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Sections and sympathizing groups of the Fourth International, as well as other organizations that consider themselves Trotskyist, have been giving extensive coverage to the rapidly moving political events in Portugal. This Internal Information Bulletin contains a sampling of the articles being written. Also included are two articles from Workers World, a group that does not call itself Trotskyist but whose views coincide with positions taken by currents inside the world Trotskyist movement on some points.

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Portugal: The Revolutionary Process in an Hour of Decision

By Luis Valle

[The following article is reprinted from the July 19, 1975 issue of *Avanzada Socialista*, the weekly newspaper of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers Party).]

On July 11, the two ministers representing the Socialist Party in the Portuguese government abandoned their post. With this act, the break-up of the collaboration between the leadership of the Movimento das Forças Armadas (MFA—Armed Forces Movement) and the SP, that even with its problems, lasted more than one year, was formalized. Some days later, the only bourgeois party (Partido Popular Democrático [PPD—People's Democratic Party]) which was a part of the government, took the same course as the Socialists and withdrew its representatives.

This crisis, the gravest one since the fall of the dictatorship in April 1974, apparently originated in a decision of the MFA to promote the formation of People's Committees with the stated intention of displacing the Constituent Assembly from the political scene (in which the SP and PPD have a majority). Nevertheless, this motive, alluded to in press dispatches and the declarations of SP leaders, like the earlier conflict around the newspaper *República* (which we referred to in *Avanzada Socialista* No. 151), are nothing more than manifestations of a more profound conflict.

And the roots of this conflict are the reason for the existence of the current Portuguese government.

Bourgeois or Revolutionary Government?

The military coup that a little more than a year ago brought down the Portuguese dictatorship, unleashed enormous social forces, which were held for almost a half-century in the straightjacket of the dictatorship.

The masses of workers took to the streets to tear down the old repressive apparatus and win the freedoms that had been denied to them for so long, and also, to take advantage of those new freedoms to win economic demands, first of all wage increases.

This vigorous eruption of the masses upset the plans of those who aspired to consolidate a solid and stable bourgeois government. In July and September of 1974 and in March of 1975, the attempts of reaction were met by a stronger and stronger response from the masses each time. And, in each of these cases, the response of the masses did not stop there; it imposed the democratic election of the Constituent Assembly; built the big trade-union confederation (the Intersindical) in the country; advanced the set up of neighborhood, office and factory committees; caused the seizure of a large number of enterprises; and [the workers] began to take into their hands some of the state's own functions (including vigilance and the struggle against the activities of the reaction.)

Let's take an example from this upsurge of dual power,

parallel to that which is exercised by the government of the MFA. The French weekly *Rouge* reports the establishment of a people's assembly in the Olivais-Encarnação neighborhood, with the help of the officers, non-coms, and rank-and-file soldiers of RALIS (Light Artillery Regiment of Lisbon—this regiment, previously called RAL 1, stood out in the smashing of the reactionary March 11 coup). The assembly was composed of delegates of neighborhood and workers commissions and discussed the following agenda: 1. Sports and cultural activities; 2. Neighborhood problems (housing and transportation); 3. Health and welfare; 4. Shops and businesses; 5. The organization of the people's antifascist vigilance.

Organs of this type are not exceptional: 38 exist in Lisbon and 36 in Oporto (the second largest city of the country).

The armed forces are not alien to this ferment. In its May 30 issue, *Combate Socialista*, the organ of the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers Party) of Portugal, reported on the situation in RALIS, where a meeting of officers, non-coms, and rank-and-file soldiers approved resolutions on the democratization of the armed forces (over the chain of command) and called for a united front of workers and soldiers against "the common enemy [that] continues to be capitalism in all its forms."

That situation is what explains some of the traits of the military government. This is a *popular front* government, that is, a coalition of bourgeois and workers parties, with the objective of preserving the capitalist regime. But the existence of dual power weakens it in face of the mobilized masses and seriously curtails its maneuvering room.

In these conditions, the preservation of capitalism is assured whatever way it can be. This can be confusing to sectors of the left. For example, certainly the MFA government has nationalized the banks, the transport system, the insurance companies, and some of the powerful financial-industrial groups that control the Portuguese economy. But, in the majority of cases, these nationalizations were in response to their need to recover control over enterprises that were in the hands of the workers.

In the CUF group (the strongest of the seven firms that manage Portuguese industry), a coordinating committee of workers commissions existed that had kicked-out the bosses in each of the groups' enterprises. The nationalization did not remove the bosses (they had already been removed by the workers) but imposed state control over the workers commissions and its coordinating committee.

A similar process existed in Spain in the first weeks of the civil war, when organs of workers power took charge of the management of the economy and the functions of the state. The bourgeoisie, incapable of preventing this, got the reformist workers parties to renounce the seizure of

power and formally recognize the feeble republican government. Naturally, the bourgeoisie did not spare any demagoguery and promises of "socialism." And so it gained the time and opportunity to restore the state and strangle the revolutionary organs of the workers movement.

In the same way, the officers who rule Portugal yield to the revolutionary advances of the masses, as they have no other option, but *with the intention of imposing firm control on them, to restore the state apparatus damaged by the tide of struggles, to reestablish discipline in the Armed Forces, and finally, with the authority of a new, solid, bonapartist, bourgeois state, to finish the "revolution."*

What Does the MFA Want?

That these are not merely our own opinions is clearly shown by the conduct and words of the top officers of the MFA. On June 21, amid a clear political crisis, the Assembly of the Movement approved a plan of action that emphasized the need for the *"gradual construction of a new state apparatus."* With that objective, they warned that, *"armed civilian organizations will not be tolerated, whether or not they are affiliated to a political party,"* that is, the arming of the workers and people that brought about the defeat of the reactionary conspiracies in March and September.

Within the Armed Forces, the MFA (an organism made up of officers that respects the military hierarchy) retains a monopoly over political activity: *"No organization of a political-military character unrelated to the MFA, whether or not affiliated to a political party, will be tolerated in the army."* That is, the democratic organization of soldiers, without distinction of rank, is (as in every bourgeois army in the world) prohibited. In order to ensure these objectives, the MFA announced that it will revert to repression (by arms, if necessary, it makes clear) against *"those groups that, through their activity, systematically upset public order and ignore the norms set for the construction of socialism via the pluralist road."* Moreover, that is, the "norms" that were "set" by the MFA.

Because, in spite of having held elections (under terms set by the imposition of a previous agreement with the principal parties that participated in them), the MFA does not recognize any authority claimed by the Constituent Assembly. In the June 21 plan, its activity is limited to the drawing-up of a constitution in accordance with the outline imposed by the MFA before the elections, and it is advised not to make *"any kind of official interference into the political life or administration of the country."*

In the plan for the communications media, the policy toward the Socialist daily *República* is reaffirmed. There should be several dailies that are direct organs of the MFA, strict control of the radio and TV, with the final objective of *"the mobilization of public opinion through the utilization of the nationalized communications media."*

So, according to its own definition, the MFA raises itself above Portuguese society as *"the political movement for the liberation of the Portuguese people, over and above all parties, which sets national independence as its essential objective."*

That is, a government that presides over the popular vote, over the mass organizations, over the workers parties (as Admiral Rosa Coutinho and General Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho never tire of repeating), that controls the press with an iron hand in order to manipulate public opinion. To do what?

In order to impose "austerity": to limit wage increases, restrict buying of consumer goods, increase production. In this way they hope to mend an economic situation that has been brought to the brink of disaster by the effects of the world capitalist crisis, and the sabotage of the sectors of the bourgeoisie affected by the advance of the working masses. Major José Costa Martins described this situation on July 15: *"There are almost 300,000 unemployed out of a total population of 9 million, a falling rate of production, enormous deficits in the balance of trade and balance of payments, considerable drop in the currency and gold reserves, and a growing exodus of technicians and scientists."*

But the formula chosen to improve the functioning of the economy is none other than the *superexploitation of the workers*. On that subject, the leaders of the MFA have not discovered anything different from the recipes of Celestino Rodrigo [Argentine minister of the economy].

Still in recent months, the MFA launched the "Battle for Production," to convince the workers of the advantage of increasing production and holding down wage demands.

That maneuver of "confidence" in the MFA thwarted, their hostility deepened both toward strikes and the mass mobilizations that went beyond the limits that the MFA considered convenient. Over the last few weeks, General Saraiva de Carvalho, the head of COPCON (Comando Operacional do Continente, the unit in charge of maintaining order in Portugal with the elite troops of the three armed services), was very active, releasing communiques against the telephone workers strike, the postal workers strike, and, upon the outbreak of the current crisis, he warned the Communist party that their barricades in the streets would not be tolerated—even though they were set up in support of the government.

What Is the MFA?

The very existence of the MFA is inseparable from the Portuguese situation. It is part of a political current arising as the result of the radicalization of a broad sector of officers, in tune with the radicalization of the petty-bourgeoisie in its entirety. The radicalization in the Armed Forces is part of the [radicalization] of the middle class and the MFA (the product of exactly this process) *rides on its back in order to save capitalism and Portuguese imperialism from its final destruction at the hands of the masses.*

Evidently, it is part of a contradictory phenomenon. And precisely because the MFA is part of this leftward-moving process, it can be the most efficient instrument to brake it. Much more so than a bourgeois military leader like Spínola, who quickly failed in his attempt to impose a bonapartist government in opposition to the masses. The officers of the MFA have the advantage of their "leftist" aura, of their leftist language, and of having participated in the living process in Portugal during the last year.

Precisely because of their contradictory and petty-bourgeois character, it cannot be discounted that elements

of the MFA will push its radicalization to authentically revolutionary positions. But this possibility cannot mean a *carte blanche* to the leaders of the MFA. On the contrary, their policy of opposing the democratization of the army and the organization of non-coms and rank-and-file soldiers is a great obstacle to the fruition of this evolution.

The central axis of the MFA's policy is in a quote that we have already referred to: "national independence." What does this mean? Portugal is an imperialist country, but more feeble and backward than the others. For that reason, they run the risk of being colonized by their colleagues (particularly the neighboring European imperialisms). The MFA proposes to maintain the autonomy of Portuguese imperialist capitalism.

This can foment a confusion, one that the leaders of the MFA do all in their power to spread—the confusion of the politics of the MFA with those of the antiimperialist movements of the colonial and semicolonial countries. A very serious confusion.

As we have said, Portugal is an imperialist country. Therefore, its conflicts with other imperialisms are not antiimperialist struggles but interimperialist struggles. The role of the working class, therefore, is not to support one gang against the other, but to take advantage of the fact that their own bourgeoisie finds itself engaged in a struggle with others in order to destroy it and install their own workers state.

The nationalism of an oppressed country is progressive. That of an oppressor country is regressive and reactionary.

The best proof that the nationalism of the MFA is of that character lies in the sad situation in Angola. The maneuvers of Portuguese imperialism (through the top leaders of the MFA) maintain and foment the division among the liberation movements that permits them to stay on as arbitrators and to establish a neocolonial order that will preserve Portuguese domination in Angola after the date of independence. In an article that we published in *Avanzada Socialista*, Admiral Rosa Coutinho maintained that Portugal could not withdraw from Angola while the danger of a dictatorship supported by the neighboring government of Zaire existed (a danger that is encouraged by another leader of the MFA, the High Commissioner [governador general] of Angola).

The SP and PCP—Accomplices of the MFA

It is this nationalist character of the politics of the MFA that is the real cause of the crisis between it and the SP. The Portuguese social democracy acts as an agent of European imperialism, with the aim of closely uniting the economy of Portugal to the Common Market and transforming the country into an open battlefield for monopolies of that origin.

That explains the virulence (although verbal) among the protagonists in this confrontation, in spite of their total agreement on all the key questions of current Portuguese politics. The SP, along with the CP and MFA, agree on the necessity of superexploiting the workers; the necessity of liquidating dual power and strengthening the bourgeois state; on maintaining the neocolonial exploitation of the ex-colonies in Africa.

The main Socialist leader, Mario Soares, said on May 22: "We support the *Battle for Production*. And contrary to

what has been charged, the Socialists are participating in this Battle for Production. But, for this end, it is necessary to organize labor discipline. . . ." And the Socialist daily, *República*, before being silenced, maintained that "one of the ways in which the socialist system is better than the capitalist system [is that] it means working harder. . . ."

This is not very different from the language of the PCP. Its General Secretary Alvaro Cunhal said on May 27 to a French journalist: "In a revolution sometimes you must defend a line that is not always popular. To support demands for wage increases that our economy cannot give; to call for the reduction of the workweek to 35 hours can help you get votes. But, in view of the state of the economy, this is demagoguery and can lead us to disaster." What Cunhal does not say is that the 40 hour week has been raised by some sectors of the working class in order to provide work for the tens of thousands of unemployed. What Cunhal does not say is that his party, during the time of the dictatorship which fell on April 25, 1974, kept calling for a minimum wage of 6000 escudos (about 885,000 old Argentine pesos); and that when it got posts in the Provisional Government, it fought in the unions to impose the minimum wage that the military wanted: 3300 escudos (about 485,000 old Argentine pesos). Recently in March, the government increased the minimum to 4000 escudos (about 540,000 old Argentine pesos), much less than what the CP had demanded more than a year ago and in spite of the great inflation of the last few months.

In accordance with this position, the Communist leaders in the Metal Workers' general assembly on May 15 prevented the workers who proposed a 40 hour week from speaking. The COPCON collaborated in beating up these workers which got them a vote of applause from the Communist leaders. The SP, like the PCP, has demonstrated its agreement with the possibility of an exclusively military government. Cunhal said this in the same interview: "If the coalition government is shown to be an impossibility, an alternative will have to be found, for example, a government composed of officers and civilians who don't represent parties as such." And he was echoed by Mario Soares: "The government can be military, but only if public freedoms are respected, if we have pluralism in the communications media, in the municipal and trade-union elections, etc. if political life continues to operate normally until there would be a new constitution, and then, within the terms of the pacto-programa, elections for the legislative assembly are carried out, then, in my opinion, there will not be a military dictatorship." The pacto-programa (signed in April before the elections) effectively guarantees control of power by the MFA over and above the elected authorities.

As we see, in spite of the confrontations and the crisis, on the decisive problems, the SP and PCP support the political line of the MFA.

The Fear of the Masses

If there is such agreement on the fundamental points, why the current rift between the MFA and PCP on the one hand, and the SP on the other? Because the difference that we have shown (the MFA in favor of autonomous development; the SP for the colonization of Portugal by other European imperialisms) already existed before.

But after more than a year of collaboration in the same government, what made the difference explode now? *The*

key is in the fear of the top military leaders of the working masses and the people. The program of austerity," together with the gravity of the economic crisis, begins to provoke discontent among the workers. It is foreseeable that this process will deepen and expand more and more.

In the explosive Portuguese conditions, it is logical that the MFA feels a great apprehension about the consequences of that discontent.

The SP, for its part, although it also aspires to "put the house in order," sees in this circumstance a possibility of applying pressure to gain a favorable turn for its pro-European line.

The MFA and its "auxillaries" in the PCP worry that the Constituent Assembly (where the SP is the most powerful force) is beginning to reflect the ferment among workers and the demands that a path be opened for the ranks of the workers. This preoccupation is what makes them try to assert monolithic control over the communications media so as to silence protests and reinforce official propaganda.

From Dual Power to the Workers State

For more than 14 months, the revolutionary process in Portugal has been advancing. Its force, the force of the mass mobilization, has been striking down the obstacles that reaction has put in its way.

But, with the crisis that has developed in recent weeks, it faces a very grave danger: the pledge of the MFA (efficiently supported by the two largest workers parties) to smash the workers' and people's organs of dual power creates the threat that the process would begin to recede.

And in such a case, the conditions would be created for the repair of the bourgeois state machinery, for the restoration of military discipline, and for the imposition of the bonapartist government that Spínola could not bring about.

The fact that the two large workers parties (the SP and PCP) support the essential bourgeois policy of the MFA enormously increases the danger that this plan will be successful.

There is only one response capable of facing up to this danger. To decidedly confront the attempts at the superexploitation of the workers, the shackling of democratic freedoms, and the neocolonialist policy that is provoking a blood-bath in Angola. The strengthening of the *Intersindical* and the committees in the neighborhoods and among the workers and soldiers should be the fundamental concern of Portuguese revolutionaries, in that these organizations will have to be those that *take power* in Portugal in order to definitively end capitalism and carry through to the finish the revolutionary process symbolized by the already legendary red carnations.

“The first of two parts on the Armed Forces Movement’s drive to dictatorship in Portugal:”

“Krivine Hides Stalinist-Bonapartist Treachery”

by Cliff Slaughter,

[The following article, the first of two parts, appeared in the June 6 issue of *Workers Press*, the weekly newspaper of the Workers Revolutionary party in Britain.]

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Last week’s visit of US President Ford to the NATO meeting in Brussels had one purpose and one purpose only: it was to reorganize as quickly as possible the military defences of world capitalism (and US imperialism in particular) in response to the hammer-blows struck against imperialism in the last year.

Portugal is right at the centre of these developments.

The “weakest link” in the chain of world capitalism, it saw the collapse of the fascist regime of Caetano in April 1974, under the impact of the deepening world economic crisis.

Already, some six months earlier, the same uncontrolled inflation provoked the four- and five-fold increase in oil prices to the capitalist countries, which of course had enormously accelerated the crisis once again.

The reactionary Greek colonels’ regime collapsed under the weight of the same crisis. The US imperialists recognize very well that the masses all over southern Europe and the Near East now find themselves in entirely transformed conditions for the conduct of the class struggle. This is why Ford meets Sadat and confers with the senile tyrant Franco.

Desperate

But 1975 brings even more desperate developments for imperialism. Uncontrolled inflation has been joined by slump and growing mass unemployment. The British economy is near collapse.

Most decisive of all, the workers and peasants of Indo-China have defeated imperialism despite the long years of combined US military intervention and Stalinist betrayal through secret diplomacy and counter-revolutionary manoeuvres.

It is in these conditions that the Armed Forces Movement, the ruling clique in Portugal, supported totally by the Stalinist Communist Party, affirm their continued membership of NATO. What world capitalism and NATO require of the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement is that they preserve the capitalist state structure in that country against the strength of the working class, released by the fall of Caetano and the subsequent mass struggles.

All kinds of left demagogy is permissible, so long as this aim is accomplished. The capitalists cynically accept that the revolutionary process cannot be controlled and then strangled without a measure of “revolutionary” phrasemongering. In this way, by the Armed Forces Movement retaining the repressive state structure, even a capitalist class so discredited as that of Portugal can be restored to its former place. The state is preserved on its behalf, so to speak, until the national and international conditions may be modified.

So long as the bourgeois state is not smashed, but only occupied by different personnel (in this case the Armed Forces Movement and their Stalinist political bag-carriers), then this is the reality of political power.

In Spain in 1936-1938, even with all the workers’ parties sharing in the Republican Popular Front government, and with the workers and peasants having expropriated and physically expelled hundreds of landlords and bourgeois, this is what happened.

And the political and physical purging of left opponents by the Stalinists was the main instrument by which the bourgeois state and its authority were preserved, and the eventual victory of Franco assured.

This is what Trotsky called the alliance of the Stalinists and centrists with the “ghost” of the bourgeois state. The Communist Party of Portugal in supporting the Armed Forces Movement, is playing the same game today, with a bourgeoisie only waiting, with imperialist support, to restore right-wing dictatorship.

The Trotskyist movement, as the continuator of revolutionary Marxism, has always had to fight for the principle that the basic question in winning working-class power is first of all to smash the bourgeois state machine. This has meant a ruthless struggle to expose the Stalinists’ “parliamentary road to socialism.”

In Portugal, the LCPR (League for the Construction of the Revolutionary Party) section of the International Committee of the Fourth International carries on this fight.

On November 5, 1974, *Workers Press* warned: “The activity of the Portuguese Communist Party has gone beyond encouraging a Popular Front with the reformist parties against the working class. The CP are now working for a permanent Bonapartist dictatorship—a kind of military junta in which they will be the running dogs for the capitalist class.

When the Armed Forces Movement, in February 1975, published its plans for such a regime, we renewed this

warning in clear terms: "The machinery is being laid down, before the elections, for a military dictatorship, with political control assisted directly by the Stalinist Communist Party." (*Workers Press*, February 28, 1975.)

