SOME NOTES ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE AZORES AND ITS BRITISH CONNECTIONS

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SUMMARY

The first mention of the existence of the Azores seems to have been made, by Mohamed Al Edrisi, an adventurer of the Xth century who became the geographer of Roger II, King of Sicily, for whom he produced a famous description of the world, named *"Al Rojari"*. In it there was a reference of the "Insulae Canarides" and to *nine other islands to the northwest. One of these nine was called "Raca" because it abounded in a species of eagle.* The Azores appeared again in the "Libro per conocimiento de todos los reinos y Señorios", written in Spain in the XIV century. After that, the islands may be seen, on a Genoese chart, a copy of which may have been taken to Portugal by Pedro, the brother of Henry the

Navigator. The prince was interested: he sent one of his captains in search of the Azores. Who was it? At Maiorca, a chart, rendered partially unreadable by an accident with an ink pot (the episode occurred in the XIX century under the eyes of Chopin and George Sand who related it in one of her books), showing the Azores, named as the discoverer a "Diogo de Silves" or "de Simas". Or was it someone else? We will probably never know. Officially Gonçalo Velho Cabral, a friar and knight of the Order of Christ, in 1432 found an island: Santa Maria. The group of nine islands was later called "Azores" ("hawks") because of the great number of these birds. (The birds were in fact "milhafres", buzzards, mistaken for hawks. It is curious to think of the Edrisi's "Raca" island named after "a kind of eagle"). By 1450 all the islands of the central group had been discovered. São Miguel, Terceira, Graciosa, Pico, São Jorge and Faial. Two more, further west, were found later. Except for birds, no people or animals existed. Domestic animals were put ashore. Men followed. From these first days of settlement in the XVth century we find the Flemish on several of the islands. Henry the Navigator's sister, the Infanta Isabel, had married the Duke of Burgundy, Count of Flanders: when people fled from wars in the Low Countries, Isabel sent some of them to her brother's new islands.

1. Portuguese Expansion in Africa, India, the Far East and Brazil: The Azorean role as the key to the North Atlantic sea trade

Years passed.

The world was, finally, fairly well known. The two peninsular kingdoms, taking advantage of their superior capacities at sea, managed to create colossal maritime and commercial empires. Portugal in the Far East, Africa and Brasil. Spain in the rest of the Americas. But in the middle of perilous sea routes of the vast deserted North Atlantic, only the Azores could be used as a base of support and defence for seafaring and trade. Boats sailing from south to north were almost inevitably forced, by winds, to cross the archipelago's waters.

Angra, the capital of the island of Terceira, became, thus, the main North Atlantic maritime centre. Built throughout the years, step by step, its fortifications grew to enormous dimensions, Angra's harbour became, in fact, impregnable. No fleet could be attacked under the cover of its guns. Warships were permanently stationed there, ready to sail and protect arriving merchant vessels.

2. The Spanish Occupation: the Azorean last defensive line of the National Pretender and English support to his cause

After the disaster of Alcácer-Quibir in 1576 and the disappearance of the young King D. Sebastião, the throne was occupied by his aged great-uncle, the Cardinal King, D. Henrique, and on his death, the whole issue of the succession to the Portuguese Crown and Empire was open. Philip II of Spain, who based his claim on his Portuguese mother (daughter of D. Manuel I), invaded Portugal in 1580, overcame some resistance, and thus the Spanish Kings reigned over Portugal for 60 years until 1640 when the country regained its independence. One of the immediate consequences was that all enemies of Spain became the enemies of Portugal and of her possessions too

For a period the Azores held out against Spanish domination and a bastard son of the King D. João III's brother, D. António, (known in history as the Prior of Crato, Grand Master of the Portuguese branch of the order of Malta), led the war. In fact Terceira, is reputed to have offered such stiff resistance that the inhabitants even let loose wild bulls against the disembarking forces at the bloody battle of Salga. Their elite troops disbanded after six hours fighting. The Spanish tried, vainly, to regain their vessels: most of them were victims of dreadful carnage, at the hands of the Azoreans. The fleet retired . . . (For this reason Angra was renamed after 1640 Angra "do Heroismo").

