate and downright concession to the anti-war forces. However, Barnardiston moved quickly and on the 21 January 1918 Sidónio wrote to him confirming that the proposal of His Majesty's Government concerning the CEP had been approved by the Portuguese Government.

3. Barnardiston's Views of Portuguese Society

The schedule of the Chief of the British military mission reveals a very busy and active social life, with constant visits, official dinners and other social events (he spent one night in particular listening to *fardos* [*sic*]).³ Apparently, General Norton de Matos insisted in offering the very best hospitality to the British guest. In a letter to the then Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Portugal, Sir Lancelot Carnegie, dated 30 November 1916, Barnardiston asserted that "the Portuguese are almost oriental in their adroitness in making us feel indebted to them".⁴ The difficulties the country was then going through barely affected this lifestyle, although his constant travelling up and down the country allowed him to come face to face with its stark social reality. From a privileged vantage point to analyse Portuguese politics, Barnardiston could not help making his own judgments about its actors. In fact, a few weeks after Sidónio Pais's assassination, on 6 February 1919, Barnardiston would write in his diary the views he held of the Portuguese and of Portuguese politics:

I have come to the conclusion that 99% of the Portuguese do not care whether they are under a Republic or a Monarchy. They may say they prefer one or the other, but they are so apathetic they will not lift a finger in

3. Ref. no. GB 0099KCLMA Barnardiston:3/4.

4. Ref. no. NA FO 371-2762; quoted in Menezes 2015: 475.

support of either. This trait was noticeable over 80 years ago, in the time of the Civil War & the introduction of the Constitution.

The consequence is that all political power is in the hands of the remaining 1% who are always intriguing for their own personal advantage. There is no real patriotism but only party feeling. The so-called patriotism of the Portuguese merely consists in expatiating on their deeds of the XV & XVI Centuries. They live on their past. The result of these conditions is that a small number of enthusiasts or men with more determination & less apathy than the rest can upset any government. The success of a movement is determined by the degree of determination evinced by either side.

The Revolution of 1910 was almost a success for the Monarchists for the Republicans were on the point of giving in, & their leader had already committed suicide owing to what he believed to be the failure of the movement, when the Monarchists themselves fled.

An exactly similar event occurred during the past combats between liberals and Miguelists in 1828.

Another factor in ~~Revolutions~~ the recent Revolution appeared to me to be that the opposing sides don't want to trust each other more than they are obliged to. They [illegible] trust each other. At any moment they may change their sides & the position may be reversed & they are unwilling to incur more odium in the event of being beaten than is necessary.

Then as no one is [illegible] really punished for conspiring against the Government there is no deterrent to making a Revolution. All that happens, if the worst comes to the worst, is that the leaders may be imprisoned, perhaps exiled, but at the next Revolution they are all released & return to power.

The Portuguese are as a rule without any organising ability. There are a few exceptions, one of the most notable being Col. José Norton de Mattos, the War Minister under the Democratic & Coalition Government, 1916-17. He was very good.

Another defect of the Portuguese character is their superficiality. This added to their vanity and their natural quickness of intellect brings about a want of thoroughness in everything they do. They have no capacity for continued effort. A new idea appeals to them, & they use it for all it is worth & then tire. They get a smattering of knowledge at the expense of

little trouble to themselves & then think they know all about the subject & that there is nothing more anyone can teach them about it.

One often hears people say they are unreliable & that their promises cannot be trusted. This is partially true, but it does not occur through a wilful desire to deceive but from a wish, probably sincere, to say or do what is pleasing, and then if difficulties crop up in the performance of the task there is not sufficient energy to tackle them, or to face consequences which may be disagreeable & which were not properly considered when the promises were made.

On the other hand the national character as evinced especially among the country folk has many charming attributes.

The peasants are kindly disposed, though they may act savagely if their passions are roused, honest, very patient, hard and simple in their lives. The soldiers are obedient & if properly led would be very good. But there is no sense of self-sacrifice from the [illegible] good – no cohesion and no real respect for authority.⁵

His reading of the events that shook the First Republic and his considerations about the national character would not have been disputed by the views of Sir Lancelot Carnegie, who, some years later, in 1925, would write:

The parliamentary system of Government, so unsuited in many ways to the Latin nations has hopelessly collapsed, owing partly to the indolence of, and partly to the perpetual quarrels between the Deputies (...) we find her [Portugal] with a weak government, an incompetent Parliament, her credit abroad impaired, no budget, a huge deficit, business at a standstill, high prices and a discontented working class (...). A wave of insubordination and lawlessness seemed to be spreading over the country.⁶

5. Ref. no. GB 0099KCLMA Barnardiston:3/4.

6. Quoted from Glyn Stone (3). The text is cited in a dispatch by Sir Charles Wingfield to Anthony Eden dated 25 September 1937, ref. no. FO425/414, W 18554/923/36.