Now we have a situation where the Socialist Party, led by opportunists but receiving the biggest vote in the recent elections, as a confused expression of support for socialism but opposition to Stalinism and bureaucratism, cannot have a paper supporting it or demonstrate without state interference, and where Maoist youth are banned and imprisoned purely for their political ideas. Other left organizations and then left-wing youth and workers in the Socialist Party will be next.

We have also found it necessary, however, to expose the politics of those who falsely claim to be Trotskyists and who abandon all the revolutionary tasks of fighting Stalinism. We refer to the so-called United Secretariat in Paris, which is represented by the International Marxist Group in Britain and by two organizations, the LCI and the PRT (they are politically split) in Portugal.

The capitulation of these revisionists to Stalinism in Portugal has recently plumbed new depths.

This is shown by last week's "Red Weekly," the IMG paper in Britain. It reprints from the French paper of their own movement ("Rouge") an interview with Admiral Rosa Coutinho of the Armed Forces Movement. The interview was carried out by Alain Krivine, leader of the French Pabloites, and not by some young and naive reporter. His questions, and "Red Weekly's" comments, reveal the extent of the degeneration of these revisionists.

Discussing the various statements about whether the AFM will or will not permit political parties in the future, "Red Weekly" proceeds to completely cover up the actually developing and consolidating military rule. Thus:

"The most recent meeting of the AFM took a cautious compromise approach (!), limiting itself to a call to 'reinforce the direct relations of the AFM with all the structures of popular participation, such as the district commissions and workers' commissions, with a view to consolidating the alliance of the AFM and the people and overcoming partisan divisions in the common struggle of the battle for production and the effective construction of socialism.'"

Some compromise! What is involved here is a contemplated measure to emasculate the working class politically in the the name of "national discipline" to overcome the country's economic problems. The word socialism is mere window-dressing.

But "Red Weekly" ignores this, which is the essence of the question. According to them:

"In this interview Rosa Coutinho also stresses the importance of these emerging mass popular bodies. . ." This ignores the fact that Coutinho turns to these bodies only as part of the destruction of the political rights of the working class. It also ignores the fact that in hundreds of cases the government and the Armed Forces Movement have done all they can to prevent the management committees from purging the reactionaries and becoming "mass popular bodies." Wherever the workers set up such committees, it is the AFM and the Stalinists who insist that the old managers are not excluded and that the government shall nominate members of the Committee.

In the sentence which follows, "Red Weekly" tries to appear very "revolutionary" while in fact evading the

main revolutionary question. They say: "But neither he nor any of the AFM leaders take a clear position about the relationship between these bodies and the capitalist state—which continues to exist in Portugal and with which the armed forces, and therefore the AFM, remain firmly bound up." But surely to aim for the abolition of workers' parties and then incorporate "workers' committees" into the state is clear enough!

"Red Weekly's" conclusion is certainly "clear" enough: "The only way to defend the gains so far won by the Portuguese working class and really begin the 'effective construction of socialism' is not by limiting these organizations to a subordinate role as organs of 'popular participation,' but by extending and strengthening them into organs of *workers' power*, the basis for a workers' government, and for replacing the capitalist state with a *workers' state*."

Double-talk

What shameless and perfidious double-talk! So the Armed Forces Movement must be persuaded to extend the management committees into Soviets? A discussion must be carried on with them for this purpose, as in the Coutinho interview? And then the capitalist state, which is manned and run by these very army officers, will be "replaced" by a workers' state?

Like their supporters in Portugal, these revisionists will say anything except what must be said by revolutionary Marxists: that the bourgeois state must be smashed; that this means a fight above all against the AFM and the Stalinists; that the political parties and all the democratic rights of the working class must be defended from the repressions of the military Bonapartists.

In the course of his answers, Coutinho refers to a prior conversation with his interviewer Krivine: "You talked to me earlier about a popular assembly of delegates. This can be considered, but there is not just one model of democracy." Just what was Krivine advocating here? He was in fact bringing forward for the attention of the worthy Admiral the case of the type of "Popular Assembly" in Bolivia under General Torres, in which the workers were deceived by their parties and by the revisionists into thinking that they were developing organs of popular rule.

This comes out again in Krivine's "invitation" to the Admiral to go ahead with presiding over his own political destruction, e.g., "Krivine: In Portugal there already exist workers' committees, some village committees. . . what do you think about the national centralization of all these committees, which would allow the building of real workers power?"

Is it possible to go further? Here someone calling himself a Marxist advocates (to the Admiral!) that "real workers' power" can be "built" through the centralization of workers' committees under the state control of the military. In Portugal as in every other country the working class must take this warning of the way that Pabloite capitulation to Stalinism has prepared them for a direct service to the counter-revolution. Certainly any who have joined the Pabloite organizations under the delusion that they were Trotskyist must urgently break from them.

All of Krivine's discussion is carried out as if with someone who just happens to have certain differences on tactics, on how to achieve an aim which is held in

common. For example, what is the point of Krivine's question: "Don't you think that the revolutionary crisis about to break out in Spain with the fall of Franco will have huge repercussions on the Portuguese revolutionary process?"

No wonder Coutinho's only reply is "Absolutely. For us, all that is going to happen in Spain is very important." He and his colleagues are preparing to stem the revolutionary tide that will be unleashed.

At times, the real politics of Coutinho come out. Asked about the Portuguese colonies, he replies: "It is difficult for us to take action, especially in Angola, but it is true that we need international pressure on Zaire if we want Angola to have real decolonization. We don't want to have it freed from white fascism to see it under black fascism. . ." This is the oldest argument in the imperialist book to defend colonialism.

The fact is that the Admiral has the same attitude to the masses in Angola as he has in Portugal. They must be led from above along the path decided by their superiors. In reply to Krivine's question about centralizing committees, he looks a gift horse in the mouth and says:

Suppression

"Today, however, it is impossible to say which form of socialism is the best one. We will judge by experience and see, in practice, if it is successful. We will then be in a position to legitimize the initiatives that you are talking about, if they have been successful."

The suppression of the MRPP (Maoists), which has gone even further since this interview, brings out the class nature of Coutinho and his use of the Stalinists to justify anti-working-class repression:

"We have only taken repressive measures against a few organizations; there are many others which continue to make negative propaganda. It is not at all a question of

banning organizations which criticize the AFM; but the MRPP is a puppet group which has its base among bourgeois students. These students do not work and have not recruited any workers.

"There are, perhaps, in their group idealist people with a more or less anarchist ideology, but this group is infiltrated. They have a lot of money. Besides, I tell you, if I was a reactionary [military officer] I would attack through the left. The youth must understand our revolution and draw their forces behind it—but not the degenerated youth of the MRPP. I speak of the youth who work in the fields and factories."

Here Coutinho draws on all the resources which were developed by the Stalinist lie machine to set about destroying, where they could, all political opponents on the left, in the years of the Stalinist purges and the Popular Front. We Trotskyists have profound, indeed irreconcilable, differences with the Maoist of the MRPP, but we insist that the working class must defend their rights against the old calumnies served up to the military by the veteran Stalinists: "plenty of money," "all bourgeois students," "instruments of the reactionaries," etc., etc.

No wonder Coutinho declares, without comment from Krivine or from "Red Weekly": "For us the CP has always been loyal and never posed any problems."

If Krivine or "Red Weekly" had been Trotskyists, they would have posed to Coutinho the fact that Stalinism is the main counter-revolutionary force on the world arena, and the greatest danger to the Portuguese revolution. This, indeed, is why they "pose no problems" to the AFM.

Behind the statements of Admiral Coutinho lies the crisis of the regime in Portugal, which has no solution to the economic crisis and is afraid of the masses. Against this background, the Armed Forces Movement leaders are seriously discussing whether to ban all political parties, or to make another attempt to rule through these parties in the hope that they can silence the masses.

“The second of two parts on the Armed Forces Movement’s drive to dictatorship in Portugal:”

“United Front to Defeat Stalinist Splitters”

by Cliff Slaughter

[The following article, the second of two parts, appeared in the June 7 issue of *Workers Press*, weekly newspaper of the Workers Revolutionary party in Britain.]

* * *

Otelo Carvalho, the head of COPCON, the élite corps in the military used against the working class, says he wants the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement (AFM) to rule direct through a “liberation movement.”

The recent assembly of the AFM, controlled by the officer caste, decided to “formalize the joint work of the military structures with the popular front organizations that have begun to appear.”

This tortured, bureaucratic formula makes a pretence of being “progressive.” But the background to the latest political crisis in Portugal shows that the armed forces are moving rapidly to establish a dictatorship over the Portuguese working class and peasantry.

Stalinist leader Cunhal has spoken deceitfully of “a possibility of a military intervention” if a coalition government “proved impracticable.” “Military government does not necessarily mean dictatorship. It can be a government to protect threatened liberties.” To cover the dictatorship plans and disarm workers further, he added: “Links between the people and the AFM could exist outside political parties—through district assemblies.”

This statement plumbs the depths of Stalinist cynicism and treachery.

It is, of course, his own Communist Party leadership which, ever since the fall of fascism on April 25 last year, has done everything to subordinate the mass movement of the working class to the AFM and thus ultimately to the bourgeoisie.

The Stalinists have supported the intervention of Carvalho’s COPCON in breaking strikes.

They have opposed the expropriation of the land by the peasantry.

They have fought against workers who come out on strike to defend jobs and wages.

At all stages their policy has been based on one central alliance. They expressed this at their first public Congress last October when they unanimously voted for an emergency programme which stated: “. . . the alliance between the armed forces and the people is not temporary but long-term. Before and *after* the elections this unity will decide the fate of the country.”

Cunhal, speaking at the Congress, made the issue even clearer: “Some people ask me what will be the future of the Armed Forces Movement after the election? *The Armed Forces can decide*. But I am sure that whatever happens it will be for the people.”

Now the armed forces *are* deciding. Their decision is to re-establish dictatorship under the guise of “national liberation.”

Who are the officers who make up the leading junta of the AFM and its “Revolutionary Council”? The Stalinists have spent the months since April 25 dressing up these individuals as “progressives”—even “Marxists.” Nothing could be further from the truth. As a movement the AFM is thoroughly reactionary and anti-working-class.

The actual development of the class struggle in Portugal has proved this beyond question. On the two occasions the openly fascist section of the military—financed by the landowners and capitalists—staged a coup, the so-called defenders of the people in the AFM were paralysed.

On September 28 last year, General Spínola (also boosted in his time by Cunhal as “progressive,” “friend of the people,” etc.) staged an attempted right-wing take-over. Who stopped him? Carvalho and his young officers? No, the working class who threw up barricades in Lisbon and other major towns.

More recently, on March 11, 1975, when a section of the military attempted another take-over, it was the working class, backed by rank-and-file soldiers and sympathetic officers, who put the fascists down. This resistance immediately increased pressure for the mass take-over by workers of factories, banks and the land.

The position was only restored for the bourgeoisie by the rapid intervention of the Stalinists, who warned the workers of “excesses” and revived the officers’ utterly shaken Bonapartist regime.

Now, of course, Carvalho and the other officers like to pose as socialists. They talk in leftist phrases. But this is only for public consumption. They are, in fact, utterly hostile to the working class.

For example, Carvalho was asked his opinions of capitalism by the newspaper “*Diario de Lisboa*” in an interview conducted last October. The interviewer asked did the AFM believe in general nationalization, or were they in favour of defending private property? Carvalho replied: “*All the big companies who want to expand and put their capital in this country must be supported because capital will develop the country.*”

He was also asked his attitude to Champalimaud—one of the biggest capitalists in Portugal, a financial backer of the fascists and a man who allowed the hated PIDE secret police in his factories to arrest and torture workers.

Stimulus

Carvalho said: “Personally, for example, with regard to Champalimaud all the things I have heard on the industrial level is very good. I consider he is an industrial

genius . . . I am convinced he is one man who will give stimulus to our industry."

This "industrial genius" is now in jail. Workers demanded his imprisonment because he was one of the backers of the March coup!

Have these officers, who led the bloody struggle against the colonial masses in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea, undergone some deep political transformation? Of course not! Only their language has changed in order to hide their true reactionary face from the working class.

In order to facilitate the carrying out of this policy by the armed forces, the Stalinists have done everything to split the working class. Cunhal was up to his old tricks in his latest statement.

"Any further lowering of production," he warned, "will be paid for by the workers themselves. We must tell two home truths. If unrealistic wage demands and productivity decreases continue, we will be travelling towards economic catastrophe, towards political catastrophe."

This could be Denis Healey speaking to an audience of big businessmen and bankers at the Dorchester. Portuguese capitalism is indeed heading towards catastrophe. Unemployment is 25 per cent, inflation something over 40 per cent and investment is plunging as the economy is caught in the grip of the world inflationary crisis and slump.

One of the greatest Stalinist crimes is to hold back the working class by splitting them in the face of this crisis. The situation is reminiscent of Germany in the early 1930s when the Stalinists adopted an ultra-left policy, declaring the workers who voted for the Social Democrats "social fascists" and making no struggle to win them to the banner of Marxism.

The big difference in Portugal is that the Stalinists carry out the same dirty work from the position of the extreme right. They are the main strike-breakers, protectors and public relations men for the military regime.

An example of their handiwork is the latest political confrontation in Lisbon. The Stalinists at the newspaper "Republica" took over and ousted a pro-Socialist Party editorial staff. This exercise has nothing to do with workers' control which the Stalinists oppose. The CP were simply attempting to eliminate all opposition within the working-class movement, for fear of the danger that they might become the focus of independent working-class mobilization.

'Free Press'

Socialist Party members retaliated with a demonstration outside the "Republica" offices. It is not the duty of Marxists to uphold the bourgeois principle of the "Free Press," but it is essential for any revolutionary movement to struggle with workers within the camp of social democracy to win them to the revolution.

The Portuguese Socialist Party won the votes of millions of workers and peasants in the election. They took 38 per cent of the vote and emerged by far the strongest Party. These workers and peasants do not yet see the necessity to take the power in Portugal and many thousands of others are opposed to the Stalinists' counter-revolutionary and ultra-bureaucratic policies.

These masses must be won over in order to fight the

threat of military dictatorship. In their desperate desire to uphold the Bonapartist military caste, the Stalinists do all in their power to split the working class by denouncing supporters as "provocateurs" and "fascists"—common terms of abuse in Stalinist circles.

In Portugal today the Stalinists combine the worst features of the ultra-leftism of the "third period" of 1929-1933, when they denounced social-democratic supporters as more dangerous than fascists, and the treachery of the subsequent "Popular Front," when the independent demands of the working class were entirely suppressed to keep an alliance with bourgeois "democrats." The most fatal result was in Spain.

In Portugal today, what is necessary is a clear tactic of united front in defence of democratic rights against the repressive measures of the bourgeois state. Workers in the Socialist Party will respond to such a call, which would demand the immediate release of Maoist political prisoners and the right of all tendencies in the labour movement to publish their Press. They would want to know why their leaders like Soares rejected such a united front, which would include an organized struggle to develop and bring together the various workers' committees in industry and administration.

Experience

Such a united front policy would create the conditions in which the whole working class could go through the vital experience of building an alternative leadership, developing socialist policies and finding a way forward for the workers' committees to develop into soviet-type organizations, themselves the highest form of the united front of the working class.

Instead of this the Stalinists tell the workers who voted Socialist that they must do as the military decrees, and that only the Stalinists are to have the right to carry out their political activity. In this way they divide and disillusion the working class, preparing the conditions under which the bourgeoisie delivers counter-revolutionary blows.

The programme for the working class must involve the fight for organs of workers' control in the factories, council of workers' action and protection in the local areas, a direct approach to the conscript soldiers to form a workers' militia and the disbanding of the Armed Forces Movement and the officer corps. Those officers who are genuine about their socialist beliefs can join the workers' militia.

This programme for advancing the struggle for workers' power in Portugal, and strangling the threat of a reaction, by smashing the capitalist state, goes hand in hand with the struggle for socialist policies.

Nationalization without [*sic*] workers' control in industry and the nationalization of all land as a basis for co-operatives and state farms under peasant and land workers' control.

This is how to overcome the "capitalist catastrophe in Portugal."

This task is urgent. Despite all attempts to stabilize the regime the prospect of revolution or counter-revolution continues to dominate in the struggle between the two classes.

The building of the Portuguese section of the Interna-

tional Committee of the Fourth International—the League for the Construction of the Revolutionary Party—is vital if the working class are to be mobilized against the threatening military take-over.

The price of failure was bloodily demonstrated in Chile. Workers and peasants in Portugal must take the words of Lenin to heart when he wrote in his pamphlet "Theses and Report on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat":

"The army was a machine of oppression and not only

under a monarchy. It remained such in all the bourgeois republics, even the most democratic ones. Only the Soviets, the permanent organizations of the government authority of the classes that were oppressed by capitalism are in a position to destroy the army's subordination to bourgeois commanders and really merge the proletariat with the army; only the Soviets can effectively arm the proletariat and disarm the bourgeois. Unless this is done the victory of socialism is impossible."

Portugal: The Permanent Crisis

by C. Michaloux

from the July 31, 1975 *Inprecor*

LISBON — The general situation in Portugal today is dominated by two major features: First, the revolutionary upsurge that has been accelerating and deepening since September 1974 has not run up against a bourgeois state apparatus capable of containing or crushing it during the current phase. On the other hand, neither has it attained a scale of self-organization (that is, a situation in which organs of workers power are more or less generalized), a level of consciousness, or a working-class revolutionary leadership that would make possible the conquest of power by the proletariat in alliance with the poor peasants and revolutionary soldiers as an immediate outcome of the revolutionary process.

The result is a more or less permanent political and social tension, a feeling of crisis that permeates all the politicized sectors of society, and a succession of dramatic events: ministerial crises, theatrical political coups, and violent clashes between political forces and the major social classes, each of which is trying to modify the relationship of forces before a decision can be imposed in one direction or the other.

In the bourgeois camp, the major goal being pursued is to reestablish both a coherent, effective instrument of political authority and the initial elements of a functioning repressive apparatus. After the successive crises that have shaken it, especially the crises of March and

July 1975, the original Movimento das Forças Armadas (MFA — Armed Forces Movement) can no longer adequately play that role. Its authority has been sapped within both the bourgeoisie and proletariat. Its unity is broken. This means that it is unable to initiate a policy of systematic repression of the forms of mass self-organization that are most advanced and, from the bourgeois standpoint, most dangerous: occupations of factories and companies; experiences of workers control; land and housing occupations; experiments in the creation of organs of workers self-defense; forms of democratic self-organization among the soldiers.

Under these conditions, the bourgeoisie has opted in an initial phase for the reconstruction of the bourgeois order through parliamentary legal channels, as was done in Germany in December 1918–January 1919 and in republican Spain during the period August 1936–April 1937. Such is the sense of the offensive of Mario Soares, who puts forward the Constituent Assembly in counterposition not to a nonexistent "military dictatorship," but instead (and explicitly) to "anarchy" and the "absence of government authority," which would lead to "communist dictatorship" if it continued.

The whole Portuguese and international bourgeoisie is supporting this maneuver. The support of the international bourgeoisie is particularly pronounced. The im-

perialist bourgeoisie of Europe is suspending the financial aid that had been promised to collapsing Portuguese capitalism. This suspension will remain in effect until governmental authority is reestablished, firm guarantees are provided that parliamentary democracy (that is, bourgeois democracy) will be consolidated, and the reestablishment of bourgeois order in the factories is assured.

These appeals are receiving a growing response within the MFA, not to mention the sections of the officer corps not affiliated to the MFA. Especially in the northern part of the country, the garrisons are controlled by officers who lean politically toward bourgeois solutions, including drastic ones. The air force as a whole is controlled by similar forces. The big obstacle to a right-wing military pronunciamento is the division of the officer corps and the rejection of discipline by a growing layer of soldiers and sailors that could be provoked by such a move so long as the rise of the mass movement continues. That would lead to a crisis in which the bourgeois state apparatus would be even more weakened and powerless than it is today.