In 1583 Philip of Spain, seriously worried by the deterioration of the Azorean situation sent a new fleet of 97 ships commanded, again, by the Marquês de Santa Cruz, which having totally defeated the Anglo-Portuguese-French fleet off the coast of S. Miguel, (the victory was considered so important that it was depicted on a fresco on one of the walls of the Escorial's "Hall of Battles"), finally imposed Spanish authority over all the islands. Santa Cruz returned to Lisbon and left on the island of S. Miguel (the largest), Rui Gonçalves da Camara, Count of Vila Franca. His first priority was obviously to fortify the islands against English and Dutch raiders. D. António had received help from England and this among other reasons, drew England's attention to these Atlantic islands. And so, England, with its continuing war with Spain, made several raids on the Azores.

3. The Great English attack at the end of the XVIth century [1]

With Portugal under the Spanish crown and after the defeat of the "Armada", (where almost half of the vessels were Portuguese), England launched a systematic attempt to seize the Azores and cut the Iberians from their imperial resources. In fact, almost immediately after the "Armada" the Elizabethan large scale attempt to conquer the islands started. On September 26th, 1585, off the village of Mosteiros (S. Miguel), two English ships of about 150 tons each appeared. On the 27th they attacked a Portuguese galleon arriving from India. In this case the attack was beaten off; but this was by no means always the case. The raids on the Azores continued. The Earl of Cumberland invaded and sacked the islands of S. Jorge and Graciosa. He also attacked Horta with 300 men, putting the defenders to flight, causing great destruction and occupying the town for a whole week. In 1591, an incident occurred, which was to become famous in English literature. Sixteen English privateers, under the command of Sir Thomas Howard, attacked the island of Flores. Warned in time of the presence of a Spanish fleet with a larger number of ships, the English, except for the *Revenge* under the command of Sir Richard Grenville, withdrew. Sir Richard, however, remained (either waiting for his crew, or thinking that the approaching sails belonged to the treasure galleons). Having finally discovered the true situation, instead of retreating he engaged the Spanish vessels. The *Revenge* resisted heroically until she was boarded. Only Sir Richard Grenville and twenty men were alive. Sir Richard died some days later. This heroic deed, has been the subject of a very famous poem by Tennyson, and is now a classic of British poetry. Meanwhile the Count of Vila Franca was replaced on S. Miguel by the younger Gonçalo Vaz Coutinho. In 1595 a new expedition was mounted against the islands. As usual in those days it had several "investors" who put up the money expecting rich dividends from plunder and captured ships. It was commanded by Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex and a great favourite of Queen Elizabeth. Their instructions were to capture the Spanish Treasure Fleet due in the summer from the Americas and also to plunder the islands. The armada was composed of about 100 ships, including a Dutch squadron, and Essex's principal commanders were Lord Thomas Howard, Lord Mountjoy who, together with Sir Frances Vere, commanded the land forces, and Sir Walter Raleigh. Curiously among the sailors who joined this fleet was John Donne who wrote several poems on

[1] This paragraph reproduces partially an article published in the "Anglo-Portuguese News" by Paulo Lowndes Marques and Augusto de Athayde.

this voyage. Misfortune was with them from the start. Terrible storms scattered the ships and delayed the voyage for about two months. It was only in August that they concentrated on the most westerly island of Flores and waited for the Treasure Fleet. But, Essex, after a council of war, decided to divide the fleet and attack the various islands. Essex and Raleigh would attack Faial. Howard and Vere would deal with Graciosa. Mountjoy and Blount would attack S. Miguel. And the island of Pico, (already known for its good wine), would be attacked by the Dutch squadron. Sir Walter Raleigh arrived at Faial harbour with instructions to wait for Essex. He waited for three days while his troops, impatient for plunder, observed the population retiring to the hills, with long lines of mules carrying their possessions. Raleigh finally disembarked alone with 160 sailors and 100 soldiers. There was little resistance and what defenders remained, concentrated inside the fort, from where they fired on the English forces. Essex arrived next day and was enraged at Sir Walter Raleigh's initiative. They lost another day squabbling and when they again landed in force the fort by now had also been evacuated. Furiously the troops razed the town to the ground and destroyed all the churches. They even took the church bells with them.

Next, this squadron sailed to Graciosa but a deputation of the inhabitants came on board, offered victuals and entreated that they should not be plundered. Essex graciously granted this request and then decided to sail on and attack S. Miguel.

