The author, a distinguished Portuguese historian and novelist, once served the Salazar regime as Chief Inspector for Overseas Territories. Failing to appease Salazar in 1951 for a report he prepared on contract-labor abuses in Angola, he was tried in 1956 and sentenced to sixteen years' imprisonment. Escaping, he found asylum in South America, where he continued his revolutionary activities (Mr. Galvão's My Crusade for Portugal will be published this fall by World). This article has been translated by Gregory Rabassa from the Portuguese.—Editors.

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I. Background to Action

THIS ARTICLE aims to provide an understanding of the "incident" which aroused the world as twenty-four men of the Iberian Revolutionary Directorate, under my command, seized and occupied the Portuguese luxury liner Santa Maria. I hope that it will serve this purpose better than the news media, which excited world opinion with outbursts of sensationalism. It is perhaps still too early to judge the Santa Maria action ("Operation Dulcinea," as we called it) with perfect objectivity, since it was only the first phase of an operational plan of revolutionary hostilities against the Iberian dictators and their regimes. This first phase had as its aim the arousing of the free world's human interest in the barbaric drama of the oppression of the peoples of Portugal and Spain. Now that this first phase is over, and the thirst for sensation so dominant in today's world has been satisfied somewhat, the events can be seen in a clearer perspective. In this way the "incident" will make more sense than it did when the Santa Maria was in mid-Atlantic and the whole episode was a feast for a world gluttonous for sensation.

In an article published in The Nation of January 9, 1960, I dealt with the Portuguese aspect of a situation that has prevailed in the entire Iberian peninsula for the past thirty years and has devastated and enslaved its peoples. Implicit in that article were the motives behind the capture of the Santa Maria; and, with this act, I consider that direct hostilities were opened against the dictators. As for the Spanish aspect of the Iberian problem, the situation under Franco is too well known for me to repeat the facts. All I want to do here is pose a question to all people who prize their liberty as individuals and nations, who hold to the humane point of view that there will never be peace anywhere in the world as long as any form of tyranny exists. Of these people I ask: Was our insurrection, the revolt of those who would not conform to the loss of liberty or to the acceptance of material and moral miseries offensive to human dignity, in fact completely legitimate? I write for free men and free peoples. I shall not waste my time arguing with tyrants or their pack of sub-humans.

I was one of the many living in the inhuman atmosphere of Portugal who, uncomforming, found myself immobilized because of the lack of scruple on the part of the dictatorial regime, whose defenses were criminal force and spiritual fraud. I did have an advantage (or was it a disadvantage?), however, over my fellow sufferers, who made up the overwhelming majority of the population. I had a clearer picture of things, not only because I had suffered personally, but also from having personally known the Dictator and the most hateful elements of his oligarchy. As a Deputy in the National Assembly and as Chief Inspector of Overseas Territories, I had had direct contact with the most horrible cancers of the regime—a regime which does not hesitate to operate in God's name! This advantage (or disadvantage) enabled me to develop a conscience which, although neither better nor purer on the whole than that of any other oppressed person, did give me, in a manner of speaking, a missionary spirit of resistance which made me decide upon action against the regime. All alone or with companions, leader or follower, the rest of my life would be completely dedicated to an attempt to free my country from Salazar's tyranny.

WITHIN Portugal itself, as within Spain, the organization of any attempt at liberation—and many had been made—seemed impossible. On the one hand, there was the regime, continuously fattening its oligarchy and impoverishing its people, spending on arms and propaganda the money which the masses needed for bread, health, housing and education, and protected by a defensive armor of oppressive police who, in spite of being more brutal than intelligent, did manage to have a spy or agent within earshot of any group of twenty Portuguese. On the other hand, there was the effect of thirty years of Gestapo practices on school and home, on factory and farm, on city and village, on barracks and sporting club—in short, throughout all Portuguese society—which had planted fear in the heart and spawned all the forms of terror, fright and unrest upon which Salazar based the "Peace and Order" harped upon by his propaganda. To provoke the explosion of this collective despair through a disorderly mass movement—a not impossible feat, considering the agitation created by the candidacy of General Humberto Delgado for President of Portugal—would be to run the risk of plunging the country into a bloody demagogy, a path which
has been proved as not leading to liberty. In their struggle against tyranny, tyrannized peoples cannot rely even on the neutrality of certain governments among the great Western democracies, which constantly betray their ideals—often without the consent of their people—and deal with dictators in such a way as to assure their survival.