In the camp of the proletariat, the radicalized and forward moving workers of the big factories of Porto, Lisbon, and elsewhere are continuing their pressure and initiatives toward independent mass self-organization and self-defense. They are extending their attempts to politicize and link up with growing sectors of soldiers and sailors. But these workers are still a minority today; they remain politically confused and are often prone to leave themselves open to the maneuvers of the enemy.

The Socialist party has utilized the República incident to unleash an offensive aimed at the reestablishment of bourgeois order and authority in both the factories and the state, under the cover of the Constituent Assembly. The political confusion of a part of the workers vanguard and the sectarianism and Stalinist ideological tradition of the Communist party have powerfully aided the SP in its offensive. But the internal logic of Soares's maneuver is beginning to accentuate the contradiction within the SP between the clearly counterrevolutionary political program of the leadership and the elementary class consciousness of a good part of the Social Democratic rank and file, who favor workers control, workers commissions, and even the continuing and deepening of the revolutionary process.

The CP has manifestly lost the political initiative. The violent anticommunist offensive of the bourgeoisie and the Social Democracy has shaken the CP and initially driven it somewhat to the left. But the logic of its strategic orientation, the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, and its "frontist" tradition are impelling it to increasingly regard the "progressive" wing of the MFA as its only valuable ally and even as the only instrument through which it can carry out its political designs. A realignment of the political currents within the MFA thus threatens to push the CP to the right once again.

In conditions like these, the road revolutionary Marxists must follow is clear. They must intensify their campaign

for the creation, extension, coordination, and generalization of democratic bodies of self-organization of the workers, peasants, soldiers, and tenants. They must conclude agreements for immediate unity in action with all the political forces prepared to engage in such a campaign. They must simultaneously put themselves forward as the political force in the Portuguese workers movement that most favors unity, waging a campaign for the workers united front, a campaign that condemns both the reactionary anticommunism of the Social Democratic and Maoist leaders and the criminal Stalinism of the CP leaders. The unity of the entire proletariat and of all the Portuguese toiling masses requires that pluralism of parties be the rule within the structures of workers councils that will direct the socialist revolution in Portugal; the independence of political parties and their right to an independent press and to access to the means of massive distribution must be strictly guaranteed; the election (not the appointment) of delegates in general assemblies must be assured, and these delegates must be recallable by the voters.

The struggle for the class independence of the proletariat in a situation like the one that exists in Portugal today cannot at all be reduced to propaganda calling upon the leaders of the SP and the CP to break with the bourgeois ministers. It implies a struggle for a break with the bourgeoisie throughout all the structures of the collapsing state. The government of the workers organizations must be based only on the organs of self-representation of the masses, the centralization of which in a People's Assembly must be vigorously propagated and actively prepared.

The permanent crisis of the provisional government

The protracted political crisis of the country is now being reflected in a virtual governmental vacuum. For more than a week there has been no government in Portugal. And everything suggests that the fifth provisional government, which will succeed the one that has just collapsed so miserably, will also be very fragile.

The crisis is there for all to see. Mario Soares and the rest of the leadership of the Socialist party flatter themselves in thinking that it was their departure from the government on July 11 that triggered the crisis. It would be more appropriate to say that their resignation, drily received like a divorce decree by the July 12 meeting of the Council of the Revolution, only illuminated the factors that had long since been undermining the regime.

The government had gotten everybody's back up with its hesitations, compromises, and powerlessness. The bourgeoisie, exasperated at seeing the MFA give in each time under the hammer blows of workers combativity, withdrew the support it had previously extended the government through the PPD (Partido Popular Democrático — Popular Democratic party) and the SP in order to control the situation somewhat. The workers had

expected the government, which they regarded as their own, to take energetic measures to halt the economic crisis of which they are the victims; when that did not happen, their attitude shifted from confidence to distrust, and even to outright hostility. The coalition government died unlamented by those who attended its death agony.

Up to the time of the government's demise, everything seemed to be going in the direction desired by the leadership of the Communist party. After all, didn't the latest MFA assembly adopt a "guiding document" that came very close to the conceptions upheld by the CP: the gradual transformation of the bourgeois state apparatus through careful injections of "popular participation" channeled and controlled by the MFA (the "prestigious liberator" of April 25, 1974)? And didn't the report of Vasco Gonçalves, adopted in the MFA assembly (by a weak majority, but a majority nonetheless), constitute a line "that is binding on the whole MFA" and "fully satisfies the Portuguese Communist party"?

Under a rubric entitled "the transformation of the state apparatus and the link between the MFA and the people," the prime minister reported: "It is important to stress the two most important preconditions for the actual realization of the socialist process. The first consists of transforming the state apparatus, which means that its rule must become a consistent instrument for the realization of the interests of the workers. The second consists of creating organs of people's power independent of the parties and supported by direct democracy, which can exert a dynamization and control over the state apparatus in transformation. The link between the MFA and the people, if it is properly understood and put into practice, will permit the second precondition to be fulfilled." It is claimed that Vasco Gonçalves has been a member of the Portuguese Communist party since 1965; in any case, that is his place. And the CP has carved out a good position for itself within the MFA.

The government is dead, long live the government! Vasco Gonçalves has been confirmed in his post as prime minister and has settled down to form the fifth provisional government. Everyone is parading through his São Benito residence.

On July 17 Vasco Lourenço, spokesman for the Council of the Revolution, announced the end of the coalition government, as the PPD's conditions for remaining in the government team were officially rejected by the MFA. On July 18 the members of the ex-MES (Movimento de Esquerda Socialista — Left Socialist Movement) — that is, former members of the MES who joined the MFA after March 11 — resigned from the government. João Cravinho and Jorge Sampaio handed the prime minister a document in which they affirmed: "The revolution lacks a power center. The MFA is now primarily responsible for the revolutionary process. Without a mobilizing program that the masses can understand, political power loses its internal coherence and leaves an open field for the most sterile party struggles."

The present orientation is toward the formation of a military government with which members of the CP, the ex-MES, and even the MES and the FSP (Frente Socialista Popular — Popular Socialist Front) would be associated "as individuals." The CP supports this project, for it is quite confident in the relationship of forces it has established in the MFA and expects that such a government would adopt its positions by a majority.

The 15,000 people who gathered in front of the SP's Lisbon headquarters on the night of July 15 will not be able to block the realization of this plan. Not, at least, in the opinion of Alvaro Cunhal and Vasco Gonçalves.

The SP campaign

"The SP has lost a battle but not the war," Mario Soares declared the day after the Socialist ministers and state secretaries resigned. Within just a few days, the SP leadership mapped out a real campaign plan. The troops for this campaign were assembled by the SP leadership's disguising its position against the emerging organs of workers power with some lyrical braggadocio about "socialism in freedom." These troops were recruited at top speed and by all available means; the SP leadership lined up every Tom, Dick, and Harry with hysteria against "communist totalitarianism" and "social fascism." Next, the generals had to be rallied and broken from their fetishism about the unity of the MFA.

On Friday, July 18, Minister of Foreign Affairs Melo Antunes took a plane to Rome. At the airport he confided to whoever wanted to listen that it would probably be his last official trip. He anticipated that the new government would carry on without him, the ardent defender of the ideas of the SP within the Council of the Revolution. Upon his arrival in Rome he held a press conference during which he declared that any political solution to the current crisis had to be sought in a government including the SP and the PPD.

With beautiful synchronization, on the night of July 18 itself the SP struck a real blow by assembling 70,000 people in the Antas stadium in Porto. The next day, more than 100,000 people gathered in the Alameda Afonso Henriques to listen to speeches by the central leaders of the SP, who, under the tender gaze of representatives of the major European Socialist parties, attacked the Communist party with unprecedented violence, calling it a "social-reactionary and murderous" organization that "wants to transform Portugal into an immense concentration camp"; also denounced were "the captains, a bit too quickly promoted to generals, who support its (the CP's) totalitarian schemes." Soares demanded a "government of national union in which the SP, representative of the Portuguese people, must have its rightful place." He also demanded the resignation of Vasco Gonçalves and his replacement by "a really independent prime minister" who "respects the popular will as expressed by universal suffrage."

In Porto, as in Lisbon, Soares washed his hands in advance of any consequences his reactionary and anticom-

munist diatribes might have on the overcharged crowd. During the night, roving bands set fire to propaganda stands of the CP and the MDP (Movimento Democrático Popular — Popular Democratic Movement, close to the CP) that had been set up in Humberto Delgado Square in Porto; later they tried to assault the studios of Radio-Club Portugal, which were protected by the army.

In Lisbon the few army trucks and jeeps that were parked around the SP meeting soon drove away; militants of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI — Internationalist Communist League, the Portuguese sympathizing organization of the Fourth International), who had come to distribute a leaflet to the demonstrators, owe it to the protection of foreign journalists that they were not lynched by an enraged mob shouting "Commies go back to Moscow!"

Despite its "socialist" pretensions, the campaign organized by the leadership of the SP against the CP has opened the floodgates for a broad reactionary offensive. Between Thursday, July 17, and Saturday, July 19, local headquarters of the revolutionary organizations, the CP, and the Intersindical (the trade-union federation) were attacked in Alcavem, Sacavem, Leiria, Batalha, Porto de Mos, Aveiro, Rio Maior, Lorinha, and Cadaval. The news spread (confirmed by revolutionary soldiers with access to the army's radio transmission service) that 200 mercenaries recruited in England had just arrived in Spain to join the estimated 5,000 armed men of the ELP (Portuguese Liberation Army, a fascist military organization) massed on the Spanish side of the border. On Friday and Saturday, July 18 and 19, the soldiers and officers in the barracks were placed on alert, while the revolutionary militants of the MES, the LUAR (Liga de União e Acção Revolucionária — League of Revolutionary Union and Action), the FSP, and the LCI kept in close contact with the CP, the trade unions, the workers commissions, and the tenants commissions in order to deal with any eventuality.

At no time did the SP leadership take a clear position on the disturbing wave that was developing, especially in the north, where whole villages fell under the control of reactionary forces.

In fact, the SP leadership took advantage of this sudden tension, to which it had contributed in no small measure, to make apparent its ever more indispensable role within the state as the "guardian of order." But this subtle blackmail could well end up turning against the SP itself by touching off a massive reactionary aggression against the workers movement, of which the Socialist workers are still an integral part.

The SP leadership has been playing with fire during this agitated week. By inciting its militants and sympathizers to a white heat against "communist dictatorship" it has allowed fascist gangs to penetrate its meetings and demonstrations, gangs that came to "kill the reds" in preparation for soon being able to kill the workers, whatever their party or organization.

These past few days have given a frightful foretaste of

what the fury of the fascists would be if they managed to regain control in Portugal thanks to a persistent division of the workers movement. Everything must be done to make sure that this never happens.

The CP's adventurism

The leadership of the Communist party bears a large share of the responsibility for the division in the workers movement that has erupted these past days and that could tragically threaten the future of the Portuguese working class.

The leaders of the CP have tried to transform a necessary mobilization against reaction into a maneuver aimed at isolating the SP. They have sought to take advantage of the very lively and widespread sentiment among the workers about the necessity of barring the path of an increasingly arrogant fascism to cynically push the Socialist party — and not only its leadership — to link its own fate to that of the right, that is, to that of the PPD, the CDS (Centro Democrático Social — Social Democratic Center), and all the reactionary grouplets.

The leadership of the CP hoped in this way to provoke the MFA to enter the game on the side of the CP and thus to ensure a prolonged political marginalization of the SP. For some days now the leadership of the CP has been engaged, with no success at all, in a policy of denouncing "social fascism," a policy parallel to the one the SP has been following toward the CP. On the night of Friday, July 18, communiqués released by the CP and the Intersindical called for the erection of barricades to prevent an imaginary "march on Lisbon," which in reality was the meeting of the SP.

If a march on Lisbon had really been in preparation, the first thing to do would have been to launch an offensive toward the SP — its militants and its leadership — demanding that it join in the organization of workers self-defense aimed at blocking the path of the march. To do that would have required first assuring the militants of the SP that their right as a workers party to hold meetings and demonstrations would be recognized. That would have forced the SP leadership to make its position clear, and its possible or probable lack of response to such appeals would have at least helped a large number of Socialist militants who are already beginning to assert themselves to get a clear idea of the real orientation of their leadership and to join with the Communist and revolutionary workers in the organization of a common response to reaction.

But the adventurist and sectarian folly of the CP on the contrary contributed to helping the SP leadership harden up its rank and file by invoking the threat of the CP. The reflex of party patriotism, obviously intermixed with reactionary and anticommunist prejudices, was thus able to come fully into play to assure the success of the SP meetings, which were presented by the Social Democratic leadership as "a great victory against the attempt at Stalinist repression."

In any case, only about 2,000 people participated in

the Lisbon "barricades," which were quickly taken over by COPCON. By the end of the night, the leadership of the CP itself was compelled to order the barricades abandoned because of the hostility with which its initiative had been greeted by broad sectors of the working class not inclined to serve as foot-soldiers for the CP's maneuvers aimed at preparing for the formation of the next government.

After trying in vain to gain control of the demonstration of workers and tenants commissions that had been called in Porto for Friday, July 18 (which followed up the Lisbon demonstration of Wednesday, July 16), the CP tried to cover itself by convoking a united meeting with the MES, the LUAR, the FSP, and the LCI — but these organizations refused to attend.

What is the explanation of what could appear to have been a crude adventurist error by the Communist party? The dominant factor is the CP leadership's desire to guarantee its preponderance within the MFA at any price. The CP prefers the unity of an MFA in which it holds a preponderant influence to the unity in struggle of the working class, which, the CP leaders are now beginning to feel, could very quickly threaten their present control over the organized workers movement. The radicalization of the Portuguese workers is beginning to have an effect on the CP, which is losing ground to the revolutionaries in some unions, workers commissions, and tenants commissions. In the teachers union, for instance, the CP leadership was displaced by an MES list of independent far-left militants. In the woodworkers union in the Porto region (which includes several thousand workers), the LCI has won preponderant positions over the CP. In the CTT (the postal system), the insurance companies, and the banks of Lisbon, far-left lists have obtained percentages that sometimes border on majorities.

No longer satisfied simply to sit astride the combativity of the workers and people, the CP leadership wanted to give it a big "leftist" crack of the whip that would get rid of the SP, at least until the MFA could finish the job.

The sole result of this typically bureaucratic adventure has been to isolate the CP in the workers movement between the SP on the right and the revolutionaries on the left. It is now indispensable to work — and fast — to reforge workers unity where it can be most effectively asserted: in the workers commissions, the tenants commissions, and the popular assemblies.

Nevertheless, behind these great maneuvers orchestrated by the leaderships of the SP and the CP, the real target of which is the MFA, two demonstrations put the stamp of the future on these days of governmental crisis. The first took place in Lisbon on July 16. Called by the workers and tenants commissions of the capital, it assembled about 10,000 demonstrators, who marched under the slogans "Against reaction, against capital: proletarian unity!" "Workers and peasants, soldiers and sailors, united we will win!" and "Workers control, people's power!"

For the first time since April 25, hundreds of soldiers marched in the contingents of the demonstration. The soldiers of RALIS (the light artillery regiment of Lisbon) participated — complete with their tanks and armored machine-gun carriers onto which hundreds of demonstrators carrying red flags quickly jumped. The soldiers of the RIOQ (the operational intervention regiment of Queluz), units of the military police, and other regiments of the city also turned out, raising their fists and singing the Internationale.

In Porto there were even more demonstrators — and in the midst of the crisis, a few hours before the SP meeting of July 18. This time, the Intersindical endorsed the demonstration. This was done, of course, partly in an attempt to coopt the demonstration to the advantage of the orientation of the CP (which failed completely), but also because the leadership of the CP understood the potential danger if it held itself aloof from these initial street assemblies of the independent bodies of the working class, which went beyond the limits of the neighborhood or factory to put forward the outlines of an alternative policy in the crisis.

The presence of many soldiers in these demonstrations represents much more than the participation of the most radicalized regiments of the Portuguese army. It is also a sign of the growing penetration of the movement by the independent organization of the working class in the barracks, especially important in a context of tension propitious for an attack by reaction. There were examples of this all week long.

On Saturday night, July 19, in the SICA 1 (the tank regiment of Porto) the soldiers got together in a plenary assembly to discuss the situation. Because of the reactionary and anticommunist machinations of the commandant, they decided to remove him from his post and elect someone else. Similar assemblies were held in the Lisbon area, among the RALIS and at the EPAME barracks. On each occasion, the discussions attested both to the high level of radicalization among the soldiers and to the reactionary polarization of certain officers, members of the MFA of course.

The crisis, which reached its zenith on Saturday night, July 19, revealed deep fissures in the army, especially among officers.

Although it has now receded temporarily, the tension of these past days has etched out a lesson that has been well learned by the revolutionary soldiers and officers: The decisive weight needed to crush reaction, which raised its head on July 18 and 19, will be found outside the military encampments and in the defense of the gains of the workers through independent workers organs of anticapitalist struggle. The assemblies of representative units of the soldier rank and file must ally with the workers commissions, the tenants commissions, and the people's assemblies if they are to prevent a part of the military hierarchy from doing their worst.

Another provisional government: for how long?

Whatever mixture is finally selected in forming the fifth provisional government, that government will not be viable.

If the pressure from the SP succeeds in convincing the Council of the Revolution to name a new coalition government, it is probable that such a government will be a short-lived one. A government with a prime minister like Vasco Gonçalves flanked by a vice prime minister close to the SP (Vasco Lourenço perhaps), in which a large number of SP ministers are also involved (as individuals, in order to save face), would quickly be torn apart by the first important decision. And the important decisions that have to be made in Portugal today are legion! Things would just be put off for a few weeks, or even a few days, at the rate things move today. In any case, the SP has shown its true colors; its participation in the government would be predicated on putting an end to "anarchy" (that is, the nationalizations, expropriations, and land occupations) and respecting foreign commitments. A government with such a program, if it did not fall apart from within, would be hard put to contain the hostility of the workers, who are tired of the class collaboration that is paralyzing their forward march.

If, on the other hand, the next assembly of the MFA, which has already been postponed twice and is now scheduled for July 27, continues along the lines of the

preceding assembly by giving way in face of the determination of the workers, then it is the MFA itself that will be torn apart. A military government with which "competent revolutionary personalities" are associated would find in its cradle the gauntlet thrown down by the most right-wing sector of the MFA. In one form or another, this right-wing would ally itself with the SP, or even with the reactionary right itself, to activate discontent and create an atmosphere of permanent political crisis propitious for the government's overthrow, peacefully if possible, violently if necessary.

In either case, we can be sure that the crisis will rebound and become more serious than ever.

What is going on now is a real race against time. Workers power exerted through the workers National People's Assembly must manage to take over from this defeated regime before the powerlessness of five provisional governments gives rise to the usual reactionary push toward bourgeois "law and order," in the absence of a working class organized to assert its determination to put an end to the permanent crisis. There is not a single day to lose in winning this battle. The fate of the Portuguese revolution is at stake, and with it the destiny of the European socialist revolution.

July 21, 1975

The Long March of Dual Power Being Born

[The following article appeared in the July 25 issue of the French Trotskyist weekly *Rouge*.]

Of the events in Portugal the bourgeois press only covers the main political conflicts and the disagreements between the different political apparatuses. It covers nothing of what happens in the factories, in the neighborhoods, in the fields, in the barracks. Nevertheless, throughout Portugal today the masses are creating their own organs of representation—although in a dispersed and uneven manner—alongside and often against the power of the capitalist state. This process of self-organization deserves our greatest attention; it is the embodiment of the advance of the Portuguese revolution. Without grasping its importance, it is impossible to understand what is happening today in Portugal. The advance of this process is not the same everywhere; certain regions, factories, villages, and units are out ahead of others. We have chosen to report some of the experiences of the most advanced.

* * *

In Portugal the peasants make up 30 percent of the active population. This figure suffices to show the stakes that they represent for the revolution. The peasant struggles differ widely according to the agrarian structures. In the north of the country, where small-scale farming predominates, there is little motion among the peasants despite the dynamization campaigns of the MFA and the attempts at implantation by the League of Small and Middle Peasants, controlled by the PCP. On the contrary, these peasants provide the striking force of reaction, as was shown by the sacking of the headquarters of the PCP and the FSP [Frente Socialista Popular—People's Socialist Front] in Rio Major. In the south, a region with large latifundist holdings where agricultural wage labor predominates, occupations of the land are multiplying, often controlled by the PCP. The latter has an

ambiguous policy toward the small- and middle-scale farmers, with the union of agricultural laborers furnishing the forces for the League.