Essex was committing his greatest mistake, for by now, with the fleet dispersed on local plunder, he risked losing the greatest prize and what, after all, they had come to do: to capture the Spanish Treasure Fleet. And this is exactly what happened. No sooner had Essex appeared off S. Miguel than he was advised that the Treasure Fleet had been warned by launches (which put off from Graciosa) and had made at once for the nearest fortified island, Terceira, where the treasure was unloaded and placed inside the forts. When the English arrived there was little they could do as the forts were well armed with artillery. A council of war was called and it was decided not to attempt a landing. In furious desperation the armada decided to go back to S. Miguel and attack Ponta Delgada.

Before the attack began, a curious incident took place. The English ship in command, observing that the flag of St. Sebastian (patron of Ponta Delgada) was flying over the Castle of S. Braz fired a salute to which the local governor did not reply, for the reason that *"não convinha gastar pól-*

vora",* whereupon the whole fleet opened fire on the town. But the winds were against them and they didn't get any closer. Essex then sent a party of parliamentarians to shore, under a white flag, but the defendants opened fire on them and they beat a hasty retreat. Outraged at this violation of the conventions of war, Essex fired on the town until nightfall. During the night feverish work was done by the defenders, all this commanded by the able Governor Gonçalo Vaz Coutinho. Trenches were set out across all streets. But, for several days, there were no developments. Finally the fleet was seen to approach again and, after a renewed bombardment of the town, large flat launches, filled with men were towed close to the beaches and began to row in. They approached with shouts and sounds of drums and trumpets. The defenders held their fire but when they finally opened fire they did so with great effect. The attack was not pressed and the launches returned to the ships. A prisoner was taken by the Azoreans and, threatened with "torment", is said to have described the invasion plan. Essex was beginning to fail. He then disembarked about 2,000 men further down the coast at Vila Franca, about three leagues from Ponta Delgada overland. Sir Walter Raleigh remained in front of the town as a diversion. But this plan was impracticable "by reason of the high and craggy mountains on the way". Vaz Coutinho evacuated Vila Franca and put his guerillas in the surrounding hills, refusing to divide his troops. The English found Vila Franca well stocked with food and wine and remained there, not attempting to progress inland, for six days. All this while Raleigh remained in front of Ponta Delgada and, remembering the dissension over his attack on Horta, took no initiative and stuck to the letter of his orders. After six days Essex re-embarked. He was attacked during this operation and over 200 of his men were drowned. After this day he decided to sail home. A storm gave the scattered ships an opportunity to make their own way to England. Every ship arrived with a different story but it was difficult to avoid the conclusion that they had made "idle wanderings upon the sea". Essex was executed in the Tower in 1602 and Sir Walter Raleigh suffered the same fate under King James I. Although further raids took place on the Azores this was the last full scale attempt on the part of the English.

Restoration, after 60 years, of Portuguese independence in 1640, and the marriage of Princess Catarina of Braganza to Charles II reestablished good peace and old treaties of friendship and commerce with England. A long and peaceful sleep for the Azores ensued.

* It would not be convenient to waste gunpowder.

4. Portuguese neutrality and Azorean incidents during the American War of Independence and the war of 1812

Remaining neutral, Portugal did not participate in the wars. But the mixing of American whalers, Azorean harbours and British interests, fleets and diplomacy, produced a rather explosive "cocktail".

The strategic importance of the Azores was, indeed considerable. As an example it should be mentioned that only under several entries related to the Azores a number of pages of small print can be found in the immense catalogue of "The papers of the Continental Congress"! What a treasure for the history of the Azores during the War of Independence. Let us hope a scholar will, some day, research them.

During the Anglo-American war of 1812 the Azorean harbour of Horta (Island of Faial) was actually involved in a serious incident. Having entered the neutral Portuguese water of the harbour to take provisions, the powerful American privateer *General Armstrong* was attacked and destroyed by three British warships (the extremely strong *Plantaganet* and two important frigates the *Rota* and the *Carnation*), with total disregard of Portuguese neutrality. The British notified the local authorities of their decision to raze the town if any attempt was made to prevent the violation. Consequently nothing was done by the islanders and the U.S.A. held Portugal liable for the loss of the *Armstrong*. The issue, was discussed for years and years, and was only settled in the second half of the XIX century, through the payment, by Portugal of a considerable sum, fixed by international arbitration. The Portuguese "submission" must be considered within the context of the period, during which total support was given by the United Kingdom to Portugal against Napoleon. In the U.S.A., the admirable courage and resistance of the *Armstrong* led to considering the Faial episode as remarkable naval victory.