If, then, there was to be some possibility for careful organization and preparation, the struggle would have to come from without. In other words, only if the revolt was begun by exiles could there be any chance for a successful outcome. It was not without bitter experience in other forms of rebellion that I had arrived at this conclusion. Having failed for the usual reasons in every attempt I had made in Portugal and in the Overseas Territories to organize a revolt of the hopeless, I was arrested and condemned by successive extraordinary tribunals to life imprisonment. In prison, I managed to resist, physically and morally, the disintegrative methods of the political police (PIDE), who even made a pure and simple attempt at murder. Every day of my imprisonment, I fought against the regime, against the police and against myself. At the end of seven years, during which I had won only the victory over myself, I saw but three possible paths before me: death, madness or escape. The last was made all the more difficult by the fact that I was the most closely guarded prisoner among all of the thousands held by the regime. Nevertheless, with the moral strength I had managed, by some miracle, to keep intact, I succeeded in escaping from a prison hospital (like the ship I was later to capture, the hospital was named Santa Maria). While in hiding, I persisted in my efforts to organize a revolt. But after a month, I saw that I could no longer remain in Portugal; the police were closing in. I took refuge in the Argentinian Embassy, whence, three months later, I left for South America.

At last I was another exile. But my difficult experience had taught me that it was as an exile that I would have greater opportunity to organize the struggle for direct action and the liberation of my unhappy people. There would be the chance of bringing before all the people of the free world the opportunity to examine the Portuguese drama more closely.

Six months later I moved to Venezuela, where it seemed that I would have better conditions for the completion of the mission I had undertaken. I aligned myself with Humberto Delgado, the elected candidate defrauded of his victory by Salazar; I felt close to him both as a comrade and as one who shared his political objectives.

WHILE the intent of the mission was clear, great practical problems arose. The struggle seemed most one-sided, and none of the elements one could logically count on to make less so were available. The political exiles had degenerated to the point where they offered only rhetorical forms of resistance. A sort of fatalistic immobility characterized them; they relied more on the chance that international contingencies would cause the downfall of the peninsular dictatorships than on the will and strength of an active national resistance. Salazar had corrupted everything, and through fear, bribery and misery, he had also corrupted many of the values once held by the opposition.

On one side there was the State, very powerful materially, as far as we were concerned, with a police-like Army and a police force as well-armed as an Army—both useless for external defense, but strong enough to maintain an internal offensive of fear; with a diplomatic corps serving both as police and propagandists, and with plenty of resources for bribery; with a naval force sufficient to frighten the Overseas Territories; and, above all, with as much money as could be diverted from the vital necessities of a population which, in terms of living standards and tuberculosis control, was already relatively inferior to any other European country.

ON THE other side, separated from Portugal by the Atlantic moat, here we were: first two, then a half-dozen, then several dozen—lacking money, arms, transportation or international aid. We could not command an iota of moral or material support from the democratic country we had chosen as our jump-off point. We were stronger than the dictators only in the morality of the cause we were defending, in the dignity of our poverty and in the sincerity of our aims. But superiority in moral strength does not count for much as a weapon of war in a world in which the very liberty of oppressed peoples is trafficked in by certain undemocratic governments of very democratic nations in exchange for military bases and facilities undemocratically conceded. In addition to this, the dictators had signed and put into operation the so-called Iberian Pact, by which they formed an alliance to insure the survival of their tyrannies on the international level through diplomacy, and internally by means of the joint forces of their oligarchies.

The aid I had hoped for, and which had been promised by a high official of the majority party of Venezuela, never materialized. Indeed, instead of help from that quarter, we came to count on nothing but difficulties which certainly would not have existed had the Venezuelan Government more faithfully followed the wishes and feelings of its people.