4. Under the Spell of Sidónio

Among the several documents that he produced for the War Office, there is one particular report (undated) where Barnardiston sought to make an informed value judgment about Major Sidónio Pais. The British officer did not hide his respect for the personality of the future President of the Republic, who, as he acknowledged later, was “a man of strong personality”, displayed an extraordinary courage and was “animated by faith in a high ideal”. In fact, Barnardiston admired Sidónio’s determination to carry out the coup despite being abandoned to his fate by his peers at the most critical moment, with only 250 men siding with him during the uprising. When the two men met for the first time, Sidónio Pais was surrounded by junior officers, including Captain Machado Santos, who, after the thwarted coup in Tomar, had been taken to the prison of Fontelo in Viseu and held without trial until that date.

In this first encounter, what Barnardiston saw was “a slender man of medium height, clad in a light military coat, a tired white face looking almost emaciated in its pallor, with clear flashing dark eyes, an aquiline nose, a thin-lipped sensitive mouth.” Barnardiston then deduced that “[h]e could have had but little rest since the opening of hostilities but no exhaustion was suggested by his composed manner”. And then he added:

He had borne the awful responsibility of leading a small and uncertain following in a revolt against a recognized although intensely unpopular Government; of firing on his own countrymen; of creating civil war; and of risking long imprisonment and possibly worse, in case of failure.

He faced it – had accepted it – had succeeded.

The Army had flocked to his support, the people had acclaimed him.

The oppressed, the dissatisfied, the religious, the Monarchists, turned to him as a deliverer from tyranny.

In the end of this three-page report on the Portuguese leader, Barnardiston concluded: “It would seem as though, at this moment,

were extended to grasps his, the hands of all the pious, the patriotic, the peace loving, among the Portuguese.”⁷ Barnardiston’s analysis was correct: Sidónio Pais enjoyed the support of those sectors who not only stood against the former Government (dissatisfied Republicans, monarchists, clericalists), but also strongly opposed the war, and this was something the British Government could take advantage of.

This devotion was short-lived, as was Sidónio Pais’s term-of-office. The man who had singlehandedly carried the hopes of the Portuguese upon his shoulders in December 1917 ended up brutally murdered at the hand of José Júlio da Costa a few days after the first anniversary of the coup at the Rossio Train Station, on December 14. Barnardiston himself, who had been awarded the order of Aviz in February 1918 and the title of Grand Officer of the Order of Christ in 1919, would outlive the man he came to admire by only eight months, having passed away on 18 August 1919.

5. A City at War

In the report that Barnardiston sent to War Office on his visit to bivouacs and trenches in Parque Eduardo VII, Lisbon, there are two maps showing the positions held by the contending forces in Lisbon, indication the location and orientation of the sixteen artillery pieces of the insurgents, some deployed between Rua Castilho and Rua da Artilharia 1, others north of Parque Eduardo VII, at the time an area of open space commanding a view of the city, the harbour and the Tagus. Barnardiston’s reading of the city is symbolically, one might say, a cartographic exercise of the political Lisbon of those days, where he describes the rise of a dictator who, from the top of the hill, crushes under his feet the weaknesses of a regime that had already lost all its credibility and had nowhere to hide.

7. Ref. no. GB 0099KCLMA Barnardiston: 3/1.

Report on a visit to bivouacs and trenches in King Edward VII's Park, Lisbon, after the Revolutionary Movement of 5th-8th December, 1917⁸

Major Casquero, an officer of the Portuguese expeditionary Force on leave from France, where he holds the position of Commandant of the Portuguese Base at Brest, having invited me, my Staff and family to visit the positions occupied by the Revolutionary Forces during the fighting of the 5th, 6th and 7th instant, I took the opportunity of doing so yesterday morning. On arriving at the Barracks of the 1st Artillery, I learned that Major Sidonio Paes, the leader of the Revolution, was with them. I was not previously aware of this fact. We were introduced to him by Major Casquero and also to Captain Machado Santos and Captain Feliciano Costa, the members of the Revolutionary Committee.