At Quebradas and Alcoentre

The occupations in the villages of Quebradas and Alcoentre, even if limited, have a much more advanced character. In this area fifty kilometres from Lisbon, tenant farming predominates. Prior to April 25 [1974] the peasants had to submit to the whims of the big absentee landlords. The owners could decide, for example, to triple the land rent by going over from rent in kind (a part of the harvest) to money rent, or they could decide to transform part of the land into a hunting preserve, thus forcing the peasants to leave the land and swell the stream of emigration into the cities or to France.

Since February 1975, after some initiatives met with no reaction, the land occupations multiplied. At a General Assembly the peasants decided to occupy an estate at Alcoentre; five days later the peasants of Quebradas followed their example. A commission was elected to prepare the occupation, and after obtaining the agreement of the emigrants, almost the entire population of the village occupied the land, headed up by a red flag and carrying their hunting rifles. The GNR¹ was sent by the landlord to ask them not to damage the land. To this the peasants replied: "No one wants to destroy the land or the equipment; we want to protect them for ourselves."

Then the peasants discussed what they would do with the land. Some were for dividing it up, but the majority decided to make it into a cooperative and cultivate it in common, with each member required to contribute labor time to farming it. The rights of peasants who have emigrated to France are guaranteed, providing that a member of their family works the land in their place. Some members of the cooperative are not farmers but truck drivers, carpenters, or mechanics. They work for the cooperative in line with their special skills.

The peasants also appropriated the animals, the machines, and the house of the landlord. At Alcoentre, the landlord's home served as a meeting place, and two houses were given over to the families who took care of the animals. At Alcoentre, whenever the cooperative needed agricultural equipment, it got in touch with the workers commission at an agricultural machine assembly plant in Lisbon. The peasants went to explain their struggle to the workers, who in turn did the same thing for the villagers when they brought a tractor on loan to the cooperative.

Numerous projects are under way. After a period of experimentation, a number of fields belonging to the peasants were brought under common ownership. As was explained to us by a member of the cooperative commission, some peasants were ready to do this immediately, but the majority were unable in six months to overcome their whole lives and the individualistic mentality of small farmers. The experience of cooperative work should quickly break down this resistance. The Alcoentre cooperative is now trying to establish connections with all the commissions and cooperatives that have occupied land in the region, in order to try to work together in the areas of machines, fertilizers, and in the social and cultural sphere.

The land occupations are a very recent development (taking place between February and May); the first harvest

has not yet been made. But already it is clear to the peasants that the cooperatives cannot stay closed in on themselves. They remain open to anyone who wants to participate in them, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, which makes all important decisions. They also know that the struggle must continue—in order to continue the occupations and to guard the land against the landlords, who, even if they have left, have not lost hope of regaining the land. The peasants know they must organize on a district level and tie their struggle to those of other workers—even if the problem is still posed in a confused way. But one thing is certain: They will not agree to go back to the way things were "before." And they will use any means to stop those who might try to force them to go back.

Engineer Regiment No. 1

The soldiers are also organizing. The Engineer Regiment No. 1 (RE 1) at Pontinha, a suburb of Lisbon, is a good example of the revolutionary development in the barracks. Like the RALIS (the artillery regiment in Lisbon) the RE 1 is a regiment that is "out ahead." On September 28 and March 11 they were foreshore on the side of the workers against the reaction.

In this regiment the leading authority is the Assembly of Unity (ADU). It is not chosen more or less bureaucratically, as is proposed in the MFA plan, but is elected by three constituencies: rank-and-file soldiers, non-commissioned officers, and officers. Of its twenty-five members, thirteen are soldiers, eight are non-commissioned officers, and only four officers. This illustrates—as we were told by a representative of the ADU—"the hegemony of the rank-and-file soldiers in the process." It is this assembly, together with all the soldiers, that takes charge of internal "dynamization" in the barracks as well as of putting the regiment at the service of the workers. In the regiment, social distinctions tend to disappear: no more officers' mess, the same food for all, the same living conditions, etc. The soldiers' quarters are astonishing—with MFA posters everywhere but also dozens of books and pamphlets of Marx, Lenin, Mao, and Guevara. The RE 1 subscribes to all the revolutionary newspapers and articles from them are discussed, even though all "party-type" activity is prohibited. Discipline continues to exist "but like the laws, it is completely bypassed in practice." In fact, as a result of the developing process, it is the soldiers and the ADU that determine the rules of functioning and discipline.

The regiment is at the service of the workers commissions (CT) and the tenants commissions (CM). As an engineer regiment, it repairs the roads in the countryside or in the neighborhoods, and it does housing construction at the request of the CMs, always combining its activities with a campaign of political explanations and discussions with the peasants and workers. One section of the barracks serves as a playground for children of the neighborhood. Workers from the Lisnave shipyards come voluntarily to repair machines that have been brought back in bad condition from Angola.

Of course, not all regiments function as the RE 1 does. In many units discipline is maintained and Spinolaist officers are still present. But the RE 1, like the RALIS,

shows the way and sets the example that is beginning to be followed in other barracks—not without posing problems for the right wing of the MFA.

The Popular Assembly of Pontinha

Commissions of workers, commissions of tenants, and committees of soldiers are beginning to centralize and coordinate themselves. At Pontinha a Popular Assembly (AP) exists which coordinates forty-five workers' and tenants' commissions and the Assembly of Unity of the RE 1. On July 4 the Popular Assembly of Pontinha met in the headquarters of the RE 1 barracks. At 9 o'clock the delegates of the CTs and the CMs arrive and report to the provisional secretariat, which verifies their credentials and gives them a voting card (one vote for each CT and CM). The agenda deals with the statutes of the AP, the method of voting, etc. Presiding over the assembly are military men from the RE 1, aided by two representatives of the CTs and CMs.

Each proposal is discussed for a long time before it is put to a hand vote. The representation of the CMs was the topic of a lengthy discussion. Should representation be given only to the commissions of the poor neighborhoods and shantytowns? The discussion is a little confused. But what came through was concern for making the AP an organ of struggle of the workers by rejecting the representativeness of pseudo-commissions in the well-off neighborhoods, which are content to meet to organize festivals or to plant trees!

There is lively debate when the question is posed of representation for the unions and for the juntas de freguesias², which are defended by workers close to the PCP. They are refused representation—by a slim majority in the case of the unions, and by forty votes against five in the case of the juntas de freguesias. One delegate explained

that before April 25 the juntas had all the power but that now they had to be subordinate to the tenants' commissions. Another exposed the fact that one junta controlled by the MDP/PCP had called a meeting of CMs and CTs in one neighborhood of the district for the same time as this meeting in order to boycott it.

In the end, the unions and the juntas are allowed to participate in the AP, but only the CTs and CMs and the Assembly of Unity will have the right to vote.

The impression one gets from such a meeting is the creation of a new democracy and a new power—that of the workers. Of course everything is not perfect. It is apparent that some people are clearly used to this kind of meeting while others are somewhat bewildered. But what comes forth is the will to construct workers power. Differences exist, reflecting the various currents in the workers movement. They are expressed and are decided by the workers within their organizations.

Today the Popular Assemblies are multiplying following the decision of the Assembly of the MFA, which was made under the pressure of assemblies like that of Pontinha. The next stage could be the calling of a National Popular Assembly, a decisive step toward the creation of a workers state in Portugal.

1. GNR [Guardia Nacional Republicana]: national republican guard, the equivalent of our [French] gardes mobiles [riot police].

2. juntas de freguesias: district councils, very often controlled by the PCP through the intermediary of the MDP [Movimento Democrático Português—Portuguese Democratic Movement].

Portugal: The Revolution at a Turning Point

A new stage of the Portuguese revolution is opening today. In launching a political offensive against the MFA and the PCP—but in reality also against the growing threat of workers power asserting itself in the factories, the barracks, and the poor neighborhoods—the Socialist party is becoming the main prop of the reaction that is again raising its head.

The victory that the SP believes it achieved by mobilizing tens of thousands of persons in Porto and in Lisbon—the CP's sectarian response amounted to a dangerous adventure—is a "victory" with implications that the SP itself has not yet gauged. In mobilizing the whole of reaction under its banner, the Portuguese Socialist party has clearly chosen its camp. It has now come forward as the best vehicle for the most far-seeing sections of the capitalist class. It welcomes into its ranks layers of the urban petty bourgeoisie and of the peasantry who are under the sway of the counterrevolutionary ideology put forward by the most reactionary church in all of Europe. However, the Socialist party still enjoys a mass hearing in the working class, and not only in the most backward sectors.

A good many militants who reject the Stalinism of the CP still look to the SP. The response that the CP chose to give to the SP offensive is nothing less than criminal. To fight against the reaction that is hiding behind the SP, the CP though it appropriate to try to suppress the right of expression of this organization that has the allegiance of a major section of the workers movement. This at a time when it is only by allowing the SP to fully display its politics that its betrayal will be demonstrated before the eyes of the mass of the toilers in the countryside as well as in the city.

Through this wrong maneuver, consistent with the bureaucratic Stalinist character of its leadership, the CP has only driven the Socialist workers behind the SP leadership just at the time when the policies of that leadership are widening the class gulf between the SP leaders and their working-class base at a giddy pace.

This new turning point of the Portuguese revolution has laid bare the contradictions between the classes. At the top, the regime is tottering. The governmental crisis drags on in the search for an impossible compromise.

Inside the MFA itself the differences are deepening. The right wing, which for the time being has taken refuge in support for the policies of the SP, is striving to bring to heel the progressive elements of the MFA, who are being swept along by the torrent of the revolution and who are

looking confusedly for a new base of power in grass-roots committees.

The key to the present situation lies in the rise of these committees. As emerging organs of dual power, *they are bringing into being the highest unity of the working class, the workers united front*. This united front goes beyond the division between the traditional political parties, which have been condemned by history although they still provide structures for the working class and are still growing under the relentless pressure of the revolution. Only in these committees can the working class achieve profound unity, overcoming the divisions imposed by the policies of the reformist leaderships.

The growth of these committees, their rapid coordination on a regional and national scale, the extension of their functions of control—these are precisely the factors that *pose as an immediate task the constitution of these committees as organs of sovereign power through the immediate calling of a national popular assembly directly based on these committees*.

There is no other answer today to the question of power: Immediate convocation of a national popular assembly! All power to the committees of workers and soldiers!

This is the only way to sweep aside the obstacles that stand in the way of the revolution. The government issuing from this popular assembly will have to take emergency measures in support of the struggle for self-organization and arming of the workers:

- Carry out the definitive expropriation of the big capitalists by generalizing the nationalizations under workers control into all key sectors of the economy. This is necessary to prevent sabotage by the bourgeoisie and strangulation of Portugal's economy by imperialism.

- Extend the agrarian reform by expropriating and occupying all arable land, and nationalizing the agricultural and food monopolies.

- Arm the workers. Construct workers militias immediately through drawing together the soldiers committees with the workers committees and the Intersindical. This is necessary to counter the maneuvers of the reactionaries who are trying to organize a right-wing uprising on the flank of the revolution, as well as to counter the danger of a military coup.

- Break up the structures of the bourgeois army that remain unchanged, through developing soldiers committees, consistently electing officers and carrying out a deep purge at all levels of the command structure.

This is the path on which the Portuguese revolution must now make its way.

[The following editorial, signed P. Robs, appeared in the July 25 issue of the French Trotskyist weekly *Rouge*.]

How to Understand the Events in Portugal

[The following article appeared in the July 23-August 6 issue of *Informations Ouvrières*, weekly publication of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (Internationalist Communist Organization). The French OCI, whose main leader is Pierre Lambert, did not participate in the reunification of the Fourth International in 1963. It constitutes the biggest component of the international "Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International."]

* * *

At the moment we write these lines the Portuguese revolution is at a turning point. The flood of lies unleashed in all the publications of every tendency and point of view are aimed at obscuring for the proletarian masses of the entire world the significance of the tumultuous events that are unfolding in Portugal. Consequently, in order to assess the alternative perspectives open before the Portuguese revolution it will be helpful to reexamine briefly the overall process of the revolution from its first days.¹

* * *

The Caetanist-Salazarist dictatorship fell under the double pressure of a military coup and the mass movement of working people who, a few hours after the coup, took in hand the task of destroying the corporatist, Salazarist institutions of the bourgeois state. In destroying the corporatist institutions, something that was in no way intended by the military, the working masses dismantled the apparatus of the bourgeois state and set in motion the beginning of the proletarian revolution in Portugal. In other words, April 25, 1974, was clearly the result of the political crisis of bourgeois society, the dictatorship having shown itself incapable of overcoming the difficulties of all sorts facing the bourgeoisie, in particular the colonial war.

In the eyes of the ruling classes, the dictatorship had become an obstacle to the needs of the bourgeoisie—its continuation threatened to give added impetus to the revolutionary movement of the working masses. This is attested to by one of the officers who lead the coup, Captain Maia, one of the high military officials who directed the April 25 coup. He said:

1. Read *Problèmes de la révolution portugaise* [Problems of the Portuguese Revolution], published by the OCI:

I. 25 avril: la dictature fasciste s'effondre à Lisbonne [April 25: The Fascist Dictatorship Falls in Lisbon] (September-November 1974). Eight francs.

II. Comment sauver le Portugal et les masses laborieuses de la catastrophe économique [How Portugal and the Working Masses Can Be Saved From Economic Catastrophe] (April 1975). One franc (available at SELIO).

"We concluded that it was necessary to do something, because if we did not, the people would. We felt that we were marching toward an abyss, and that this abyss would lead to a civil war in which the people would take up arms. General Spínola's book appeared, with all its prestige. We were certain that with this man, the revolution would not fall into the streets."

This was the assessment of the military coup made by one of its leaders. We should add that this assessment was shared by all, including Cunhal, until September 28.

What the bourgeoisie sought until the end to avoid nevertheless did occur. On April 25 Spínola, with the support of the officers who carried out the coup, tried to maintain the continuity of the state by negotiating with Caetano in the barracks and police stations. This effort failed, because the dictatorship was rotten to the core. It was swept away by the mass movement of working people, fraternizing with the soliders. And the fall of the dictatorship brought with it the dismantling of the state.

Consequently the groupings and political parties representing the classes in struggle were forced in the first days of the revolution to readjust their respective positions with regard to the popular masses. All the bourgeois politicians, the military caste, the capitalist class, the landlord caste—persons who for half a century had been identified with the Salazar dictatorship—declared themselves ipso facto "*antifascists and anticolonialists*."

Those who were unable to carry out this shift in time, those who were despite everything a little too compromised, left for Spain and Brazil, armed with all the necessary travel permits by Spínola and the military junta, already directed by the MFA [Movimento das Forças Armadas—Armed Forces Movement]. It was necessary, however, to try to make people believe that Salazar's terrorist dictatorship, which had lasted half a century, had practically no support and had not represented the interests of the exploiting classes.

This was a fiction, of course, for the entire bourgeoisie, the entire landlord caste, all the functionaries of the military high command—including General Costa Gomes, who was head of the chiefs of staff under the dictatorship—and all the political leaders of the bourgeoisie were identified with Salazarism. But this fiction, supported by the workers parties and chiefly by the leaders of the PCP [Partido Comunista Português—Portuguese Communist party] expressed the fundamental need of the bourgeois class to find a point of support against the proletarian revolution, with the aim of rebuilding the instrument of exploitation—the dismantled bourgeois state.

Thus Spínola, Costa Gomes, and others were certified as antisalazarists, anticolonial democrats, and leaders of the coalition government. At this stage not a single person or party—with the exception of Trotskyist militants who were supporters of the reconstruction of the Fourth International, and the OCI—was willing to acknowledge that on April 25 the proletarian revolution began in Portugal.

This "national and international" unanimity aimed at trying to camouflage the revolutionary reality could not last, however. The April 25 coup did nothing to resolve the economic, financial, and colonial problems. The bourgeoisie had to rebuild its dismantled bourgeois state.

The coalition government of the workers parties, bourgeois parties, and the MFA was unable to resolve anything. The revolutionary crisis deepened. The working masses and the soldiers, intimidated for a moment by the clamoring of the press, responded to the blows the bourgeoisie sought to deal them September 28, 1974, and March 11, 1975. The revolutionary crisis deepened. The organs of the bourgeois state decomposed even more.

All those who up until that time denied the "revolutionary" character of the revolution² were compelled, in accordance with the deepening crisis after September 28 and particularly after March 11, to make a new shift so as to adapt to the mass movement. Previously, both in Portugal and internationally, "they" refused to acknowledge the revolution. Then they all made adjustments in their speeches and articles. Everyone became a "revolutionary," a "socialist," and denounced "bourgeois democracy." This national and international unanimity even acknowledged the committees of workers delegates, but as counterposed to the Constituent Assembly and to unions independent of the state.³

II. The Masses, the Communist Party, and the Socialist Party in the Revolution

Tuesday, July 15, 1975, 7:30p.m., Lisbon.

After four days of crisis a demonstration has been called in a few hours time at the initiative of sections and plant units of the Socialist party in the Lisbon district. By 7:00 p.m., thousands, then tens of thousands (undoubtedly more than 30,000) of militants and sympathizers, great numbers of them from the factories (Ford, Baroi Alto, the bank workers, and so forth), entered the square and gardens that they were soon to fill completely, with a large

2. "Let us not give the impression that the Portuguese people are in the process of making a socialist revolution," one reads in the French CP weekly *France Nouvelle*, June 11, 1974.

3. *On August 11, 1974, the coalition government headed by Gonçalves issued a decree on purging the state administrations, removing this power from the commissions of delegates elected by the workers. We indicated, in the first pamphlet, "the forms taken by the PCP leadership's fight against the commissions of elected workers delegates. In the factories they counterposed the trade-union committees to the commissions of elected workers delegates, denouncing the latter as an instrument of division. The PCP explained that the MDP-CDE [Movimento Democrático Português/Comissão Democrática Eleitoral—Portuguese Democratic Movement/Democratic Election Committee] (a class-collaborationist movement that was to be heavily defeated in the elections for the Constituent Assembly) "was the rallying point for antifascists, therefore there was no need for the commissions of elected workers delegates to take on the task of carrying out the purges."*

overflow in the neighboring streets.

Hundreds of red flags imprinted with the emblem of the SP floated above a closely packed crowd that chanted the initial demands:

"Socialist party, Marxist party; Intersindical [the single legal trade-union federation] is Cunhal's toy. Right to form tendencies, yes; repression, no!"

The mass of militants took up a slogan that was to become the one most chanted during the demonstration: *"Mobilization on a national scale!"*

An enormous ovation greeted the general secretary. Half an hour later they were still shouting, "Soares, prime minister!"

The first speaker, a rank-and-file-militant from Alges, was greeted by shouts of: *"Action, action, action . . ."*

In his speech he referred to a document in which the MFA asserted that it was fighting for a socialist revolution. [See Intercontinental Press, July 21, p. 1050, for the text of this document.] Tens of thousands of voices cried out: *"That is a lie, that is a lie!"*

The militant replied: *"Fourteen months after the April 25 revolution, we have to ask ourselves whether the people still give unconditional support to the MFA."*

The masses: *"No! No!"*

The militant continued: *"There is a crisis of confidence, and the people understand that it is only a pretext."*

The masses: *"The people were deceived."* The militant: *"It is said that the people are not politicalized, but they know what their true interests are. Weren't they aware of them when they unconditionally supported the April 25 coup? The people know what future they want and how to build it. They refuse to allow anyone to make decisions in their name."*

The mass of militants then chanted the slogan that marked the entire demonstration: *"The people are not with the MFA."*

It was a turning point. In fourteen months the illusions have fallen. A little bit later, when the editor of *República* said: *"We still believe in the good intentions of the MFA,"* the militants let loose a thunder of boos and hisses!

Other rank-and-file militants spoke.