It was at that time (beginning in December, 1959) that I began to attempt a reply to the Iberian Pact by
trying to unite the exiled forces of the Portuguese and Spanish opposition for a common action. Through this alliance, we hoped to set up a sort of technical organization of liberation, aimed at opening and maintaining active hostilities against the dictatorial regimes of the Iberian peninsula. The first attempt to achieve this alliance was a failure. The Spanish elements of the opposition—exiled, although in agreement on the advantages of unification, and although they harbored a common anxiety over Franco's continuing in power, were hopelessly divided on institutional questions. Many of the groups they had formed were, in a manner of speaking, adapted to the routine of an opposition consisting primarily of rhetoric—a type of opposition hardly suited to match the force and intrigue that could be put into play by the signers of the Iberian Pact. The result, for all practical purposes, was a type of immobility. Nevertheless, while the attempt at union failed, the contacts made enabled me to become acquainted with certain elements who were not in agreement with this immobility and who, along with me, saw the necessity for direct action. These dissidents formed a group called the Union of Spanish Combatants. We then organized the Revolutionary Directorate of Iberian Liberation (DRIL)—a precarious organization at best, considering its lack of material means and prestige. DRIL could count only on the determination and courage of its members. Basically, it represented an alliance between the Union of Spanish Combatants and the National Independence Movement (MNI), led by General Delgado (at the time, I was the General's delegate in Venezuela, as well as his closest collaborator). The Union of Spanish Combatants could count on combat elements scattered throughout several European countries, more faithful and valiant than organized, and the MNI had the weight of the support of the Portuguese masses who had voted for Delgado, and consequently could claim legitimacy as the representative organ of Portuguese resistance. Ideologically, both organizations were anti-totalitarian, opposed to all oppressive forms of government, whether Communist or McCarthyite.

From this tenuous union there would arise an understanding among people who, at the outset, hardly knew one another either personally or politically. But the fundamental problem still remained, namely the lack of material resources, the small size of our forces in comparison with the enemy, and the lack of prestige which alone could bring us the help we needed. For all practical purposes, the only thing we could rely on was the fact that the overwhelming majority of the Portuguese and Spanish peoples wanted what we wanted: the redemption of the Iberian nations, morally, politically and economically, through liberty. They would give their unconditional support to us, or to any democratic opposition, which could show a capacity for direct and effective action. I was to be chief of operations for the Portuguese DRIL under the authority granted me by General Delgado.

II. Planning the Action

"OPERATION DULCINEA," the opening of hostilities against the Iberian tyrannies, actually arose out of the seemingly insurmountable difficulties facing us. We could not use the classic methods of revolutionary combat, such as armed rebellion from within, or invasion. As far as these methods were concerned, the invulnerability of Salazar and Franco seemed as real as their immoblist opposition had painted it. Yet it was indispensable that we attack the tyrants on their own ground. Moreover, this had to be done in full view of a world opinion so indifferent to the Iberian drama as to be unaware that Western governments were pursuing policies which assured the survival of the Iberian dictatorships. We would have to employ a form of action modest enough to fall within the scope of our meager possibilities, yet which by its 'originality' and power to shock would lay bare the systems of violence and lies of the dictators. If we could manage this, we would certainly gain the support of the oppressed masses of the nations in question and of the political leaders of the democratic opposition; we might even gain sufficient prestige to carry us into a battle for the ultimate freedom of our peoples. Clearly, imagination would have to play a leading role in our operation.

THE ANGUISH of our difficulties brought forth the idea of "Dulcinea." Every month Spanish ships and the Portuguese luxury liner Santa Maria touched at the Venezuelan port of La Guaira. Legally they were parcels of national territory. Why was it not possible for the revolution to begin on one of these pieces of Iberian soil which came our way—as other revolutions had started in cities, mountains or valleys? The passengers would correspond to the inhabitants of territories in revolt, and the situation would differ only in form from what was happening, and had happened recently, in Cuba, in Algeria, in Paraguay and in all countries where oppressed peoples were fighting for their freedom. Naturally, the passengers would be inconvenienced, but certainly less than the inhabitants, native and foreign, of a city in revolt; in any case, our plans called for the unstinting protection of their lives, dignity and property. Due to its prestige as a merchant ship, its speed and its resources, the Santa Maria interested us most among all the ships available for our operation. We would not be able to obtain the same effect with a smaller, slower and less important ship. Therefore, the Santa Maria would be the ship of "Operation Dulcinea"—Dulcinea because, in many ways, we were also romantics going forth to do battle for our lady fair.

Once we had formulated the idea, the practical problems of its realization became evident. We would have to gather information and study it closely. There would be the preparation of personnel who would take part. We would have to secure funds for arms and tickets. And we would'
have to guard the secret from Salazar's spies, who are present wherever there is a Portuguese colony. We spent many months of anguish and despair in resolving these problems, more anxious and desperate than armed combatants, more fatigued than any laborer, in a situation as precarious as any in which one's life is risked. These months were so intense that on January 20 of this year, when we finally boarded the Santa Maria, we could say with real conviction that whatever our fate might be, the most painful part of the operation was already behind us.