5. A Volcanic Frustration

By the beginning of the XIXth Century the ancient dream of a British strong point in the Azores almost appeared to materialize. One of the best descriptions of these extraordinary facts seems to have been made by an Azorean emigrant in the USA who published his impressions of a voyage to the native islands: "A Trip to the Azores or Western Islands by M. Borges de Henriques", Boston, 1867. "In the early part of 1811 a tremendous explosion occurred, and smoke and flames issued from the sea

at a distance of nearly two miles from the western shores of St. Michael. Smoke, fire, cinders, ashes, and stones of an immense size, were thrown up from this spot, where there was a depth of about forty fathoms. Upon the surface of the water in that vicinity floated innumerable quantities of fish; some as if roasted, and others as if boiled. A dangerous shoal was then formed there, where the ship *Swift*, with all her crew, was lost, before its existence became known".

"On the 18th June, the British sloop of war *Sabrina*, the crew o which, two days previously, had observed two columns of white smoke ascending from the sea, which they then supposed to arise from an engagement, approached as closely to the volcano as she could with safety, and found it raging with unabated violence throwing up large stones, cinders, and ashes, accompanied by several severe concussions. By July 4th a complete island had been formed, and was perfectly quiet. The captain and some of the officers of the *Sabrina* effected a landing, but found it very steep, its height being from two to three hundred feet. With much difficulty they reached the top; but the ground or rather the ashes, composed of sulphurous matter, dross of iron, etc. was so very hot to their feet that they were obliged to return. Before leaving, however *they took possession of the new-born island in the name of his Britannic Majesty, and left an English Union Jack flying upon it.* The form of the island, at this time, was nearly round, and the circumference about a mile. In the summit of it was a large basin of boiling water, whence a stream some six yards across ran into the sea, towards St. Michael; and at the distance of fifty yards from the island, the water, although thirty fathoms deep, was too hot to hold the hand in. Subsequently and by degrees, this island crumbled away, and disappeared in the sea, *English Union Jack and all*, so that by the middle of October no part was left above water".

The dream was over. An unusual colour print, describing the episode was published in London by the well known editor Boydel.

6. **England, the Azores and the Portuguese Civil War**

When the American War of Independence was over the French revolution exploded. As everybody knows, before Trafalgar, Napoleon had still a navy and the will to "impose" on Britain the so-called "Continental Blockade". Portugal did not obey and, consequently, was the victim of aggression by a "contra-natura" French-Spanish invasion. The Royal Family, with English support, went to Brazil. (The King of England and the

Portuguese Monarch were among the rare European sovereigns never to fall into the hands of the French). English forces even settled at Madeira, in order to cut short any French southern Atlantic folly. All this is very well known. And the Azores?

Some years after the Napoleonic invasions (beaten back by Portuguese and British armies under Wellington's command), a fierce civil war ensued in Portugal, opposing "absolutists" to "constitutionalists". The "absolute" King, D. Miguel reigned for seven years. Constitutionalists fled to England, waiting for the return of their leader D. Pedro, (D. Miguel's brother), Emperor of Brazil. Where should a place be prepared for his arrival? Again the Azores were crucial. After a local coup, Terceira was seized by a liberal junta. Some of the islands followed. Others remained faithful to D. Miguel. But the "liberal" emigrés immediately sailed from England and organized "a government" at Angra do Heroismo. Soon, D. Pedro arrived. Having established his authority over the entire archipelago, he organized a small army of 7,500 men, who left S. Miguel to land, near Oporto, at Mindelo. From there, they conquered the whole country and D. Miguel retired to Austria. (They entered Portuguese History as "the 7,500 braves of Mindelo" although a meticulous counting of such heroes, claimed today as glorious ancestors by many families would probably lead us to a total of several hundred thousand).

How did D. Pedro raise funds for the expedition? Mostly with British government support, which was maintained throughout the entire war. But an additional Azorean detail is curious: a considerable sum was raised, as a loan, in London, under the signatures of a group of Azoreans, whose credit in the City was supported, by the orange trade. They, indeed, "bet the winner". After D. Pedro's victory a comfortable "list of honours" was published. Barons, Viscounts, Counts, Marqueses, Coats of Arms, Medals, many Azoreans were very happy!