One of them said: *"We support unconditionally the comrade general secretary. We support unconditionally the withdrawal from the government. We regret only that it did not take place sooner."*

He continued: *"The workers want to make the decisions about everything that affects them. The MFA is occupying itself with what concerns the people. But it is not the MFA who organized the workers committees. It is not the MFA who fought the economic sabotage. It was us, the workers."*

A representative of the socialist grouping at Lisnave [shipyards] spoke next:

"How can they tell working people that they have to work more, when they have never done anything for them? They are the same ones who were opposed when the Lisnave workers wanted to purge the fascists (cf. the demonstration of September 12, NDLR), like those at the Jornal do Comércio."

Referring to the leaders of the PCP, he asked: *"Are they revolutionaries, those who are always opposed to strikes?"*

The masses then shouted: *"Purges, purges."*

The militant asked: *"Can we remain in a government that has done nothing?"* The masses: *"No! No!"*

The Lisnave representative: "What kind of government do we need?"

The masses: "Socialist, socialist! . . . The will of the people must be respected."

Next a representative of the Lisbon dock workers spoke.

"I am here because my family, like those of the 300,000 who are unemployed in this country, cannot eat the ideology of pseudorevolutionaries."

The crowd of militants began a new dialogue with Manuel Alegre, a leader of the SP. The crowd: "Socialist party, Marxist party."

Alegre: "The rank-and-file militants of this party are free men. Tonight the rank-and-file militants have spoken freely. They have said harsh, perhaps, excessive, things. . . ."

The crowd: "No! No!"

Alegre: "Today, only the Socialist party can give a focus to the popular discontent and the people's will to make a socialist revolution."

The crowd shouted: "Socialist government." Soares himself said: "We have heard very harsh things today, but they have come from the heart of the people."

During the entire meeting, as the leaders spoke the tens of thousands of SP militants and sympathizers shouted: "Action! Action!"

III. The Facts Are There

The SP meeting in Porto Friday [July] 18 drew 100,000 persons, the most massive demonstration ever seen in this city.

In Lisbon, Saturday night [July] 19 a tremendous demonstration, called by the SP, took place. On the question of the government the militants went further than they did at the Tuesday [July] 15 demonstration. The two slogans chanted the most were: "Vasco Gonçalves, out of the government!" and "Socialist party government!" In some sections of the meeting, the militants chanted: "SP to power."

These two demonstrations were a major defeat for the Stalinist apparatus, which had spared no effort to block them. For example, in a joint communiqué issued by Intersindical and the CP federation in Porto compared the SP gathering Saturday night in Lisbon [July 19] to Mussolini's march on Rome!

Dozens of barricades were placed along the roads to Lisbon by Copcon [Comando Operacional do Continente—Mainland Portugal Operations Command, the state security police]. These barricades had nothing in common with those erected by the masses September 28, 1974. These barricades were military checkpoints reinforced by a few dozen CP militants—and that is all they were.

At the end of the Lisbon meeting Saturday night, the organizers asked for volunteers to help release the SP militants who had been stopped and attacked on the northern expressway. The militants and workers chanted: "The people are not with the MFA!" The facts are there:

While in the aftermath of April 25, 1975, the CP controlled the majority of the working class, today it is clear that the masses of workers are flowing toward the SP, which has become by far the biggest party of the working class in the plants, in the steel mills, among agricultural workers and government employees, and among airline and salaried workers. This is certainly the first example of such a reversal. In the past the CPs have

seen the masses abandon them—in France after 1938, in Spain at the end of the civil war, for example. But in the countries in which the CP dominates the workers movement, the workers have never before turned toward the Socialist party.

In general when the masses are led to defeat by the class-collaborationist line of the traditional leaderships, they turn away from politics. The bourgeoisie can then resolve by itself its problems with the working class. The CPs pass over to the "opposition." And the disillusioned masses quit the political scene, deserting all the workers parties and the unions.

In Portugal the bourgeoisie is totally disoriented. It has undergone one after another the defeat of April 25, 1974, the defeat of July 11, 1974 (the fall of the Palma Carlos government), the defeat of September 28, 1974 (the fall of Spínola), and the defeat of March 11, 1975 (the defeat of Spínola). In the face of the unbroken class power of the proletariat and the working masses of the cities and countryside, the capitalists cannot by their own means and with their state apparatus dismantled directly confront the working class and restore bourgeois order. Since April 25, 1974, the bourgeoisie has had to entrust to the workers parties the task of containing the revolutionary movement of the working class. But it is mainly the CP that has had to take the front lines. It was Cunhal who, paraphrasing the famous line of Thorez's ("the strike is the weapon of the trusts"), said: "The strike is the weapon of the PIDE [Salazarist political police]."

It was Octavio Pato, one of the leaders of the CP, who said: strikes and actions demanding higher wages "weaken and divide the Portuguese people." (May 15, 1974)

On May 18 a direct attack was made on the post office employees, who were accused of being manipulated—like the workers of Chile—by the CIA and ITT "who, infiltrated into the working strata, led them to declare unnecessary and useless strikes, and to put forward demands for higher wages under a regime that had only recently been established."

Octavio Pato said even more clearly:

"There are very clear signs that some sectors of Portuguese workers are already inspired and encouraged by fascist elements and former elements of the PIDE who, in pushing for inopportune strikes and inflated wage demands, have no other objective than to create grave difficulties for a regime and a government that, for the first time after a half century of fascism, accept the representation of workers in the government through their parties and their trade-union organs."⁴

Our first pamphlet, which takes up the first months of the Portuguese revolution, offers a whole series of

4. What high praise for a government headed at the time by Spínola and Palma Carlos! But isn't it strange to note on one hand that for the CP workers participation through "their parties" was a good thing under Spínola-Palma Carlos, since the fascist regime had been opposed to this "representation" for half a century? And on the other hand that after the elections for the Constituent Assembly Cunhal viewed the representation of parties in the government as almost something bad? There are precise reasons for this change in position, which we will explain.

documents, texts, and statements that testify to the bitter struggle of the CP leadership against strikes, the committees of delegates elected by the workers, and all the revolutionary initiatives of the working masses, both in the towns and in the countryside.

But the depth of the growing disarray in the ruling classes and the dismantling of all the organs of the bourgeois state apparatus forced the CP itself to openly take charge of preserving bourgeois order in opposition to the working masses. Taking upon itself all the contradictions of the bourgeoisie, the CP therefore had to come into direct confrontation with the working masses.

The initial result was that in June 1974 the postal employees, who had been forced to return to work following a campaign of slander and violence orchestrated by the Stalinist leaders of Intersindical, began to leave the CP in massive numbers. Postal workers who had been militant cadres under the dictatorship tore up their "party" membership cards to join the Socialist party.

The elections to the Constituent Assembly reflected the lessons the working masses themselves drew about the line followed by the leaders of the CP during this first stage of the Portuguese revolution: The Socialist party received 38 percent of the vote, the CP, 13 percent. The Socialist party became the most important workers party in Portugal.

IV. Democracy and the Republic of Councils

Let us note that at the time the commissions of workers delegates were constituted, very few—perhaps not a single organization or party (except for the militants of organizations affiliated to the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, including the OCI)—considered them to be incipient organs of the centralized power of the working class.

All the positive prospects for the victory of the proletarian revolution in Portugal require a fight that at this stage of the revolution closely links the movement of the commissions of elected workers delegates and all the questions that are emerging from the crisis of bourgeois society, in particular the struggle for wage demands and for democratic rights. To counterpose the struggle for councils, which the commissions of elected delegates are to serve as the path toward, to democratic demands is to oppose the very thrust of the proletarian revolution. At the present stage of the revolution the interests of the proletariat require a fight for democracy, for this fight is the only one capable of permitting the centralization of the commissions of elected workers as centralized and independent organs of proletarian struggle for the republic of workers councils.

Let us make this point clear before continuing. In France on April 6, 1934, the fascists attempted to carry out a coup against the National Assembly. The leaders of the French CP called on the workers to demonstrate against the National Assembly with the fascists and reactionaries. The masses refused to follow the adventurist directives of the Stalinists, who had led the German proletariat to disaster a year before. Does that mean that the masses thought they were defending the Parliament? Not at all. But a revolutionist who supports workers democracy as opposed to bourgeois and parliamentary democracy will never associate himself with actions aimed at destroying bourgeois democracy in favor of a reactionary and fascist

dictatorship. In democracy, even in political democracy, there are workers rights that help to organize the class as a class: the right to assemble, freedom of the press, the right to strike, the right to have unions that are independent of the state.⁵

* * *

The only solution to the evils that afflict, and that will continue to afflict the masses until the capitalist regime is abolished, is the republic of elected councils, workers democracy, the dictatorship of the proletariat. In Portugal the debacle and chaos are systematically organized by the capitalists and the landlords. The struggle against the debacle and chaos in all spheres—economic, financial, and political—requires planning on a scale of the entire nation. The working masses tend toward the republic of councils but no workers party—neither the CP nor the Socialist party—has come out in favor of this solution.

The masses are nonetheless seeking to realize their aspirations in the political organizations. Today, because of the line followed by the leadership of the CP, they are turning in their great majority toward the SP. For revolutionary Marxists, the emancipation of the workers can only be the work of the workers themselves. You cannot fight behind the backs of the masses for the republic of councils.

Thus, in refusing to present the perspective of a workers republic of councils, the workers parties in which the masses have placed their confidence are dividing and atomizing the incipient organs of workers power represented by the elected councils of workers.

Each revolution teaches Marxism, posing the question of the state as the stakes being fought for by the forces of the revolution and the counterrevolution. The question of the state poses the governmental question. The elections for the Constituent Assembly enabled working people to centralize their aspirations. The workers parties obtained a majority of the votes. The vote for the Constituent Assembly is clear: the CP and the SP must, in the eyes of the masses, take governmental power. The results of the April 25 elections indicate clearly the wishes of the

5. The fact that the leaders of the CP supported the law on "trade-union unity," which resulted in transforming the union federation into a cog in the government apparatus, led them to take a position against the right to form tendencies in the unions. In the next issue of *IO*, which will appear August 6, we will present the facts showing that the leaders of the CP were heavily defeated in the votes that were taken on the right to tendencies. In the Lisbon banks 4,500 employees voted for the right to tendencies and scarcely 500 voted for the proposal put forward by the leaders of the CP and Intersindical. The proportion was identical in the insurance companies, at TAP [the national airline], and at other work places. Let us note, that the LCI, the sister organization of the LCR [Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire—Revolutionary Communist League, French section of the Fourth International] took a position with the Stalinists against the right to tendencies. It is true that Bensaïd-Krivine supported the law integrating the unions into the state, under the name of trade-union "unity."

masses. In their view, the CP and the SP must form a government responsible to the Constituent Assembly, to which all sovereign powers must be accorded.

For the working masses this is the solution that can bring the country out of the impasse and chaos that are threatened. And here once again emerges the problem of the coalition government, that is, the question of breaking with the bourgeoisie. The working masses reject a coalition with the bourgeois PPD [Partido Popular Democrático—People's Democratic party]. The PPD is led by ex-Salazarists and ex-Caetanists who since April 25 have become anti-Salazarists and anti-Caetanists, and who supported and gave backing to the three abortive attempted coups organized by Spínola.

But, some will say, in Portugal we are witnessing the take-over of factories and banks, and the exercise of control over companies, state administrations, and the press by the trade unions, the commissions of elected workers delegates, and the MFA. This is the way the MFA—after opposing the formation of commissions of elected workers delegates, after opposing a thorough purging of the capitalists and the administration and of all the PIDE agents—called for the formation of grass-roots People's Assemblies. In this, the MFA received the support of the Stalinists and the approval of the ultraleftists, including the Pabloite LCI [Liga Comunista Internacionalista—Internationalist Communist League, sympathizing section of the Fourth International in Portugal]. Are these grass-roots People's Assemblies soviets? In no way.

The soviet is a representative body of elected and recallable delegates from the workshops, factories, commercial enterprises, banks, universities, barracks, neighborhoods and villages, along with representatives of the parties and organizations of the working class and the organizations of the working peasantry. The soviet does not exclude organizations. To the contrary, it includes all of them as such.

The People's Assembly envisaged by the MFA and supported by the CP reduces the workers to individuals and excludes the working class from the centralization of these People's Assemblies, which remain under the sole control of the MFA. In this way the workers commissions and the neighborhood committees are reduced to independent units whose centralization is beyond the control of the workers, make them corporatist organs stripped of any real power of control.

The Declaration by Trotskyist Militants

Our comrades in the Liaison Committee of Portuguese Revolutionary Militants for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International made the following points in a leaflet dated July 13 and distributed in Lisbon and in Portugal:

"Militants, workers, young people, soldiers!

"The forces defending bourgeois order, the forces who engineered the division and dismantlement of the workers movement are in the process of plunging the country and the working masses into economic and political chaos.

"The only forces of order in this society, the sole and unique forces capable of preventing chaos and presenting realistic solutions to the social crisis are the forces of the proletariat. To save the country from economic catastrophe and the blows of the counterrevolution, the will of the working masses must be respected, the rights and

independence of its organizations must be defended, and a government corresponding to its aspirations must be installed.

"Initiatives that end up strangling the workers movement, integrating its organizations into the state, or limiting or liquidating its rights bring on chaos, even if they are supported by pseudoradical groups.

"The document approved by the last 'MFA Assembly,' 'institutionalizing the people-MFA alliance,' was supported enthusiastically by the forces who claim to represent the working class, by the leadership of the CP, and by the ultraleft groups.

"Militants, workers, young people, soldiers!

"The truth must be spoken! This document is nothing more than an attempt to integrate into the state the independent organizations of the workers, with the aim of disintegrating and liquidating them.

"This document, hailed perfidiously by some as an initiative of the 'soviet' variety, is nothing but a monstrous corporatist maneuver.

"Soviets can only emerge as organizations created by the workers, independent of the state, and within which are represented all the parties. They cannot be instituted by abstract decrees.

"The workers commissions, built by the Portuguese working class in its revolutionary movement, are real organs of the pre-soviet type. But the 'National People's Assembly' decreed by the military hierarchy calls for 'direct participation' of the military commanders, the heads of the 'Security Forces,' and representatives of the government in the 'assemblies,' which are to coordinate and lead the workers and tenants committees. These committees, according to the document, 'will be broadened after their formation to include the objectives defined here,' that is, they will participate in 'strengthening the people-MFA alliance, which will be the ongoing activity of these organizations.'

"The very foundation of the workers movement is its organizational independence with respect to all the forces that are outside it, most importantly the state.

"A grave responsibility weights upon all Portuguese militants and workers organizations in face of this attack on the independence of the organizations of the proletariat.

"THE PORTUGUESE WORKERS PARTIES MUST DENOUNCE THIS CORPORATIST ASSEMBLY AND BREAK WITH THE FORCES THAT ARE SEEKING TO INSTALL CORPORATISM IN PORTUGAL."⁶

No to Corporatism

Trotsky held that the soviet was the highest organizational form of the workers united front, that the soviet represented "for the proletariat an organization that goes beyond all the political, national (he was talking about Spain), provincial, and professional divisions in its ranks. An organization of this sort in the factories, commercial enterprises, railroads, and maritime transport, including the proletariat of the cities and countryside, can only be the soviet."

6. In the next issue of *IO*, which will contain the full text of the document adopted July 9 by the MFA Assembly, we will also show the extent to which this document can be characterized as corporatist.

What is there in common between the soviet as defined by Trotsky and the People's Assembly, falsely called a soviet by unrepentant loudmouths of all stripes?

What is there in common between the soviet, the highest form of the workers united front, and a People's Assembly that excludes the workers parties, even the main workers party, the Socialist party?

What is there in common between the soviet, the organ of workers democracy, and the MFA document, which seeks to institutionalize the MFA as the sole organ of control and thus to militarize (however much the MFA denies it) all at once the neighborhood committees, the workers commissions, and the municipal and district assemblies by assuring the "direct participation" of the MFA in these assemblies?

The MFA document asserts in one section that "the achievement of this objective can best be guaranteed by the MFA, a movement standing above parties, accompanying this process and encouraging it by supporting it, coordinating it, and recognizing those organizations that by their activity merit recognition."

In this passage the MFA directly defines its objective. By integrating the organizations (committees of delegates and neighborhood committees, workers parties and unions) in the movement "standing above the parties," which is the way it defines itself, the MFA intends to establish corporatism and a single corporatist party in Portugal.

The rigid refusal to permit the Socialist party the right to publish *República* can thus be explained quite easily. Corporatism and workers democracy are contradictory. Let us add that this would not be the first time in history that, innocently on the part of some, corporatism has been christened "socialism"!

V. What Is the MFA?

The officer corps that had been carefully selected over half a century by Salazarism found itself abruptly placed in control of the country after April 25. The first observation to make is that the Junta, as we are well aware, took power under quite different circumstances than the generals and high-ranking officers had foreseen. The April 25 military coup opened the road to the proletarian revolution. The unforeseen upsurge by the toiling masses—the thing the military feared the most, and the reason why the coup was organized in the first place—forced Spínola and the Junta to hoist themselves into the driver's seat of a dismantled bourgeois state, where all the organs of state power were dismantled, including the army.

That is what all the "observers" are still trying to disguise. The fraternization of the soldiers with the working masses not only led to the destruction of the Salazarist institutions tied to the state of the Portuguese bourgeoisie, but that state itself was dismantled.

In the very process of revolutionary fraternization, therefore, the army was dismantled, for the same reason that all the institutions of the bourgeois state were pulled down. That is the first point.

The second point is that during the colonial war, first Salazar and then Caetano brought layers of young officers from petty-bourgeois backgrounds into the army. The setbacks suffered by Portuguese finance capital in the

colonial war were the initial causes, but not the sole ones, of a discontent that spread to all sections of the ruling classes, and all other classes in Portuguese society. This had repercussions in the army, which immediately bore the consequences of it. The upper ranks of the army, the officer corps, demanded solutions that Salazar and Caetano could not provide. Lenin explained that the first condition for revolution was a political crisis within the ruling classes: "For a revolution to burst forth, it is not sufficient that those at the bottom are no longer willing to live under the old conditions, it is also necessary that those at the top are no longer able to do so."

At the top, the discontent of the high-ranking officers and the officer corps reflected the crisis of the ruling classes. It also fed the discontent of the soldiers, who of course had quite different motives. Together with the discontent of the working masses that was fostered by the political crisis wracking the ruling classes—even at the level of all the bourgeois state institutions, including the army—the soldiers' discontent cleared the way for the fraternization that corroded the army after April 25.

A third point is essential to any characterization of the MFA. "Intelligent" observers, such as Niedergang of *Le Monde*—and, in his train, Ernest Mandel-Frank-Krivine, and many others—discovered in the days following April 25, 1974, that it was just a question of an ordinary political struggle between two wings of Portuguese capitalism, one of them backward and "colonialist," and the other "modern" and "intelligent," with Spínola and Champalimaud, chairman of the CUF trust, dubbed as the representatives of this wing. It is true that after March 11, Niedergang modified his estimation of General Spínola, who, in place of being described as "shrewd and intelligent," became "unintelligent and stupid" in the eyes of the honorable journalist from *Le Monde*. Such is the way of the world!

Although he is there on the spot, Niedergang makes a comparison between the role of the army and the MFA in Portugal and the role played under certain circumstances by bourgeois armies in Latin American countries. More precisely, he makes a comparison with Peru. This explanation—which has been more or less adopted by the Stalinists, the far left, and the Pabloites—is worthless. The colonial and semicolonial countries, although formally politically independent—are dominated by imperialist oppression. Reduced to its fundamental factor, in the struggle of an oppressed nation against imperialism, the objective of the "semi-oppressed, semi-comprador" bourgeoisie is access to the world market dominated by finance capital. But for Marxists it is obvious that in the epoch of imperialism the national bourgeoisie cannot accomplish this task, like all other tasks of the national democratic revolution, and that only the proletariat can accomplish it.

It by no means follows that the situation facing the "national" bourgeoisie in a country oppressed by imperialism cannot prompt it, under certain conditions and circumstances, to oppose imperialism. This is the theoretical basis for the support that Marxists extend to all national struggles that the national bourgeoisie is led to begin in a formally independent colonial or semicolonial country. Therefore Marxists support, in these conditions, all anti-imperialist measures taken by a "bourgeois" or "military" government, in Peru or elsewhere, on condition, of course, that such measures be real, concrete, and effective. At the same time, Marxists preserve the class

independence of the proletariat, for the very reason that the national bourgeoisie and the "military" will inevitably betray the national struggle at one stage or another, and will capitulate in one way or another before imperialism.