According to the initial plan, the operation would consist of three phases. One hundred men armed with automatic weapons were to seize three ships in a period of two days, provided certain time tables coincided. They would be the Santa Maria, the Vera Cruz, its sister ship; and a Spanish ship which sailed between Europe and Cuba. In order to accomplish this, we would need at least $30,000. Had we been able to obtain the money, "Dulcinea" would have been carried out through all three phases and it is entirely possible that large sectors of Portuguese territory in Europe and overseas would today be free. But there was no way of obtaining $30,000. We had no help from the country we were in and hardly any help at all from the many elements of democratic opposition-in-exile, who preferred immobility and lacked faith in our capacity for action. Communist parties were against us, and several Portuguese and Spanish millionaires with democratic sympathies closed their pockets to any program which did not consist of banquets and rhetorical manifestations. Begging from door to door, failing time after time, fighting a daily battle against the difficulties caused by the immobilsits, it was only by the generosity of the very poor and by sucking blood from our own breasts, like pelicans, that we were able to manage enough for the embarkation of twenty-four men, of whom only fourteen would be armed. In order to attain this minimum goal, we not only had to postpone the operation from October to January, but also to abandon the most ambitious part of the plan.

BY outsiders, even the first phase of the operation would have been considered madness; but there was no other way out. Furthermore, we had foreseen, and quite accurately as it turned out, that we would have in our favor the element of surprise and audacity. Although we were going against a crew of more than three hundred men, they were oppressed, like all Portuguese under the domination of Salazar's oligarchy, and the fear the regime had instilled in their hearts would work in our favor.

We had come down to the final day, ready to bring about the first phase of the operation. Anticipating that the successful accomplishment of the first phase would bring many new elements to our side, we left the details of planning for subsequent phases for a later period. There was nothing mad about it at all. I am a cold-blooded creature, prepared for life and ready to consider its risks and contingencies in an objective manner. I felt that it was no more than one dangerous step with enough chances of success to risk it; the risk would be warranted, I believed, even if we gained only the first objective. The immediate goals of the first operational phase were the following:

1. To arouse interest in the drama of Portugal and Spain, so that the oppressed peoples of the peninsula would find among free peoples a support more worthy of the latter's ideals, heretofore compromised by the aid their governments had been giving the dictators.

2. To instill new hope in the oppressed masses of Portugal and Spain and assure them that ours was a movement based on direct action which was nevertheless capable of leading them ultimately to freedom without the danger of a disorderly uprising.

3. Finally, to arouse out of their immobility the groups of democratic politicians whose militant opposition to the regimes had so far been limited to rhetoric.

III. Seizure and Aftermath

WHILE MY Compatriots bought their tickets and boarded the Santa Maria at La Guaira as ordinary passengers (but with their arms concealed in their baggage), I flew to Curacao, where the ship was to dock on the morning of the following day, January 21. I would have to embark clandestinely, lest my presence be noted, and it was best that I go aboard as close to H-hour as possible. At eight in the morning of January 21, the Santa Maria entered the harbor at Curacao. One can imagine the emotion I felt as I saw it pass by the hotel where I was staying. With a felt hat pulled over my eyes and a God-given calm, I took advantage of the coming and going which always precedes the sailing of a ship and went on board at four-thirty, that afternoon without any trouble at all.

We had gone through so much for this moment that, as I headed for the cabin where I was to hide out until H-hour, I felt a great euphoria surging through me, much the same as my companions had sensed on going aboard at La Guaira. We really felt that our battle had begun months before and elsewhere, and that we had already been through the most bitter and heroic, albeit the least spectacular, aspect of our adventure. In spite of the fact that we had yet to "capture" the ship and take it to our destination, what lay ahead seemed no more than a simple formality.

The world is too well aware of the subsequent events to make a detailed account worth while, and since everything will be described in a book which will be published soon, I shall limit myself here to a sum-
mary of the salient facts and also to others which need some clarification. This last is necessary because of the passions aroused by the first news items sent around the world. The truth concerning certain events was distorted by the hysterical propaganda of the dictators and the haste with which journalists reported the happenings.