7. **Oranges and Sterling**

During the hard Napoleonic times we must admit that the Azores were, in fact, the biggest Portuguese earners of the period. And this through a rather surprising manner. Britons were used to good Spanish oranges but for a while, the "Blockade" prevented them indulging in such healthy habits, but only for a while. Soon, some Azorean traders, decided to risk their ships through the "blockade, (rather ineffective, we must

admit, at the level of those latitudes!), loaded with oranges.

They were, in fact, developing a trade that had been already initiated by the middle of the XVIIIth century. How they were welcomed in England! And what a stupendous business they did. The market was open. Even after Trafalgar, the XIXth century became "the orange century" for the Azores. Trade developed immensely. Scores of ships established a continuous link between Britain and the island ports (specially Ponta Delgada), overcrowding them almost permanently. Amounts of sound gold pounds, never heard of before locally, piled up in English banks. There is even evidence of Azorean bankers working in the City. The traditional, (and some new), Azorean families became rich. And so a considerable English influence was felt during all the XIXth century in many aspects of life. Vessels left with oranges and came back with all kinds of English goods, furniture, china, fabrics, musical instruments, books, etc. Britain and the "orange sterling" were present too in neo-gothic chapels, monuments, cemeteries and yachts! But everything comes to an end. By the beginning of this century a disease killed the orange trees and the "gold mine" was shut. The links with England diminished.

8. **A botanic passion of English origin**

By the middle of the XIXth century, an interesting combined effect of the British influence and of the "orange affluency", was the development of a sort of passion for large botanical parks in the English style: several of the Azorean families created them, transforming ancestral lands, with the help of British landscape gardeners, architect, botanists, etc. others, even abandoned their traditional manors and built (sometimes at colossal cost) Victorian stately homes (such as the one which is now the seat of the Azorean local government).

The main parks belonged to the Viscount and Marquis of Praia (at Furnas), where an Englishman, John Milton, was responsible for a considerable part of the works; and to the Marquis of Jacome Correia, where British know how was also present; to José do Canto (the largest and botanically richest park) designed by David Mocatta (1806/1882), a Jewish-English architect (about whom there is detailed information in the Royal Institute of British Architects). José do Canto had an English chief gardener who, alas, sometimes drank rather immoderately as we can see from some indignant letters from the employer. We guess that Brown's story was a sad one. During a visit to the Anglican cemetery and its

Church of St. George in Ponta Delgada, Island of São Miguel, we made some findings related to Brown. Apparently tragedy struck in 1861. A tombstone bears the inscription: "SACRED TO MEMORY OF EMMA GEORGIANA DIED MAY 28TH 1861 AGED 10 YEARS, ALSO GEORGE EVERATT DIED June 29TH 1861 AGED 8 YEARS AND CAROLINE MARY DIED JULY 16TH 1861 AGED 3 MONTHS, CHILDREN OF GEORGE BROWN LANSCAPE GARDENER WHO CAME TO THIS ISLAND FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF LAYING OUT THE GARDENS OF ILLMO SNOR JOSÉ DO CANTO, AND SARAH HIS WIFE. "SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN WHO COME UNTO ME". From this we can see that, in a matter of months, three small children died. One thinks twice about the alcohol problem. Other tombstones give us information about the Brown adventure: "In loving memory of George Brown who entered into rest January 8th 1880 in his 68th year". And in three more graves rest three other adult children. Among them Sophia Brown who died "a spinster in 1942 aged 87 years of age". Still well remembered by a number of Azoreans, she ran until her death the "Hotel Brown", which her father had opened, upon retiring from José do Canto's garden. "Hotel Brown" was for a long time the best in the island. And Miss Brown created a very special English cake, which, is still famous! (One thinks of the "Sacher Torte" in Vienna all distances respected). Some ladies still keep the "formula": I have eaten it myself.

9. **"A Wise Report", and other travellers' stories**

Through the centuries many travellers wrote about the Azores. A list of such accounts, even only those made by Britons, would be impossible in the present work. Two of them, though, should be mentioned: one is rather unknown but very curious; the other is the most famous of narratives by English travellers.