From this point of view, in countries oppressed by imperialism, the army as an institution of the bourgeois state can play the same role as the class behind it.

Having sketched out these basic considerations, we can now ask, what is the nature of the Portuguese bourgeoisie? Could Portugal be considered an oppressed nation dominated by imperialism, in the same category as Peru, Egypt, etc.? Not on any account. In Portugal, it is Portuguese finance capital that dominates; the Portuguese bourgeoisie is an imperialist bourgeoisie. To the extent of the resources at its disposal, it has access to the world market in its own right, just like the imperialist bourgeoisies of France, England, Germany, Belgium, and so on. This sets it against all the imperialist bourgeoisies in the world.

The Portuguese bourgeoisie and its army, as an imperialist bourgeoisie, has no great national task to carry out. To compare the Velasco government in Peru to the Gonçalves government in Portugal reveals both total ignorance and a deliberate desire to disguise the actual facts of the problems that have to be resolved in Portugal.

The three points set out above enable us to accurately describe the MFA. It is the leading body of an army that has no great national task to accomplish and that, in addition, has still not done with the defeats of the colonial war, where the Portuguese imperialism's old colonial empire is on the road to liquidation. Furthermore, the Portuguese army is, as we know, an army corroded by the proletarian revolution that has begun in Portugal.

It was the commander of the RAL 1 who warned his colleagues at an MFA assembly about any attempt to use the soldiers against the working masses. The danger would be, he said in substance, that the soldiers would arm the workers instead of carrying out a task of repression.⁷

The MFA is cast in the same mold as the Portuguese bourgeoisie, which since April 25 has suffered setback after setback in its attempt to restore the dismantled bourgeois state. Contradictions are eating away at the MFA Assembly, and implacable rivalries divide into opposing cliques the 240 officers of all ranks who make up the Assembly. But these things merely reflect the fact that the ruling bourgeoisie, demoralized by the revolution, has no other recourse but to organize political, economic, and financial chaos in an attempt to demoralize the working masses and especially the petty bourgeoisie in the cities and countryside. Since April 25 this petty bourgeoisie has looked to the proletariat for solutions to its agonizing problems.

It would be totally erroneous to think that the bourgeoisie and the MFA, because of their present situation, would not be able to stand up against the masses. As long as the policies of the official leaders of the workers movement prevent the working masses from realizing their revolutionary aspirations, the Portuguese bourgeoisie, supported by world imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy, will

seek to restore its state in opposition to the toiling masses.

The situation in Portugal is as follows: political chaos precedes the impending economic chaos; neither the MFA, nor the Council of the Revolution, nor the council of ministers that the SP left on July 10 are able to guarantee the minimum cohesiveness necessary for the exercise of governmental power. A decision taken by one of these bodies—which all have the same character of being makeshift instruments without any internal cohesion—is immediately negated by another decision taken by another body, or even by the same body. In this situation, the MFA represents the last segment guaranteeing the continuity of the dismantled bourgeois state

* * *

In the MFA there are certainly some junior officers who want to march with the working class. But those who have profited from events to assure themselves a meteoric rise in their career are more numerous.

The essential problem does not lie there, however. The army that has been corroded by the revolution is fundamentally split along class lines. The army led by the MFA remains an institution of the dismantled bourgeois state. The soldiers are workers in uniform. Starting from there, the question is resolved along class lines, which implies a political struggle to prevent the soldiers remaining under the dominance of the MFA. (Obviously the officers who are on the side of the working people can and must be united with the soldiers.)

Democracy, and the fight for the proletarian revolution, require that the soldiers in their barracks elect their own delegates. The soldiers' delegates, within a framework to be defined, must be integrated with the delegated commissions elected by the workers and neighborhood commissions. This must be done at all levels—local, provincial, and national.

In this regard, a radical democratic demand that should be taken up is the demand that soldiers elect their own officers. The struggle to win such a demand would allow the abolition of the practice whereby those captains and commanders who promoted themselves to generals after April 25, 1974, designate themselves to the Assembly of the MFA with the pretension that they constitute the only guiding body for the Portuguese people.

VI. Militant Government, Coalition Government

We return to the fundamental problem, the problem of what form of government meets the aspirations of the masses. Blind and deaf are those who refuse to listen to the voices mounting from below: the working masses want to put an end to the bourgeoisie and capitalism in order to set out on the socialist road.

The Portuguese bourgeoisie is mortally afraid. Its main party, the PPD, is forced to disguise itself as "social democratic," declaring itself in favor of a "democratic and socialist revolution." Despite all its efforts—amply supported by General Costa Gomes, if one is to believe the interview in *Le Monde* with Mr. Guerreiro, the leader of the party—the PPD by itself cannot play the role at the moment that it would assume in a coalition government.

In this same interview, the PPD leader, who had just left the government, declared he was against the Socialist

7. Something that the soldiers began to realize September 28 and March 11, when they did not hesitate, in some localities to arm the people.

party and suggested forming a military government, because "*the military*," he said, "*all the military, the whole MFA, does not want dictatorship.*" This solution of a military government is the one desired openly by Cunhal. It was supported by the CP general secretary and by the leaders of the French Communist party. This solution of a military government was denounced by the leaders of the Italian and Spanish Communist parties.

Cunhal amplified his stance with an attempt at a theoretical explanation. For the PCP's general secretary, the political solution for Portugal could be "neither bourgeois democracy, nor people's democracy." (The PCP, at its recent congress, abandoned all programmatic reference to the dictatorship of the proletariat.) If Cunhal therefore denounces these two types of regimes, corresponding to two types of government, he in fact declares himself in favor of a military dictatorship.

If it is to be neither a "bourgeois democratic" government, nor a government of a "people's democracy," nor a government of the dictatorship of the proletariat (a government of soviets), then the only thing left is the military government of the MFA.

This desire fits in perfectly with the desire of the PCP to retain its ties with the bourgeoisie through the latter's mouthpiece, the MFA. And it is because they refuse to break those ties with the bourgeoisie that the PCP leaders oppose the aspirations of the masses for a PCP-SP government without any bourgeois ministers or MFA representatives.

The Socialist party rejects the solution of a military government. The Socialist party has been forced to leave the Gonçalves government. It has had to launch a political struggle against the MFA.

Nevertheless, the SP does not denounce the pact it signed limiting the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly. The SP demands the removal of Gonçalves. Any governmental formula that remains within the framework of a coalition with the PPD and the MFA, restabilizing the political forces at this level, would not guarantee a genuine solution to the problems.

Such a governmental solution will not evade the chaos. More than a year's experience of coalition with the PPD and the MFA demonstrates that any coalition solution is powerless to rescue Portugal from disaster.

The only solution, the one that meets the needs of democracy, the one that meets the wishes of the April 25 vote, is:

A Soares government.

An SP-PCP government, without bourgeois ministers.

A break by the workers parties with the bourgeoisie; in particular, a break by the PCP with the MFA.

An SP-PCP government responsible to the sovereign Constituent Assembly.

VII. Where Is Portugal Going?

The MFA, in the likeness of the politically decomposing bourgeoisie of which it is the expression, is leading the country into political and economic chaos. The situation is reminiscent of that facing the Italian proletariat in 1918-1919—the first measures taken by the masses themselves against the capitalists; the fragmented and limited cases of workers control; the take-over of plants by the workers in them, without any of these initiatives being coordinated and centralized.

In Italy it ended not in a Soviet Republic but in fascism. The proletariat was prevented from creating centralized bodies from the base up by its traditional leaderships, and was unable to offer any genuine solutions to the petty bourgeoisie in the cities and countryside.

The Italian big bourgeoisie was then able to turn sectors of the petty bourgeoisie in the cities and countryside against the working class. In Portugal, the PCP's policy, if it could be carried out "successfully," would lead straight to military dictatorship.

Fortunately, the situation on a European as well as Portuguese scale in 1975 is not identical with that of Italy in 1918-1919. In that epoch, while the revolutionary wave was developing in Germany, Austria, and the Central European countries, the imperialist bourgeoisie, in each of these countries, and in Italy itself, had managed to retain a centralized state apparatus.

In Portugal, the bourgeois state apparatus is dismantled. The bourgeoisie has suffered setback after setback since April 25, 1974, and the working class forces are intact. The political crisis has pushed Franco's Spain to the edge of the abyss, in Italy the crisis is there to stay, and so on. The revolutionary crisis that is ripening in Europe gives a boost to the proletarian revolution that is beginning in Portugal. The revolutionary movement of the masses is developing with tremendous force in Portugal. This combines with a situation where all the European states—Spain, Italy, Greece, France, England, etc.—are all more or less at the mercy of a political crisis buffeting the ruling classes that has set in to one extent or another in each of these countries. It is fueled, moreover, by a world monetary and economic crisis that is growing deeper.

The policy followed by the workers parties, and more particularly the counterrevolutionary policy of the Stalinist apparatus, is a brake on the revolutionary dynamic. It could lead to a retreat for the proletarian revolution that is beginning in Lisbon. But the strength of the revolutionary movement, combined with the crisis in the European states, allows one to think that it will not be so easy to reestablish bourgeois order on the banks of the Tagus. It is reasonable to think that the working masses could win the necessary respite—time in which all the contradictions in Spain and elsewhere would deepen—so that on the basis of their added experience they could forge the revolutionary party in a closely united struggle in the fight to reconstruct the Fourth International, the precondition for the victory of the revolution.

One possibility that certainly is not excluded is that at one moment or another, within the framework of the complex relations of the prerevolutionary period with all its diverse rhythms, and above all given the attempts by the traditional leaderships to demobilize the workers, the bourgeoisie might resort to a new military dictatorship to bail them out. In fact, it is the only serious perspective open to the bourgeoisie.

With the counterrevolutionary policy of the PCP leaders and with the refusal of the workers parties to break with the bourgeoisie and the MFA, the situation remains dangerous for the working masses in Portugal.

But the defeats suffered by the bourgeoisie; the dismantling of the state and the army that we have just analysed; the strength of the mass movement; the lessons of the Salazar-Caetano dictatorship quite fresh in the minds of the workers, all this implies that in order to end up with a

Pinochet who could crush the masses, it would first be necessary to demoralize them completely.

The PCP leaders are mainly the ones at work on this. They are not the only ones. But in any event, Spínola, the Portuguese Pinochet, had to flee under the blows of the mass movement. Which is not to say at all that there are no other candidates for the role played by the Chilean butcher, even if the Portuguese "general" could not go as far.

But right from the start such a military government would be dogged by the experience of the recently collapsed and hated Salazar-Caetano dictatorship. One thing is clear: even if many pretenders to the role of military dictator exist, no serious candidate has yet succeeded in elbowing his way to a predominant position in the MFA. According to General Gonçalves, the MFA is rent with contradictions and clique rivalries.

A military dictatorship could certainly emerge from the chaos, but another thing entirely is just as likely, in particular a new and powerful revolutionary impetus that would thrust aside all obstacles to the advance toward a workers republic.

The fear of what a military government would entail is likewise one of the factors that deepens the political crisis facing a disorientated bourgeoisie, whose army is in disarray and no less disorientated. This fear of the consequences of a new attempt at a military coup is likewise one of the factors in the international policy cooked up between the Kremlin and American imperialism for Portugal, as for all other countries.

If therefore the attempt to install a military government—an objective sought since the elections to the Constituent Assembly—fails, a perspective of a more or less limited parliamentary democracy will arise.

Under these conditions, the revolution would enter into a period of parliamentarism. From this standpoint the problem of the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly is posed. Inseparably linked to this is the question of an SP-PCP government without bourgeois ministers, breaking with the bourgeois institution of the MFA, as well as the question of democratic slogans: agrarian reform; separation of church and state; extension and deepening of all freedoms, including freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, repeal of the laws limiting the right to strike, repeal of the antiunion law, and so on.

We have demonstrated that to counterpose the dictator-

ship of the proletariat to democratic demands really amounts to coming out in opposition to the soviet republic. To the contrary, the revolutionary proletariat must take as its own the following demands: the struggle for the dissolution of the police and the barely purged Spínolaist GNR [Guarda Nacional Republicana—Republican National Guard, the riot police]; the demand for the punishment of all PIDE agents; the punishment of all those who participated in the dictatorial regime, at whatever level of the economy, the army, or the administration; the fight for genuine social legislation: unemployment insurance equal to the minimum wage, a real social security system; support for all the demands of university students, high-school students, and teachers; against the course charted by the MFA and the PCP, and so on, none of which go beyond the framework of political democracy.

But what might seem paradoxical is this: While the Portuguese revolution has already delivered some hammer blows to the bourgeois regime—nationalization of the banks, large concerns, and insurance companies; delegated commissions elected by the workers, and neighborhood commissions—and while the Portuguese revolution is already engaged in taking the first steps opening the road to the socialist reconstruction of society, the proletariat's right to fight for democratic demands is challenged. Furthermore, the MFA and the PCP are bending all their efforts to impose additional limitations on democratic liberties, without which the popular masses will not be able to organize to go forward in the revolutionary struggle for power.

But as we now know, this paradox is only illusory. By opposing democratic demands, the PCP leaders and all those who follow them put themselves in opposition to the proletarian revolution.

Thus to advance along the road to workers power and a soviet republic in Portugal today, it is essential that the struggle for democratic demands be linked to transitional slogans and demands of a clearly socialist character.

In this way the fight for democratic demands—including the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly, which the bourgeoisie is resisting—will bring closer the victory of the workers republic that the masses identify with the democratic republic. This process will thoroughly unmask the antidemocratic nature of the bourgeoisie and all its organs, including the MFA.

Portugal: The Uproar over República

[The following article appeared in the June 26 issue of the German Trotskyist weekly *Was Tun.*]

The international press breathed a sigh of relief: No soviets in Lisbon! The Portuguese Revolutionary Council had made known after a six-day closed meeting that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" and the setting up of "workers militias" didn't fit in with the pluralistic socialism of Portugal.

To tell the truth, we Marxists would have also been rather surprised if the dictatorship of the proletariat had been proclaimed by the existing military government. We are still of the opinion that the dictatorship of the proletariat can only be achieved through the victorious struggle of the working class for power—in Portugal too.

However: the development of the MFA gives observers, Marxist and bourgeois, many a hard nut to crack. What a rapid development of consciousness on the part of these officers who just a short time ago directed a colonial war on behalf of the most reactionary dictatorship in Europe; on April 25, 1974, wanted to set up a bourgeois democracy; and now are seriously discussing the introduction of the dictatorship of the proletariat and a government of soviets! Moreover, the MFA officers just one year ago had made Spínola Premier and decreed reactionary press and strike laws. The very same Copcon Commander, Oteó Saraiva de Carvalho, who today wants to arm the workers, then sent his forces against striking workers!

Now, one has to understand that the MFA has adapted itself to the process of radicalization of the masses, developed along with it and transformed itself. Thus, for example, the majority of MFA officers who carried out the coup d'état of April 25 are no longer members of the MFA—and most of those expelled are even supposed to be in prison. Thus, the same Copcon units which in the late summer of 1974 were clearing out occupied factories are today being called on for help by the workers and neighborhood commissions that want to occupy factories and villas. The same units, but not always the same officers: most of them were "cleaned out" by the ranks.

One event that speaks volumes: the Lisbon workers commissions called for a demonstration on February 7 against NATO maneuvers taking place at the time off the coast. The government had banned this demonstration and sent military units in order to disperse it. But the soldiers did something different: they hailed the demonstrators with raised fists and proclaimed their solidarity with them! And at the MFA meeting of May 19 it was said that "The demonstration of February 7 . . . was of course supported by the MFA," for "independent expression by rank and file organs is the decisive factor in the revolutionary process."

MFA—Reflection of the Class Dynamic

We have no illusions about the MFA. It is not a workers organization, not a revolutionary leadership of the proletariat. But within it, class antagonisms are reflected in their actual dynamic; the shifting of the relationship of forces between the classes is reflected. On the one hand there are the "moderates," actually bourgeois democrats

like foreign minister Melo Antunes, Premier Costa Gomes, labor minister Costa Martins or minister of information Correia Jesuino. On the other, officers like Rosa Coutinho and Saraiva Carvalho—confused, but not corrupted left-wing radicals, who—and this is surely the most remarkable thing about their political development—have with astonishing clarity understood *one* essential of the socialist revolution and workers power, even if they do not see the necessity of a revolutionary workers party and a revolutionary program: the necessity of the independent mobilization of the workers, of independent mass action without bureaucratic controls, in accordance with the principles of workers' democracy.

Perspectives

In a separate box we are reproducing excerpts from the discussion at the MFA meeting of May 19 which prove what an advanced consciousness sections of the MFA have attained.

And indeed it is above all those sections of the MFA which are at the head of the actual apparatus of power, the army. Saraiva de Carvalho, the actual Copcon Commander, occupies a completely different position of power than for example the Premier (and nominal Copcon chief) Costa Gomes or foreign minister Melo Antunes. Not a position of power "in and of itself," but rather as a function of the consciousness of the soldiers, who discuss every order before they carry it out.

Of course, the left-wing of the MFA has not "won." The MFA is still publicly displaying its contradictory character—on the one hand in Brussels, swearing fidelity to its NATO commitments; on the other hand in Lisbon, supporting the taking over of factories by the workers. The conflict around *República* reflects in an exemplary way these contradictions, which with the sharpening of the class struggle must lead to a moment of truth for the MFA: is it on the side of the working class or on the side of the bourgeoisie? This question must lead to a *split* in the MFA.

The "moderates" of the MFA like Major Vitor Alves emphasize that the highest principle is the unity of the MFA. In the *República* conflict the Copcon forces under Saraiva de Carvalho openly defied the decisions of the government and the Revolutionary Council when they handed over the keys to the newspaper building not to the editors of *República*, but to the workers.

Don't the plans of the MFA to provide themselves with a "civilian" organization, be it "committees for the defense of the revolution" or "soviets," raise the danger of a stabilization of *bonapartist rule* similar to the earlier Nasser regime in Egypt or the Boumedienne regime at the time in Algeria, where indeed the greater part of the means of production was nationalized, but nevertheless no socialist workers state was set up?

Such a development in Portugal is completely within the realm of possibility. But it must be understood that if the concept of "committees for the defense of the revolution" permits such a development—the concept of "workers and soldiers councils" does not permit a Bonapartist-capitalist

solution. It has its own dynamic, which is explicitly anticapitalist and antibureaucratic.

The Demand for Workers Councils

At the end of the closed meeting of the Revolutionary Council (June 22, 1975) Copcon issued a statement in which the revolutionary groups were disavowed and the "revolutionary workers councils" demand was dropped. The jubilation of the international press (*Frankfurter Rundschau* of June 23: "The statements of the Revolutionary Council may lead to normalization"), the jubilation of the SP members, who immediately copied and distributed the draft text, may have come too soon.

The defeat of de Carvalho is *not a defeat for the working class*, is not a defeat for the revolutionary left. The idea of independent workers and soldiers councils was not born in the heads of the MFA left-wing. It is an old idea of revolutionary Marxism, which in Portugal has

been once again taken up by the workers in the course of the revolutionary process.

Even if the Revolutionary Council now rejects it, even if Saraiva de Carvalho now drops it—the militant workers and soldiers are going about putting this idea into reality. The vacillating posture of the MFA left-wing can only increase the mistrust of the revolutionary workers in the MFA! Here the roll of the revolutionary left is irreplaceable—not the confused MFA left-wingers, rather the revolutionary parties which have at their disposal a revolutionary strategy and have clearly grasped the significance of the rise of a movement for soviets for the current stage of the revolutionary process in Portugal.

The LCI, Portuguese section of the Fourth International, is currently engaged, together with the FSP (left-centrist organization which split from the SP half a year ago) and possibly still other organizations to come, in carrying out a **CAMPAIGN FOR THE EXTENSION AND GENERALIZATION OF WORKERS COUNCILS.**

Franz Spreidtlér

Soviets in Lisbon?

