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BATTALION



# Portuguese leftists hold 4 Lisbon bases

**LISBON, Portugal** — Leftist troops took over four air force bases around Lisbon yesterday without firing a shot and seized a top air force commander in what appeared to be a concerted rebellion against civil and military leaders.

President Francisco da Costa Gomes, acting as chief of staff of the armed forces, proclaimed a state of alert and banned all street demonstrations, including one called for tomorrow by left-wing troops and sailors of the Lisbon area.

A leftist radio station said dissident paratroopers had captured Gen. Anibal Pinho Freire, a member of the Revolutionary Council and commander of the central air region around Lisbon.

The rebels said in a communique broadcast by the state radio that they would hold the four bases until the

air force chief of staff, Gen. Jose Morais e Silva, Pinho Freire and two other moderate members of the military's ruling Revolutionary Council — Majors Jaime Costa Neves and Jose Canto e Castro — were ousted.

The officers are supporters of the beleaguered government of Premier Jose Pinheiro de Azevedo.

Portuguese military police, also a left-wing group, occupied the Lisbon offices of the official Portuguese news agency (ANOP). They did not appear to be interfering in its operations.

Other units had earlier moved in on the national television and radio stations, apparently to keep them from being taken over by the moderate forces.

There were also unconfirmed reports that militant leftists of a light artillery regiment stationed at

Beirolas, in the Lisbon area, had begun handing out arms to civilian leftists.

A communique from the general staff of the armed forces said dissident paratroopers first took over an air base at Tancos near their own base, 35 miles up the Tagus River from Lisbon.

An air force officer said leftist troops then occupied the Monte Real air base 60 miles north of the capital, the Montijo base just across the Tagus River from Lisbon and the Monsanto base in Lisbon, which is the air force's regional headquarters and communication center.

The government radio said there had been no fighting at any of the bases.

The general staff communique said the seizures of the bases were carried out by "victims of criminal manipulation." It said units defending the bases had been ordered not to fire on the attackers in order to avoid "a grave situation."

The situation is not yet perfectly clear," the statement added.

It said the rebels had acted "under the pretext of a struggle against" the commander of the air force, Gen. Jose Morais e Silva, "who could not be manipulated politically."

The communique was sent urgently to the state radio chain with an order that it should be broadcast immediately "to inform the Portuguese people of the situation."

The assaults were carried out just before dawn by former members of a recently disbanded paratroop regiment and leftist elements in the air force. The air force has often been described by communists and other left-wing groups as "reactionary."

Informed sources said the paratroopers, who have been openly defiant of their officers, leaders of the armed forces and the government, moved into the bases in helicopters and in trucks.

The seizure was in reply to another attempt by the ruling milit-

ary Revolutionary Council to oust leftist Gen. Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho from command of the Lisbon military region.

The council announced after a 10-hour meeting that it had again nominated Capt. Vasco Lourenco to replace Carvalho. The council named Lourenco, a moderate, to last Friday, but President Francisco da Costa Gomes withdrew the nomination in a few hours. Several newspapers reported that commanders of 11 of the 13 military units in the region said their men refused to serve under Lourenco.

Meanwhile, anti-communist farmers started removing barricades from the roads leading north and northeast from Lisbon after Costa Gomes promised to consider their demands for an end to Communist dominance of farm policy.

A delegation of farmers returned home and announced that Costa Gomes had promised a point-by-point reply to the demands within six days. A crowd of several hundred persons at one of a dozen barricades shouted "Victory! Victory!"

The roadblocks were set up Monday evening after a meeting of 25,000 farmers at Rio Maior, 50 miles north of Lisbon. The farmers drew up a list of demands, including assurances against expropriation of their lands.

The roadblocks, which were set up without warning, created traffic jams that stretched for miles. The demonstrators also claimed to have blocked the main rail line.

The Communist Party appealed to its supporters to assemble at meeting places and maintain "active vigilance." The statement, which was broadcast, charged that "reactionary elements" were mounting a campaign of "the gravest subversion."

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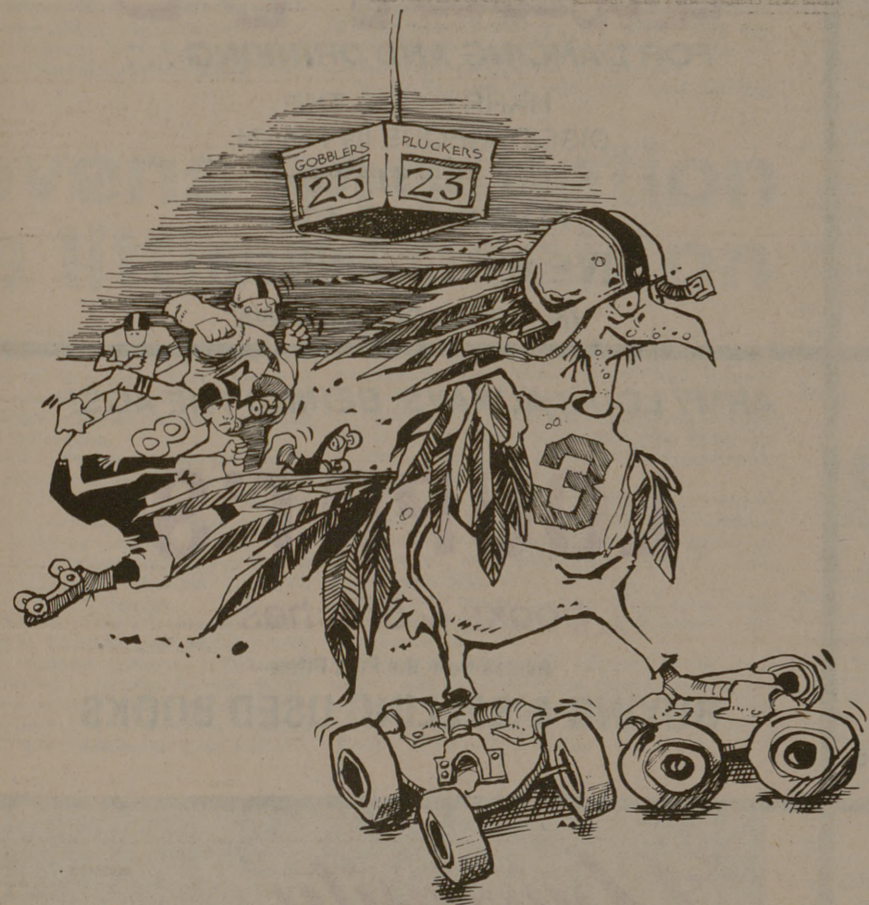
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