

Tunis, 24.1.38.

## A MISSION TO PORTUGAL

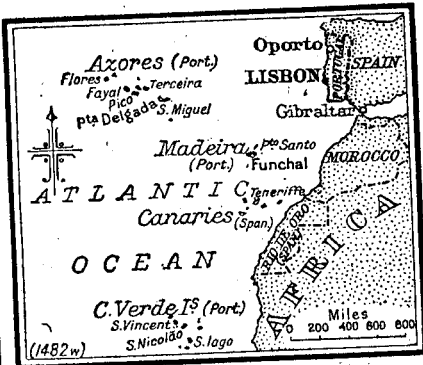
### MEANING OF THE ALLIANCE

#### STRATEGIC VALUES

From Our Lisbon Correspondent

The British Services Mission which will leave for Portugal this month will come at a moment when the relations between the two countries are closer than at any time since the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. Although throughout the most trying periods the Governments of each country no doubt understood one another, the man in the street was frequently bewildered, misled by opportunist propaganda from outside sources, and left to draw false inferences. Those periods have passed.

To-day, thanks to Mr. Eden's statements in Parliament, and specifically his categorical repudiation of any intention of seeking a solution to the German Colonial question at the expense of Portugal or any other colonial Power, owing also in no small measure to the



realization that Britain, while working wholeheartedly for peace, is rearming and is determined in the ultimate event to defend her interests, laymen as well as officials appreciate the full benefit of concord between these two ancient allies. The British Mission will pursue its task in friendly cooperation and with mutual understanding, strengthened by the sympathetic atmosphere of the Portuguese Government and people.

"It is the duty of the contracting parties," said a distinguished Portuguese general, writing in 1908 of the alliance, "to anticipate events, seeking ways and means of mutual strength against possible events." However abhorrent such events would most certainly be to both Portugal and Britain, the duty of each remains the same to-day.

#### OVER 500 YEARS OLD

The alliance, which was evolved from the renewal of an earlier merchants' treaty by King Edward and King Diniz in 1308, and became a definite alliance between John of Gaunt and King Ferdinand of Portugal in 1372, has been maintained down the centuries. It exists. No mere sentiment or trade interest alone has drawn Portugal and Britain together for over 500 years. Geographical position and the naval problem born of geographic situation are responsible for

## A.R.P. ARREARS

### STRENGTHENING THE HOME OFFICE

#### PROPOSAL FOR ADDITIONAL MINISTER

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—We, as the officers of the Parliamentary Air Raid Precautions Committee, wish to congratulate *The Times* on its instructive, helpful, and timely articles on this urgent question. Your Correspondent's fair and balanced account of both the progress and the shortcomings of this new and fourth branch of national defence deserves attentive study by all who are interested in this important subject.

Our Committee has from time to time made detailed recommendations on almost all the principal aspects of this complex problem. In this letter, however, we shall confine ourselves to the general question of direction and organization at the top, upon which all activities over the entire country are ultimately dependent.

It is our considered opinion that the progress of air raid precautions is being retarded through a lack of impetus and leadership from the centre. We are not criticizing any of the responsible Ministers or officials. The Home Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, and the Under-Secretary, Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd, considering the varied and exacting demands of their other many Departmental duties, have managed to devote a surprising amount of time and energy to this new question. Likewise Wing Commander Hodsoll, with his small skeleton staff, has during the last 12 months achieved remarkable results. That does not, however, alter the fact that evidence from every quarter goes to show that the work of the Air Raid Precautions Department has for some time past been seriously prejudiced by the restricted size of its personnel.

The decision announced last month to expand and reorganize the Department's staff should go far to remedy the position from the administrative or Civil Service point of view. However, the strengthening of the executive or ministerial personnel still calls for urgent attention.

Air raid precautions are an entirely new branch of Governmental activity. They require, therefore, something much more than routine supervision by the Minister. This problem, which so directly affects the lives of the people, raises a host of broad questions of political policy, which can only be decided by the Home Secretary himself. Many such questions have for months past been waiting for decision.

How can he hope to find the necessary time to sift and consider all these new problems? The posts of Home Secretary and Under-Secretary were already full-time jobs before air raid precautions were ever thought of. How can these two Ministers be expected to take on this new and growing branch of national defence without any additional Ministerial assistance?

It has been suggested that a separate Ministry should be formed for this purpose. But there are many valid objections to this proposal. Air raid precautions are, in our view, so closely connected with many of the services already administered by the Home Office that if divided

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