At 1:40 A.M., January 22, we gathered next to the first-class swimming pool and divided ourselves into two groups. One group was under the orders of Commander Souto Mayor, a former naval officer in the Spanish Civil War who would later take charge of the technical operation of the ship, and the other under my direct command. On the upper deck we attacked the radio room and the bridge, while on the deck below we took the officers’ quarters and the Captain’s cabin. Resistance on the bridge by the only officer who defended his post in a noble fashion caused some shooting which resulted in the death of this brave adversary and the wounding of another man who, ignoring an order to halt, tried to run away. Our simple presence was enough to force the surrender of the radio room. The presence of one man—myself—was all that was needed to effect the surrender of the Captain and his officers, who had been gathered in his cabin (one of the officers cried like a girl). They not only surrendered unconditionally, but also promised on their honor to continue work and to obey any orders. The behavior of these men greatly facilitated our plans; in spite of this, they were not the adversaries we had hoped to encounter. For all the ease and rapidity of the victory, we could not forget that these men were Portuguese, divested of all virility and professional dignity, and so to us they seemed more victims than criminals. They were victims of the two generations of rule by which Salazar had imposed a kind of spinelessness on many of the Portuguese people. They surrendered like inferior men and thereafter obeyed like inferiors whenever we gave a command. It was a great help to us, but a lamentable picture of the products of a regime.

To our great surprise, there was no reaction from either passengers or crew. It was a windy night and the shooting had not been heard in the six lower levels of the big ship. Some news must have reached the night shift in the engine room, at the lowest level, for it was taken without the least sign of resistance by a group sent down there after the bridge had been taken. The passengers had been asleep at the time of the attack and were only aware that the ship had been taken over, and was heading on a different course, when they awoke in the morning. By dawn we had already taken the steps necessary for securing the vital parts of the ship and had set up a system of patrols and sentries which gave the illusion that we were really a much larger group than we actually were.

All of this does not explain entirely how twenty-four badly armed men had succeeded with relative ease not only in taking over and occupying the ship, changing its course towards the Atlantic, as suited us, but also in keeping perfect order among 350 crew members and 600 passengers. There are two simple explanations. First, our small force was deployed and used, with great sacrifice of our rest and comfort, so that for the thirteen days we held the Santa Maria neither passengers nor crew were aware of the fact that we were on only twenty-four in number. It was rumored aboard that there were at least seventy of us; and from the tendency towards exaggeration which goes hand in hand with excitement, it was soon rumored that we were armed to the teeth, that we had brought on board quantities of explosives and, above all, that our ranks had been swelled by clandestine comrades whom we had planted among the passengers. This illusion of force was a great power we possessed over the minds of the people, and we used it to full advantage. Second, it became almost immediately obvious that the regimes of Salazar and Franco were hateful to the majority of crew members and Portuguese and Spanish passengers. Any discontent came from the unique and upsetting fact that their previously well-planned routines had been altered. The foreign passengers, mostly Americans on their way to Miami, where the ship was to have docked after Curacao, and Dutch on their way to Europe, proved to be even more tractable. Not only were there no complaints, but some appeared to be quite interested in what
we were doing and were even prepared to help us. It might be said that any personal losses they might have suffered had been compensated by the fact that they were participants in an event which would have world-wide repercussions. In addition to these circumstances, our treatment of passengers and crew was courteous and humane. We were impeccably correct and made every effort to make the newly created situation as easy for them as possible. All of this explains how we were able to maintain discipline and normal life on a ship for thirteen days.

UNDER the command of Commander Souto Mayor, and with the obedient help of the defeated Captains, immediately after the capture the ship was headed towards the strait between the islands of Martinique and St. Lucia. We wanted to reach the waters of the South Atlantic as soon as possible and from there make our demands in connection with our second operational phase. Until we gained these objectives, it would be necessary to keep our position and course secret. We would have an easy trip for three days—the scheduled travel time between Curacao and Miami. We could gain an extra day by notifying the company’s agency in Miami by radio that we were reducing speed because of mechanical trouble and would therefore arrive behind schedule. Thereafter, there would be wonder over the prolonged delay, then alarm followed by a search. But the searchers would be without any easy means of orientation, since we planned to maintain radio silence.