I explained that I had only come on the invitation of Major Casquero and that my visit was in no sense an official one. Major Sidonio Paes said that notwithstanding that he was greatly pleased and thanked me for coming. He then invited us to accompany him round the defences, where we found many of the troops still in position. We examined the trenches, gun positions, etc., and Major Sidonio Paes explained the measures taken.

At the hour arranged for the outbreak of the Revolution (6 p.m. 5th December) he was certain of the support of only about 250 soldiers; including a battery of four 75 mm. guns. He was joined very shortly by about 250 of the Cadets of the War School, and portions of other units. By degrees during the night of the 5th-6th other parties of men joined, but I believe that at no time were there more than about 1 000 troops under his command. There were also numbers of civilians. His plan was to entrench himself on the high ground on the west side of King Edward VII's Park, which commands practically the whole of the central part of the city including the business quarter, the Government buildings, the Headquarters of the Republican Guard, and several Barracks. One battery of field Artillery was posted here and other guns on the ground south of the Penitentiary to command the whole of the broad Avenida da Liberdade. It was

8. Ref. no. NA CAB/24/37.

these which did so much damage to the Avenida Palace Hotel, which had at least 15 direct hits from shrapnel and was partly wrecked. The Revolutionaries did not, at first, fire on the Fleet, as Major Paes hoped that they might declare themselves on his side.

Efforts were made all along to induce other units or portions of them to join the Revolutionaries, and these efforts appear to have been fairly successful. Towards the end of the operations, detachments began to arrive from out-stations. The garrison of the entrenched camp, or land defences of Lisbon, declared their sympathy with the Revolutionary party but do not appear to have taken an active part in the fighting, remaining at their posts in the various forts round the city.

The action began by shelling the points of the city mentioned above, where it was expected the members of the Government or the headquarters of Military Organization would be found. Fire was also directed down the Avenida da Liberdade to prevent an attack from this direction. At the same time patrols were sent out in various directions, who penetrated as far as the Rocio to the south-east, the Praça do Brasil [sic] a short distance to the south, and, the Campo Pequeno to the east. At the latter place there was a slight skirmish with a small body of Government troops who seen retired. When the Fleet began to fire against the Revolutionary Forces, their fire was returned, but I gathered that Major Paes was not desirous of doing them more harm than he could help as he still hoped they would declare for him. The fire of the Fleet did very little damage. The only serious attempt to close with the Revolutionaries and drive them from King Edward VII's Park was made on their right flank, by two columns of Republican Guards, and the Navy, which got as far as the neighborhood of Praça do Brasil and near the high water reservoir at the Praça das Amoreiras, about 800 yards from the main position of the Revolutionaries, from which however owing to houses, etc., it could not be seen.

This attack which took place in the afternoon of the 7th instant appears to have been the final effort of the Government, and it being, unsuccessful an armistice was arranged; and the Government, apparently realizing the uselessness of further fighting, resigned. The object of the Revolution was thus attained. During my walk round the defences with Major Sidonio Paes, he talked a good deal and was most emphatic in his denial

of the assertion that the Revolution was monarchical or pro-German in its inception or its designs, he declared that it was a purely Republican movement, having as its sole object the removal of an inefficient, despotic and detested regime which had become insupportable. The Revolutionary Committee, and the Government which he hoped would be formed very shortly were, he said, absolutely pro-Ally in every way, and most anxious to fulfill all the engagements already entered into with their old Ally Great Britain. He did not allude to the dispatch of reinforcements. He asked me what was the feeling in England with regard to the Revolution, but I told him I had no information on the subject.

Conversations with some of the other officers elicited a decided contradiction of what has been alleged to be one of the causes of the Revolution, viz., that the troops were unwilling to go to France. We were told that on the contrary they were ready and desirous to do so. My own personal opinion on this matter is that there has never been any enthusiasm in Portugal for the war, but the men in general are ready enough to go as part of their duty. There are of course a certain number of shirkers and discipline is not sufficiently strong to prevent their evading it. It is quite possible that the prospect of sending no more troops to France, if held out to the men, might have influenced them in favour of the Revolution, but I believe that their sense of duty will cause them to go without murmuring if called upon to do so.

I give these as my impressions gathered from personal conversations both with the leaders of the Revolutionary movement since its success, and with other officers and men during a long period.