[The following article appeared in the June 26 issue of the German Trotskyist weekly *Was Tun.*]

* * *

"In Portugal freedom is in danger"—this resounds throughout the bourgeois press in West Germany. The immediate cause was the closing of the newspaper *República*. The SPD [Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands—Social Democratic Party of Germany] is hurriedly getting 130,000 DM together in order to enable the purchase of new printing presses.

"Freedom is in danger"—every Socialist or Communist should prick up their ears here. Wasn't that also said in the case of Chile under Allende? Wasn't that always said whenever bourgeois freedom, the freedom to profitably invest and exploit "in peace and quiet," was in danger? Whenever large corporations were expropriated and operated under workers control; corporations, which for years had transferred enormous amounts of value out of the country; value which had been produced by the working class? Wasn't that always said whenever the employing class was in danger, things were going better for the working class, or when the entire existence of bourgeois order—from the economy to the laws, the police, the army, all the way to the church—was seriously shaken and threatened with being replaced by a new, socialist society?

If we look at the situation in Portugal this conjecture proves true: it's not a question of the freedom of *the masses* being threatened, rather the freedom of *the few*. One example: on June 16, 4000 workers from Lisnave, the largest European shipyard, met (it belongs to a Scandinavian corporation). The dock workers elected a workers council of Lisnave and called for the "taking of power by the workers." Revolutionary organizations are demanding the establishment of a united front including all workers organizations, whose central demand would be the demand for workers and soldiers councils and the formation of a national workers council as the highest organ of power of the working masses. Lisnave and these initiatives are *not isolated cases*—they are, however, the most advanced expression of the developing consciousness of the Portuguese working class. They show how the development of class consciousness cannot be measured with the yard-sticks of the bourgeois sociologists: one year after the liberation from the old dictatorship—at that time the coup by the young officers was still being hailed by all sections of the European and Portuguese bourgeoisie—the Portuguese masses have developed a consciousness which shows that the bourgeois class has miscalculated: *its*

freedom is in danger. (See also the *Was Tun* dossier in this issue).

The 'República Affair'

And what is true for the general situation in Portugal is essentially true as well for the specific case which the bourgeois press has seized upon: the "*República* affair." To start with, two things have to be made clear. First: the newspaper *República* is not, as often maintained, "the party newspaper of the Socialist Party (SP)". It's a case of a privately, capitalistically run, bourgeois newspaper, whose editorial board in its majority is close to the Socialist Party. Second: the *República* building was not occupied by the Communist Party (PCP), as often maintained. The occupation was carried out by the printers, among whom CP members represent a minority. The workers were reacting to threatening lay-offs and unemployment. After the occupation they elected a workers commission, removed the manager, and demanded a new administration under workers control. In addition there were political differences with the editors. In the opinion of the workers the *República* editors were specially pushing into the foreground of the newspaper sharp attacks against other workers parties, above all against the PCP, especially those coming from Maoist organizations. They were thereby reacting in the same way as tens of thousands of workers in Portugal are reacting today when they occupy factories, protesting threatening unemployment, or move against sections of the mass media which work by means of manipulation, which spread false reports and are financed from sources of shady origin (often from foreign countries). (See here also the case of the Catholic radio station.)

This actual course of events was distorted by various parties and organizations which used the *República* affair as grist for their mills and linked it to every possible intrigue: the SP spoke of "violated freedom of the press" and an attack on an "SP newspaper." The leadership of the PCP, against the background of its "left" turn, tried to play the affair off against the SP. The UDP (Democratic People's Union), which is the strongest organization among the printers, tried to deal a blow to the Maoist AOC (Workers and Peasants Alliance), which in turn is being "critically supported" by *República* editor Rego. Finally, certain representatives of the MFA are using the affair in order to step up their campaign against "party squabbling". . . .

So what does this freedom of the press which the bourgeois commentators so eagerly defend mean? Under capitalism—and in Portugal we still have a capitalist social order—freedom of the press means nothing more than the freedom of the *owners* of the means of communication to form public opinion along lines corresponding to their class interests. Whereas for the workers and their organizations it is made extremely difficult, if not totally impossible, to disseminate their opinions and to build up an independent press.

Bourgeois and Revolutionary Freedom of the Press

Therefore revolutionary Marxists raise the demand for the expropriation of the capitalist press and means of communication without compensation. Therefore we struggle for basic rights and for conditions which will give every tendency in the workers movement free access to the media and means of communication. In a workers state a democratically elected workers council will decide which political tendencies would have this free access and which not. And as revolutionary Marxists we support the right of every tendency—regardless of its program—to have this *real* freedom if it recognizes revolutionary legality. It would then depend on the real interest shown by the masses as to what degree of dissemination a certain opinion receives, how large a run a newspaper has, etc. (and not depend on advertisements, the price of paper, subsidies from sources of shady origin, etc.).

We see how the fuss of the bourgeois parties and communications media over "freedom" in Portugal, the "fundamental right of freedom of opinion and the press," turns out to be pure hypocrisy. They *say*: the *República* affair is a test case for freedom of opinion in Portugal—and they *mean*: a test case for *bourgeois* freedom of opinion; for the freedom to agitate against the struggles of workers and their organizations; the freedom to build up barriers against the development of revolutionary consciousness among the backward layers too; the freedom to poison the open atmosphere of discussion, mass experience, and independent activity of the masses with lies and manipulations. Precisely because the bourgeois monopoly on opinion has been broken Portugal is today the country which—under capitalist conditions—enjoys the greatest freedom of the press.

H.D./W.W.

For the Unity of the Workers For Revolutionary Power!

[The following is the text of a leaflet distributed in Lisbon July 18-19 by the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers party).]

* * *

In recent days the country has been going through—and is still going through—a great crisis, in which the division of the ranks of the workers—its gravest expression—was deliberately brought about by the two major workers parties. The most immediate cause of this crisis is precisely the absence at present of any government. The Revolutionary Council is trying to reconstruct a new class-collaborationist coalition, as useless and dangerous as the previous ones, although this time it may be a nonparty coalition. The Socialist party, for its part, is repeating what has now become its classic argument, claiming it is prepared to demand a government whose composition conforms to the results of the elections to the Constituent Assembly—a solution that is also dangerous and contrary to the interests of the workers, since it would only repeat the experience of the two previous bourgeois class-collaborationist governments.

To overcome the governmental crisis, it is necessary to consider the solutions proposed by the revolutionists, which do not take the form of an abstract and ambiguous defense of a Nonparty Revolutionary Government. The revolutionists call, as a first step, for an immediate meeting of the Assembly of Delegates of the MFA [Armed Forces Movement], with the sole function of assuring the democratic election of all of its components by the soldiers, sailors, and remaining officers of the Armed Forces. This election should also lead to the election of the Revolutionary Council by the ranks, so that it will then represent the real revolutionary potential of the process of democratization that is developing within the Armed Forces. It is quite clear that the objective will be the subsequent and urgent integration of delegates from the workers and neighborhoods, elected and represented on an equal basis with delegates of the soldiers in this body, which will thus become worthy of the name it now holds improperly.

The present crisis was deliberately provoked by the SP, whose leadership has been striving up to now to establish itself as a front for imperialism and the counterrevolution in Portugal, by demanding guarantees for private and foreign investments against the nationalizations and the People's Power. In fact, with the escalation of public meetings, demonstrations, and threats by Mário Soares, which are notably anticommunist and against the people, the SP is deliberately opening the door to the reaction, which up to now has been discredited. It has placed itself in this position by leading thousands upon thousands of persons into the streets around reactionary objectives. And the demonstration that the SP is preparing to hold today in Lisbon has exactly the same meaning: to divide the working class and fight the People's Power. Nevertheless, while Mário Soares's intentions are, to say the least, reactionary, many workers who go into the streets in response to his appeals are genuine socialists, who are demonstrating against the inaction of the government, against the high cost of living and for the right to trade-

union democracy. And there are also thousands of Socialist workers who want to make the revolution in Portugal! It is not enough to characterize the SP demonstration as reactionary and leave it at that: it must be said that the objectives of those who called it are clearly proimperialist and counterrevolutionary, but participating in it are workers who although deceived, are genuine socialists.

Thus when the Communist party calls for barricades to stop the SP demonstrators, it is choosing a false solution, it is choosing to divide the working class—and it is also doing it deliberately. The CP, too, does not want People's Power; it has never come out publicly and decisively for it, and the most flagrant proof of this is that it did not support or participate in the recent demonstration called by the neighborhood and workers commissions in Lisbon to support the People's Power.

We are in favor of barricades to block the advance of reaction; we will never support them when they are intended to restrict the right to demonstrate of thousands of SP workers whom we have to win over to the side of the Revolution. The CP is just as responsible as the SP for aggravating the crisis, precisely because it provides the SP with many correct arguments that it can put to reactionary use. The CP bureaucratically rejects the right to form tendencies in the trade unions, it defends the austerity program and the antiworking-class policy of the "battle for production," and it refuses to intervene in the Constituent Assembly to expose that body.

That is why we support the COPCON's statement that it "deplores the failure of the major national political parties to come to an accord on their political solutions for the crisis the country is going through, dragging the mass of workers into an imminent conflict that could have the most serious consequences."

To end the division of the workers there is only one road to follow: the dynamization of the People's Assemblies, in which the CP and the SP have the responsibility and duty to integrate themselves in accord with democratic and united practices. These assemblies are the only bodies capable of establishing themselves as the soviet expression of the United Front of all the workers. In them we will have to ensure that the concrete problems that affect and harm the interests of all the workers are resolved, independently of their party affiliation. The solutions will not be advanced by openly opposing the parliamentarist illusions of thousands of SP workers in the Constituent through shouting ultraleft slogans like "Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly."

Against the High Cost of Living, Unemployment, and "Sabotage"—For Workers Control of Production and Establishment of an Anticapitalist Economic Plan Discussed and Developed by the People's Assemblies!

Against Division, People's Power!

For the United Front of the Workers; the CP and SP Must Join the People's Assembly!

For a Government Independent of the Bourgeoisie, Resulting from the Restructuring of the Revolutionary Council and the Assembly of the MFA, Based on Democratic Participation of All the Soldiers in its Election!

A Necessary Rectification

The MFA and the Revolution in Portugal

[The following article appeared in the July 10 issue of *Combate Socialista*, the newspaper of the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers party) of Portugal. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Up until now we have always characterized the MFA [Movimento das Forças Armadas—Armed Forces Movement] as a bourgeois movement, the defender—in the absence of any structured party of the ruling class or of even a solid state apparatus—of the fundamental interests of capitalism, even though it was often also compelled by its position as “supraparty” arbiter to chastise the traditionally most privileged sectors of the bourgeoisie in order to defend the overall interests of this very same class.

Nevertheless, under the constant pressure of events and of reality, our party found itself many times in situations in which this definition was inadequate or, worse, useless. On the one hand, this pressure made the weaknesses of our initial analysis increasingly evident. On the other, it forced us in each concrete circumstance to take positions with regard to the MFA that, however correct they turned out to be at the time, were empirical and in a certain sense contradictory to our fundamental analysis. When we supported the MFA’s progressive measures against the reactionaries on September 28 and March 11, again on the occasion of the nationalizations following the second coup attempt, and in the January 14 debate on trade-union unity, we sought to formulate a political explanation and proposals in face of the visible contradictions putting the MFA in opposition to at least important sectors of the capitalist class, while the MFA remained linked to the bourgeois provisional government. Thus we became aware of an initial error we had made—an *error in method*. We overlooked the fact that during a revolution, a thoroughgoing revolution, *three classes* always come into play: the proletariat, the bourgeoisie, and the petty bourgeoisie. Invariably, there are always *two* alternatives: the proletarian alternative and the bourgeois alternative. But *three* classes intervene in the process. Because of this, any haste in “pigeonholing” everything as either proletarian or bourgeois can result in big errors when the factor under consideration is petty bourgeois.

Once we became aware of this first error, we began to analyze Portuguese reality keeping in mind the theory of *uneven and combined development*, which tells us that there is no such thing as an isolated revolutionary process. The entire national reality is part of an international totality that determines the existence of general laws that influence any given country. But this theory also tells us that *no two processes coincide in every detail*. Each process, each revolution has its *own* characteristics, encompasses *new* phenomena, has aspects that develop in *different* forms and dimensions. To be more concrete, each revolution—no matter where it begins, no matter who leads it—in this historic period can have only one perspective if it is to develop: the constant mobilization of

the mass movement under the leadership of the proletariat, the transformation of the democratic revolution into a socialist one under the leadership of a Leninist revolutionary party struggling to establish a Workers and Peasants Government, a transitional goal toward the attainment of socialism. If these are the general *obligatory* lines of any revolution in our epoch, we must also be able to *identify and understand the specific lines*.

The present Portuguese revolution has its own characteristics. In the first place, *it originated with the fall of the Salazar-Marcelist dictatorship, in crisis because of the triumphant advance of the national liberation struggles in the Portuguese colonies in Africa. Blow by blow, the colonial revolution inflicted a military defeat on the Portuguese army in the battlefield.*

The Portuguese armed forces, the institution most damaged by the war, also became the seed bed of the main reaction against the dictatorship, even before the workers of the metropolis had mobilized massively against it. And it was this reaction that toppled the dictatorship and opened the doors for the mobilization of the workers and the people.

Thus from the very beginning, the revolution faced a defeated, demoralized army, in which the values and norms of bourgeois militarism were shattered, giving way continually to a movement of politicization, democratization, and reorganization, which was relatively autonomous although ultimately dependent on the general crisis of the system and stimulated by the pressure of the mass movement.

Finally, the forty-eight years of corporatist dictatorship meant that there were no mass parties. In the case of the bourgeoisie this is quite evident in the botched construction of the PPD [Partido Popular Democrático—Democratic People’s party], CDS [Centro Democrático Social—Social Democratic Center], and so many other parties that failed within a few months. Also both of *the present mass reformist workers parties were built as mass organizations after April 25, propped up at first by the Social Democracy and Stalinism internationally.* If any difference can be established between the SP and the PCP it is that the latter persevered underground during half a century of dictatorship. Because of this it is recognized by the *most combative* sectors of the workers movement.

These are the fundamental lines characterizing the Portuguese process. In a certain way, the product of these lines is the MFA. We can understand it as a *new phenomenon*, that is, a transitory result of a very particular reality, the reality of the Portuguese revolution. It began as a *movement*, a *petty-bourgeois reaction* of one sector of the officers of an army hammered by war and massacred by military defeat in Africa, of a sector that because of this wanted to end the war, knowing that to achieve this it had to end the dictatorship.

Precisely because it represented a reaction by petty-bourgeois elements without a defined leadership, the MFA—or previously, its first embryonic form, the captains’ movement—sought orientation from generals like Spínola. Spínola certainly was opposed to the dictatorship as a representative of the most lucid sectors of capital, of big finance capital, who were aware that following the

military defeat they had to negotiate a "political solution," that is, "to find a solution" to the war by setting up local governments that were formally independent but that really represented the interests of Portuguese and international imperialism in Africa. This movement, *which the bourgeoisie really wanted to bring into being*, would have been able to topple the dictatorship and establish a more or less authoritarian regime—according to Spínola's whim—that would guarantee a political turn without any upsets in Portugal and the colonies, which big capital found itself obliged to adopt.

It would have been able to if another force had not come on the scene—the *mass movement*. It was precisely that force, which had been urged during the first hours of April 25 to stay at home, that launched its decisive participation in the Portuguese process in a resounding way.

Within the MFA, confusion increased; divisions began to appear. One sector, the "Spinolists," reversed its direction of march and was progressively beaten back mainly because the workers advanced in their struggles and defeated the conspiracies decisively. Today almost all the officers who prior to April 25 carried out the so-called Caldas putsch [the abortive March 16, 1974, revolt of an army regiment in Portugal] are in jail.

Another sector, weakened by internal and external contradictions, by the class struggle, turned to the left. With deepened democratic, populist aspirations, it began systematically to bring controlled political discussion and democratization into the barracks, mainly to combat the influence of the reactionary, "Spinolist" sectors in the armed forces. This appears to us to be the most important process, decisive in the current situation in Portugal. It begins to define the MFA or at least one of its sectors: *it is the MFA that introduces a different organization, a different power into the bourgeois armed force—a dual power*. It does not matter that the assemblies of some barracks or the organized associations of navy troops were created from above, were "controlled." These rank-and-file assemblies now represent *the beginnings of soviet power*.

Nevertheless, because of the political backwardness of the country and the organizational backwardness of the masses, the MFA plays a more or less bonapartist role, balancing and containing the mass movement, but also centralizing and, at times, carrying out the desires of the masses, who still do not have their own organizations for discussion and action—a very special bonapartism.

In the same way that the workers parties form coalitions, the MFA participates and commits itself to the policies of the bourgeois government. But this does not mean we can equate the government with the armed forces, nor the MFA with the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, the facts continue to show that despite its tolerating figures who serve as guarantors of national and international capitalism, the aggravation of the crisis deepens the cleavages within the MFA. The semisoviet tendency arising from this polarization gives the MFA an instabil-

ity, which the MFA transmits to the government as a whole, making its bonapartism more and more something suspended in a vacuum.

This process of "sovietization" inside the armed forces is unlikely to be able to continue in the absence of the full development of organisms of dual power inside and outside the barracks, precisely because the demoralization resulting from the prolonged economic and political crisis that the country is experiencing is beginning to take hold of certain sectors of the mass movement. This demoralization could be used by the right to sanction their counterrevolutionary putschist plans.

That is why it is becoming so urgent to call for a united front of all workers and their parties, beginning with the PCP and the SP, as the only viable form in the present situation. That is, such a united front must be integrated into the process of construction of organizations of direct democracy.

The revolution begins to take form with the development of these organizations, organizations born of the necessity to defend the conquests of the masses, block the blows of the reactionaries, and unite the workers and popular forces to continue the advance. Within this perspective, we find it necessary and urgent *to demand that the MFA and particularly Copcon [Comando Operacional do Continente—Mainland Portugal Operations Command]—the most radicalized expression of rank-and-file democracy that has developed in the barracks—promote the formation of coordinating committees with equal representation of delegates from the ADU [Assembleias de Delegados da Unidade—Unit Delegate Assemblies] and representatives elected from the workers commissions or other united rank-and-file organizations. All workers political parties, especially the PCP and SP, must be members of these coordinating committees, and respect their democratic, united functioning.*

Then, as a governmental alternative we must call for the *total recomposition of the Conselho da Revolução [Revolutionary Council], for it to be selected in a democratic, revolutionary fashion by the ADUs and an equal number of elected workers delegates.*

The magnitude of these tasks makes it more necessary than ever to construct a Leninist-Trotskyist combat party capable of implementing this perspective and the *only* guarantee that the progressive sector of the MFA does not get lost in the confusion that weakens it, so that the workers will guide its course according to their immediate and historic needs—the *only guarantee of the socialist revolution in Portugal.*

After a long and complex process of discussion, the PRT reached a conclusion and approved the characterizations that it has sought to summarize here very briefly. A more comprehensive document will come out soon, providing a more thorough grounding for the positions summarized here.

Against Capital and Reaction: Proletarian Unity

[The following statement by the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Portugal) was distributed in Lisbon July 19, including at the meeting of the Portuguese Socialist party. We have taken the text from the July 25 issue of the French Trotskyist weekly *Rouge*.]

For several days the situation has again become tense. Great confusion reigns, fed by all kinds of rumors.

The LCI (Portuguese organization of the Fourth International) believes it is duty-bound to try to clarify this situation in order to think out together with the workers—all the workers, no matter what party or tendency in the workers movement they identify with—the means for building a united response.

1) The incapacity of a government that tries to combine fire with water (the interests of the workers with guarantees for the capitalist class that exploits them) has just been ended lamentably by the fall of the provisional government.

Today there is no more government in Portugal. Everyone knows, every worker senses, that the country can be pulled out of the crisis only by a government defending the interests of the workers, the peasants, and all victims of capitalist oppression.