Unfortunately, an unforeseen event worked against our plans and made us change the course of our operations completely. The wounded crewman grew seriously ill as we neared the strait between Martinique and St. Lucia. According to the ship’s doctor, his life was in danger, and if he did not receive the care he could get only on shore, he would surely die. There was also a passenger who had been sick when he came on board and his condition, too, had worsened; he needed care that could be obtained only on land.

In short, two lives depended on our landing at St. Lucia, the nearest place where the ill could receive the necessary treatment.

A struggle of conscience now arose. If we put the sick people ashore, we would certainly be denounced and the secrecy, without which attainment of the second phase was impossible, would be shattered. If we did not put the men ashore, we would be responsible for their lives. The case of the wounded man—unlike his dead comrade, a coward—did not concern us as much as that of the sick passenger. The former was an adversary, subject to the contingencies of his position, and an officer in a service which, although peaceful, was not wholly lacking in professional risks and dangers; the latter was a passenger who had confidently embarked for Europe in search of better health. Although it was true that we were on a war footing at that moment, we were also human beings fighting for an ideal from which inhuman violence was excluded.

AFTER many hours of soul-searching debate, we decided to put the sick people ashore and face all of the consequences which might follow. The situation was particularly difficult for us because of the fact that we were still in one of the most heavily patrolled zones of the sea, within immediate reach of American and British bases on Puerto Rico and Trinidad. (Later on, while commenting upon this decision, an Argentine newspaper was to say that I lacked one essential quality of the revolutionary: I was not pitiless. But there are special ways of considering, in revolutionaries, qualities which sometimes compromise the revolution. In my case, while I knew that we were risking a loss of time and other, even greater, dangers, I hoped that we were not forfeiting final victory by our decision.)

The sick people were put ashore under circumstances known to the world, and so the capture of the Santa Maria became known ahead of schedule and the secret of our position and course was in danger. After the debarkation, we headed at full speed for the West Coast of Africa, now prepared to elude any possible attempt at pursuit.

There would now begin a duel between the Santa Maria and forces which we would have to consider attackers, at least initially. The nature of the duel would be more sporting than real, but we would have to accept it in a realistic manner. On the day following our departure from St. Lucia, our radio observation informed us that the Santa Maria incident had become known all over the world and was echoing with all the attributes of an extremely sensational event—just about as we had planned it would. As might have been expected, Lisbon accused us of piracy and murder. The Dictator, his hands still bloody from what he had done in Luanda, asked for help from the foreign powers whom he felt supported him most strongly. He threatened us with force and firing squad, and in his hallucinations invoked the Atlantic Pact, as if it could function as the maritime police of the Dictator’s sea.

WE HAD NOT expected otherwise from these quarters, but we were surprised on hearing the news over the radio that, in response to Salazar’s plea, British, Dutch and several American warships had sailed in pursuit of us. The impression caused by this news was more one of desolation than surprise. Had the British and Americans so misunderstood the lessons of these past years? We felt perfectly calm about the dangers represented by this pursuit; we would not stop, nor would we surrender. We could not be attacked by force with a thousand people on board, and in case of necessity we knew where we could find safe refuge and asylum. Besides, in this first phase we were more eager for a political victory than a military one, although the political victory had been somewhat tarnished by the intervention of the powers in response to Salazar’s plea for help. In those first moments it seemed clear to us that the face of democratic aid for the dictators was continuing, even against an attempt at liberation carried out by Portuguese on Portuguese territory.

For about four days, while con-
taining to give passengers and crew full radio facilities for reassuring their families, constantly changing direction and choosing the least navigated zones of the Atlantic so as not to stray too far from either the objectives of the second phase or from the ports where we could find certain asylum, we managed to elude the pursuit of the American fleet and keep our position a mystery. Whether we accomplished this by dint of our own skills or through the inefficiency of our pursuers is a question we do not wish to pursue further. Meanwhile, we had learned that the British and Dutch ships had ceased their pursuit and that world opinion, enlightened several times by eminent jurists, seemed to be in our favor. Only the American ships persisted. Why? We shall see.