Whether all the statements made to me were in good faith or not I cannot say. They had every appearance of being sincere but only their actions will prove whether their statements are to be trusted. The attitude which they took up with regard to the action which we have requested them to take in East Africa, and whether or not the early dispatch of reinforcements to France takes place should determine this.

Major Sidonio Paes also mentioned the intention of the new Government to pursue a conciliatory policy towards the Monarchists, in the hope of obtaining perhaps the co-operation of the best elements of that party with the Republican Government in assuring the well-fare of the country. The

losses on the Revolutionary side appear to have been very slight, amounting to less than half-a-dozen casualties. I believe the Government forces had a good many in attacking the Praça do Bresil.

The total losses among troops and civilians during the Revolution amounted, according to the Press, to about 100 killed and rather over 500 wounded.

(Sd.) N. W. Barnardiston.

Lisbon,

11th December, 1917.

This official document is complemented by his remarks recorded in his personal diary (5-10 December) which provides us yet another perspective of the events.

Barnardiston's Journal⁹

Wednesday 5th [December 1917] Tea at Mrs. Sleight's. Met Marquise de Praia and her daughter. Dined at Campbell's. Outbreak of Revolution at 6 p.m. We knew nothing of its being imminent, but about 7 p.m. I heard what I thought were bombs at intervals. I think it must have been the guns in the Ed. VII Park firing blank. We went to dinner all the same taking Oliveira Soares. We got back all right also, only being stopped by one patrol near the Hotel. About midnight however it was quite evident that shells were being dropped near us & slept intermittently until about 3 a.m. when awakened by a tremendous explosion & found one corner of [the] Hotel on fire and shrapnel burst in the Salon. Most of the Hotel guests turned out of their rooms & bivouac[k]ed on the stairs. The Hotel, during the 2 days fighting on 6th & 7th was hit certainly 15 times. It is a wonder there was no loss of life. The only casualty was one ladies' maid slightly cut by a splinter. Several rooms were wrecked and some people lost all they had. Firing went on at intervals all the 6th and in the afternoon Mr. Robinson went out to gather information and managed to get into the Council Chamber where

9. Ref. no. GB 0099KCLMA Barnardiston:3/4.

he enquired apparently whether the Hotel was considered a safe place for ladies. The War Minister sent him a message saying that as it was the intention of the Government to attack the Revolutionaries next morning & the Hotel was right on the line of fire it could not be guaranteed that some shells would not hit it & strongly advised me to move my family to the Legation. Carnegie having previously invited me I decided to go and as the War Minister sent his car for me we went off there.

The following day, Friday 7th the Fleet got to work at 7:45 and the field guns replied but were almost all shots. I only saw one go over and none apparently anywhere near. The naval bombardment was intermittent & only 3 ships took part viz. "Vasco da Gama" (Flag), Gil Eanes and the destroyer "Guadiana". In the afternoon a fairly heavy bombardment of the part of the town near the Place du Brésil took place & we heard that there was heavy fighting near there resulting in the retirement of the Govt. troops. This practically ended the affair and the Govt. resigned. There was intermittent rifle fire all night as rioters were looting shops &c but next morning Sept. 8th that had quieted down & we returned to the Hotel.

Sunday 9th we were all to go to Church as usual. In the afternoon Major Casquero, the Base Cmdt. at Brest called with a letter from Lawrence & I asked him to dinner. He invited us all to accompany him to see the trenches &c. of the Revolutionary forces in King Edward VII's Park in the following day which we accepted & went. On arriving there I found, to my sorrow, that Major Sidonio Paes the leader of the Revolution and the Revolutionary Committee, Capt. Machado Santos & Lieut. Costa were all there & we were introduced to them & photographed right & left. I had not at all wanted to meet them & explained that my visit was at the invitation of Major Casquero & quite unofficial, but unfortunately the Evening newspapers came out with Photos & big headlines & made a good deal of capital out of it. However, it could not affect the question of the recognition of the Government & therefore did not really matter while on the other hand I was told that it had an Excellent effect, not only on the Revolutionaries but also on people who had been influenced by silly rumours that the British Govt. was backing up Norton de Mattos & was contemplating intervention. I saw Carnegie afterwards & told him all about it & he agreed that it did not matter, but the following day the Corps Diplomatique were in a great flutter over it.