In 1813 Thomas Ashe — "Captain Light Dragoons", — published in London a *"HISTORY of the AZORES or WESTERN ISLANDS; containing an account of the GOVERNMENT, LAWS, AND RELIGION, the Manners, Ceremonies, and Character of the Inhabitants: and demonstrating THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE VALUABLE ISLANDS to the BRITISH EMPIRE. Illustrated by maps and other engravings. London: PRINTED FOR SHERWOOD, NEELY, AND JONES, PATERNOSTER ROW; and sold by all Booksellers. 1813."*

The book is today very rare. And its curiosity arises from the fact that it contains the strong defence of the control of the Azores by the United Kingdom., The work is presented "to the Right Honourable Francis, Earl of Moira" as voluntarily produced by the author "from want of other employment in these Islands". But, as one reads the book, it appears clearly that we are, in fact, in the presence of a serious and systematic report, in which all aspects of the Azores are considered in order to reach the conclusion that the Archipelago would be of great interest to Britain, and that it should be handed over by Portugal as payment for the great services received during the Napoleonic wars. It is, indeed, a sound and almost professional study. Why was the author in the Azores? Who sent him? And what happened to the report, which, apparently, had no notoriety and no consequences?

The other book dates from several years later (1841), and is, as previously mentioned, a widely known account of the voyage of two brothers in the Azores: "A WINTER IN THE AZORES; and a SUMMER AT THE BATHS OF THE FURNAS. By JOSEPH BULLAR, M.D. and HENRY BULLAR, of LINCOLN'S INN. LONDON: JOHN VAN VOORST, PATERNOSTER ROW. 1841."

Here we are not reading "a dense report", but two volumes of gently narrated and well written impressions and detailed descriptions. The book, (volumes I and II), has been re-edited and translated, (the first edition remaining very rare). Here are no imperialistic recommendations. Only a peaceful and often amused view of an ancient society where, much of the British influence is identified by the authors.

10. Azores and the 1st and 2nd World Wars

During the first world war the use of Azorean bases by British and American forces was all too natural as Portugal participated in the conflict on the side of the Allies. A considerable American naval base was established at Ponta Delgada. Its chief commander, Admiral Dunn, was popular, appreciated and respected. Americans were sincerely seen as good friends. A square still bears Dunn's name in the town center. (The base was visited in 1918 by the young Naval Under-Secretary Franklin Delano Roosevelt).

Things were not so clear and easy in 1939/45. It would be as futile and as out of place to discuss here the importance of the "Azorean issue" in the relationship between the Allies and Portugal, one of the "good neutrals" during World War II. At least since 1941 Britain, standing gloriously

alone, began to be acutely aware of the traditional strategic importance of the Azores. The ranging U-boat war, was a nightmare: supplies from the USA and the Empire were, as everybody knows, seriously endangered. Salazar was pro-British. But he wanted, by every means, to pursue his policy of Iberian, (including Spanish), neutrality, so difficult to maintain as Spain was under very heavy pressure from Germany.

On the other hand Roosevelt continuously insisted with London, (and even with Rio de Janeiro!) for the military seizure of the Azores and Cape Verde, (as had happened before with Iceland).

At a certain point, Roosevelt managed even to convince Churchill. And, what is still much more astounding, apparently the Portuguese ambassador in London too. Portugal owes, since those tense and terrible times, during which a simple unhappy step could engulf in the fire of war all the Peninsula, (and the silly Rooseveltian plan would, undoubtedly, produce such a disaster), an immense debt of gratitude is owed to a man and to the ministry he was responsible for: Anthony Eden and the Foreign Office. Both opposed, beyond all conceivable limits, to the joint Roosevelt-Churchill military take-over Azorean plan: they were deeply convinced that the timely use of the Alliance framework would be the correct way of handling the issue. And indeed it was.

In fact, Salazar, through all the difficulties, maintained the same very firm and unchanged position: a considerable military contingent sent to the islands would resist an attack by any of the belligerents; facilities and bases would be granted should Britain ask for them within the framework of the old Alliance; the Portuguese government would be transferred to the Azores, in case of a German attack. Finally, during the summer of 1943, London invoked the alliance, and received a positive answer, which was explained to Hoynigen-Huene, the Reich's ambassador in Lisbon, personally by Salazar in a small marvel of diplomatic, although somewhat cynical reasoning: "the granting of the bases did not affect Portuguese neutrality" (Were the Germans convinced? Most probably, at that point, they had no more force to "explain" that they were not).

But: no Americans please! Only British had access to the bases, mainly to Lages at Terceira Island. Americans were granted the Santa Maria base only later, and against formal guarantees given about the devolution to Portugal of Timor, (occupied by the Japanese), which indeed

took place after Japan's defeat. And finally all forces joined together in the NATO Alliance. The British slowly retired after the war, and the bases remained, (Lajes to this day, Santa Maria having been abandoned), exclusively American.