Four days after we left St. Lucia, an unexpected meeting with a Dutch freighter gave our position away. That night the first American military aircraft flew over us and, after a few reconnaissance passes, established radio contact with me. The first words were imperative in objective, if not in form. The pilot invited me to turn the ship about and head for Puerto Rico. I replied that I considered the invitation offensive in that it carried the implication that we were pirates, and that as political rebels, this was an implication that I summarily refused to accept. In more conciliatory terms, he then proposed that as soon as I reached Puerto Rico I meet with the Admiral in command of the American Atlantic Fleet. This proposal I refused just as strongly, emphasizing that I was not opposed to a meeting with American naval authorities provided that it took place aboard the Santa Maria and provided, also, that the authorities did not overstep the narrow limits of their right of intervention in the conflict—their legitimate concern for the fate, lives, and property of the American passengers on board. On no other grounds could I accept a parley with forces or representatives of foreign powers. This exchange was followed by an exchange of radio messages with the Admiral of the U. S. Atlantic Fleet, whose attitude was perfectly conciliatory and who, in acceptable terms, dealt only with the possibility of disembarking the passengers. This was also our desire, and the only conditions we asked were guarantees for the safety of the passengers, ourselves and the ship, for which we wanted assurances that it would be able to sail from the port after debarkation of the passengers.

OUR FIRST great victory over Salazar, then, came in the very form in which the negotiations were carried on, sometimes by exchange of radio grams with the Admiral, at other times by direct verbal communication with the aircraft which had never ceased to keep us under surveillance. In addition, the conference with Rear Admiral Allen Smith, commander of the Caribbean Sea Frontier, was conducted strictly in accord with our conditions. Salazar had asked the Americans for help against "pirates"; but the Americans were dealing with us as equals, with a reciprocity of recognition of rights—a clear indication that they recognized us as rebels, and not as "pirates." World opinion supported us, and the Dictator found friendly echoes only among the Spanish authorities, as infamous as his own, and among organs of the press which he had bribed. The first great objective of the first phase of our operations of belligerency had almost been reached. In the following days it would be fulfilled.

Under the conditions we had laid out, Rear Adm. Smith first suggested the port of Belém, Pará, in Brazil, for the debarkation of passengers. Since docking facilities involving the safety of the ship were not adequate, this suggestion did not suit us. It was finally decided that we would disembark the passengers and crew at the port of Recife, if Brazilian authorities would accept our conditions.

By fortunate circumstance, Brazil was with us; we had no doubt of the support of the people, and a government which had been suspect because of the support it had given Salazar was to be succeeded, on January 31, by the government of President Jânio Quadros, whose declarations against all dictatorships left no doubts as to his position, and who also knew me personally. For complete assurance, I waited a day until the new President was inaugurated. On the day he was sworn in, I sent him a radio message describing the situation and asking for the necessary guarantees regarding the debarkation of passengers and the return of the ship to international waters. The reply of the illustrious President was quick, categorical and completely reassuring. He was friendly enough to recall a certain meeting we had had in Caracas during the time of his candidacy.

WE entered the port of Recife with a guarantee that we would be free to return to international waters after disembarking the passengers and crew and taking on provisions. That we did not do so was due entirely to certain practical difficulties, not because the Brazilian authorities interposed any objections. Once it had become impossible—

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secretly to reach the objectives of our second phase, and we had to post- 
pone (I repeat, postpone) the sub-
sequent operations, the Santa Maria, 
which had served so well as the in-
strument for the first phase, now had 
become not only useless to us, but a 
tremendous burden. In addition, 
since we had not taken a single cent 
of the money we found on board 
(what kind of pirates were we?) and 
had none of our own, how could we 
pay for provisions and a new crew? 
On top of all this, when we captured 
the ship a generator was out of order 
and now needed repairs. The only 
solution was to accept the generous 
asylum offered by President Quadros, 
along with guarantees concerning the 
disposition of the ship. Under these 
provisions, we would enjoy the same 
status before the law as any Bra-
zilian citizen. This was as honorable 
and dignified for us as it was for the 
Brazilian authorities.

The President’s attitude, as well 
as the enthusiastic reception tendered 
us by people from all walks of 
Brazilian life, was much more than 
a tacit recognition of the rights of 
our position. It was the final conse-
cretion of the victory of twenty-four 
men, poor but determined, who had 
taken upon themselves the anxieties 
of their oppressed peoples along with 
the feelings of free peoples the world 
over in their fight against the shame-
ful diplomacy of two dictators bereft 
of political or humane scruples.

The Santa Maria was turned over 
to the Brazilian authorities with 
President Quadros’ personal guaran-
tee that its fate would be decided in 
conformity with current international 
agreements. Our departure from 
the ship was given full honors, proffered 
us by a contingent of marines.