Final Remarks

Lisbon was Barnardiston's last mission. A country submerged in political instability, economic hardship and labour and social unrest, in the context of a World War, demanded an intelligent, cautious and patient approach if British interests were to be protected. Barnardiston immediately realised that the Portuguese were truly keen to honour their commitment and lend a hand to the Allied Forces on the Western Front, but he was also aware that this gesture of voluntarism might do more harm than good, especially given the situation in the African colonies and the problems of military capability of the Portuguese Army.

His critical stance of Portuguese society and politics shows this lack of confidence in England's oldest ally, but also reveals, though briefly, the belief that the country could only find the long-awaited stability in the hands of a resolute and fearless individual like Sidónio Pais, a man guided by strong values and high ideals and willing to overcome the limitations of a democratic regime for which the Portuguese did not seem particularly fit. The parliamentary model adopted by the Republicans in the 1911 Constitution had led the country to a dead end and Sidónio represented a credible, if not the only credible political alternative to the state of affairs the country had fallen into. This position, which Carnegie would have subscribed, helps us understand much of the attitude of the successive British Governments towards Portuguese politics throughout most of the twentieth century.

Regardless of the respect that Sidónio commanded, Barnardiston played his cards skilfully and convinced Sidónio of something that ironically the weaker Government led by António José de Almeida had adamantly refused to do. This dictated the end of the CEP and of the war policy pursued by Afonso Costa from the end of 1915 until December 1917. The military situation in Mozambique played into the hands of the British, and Barnardiston further attempted to put the Portuguese troops stationed at that colony under the orders of a British general. Portugal was thus completely left at the mercy

of British interests, both in Europe and Africa and deprived of the negotiation power that the *Sagrada União* had so arduously tried to build up. But then again, Sidónio's move to limit the intervention of Portugal in the war is not to be read simply as an act of subordination to British interests. After all, Portugal had already paid a price too high for that adventure, and it was this realisation that had caused the political forces in parliament to conspire against Afonso Costa and the pro-interventionists. (Menezes, 2000: 159-160) Sidónio knew this and he could not afford to overlook it in his attempt to regenerate the country.

References

Archival sources

The Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College London. Catalogue ref. no. GB 0099 KCLMA Barnardiston: 3/1, 3/2, 3/3 and 3/4.
The National Archives at Richmond. Catalogue ref. nos. CAB/24/6, 40, 146 and 147; FO 371-2761 and 2762; FO425/414; W18554/923/36.

Bibliographical sources

Carvalho, Feliciano de (comp.). *Um Ano de Ditadura: Discursos e Alocuções de Sidónio Paes*. Lisboa: Lusitania Editora, 1924.
Chagas, João. *Diário*. Volume 11. Lisboa: Edições Rolim, 1986.
Fraga, Luís Alves. *Do Intervencionismo ao Sidonismo: os Dois Segmentos da Política de Guerra na 1.ª República: 1916-1918*. Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 2010.
Gomes, Manuel Teixeira. *Correspondência. Cartas para Políticos e Diplomatas*. Lisboa: Livraria Clássica, 1960.
Grey, Edward. *Twenty-five Years 1892-1916*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925.
Menezes, Filipe Ribeiro de. *União Sagrada e Sidonismo: Portugal em Guerra (1916-1918)*. Lisboa: Edições Cosmos, 2000.
— *Afonso Costa*. Alfragide: Texto Editores, 2010.

- “A Grande Aposta da República: o Corpo Expedicionário Português. *A Primeira República Portuguesa: Diplomacia, Guerra e Império*. Coord. Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses e Pedro Aires de Oliveira. Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2011.
- *A Grande Guerra de Afonso Costa*. Leya, 2015.
- e Pedro Aires Oliveira (coord.). *A Primeira República Portuguesa: Diplomacia, Guerra e Império*. Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2011.
- Ramos, Rui. “Aparências e Realidades: os Republicanos Perante a Aliança Inglesa até à Primeira Guerra Mundial”. *A Primeira República Portuguesa: Diplomacia, Guerra e Império*. Coord. Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses e Pedro Aires de Oliveira. Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2011.
- Rosas, Fernando. *Lisboa Revolucionária: Roteiro dos Confrontos Armados no Século XX*. Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2007.
- Stone, Glyn. ‘The Oldest Ally: Britain and the Portuguese Connection, 1919-1933’. (n.d) Retrieved on 30/12/2015 from http://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/files/windsor/8_stone.pdf