From Lisbon, the Salazar press 
and radio venerated against the 
American and Brazilian governments, 
accusing them of piracy. They used 
the strongest of demagogic methods 
and police violence to contain the 
excitement of the Portuguese people, 
already deprived of news from out-
side by the ironclad censorship. In 
order to save face, however, Salazar

was quick to express, through his 
agents, his “gratitude” for the man-
ner in which Brazil had resolved 
the matter and declared that the 
Portuguese Government would not 
proceed further against us (Tar-
tuffe and Torquemada in action).

We do not intend to rest on our 
laures. We have completely attain-
ed the objectives of this first oper-
tional phase. World attention has 
become focused on the atrocious 
misery of two peoples tyrannized by 
dictators who blasphemously exer-
cise their rule in God’s name. We 
shall count on these advantages in 
the continuation of our struggle un-
der less difficult circumstances. With 
a will which grows stronger all the 
while, we shall rely on the support 
and understanding of all free peoples 
the world over. We continue to hope 
that our appeal for the moral and 
material aid we need for the sup-
pression of the Iberian dictatureships 
—a suppression which will give the 
universal ideals of democracy a truer 
meaning — will not be in vain.

Letters

(Continued from inside cover)

individuals who want peace, all who 
want humanity to survive, join in the 
effort to get the maximum public sup-
port for this petition. Copies may be 
reached from the 100 Days for Peace 
Committee, 530 Fifth Avenue, New 
York, N. Y. 

HENRY H. ABRAMS 
New York City

Auto Insurance

Dear Sirs: In the Feb. 18 issue of The 
Nation, there appeared an article enti-
tled, “New Concept in Auto Insur-
ance,” summing up certain theories ad-
vanced by Professor Ehrenzweig of the 
University of California, in which appear 
a number of serious distortions 
1. In attacking the idea of liability 
Based on fault, the author, Peter Fabri-
zus, dramatically oversimplifies the legal 
concept of negligence by dash off a 
couple of extreme and untested examples. 
. . . Statements such as “In millions of 
cases, juries have either come to obvi-
ously unfair decisions by adhering to 
the law or tended to be fair by flouting it,” 
have no factual basis.

2. The author’s proposals would 
neither speed up the disposition of claims 
by traffic victims nor provide any 
similarity of adequate compensation for 
personal injuries.

3. The author cites the workmen’s 
compensation acts as examples of how 
well the plan would work. Basically 
taught to industrial injuries, work-
man’s compensation is ill-suited to auto-
mobile accidents, and would create new 
ills without curing the old . . .

Joseph A. PAGE 
NACCA Law Journal 
Watertown, Mass.

Dear Sirs: “New Concept in Auto 
Insurance” contains gross exaggerations. 
. . . The insurance companies have 
repeated the old charge that the plaint-
iffs’ attorneys receive one-half the 
award so often that the public has come 
accept it as true. Please demand 
that the author furnish the name of a single leading plaintiff’s attorney . . . 
whose agreement with his client regu-
larly contemplates this.

ARTHUR H. SCHATTZ 
Hartford, Conn.

Dear Sirs: Re the above:

1. The charge of oversimplification 
can be applied to any magazine article 
distilled from a larger work. For the 
uncompressed statement of my theory, 
with examples and references, I refer 
Mr. Page to my two books, Negligence 
Without Fault and Full Aid Insurance.

2. The substitution of compulsory 
accident insurance for liability insurance 
would indeed greatly reduce the ex-
pense and delay involved in the settling 
of automobile injury claims by eliminat-
ing negligence litigation. To be sure, 
compensation, while becoming available 
to the large numbers of victims not 
proving fault, would be keyed to min-
um requirements for the “little man” 
But this compensation would by its 
predictability encourage potential vic-
tims of “greater worth” to obtain 
their own excess insurance.

3. Neither Fabrizius nor I have sug-
ggested that workmen’s compensation 
should be the model for this future 
insurance. In fact, I have stressed 
repeatedly the desirability of keeping 
automobile compensation away from 
administration by commissions.

4. I agree with Mr. Schatz that the 
fee usually charged by counsel is less 
than 50 per cent. That it is not signi-
ficantly less, appears from the 1961 sur-
vey of the Columbia University Pro-
ject for Effective Justice.

ALBERT A. EHRENZWEIG 
Professor of Law 
University of California 
Berkeley, Calif.

The Nation