To achieve this it is necessary to put an end to hesitation, to compromise, to evasiveness—all of which is aimed at trying to put back together what has been overthrown by the real combativity of the workers. To achieve this a government is needed that is dedicated to overthrowing capitalism by basing itself on the tremendous power of the workers organized in their tenants commissions and their popular assemblies. A government is needed that is responsible to a National Popular Assembly, representative of the whole of the working class, the peasants, and the soldiers.

2) It is clear that the social-democratic leadership of the SP rejects this perspective. Whatever words they use to appeal to the spontaneous aspirations of those who still maintain confidence in them, the SP leaders left the government in order to fight against the self-organization of the workers that the assembly of the MFA had been forced to recognize. That is the truth.

On the other hand, the SP leadership is waging a campaign for the next assembly of the MFA to reverse its decision or at least moderate it. In this way they are seeking to guarantee their position in the future government and even to strengthen that position.

The SP leadership prefers the possibilities for parliamentary maneuvers in the Constituent Assembly to the development of the power of the workers, civilians or in uniform, organized where they work and live.

The SP leadership prefers its alliance with social democrats such as Schmidt, Wilson, and Palme, loyal managers of European capitalism, to the extension of international solidarity with the Portuguese revolution across the borders of the bourgeois states that are now threatening to snuff it out.

But is this what the hundreds of thousands of workers, members or sympathizers of the Socialist party, wanted

when they gave the SP their allegiance? We are certain it is not. The socialist workers—whatever illusions they might hold (illusions that we are trying to dispel—are striving for the abolition of the capitalist system of oppression and exploitation of man by man. They are sincere partisans of the construction of a classless society where the workers will wield all power and enjoy all the socialist freedoms, which cannot be compared to the formal “freedoms” of bourgeois democracy.

3) The reformist and Stalinist leadership of the PCP bears major responsibility for the division of the workers movement that we see today and that threatens to become tragic in the future.

Instead of striving toward the unity of the Proletarian Front against the bourgeois reaction that is now raising its head, the PCP leadership tries to use the popular mobilization as a pawn in its political game with the MFA.

Instead of doing everything possible to bring together the working class and revolutionary forces where they should be—at the places of work and in the neighborhoods—the PCP leadership tries, in its sectarianism, to pose as the only revolutionary force by driving the workers of the SP into the arms of the rightists.

Communist, socialist, and revolutionary workers all have the right to organize in their different parties in order to express their opinions on how to fight against capitalism and on the ways and means of building socialism.

But we can only crush the reaction if we are together and united, as on September 28 and March 11.

4) We will always defend unconditionally the right of the workers organizations to hold meetings and organize demonstrations, whatever our disagreements with their aims.

From this point of view, the maneuvers of the PCP leadership these last two days—in which they tried in vain to draw the FSP, the MES, and the LCI into a trap—contribute nothing to this Workers United Front.

But the workers of the SP must not allow their initiatives to give cover for a surge of attacks on the workers organizations, as took place at Aveiro, Rio Maior, Lorinha, Porto de Mos, Cadaval, and Batalha.

Together with their class brothers, they must smash the fascists by organizing popular vigilance at the headquarters of the workers parties and the unions, and by uniting in their independent organs of anticapitalist struggle and preparing self-defense in close collaboration with the soldiers and sailors. The workers must not allow legitimate discussion and debates inside the workers movement to facilitate the offensive of the counterrevolution.

The LCI appeals to all workers, especially the socialist and communist workers: At this decisive moment it is proletarian unity that overrides everything!

Everyone join together in our workers commissions, our tenants commissions, our assemblies for unity, our popular assemblies for the formation of the National Popular Assembly, organ of workers power! For a workers government!

Against capital and reaction, proletarian unity! Vigilance! Forward to the socialist revolution!

July 19, 1975

Executive Committee of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista

"Portugal's July days" by Sam Marcy *Workers World, July 25, 1975*

[The following article appeared in the July 25 issue of *Workers World*, weekly newspaper of the Workers World party.]

* * *

NEW YORK, July 22—The Portuguese Revolution is now going through the agony of its "July days." Communist Party headquarters in ten cities all across Northern Portugal have either been sacked or burned. Progressive newspapers are being hindered from distribution. Many revolutionary militants and progressive activists have had to take cover against mob violence. Others have gone into hiding. A wild witchhunt is in full progress, fueled by bourgeois reaction and clerical obscurantism. As always, persecution weakens some, strengthens others, and confusion takes a high toll.

It was all set off by a week-long series of demonstrations called under the banner of the Socialist Party (SP) but basically gathering together hundreds of thousands of reactionary elements, many of whom just a few weeks ago would not have dared to take to the streets. Nevertheless, these demonstrations have failed in their principal objective. The aim was to topple the government. They failed to achieve this.

Split in Junta

They did, however, bring to the surface the deep split in the governing junta. It was shown without a doubt that President Gomes, Foreign Minister Antunes, Admiral Vitor Crespo, Captain Lourenco, and others constitute a right-wing, bourgeois military grouping. In opposition are the more progressive junior officers in the governing council of the Armed Forces Movement (AFM).

Gomes's readiness to displace Premier Goncalves in a new Cabinet with the Socialists and Popular Democrats, probably to the exclusion of the Portuguese CP and Portuguese Democratic Movement (MDP), constitutes an open breach. This was made clear when Gomes issued a statement saying a new Cabinet would be formed which "would respect the will of the Portuguese people and create the need to give representation to various currents of socialist political thought."

The phrase "respect for the will of the Portuguese people" is a catchword used by the Socialist Party as a rallying slogan for the rightists. Gomes's use of this phrase clearly refers to Mario Soares and his colleagues and does not embrace Marxist or revolutionary "currents of socialist political thought."

The SP is not opposed to the whole military—only to the left wing of it, of which they consider Premier Goncalves to be the principal leader and an exponent of communist ideology.

Struggle Over Goncalves

According to today's New York Times, the recent publication of a speech by Goncalves to the Armed Forces

General Assembly "has helped to explain why battle lines have been so acutely drawn." Goncalves is quoted as having said that the principal problem of socialism was "the taking of power by the workers." Moreover, he is said to have stated that this entails leadership by a vanguard of the workers. Of course, he meant the CP. But he added that that includes other organizations that fight for real socialism, which he defined as "the domination of the workers over the means of production and over the conditions of their existence."

It is this view that is apparently at the bottom of the crisis that caused the SP to break from the Cabinet along with the PPD, because if acted upon this view would actually mean the dictatorship of the proletariat and a workers' government. This explains the furious opposition of the SP and, of course, the PPD, both of whom are really committed to the bourgeois system. This is why Soares has become the darling of international finance capital and is embraced by the entire bourgeoisie. And this explains why Soares has said that Goncalves is the key to the problem.

The pressure of the counter-revolutionary demonstrations brought to the fore a line of political differentiation, long building up in the military, which has now reached the boiling point. Only the intervention of the more progressive military leaders who are concentrated in what is called the Fifth Division, the political arm of the AFM, has momentarily made it possible to paper over the split. A communique from the Fifth Division strongly supported Premier Goncalves, and by implication rejected Gomes's move for a new Cabinet.

It is widely reported that the so-called moderates (bourgeois elements) have a majority in the High Council of the Revolution. However, in a revolutionary, showdown struggle, this is not at all what counts. What counts is, whom will the rank-and-file soldiers and sailors follow? Will they respond to a revolutionary call to defend the socialist revolution in the struggle against fascism, or will they become pawns of the counter-revolution? This basically is the issue.

About 10 percent of the old military were purged. Percentages alone, however, don't count. It depends on who among them has influence and material forces to rally in the counter-revolution.

SP Cover for Counter-Revolution

The SP demonstrations were understood everywhere in the imperialist world to be *not protests against the bourgeois military as such, but against communism*. While the thrust of the demonstrations was against Goncalves, it was clear in the Oporto as well as in the Lisbon demonstrations that these mobilizations were anti-communist and anti-working class in character. They were in fact preparations for a counter-revolution. The fact that they fell short of their projected goal gives the working class and its political organizations the opportunity to resume the initiative, to launch a new revolutionary working class offensive.

It is entirely possible that these demonstrations constitute the high-water mark of the counter-revolution's so-called popular support. It was fortunate that the military did not provoke a street struggle against the demonstrators. It would have been a tragic error that could have unleashed the right-wing military coup for which the SP demonstrations were supposed to be the popular cover.

Undoubtedly, there has been a shift to the right in the military. The military is and has been a bourgeois institution. It faithfully reflects the class stratifications in bourgeois society. By and large the officer corps, such as Gomes, Antunes, Crespo, and others, are the guardians of the bourgeois order. But the acute class struggle in the country cannot but result in at least some of the progressive officers responding to the class needs of the workers, peasants, and the poor.

A split in the military is absolutely inevitable. It is just a question as to when and how it takes place and under what circumstances. The political organizations of the workers can and must assert their class independence and utilize such allies within the military as they can find, but above all they must concentrate on the rank-and-file soldiers and sailors.

Still Time to Stop It

Unless the right-wing in the military acts immediately under the aegis of the U.S. and the Western Allies, there still remains ample opportunity to stop the counter-revolution and regain the political initiative by slowly starting to build the working class defense organizations.

Advantage must be taken of the already existing popular committees composed of workers, organized in the shops, the neighborhoods, etc. They must be made nationwide in character and draw in all strata of the oppressed. They must be given wide initiative to continue the takeover of all aspects of the economy.

The Socialist Workers Party over here, in its paper "The Militant," falls in with world reaction again in characterizing the proposed people's committees as "totalitarian." Instead it calls for a parliamentary coalition of the CP and SP. But there had been a coalition between these two parties all along! It is the SP, which is opposed to the radical measures being taken against the capitalists and landlords, that in effect is demanding that the CP be

ousted from the coalition with its attacks on CP headquarters and its slogan of "Goncalves out!"

Bosses Continue to Sabotage Economy

The bourgeoisie is continuing to deliberately sabotage production. The principal economic organizations of the bourgeoisie are defying the government, insolently handing it ultimatums, blaming the workers for the economic chaos in the country, calling upon them for more and more sacrifices.

The economic situation will surely pass from the stage of deterioration at the present time to that of collapse if the bourgeoisie is permitted to sabotage industries and the workers are not given full political control of the economy.

Every effort must be made to make arms available to the popular committees and to forge and strengthen fraternal relations with the rank-and-file soldiers and sailors. No form of economic aid from abroad can now appreciably change the character of the economic crisis. The entire struggle is now political in character.

The counter-revolution having made its major political thrust, the arena of the struggle will now shift to other areas. The New York Times of July 19 and the Washington Post of July 20 have now both admitted that a veritable army of thousands of fascist elements is training for intervention from nearby Spain. Elements from among the soldiers and sailors returning from Mozambique are speculated to be possible fertile soil for counter-revolutionary insurgency.

Under these circumstances, the status quo, politically, economically, and militarily, is absolutely impossible. A country so sharply divided along class lines and locked in most acute incipient struggle is pregnant either with proletarian revolution or a resurgence of fascist military rule. A bourgeois parliamentary solution, which is feverishly being sought behind the scenes, can only be a brief interval between the two.

Now, in the interim, is the time to build what in reality amounts to a Portuguese form of Soviets, in embryo. Such are the small, modest beginnings of the popular committees. It remains for the Portuguese CP and other left-wing militant political organizations of the workers to block together and carry out this task in this hour of peril.

"Portuguese revolution in danger" by Sam Marcy

Workers World, July 18, 1975

[The following article appeared in the July 18 issue of *Workers World*, weekly newspaper of the Workers World party.]

* * *

NEW YORK, July 16—The U.S. and its Western Allies are preparing a back-door counter-revolution in Portugal. They are using Socialist Party (SP) and Popular Democrat (PD) politicians as their public relations front to carry out this sordid mission. This attempt to reverse the gains of the revolution, unlike the two previous attempts—last September and again in March—has the potential of fomenting the bloodiest civil war in Europe since the Spanish Revolution.

There are, of course, theoretically speaking, other possibilities. The Portuguese Communist Party (CP) and its allies could gracefully withdraw from the government and from influential positions in the army and let the SP and PD run the show in reestablishing the battered and broken-down ruling class of Portugal.

But even if the CP leadership were contemplating this alternative, which we strongly doubt, it would not result in a peaceful democratic solution. It would only end up in a monstrous bloodbath for the working class. The reasons for this should be obvious to anyone who has even superficially studied the development in Portugal over the past 14 months.

Fascists Still There—in the Woodwork

In the first place, all the counter-revolutionary forces—the Salazarists, the Caetanoists, the Spinoists in and out of the army, all the old, rotten, and corrupt elements of the fascist regime, the police, the civil guards, the prison authorities, the court personnel and judges, some elements of the rank-and-file army not to speak of reactionaries in the officer corps, all the flunkies of the dispossessed landlords, absentee managers, servants and lickspittles of the monopolies, who have long been in hiding and subdued—all these would spring into the open and create a St. Bartholomew's Night of terror for all the working class militants, landless peasants, and progressives.

None of the above counter-revolutionary elements have been destroyed or deeply wounded by the revolution. The revolution has been kind to them. Have not all genuine revolutions of the oppressed in the past always started off by treating their mortal class enemies with kindness—until the night of terror does descend upon them? Only then, and then only, does the vengeance of the revolutionary masses come into existence. It is then that the revolutionary masses are reviled for the use of terror, but the terror of their oppressors is not mentioned.

To this day, the PIDE (the secret police who used to torture all dissidents during the fascist regime) have been treated "leniently, even kindly" (Portuguese CP head Alvaro Cunhal's own words). They could be out of jail on

an hour's notice as vengeful, as cruel, and as sadistic as they ever were, if not more so.

Then think also of all those—there are thousands—who have been forced into exile. The landlords, plant managers, business executives, government officials of the former regime, and their families. Even now, "refugees" from Mozambique and Angola are streaming into the Lisbon airport. The rightists are delighted to welcome them.

Yes, it is theoretically possible for the CP to gracefully withdraw, but the practical aspect is no easy task. It ought to make anyone shudder at the enormous dangers it would entail. The bourgeoisie would soon show what it really means by a "democratic process." This would happen even if the CP withdrew in the best and most principled break with the government.

Right-wing Pressure From Italian CP

There is no question that the Italian CP leader Enrico Berlinguer and his colleagues have been urging precisely such a withdrawal. Have not the Italian CP leaders been warning Cunhal all along to take his place as a minority in a "peaceful," constitutional, "democratic way" and make a Portuguese-style "historic compromise" like Berlinguer is so desperately trying to accomplish in Italy?

No wonder Cunhal is now so disdainful and scornful of his Italian and Spanish colleagues. The truth is, as an article by John Paton Davies in the *New York Times Magazine* of July 13 says, the Italian CP leaders have all along been more favorable to the Portuguese Socialist Party and its approach. That explains a lot about the anger of Cunhal at the advice (or really pressure) he's been getting from Italian and other Western CP leaders.

The current crisis in Portugal arose when the SP ministers and their deputies withdrew from the Cabinet. By the time this is in print, the Popular Democrats will have done so too.

Almost simultaneously, the Confederation of Portuguese Industries—the industrialists' organization—which had been laying low all these many months and at times seemed as servile as flunkies to the government, has made a turnabout. Emboldened by the "democratic" electoral victory, these capitalists have steadily become tougher. At their last meeting they went so far as to hand the government an ultimatum so provocatively worded that even President Costa Gomez [*sic*], a moderate (a euphemism for a bourgeois), had to decline meeting with them. The smaller shopkeepers too have become even more rambunctious.

And finally, the Assembly of Lawyers, representing the ancient and honorable profession of Portuguese barristers (where have they been all these 50 years in the struggle for civil rights and democratic liberties?) has at last passed a resolution for civil rights and democracy *directed against the government and the CP*.

To round out the events as they are unfolding in this

tense political crisis, the headquarters of the CP in Rio Maior (a small town 25 miles north of Lisbon), has been burned down to the ground by a counter-revolutionary mob to the malicious joy of all the rightists. And none of those who are now suddenly fighting for "democracy" took note of this infraction of democracy.

And what has been the issue which galvanized the SP and the Popular Democratic politicians and caused them to throw down the gauntlet to the armed forces (really meaning it for the CP)?

Freedom of the press! The fact that the workers, led to a very limited extent by the CP, took over the establishment of *Republica* (which incidentally is privately owned), locked the door, and wouldn't let the publishers in. But this takeover coincided with hundreds of others by Portuguese workers in other areas of the working class struggle, which explains why so much workers' control of industry prevails as of now in Portugal (see *WW* article, June 27).

Bourgeois 'Freedom' Lovers

Never has an issue such as the closing of the *Republica* newspaper had such a magical effect on rallying the worldwide bourgeoisie. Offers of financial support "have come from all over the world and things have gone so far that there was a suggestion that Western European and American newspapers might make a direct contribution for a newspaper to be edited by Raul Rego" (the former owner of *Republica*), says the *Washington Post* of July 15.

Has there ever been a genuinely socialist publication that could get the support of the Pentagon, the CIA, the White House, Wall Street, and the Bund? Yet even a retired U.S. Chief of Naval Operations is publicly soliciting funds for *Republica*. Admiral Elmo Zumwalt signed his name to an ad in the *New York Times* for such purposes (July 13), and Zumwalt was none other than Nixon's Chief of Naval Operations.

Indeed, the U.S. ruling class is working overtime on all cylinders getting everybody to do their bit to reverse the situation in Portugal. Even bankers have been enlisted to act as errand boys for the CIA so that "freedom could prevail." Tad Szulc, the former *New York Times* Washington Bureau Chief, says in an article in the August *Penthouse* magazine that "early this year several American bankers were asked by personal friends in the CIA to handle a delivery of special funds in Spain and Portugal." Some, of course, refused. It would violate the tradition that the CIA does the errand boy work for the bankers, and not vice versa. But on this special occasion, some of the bankers agreed to cooperate in the spirit of "national interest."

Money and Troops

Why special funds in Spain and Portugal? It was not for nothing that Ford on May 30 condescended to embrace Franco in public. For it is there in Spain that the so-called Portuguese Liberation Army, a band of cutthroats, mercenaries, and scum of the earth, are being trained for a counter-revolutionary invasion. It should not be forgotten that the Mutual Assistance Treaty signed between Franco and Salazar in 1939 had in mind precisely such a situation as exists in Portugal today.

The London *Economist* of June 28 refers to the PLA as

one of the reasons why the "vanishing right has reasons for feeling not entirely powerless."

The other two reasons the magazine gives are the troops expected to return from Mozambique and the former high commissioner there, Admiral Vitor Crespo. It has been widely speculated that the latter is a possible alternative to Premier Goncalves.

The ruling class has put its liberal elements in the vanguard role in garnering support for *Republica*. Behind them, of course, are the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, such luminaries of the right as William Buckley, a long list of right-wing liberals, and an array of organizations like the anti-communist Social Democrats USA, and others ad nauseam.

Where were they all these many years when the fascist dictatorship was in power? Did they ever raise their voice for any victim of fascist terror in Portugal, or condemn the suppression of democratic newspapers *then*?

Where were they when Spinoza was planning and openly calling for his "silent majority" to come out in a Mussolini-type march and end the Portuguese revolution?

None of them seem to have noticed that at all. Where were they all when the Spinozaists were planning to launch their second coup last March? Were they alerting the public in Portugal to mount the barricades? Were they getting ready to send bundles for the freedom fighters on the barricades who halted the Spinozaist fascist assault?

Did they even deign to write a commendatory editorial on the successful defense and the crushing of the fascist coup—which they said they were against (but only because it failed)?

No, No! Then it was the workers, the revolutionary militants, the PCP, the Portuguese Democratic Movement, and others on the left who were fighting the battle for civil liberties and democratic rights against the fascist assault. It was they who saved whatever democratic rights exist in Portugal today. Arrayed today against these very same revolutionary militants, class-conscious workers, and progressives is the bourgeois counter-revolution wearing the mask of "freedom of the press" and "democracy."

Soares and his colleagues are merely preparing the groundwork for the counter-revolution. They are transitional, intermediate, and temporary figures to hold the fort until . . . ! Soares' bourgeois allies among the Popular Democrats are more conscious of their mission than he is. As are the representatives of U.S. imperialism like C.L. Sulzberger, part of the oligarchy that owns and edits the *New York Times*. Now in Lisbon, he quotes Soares as telling him, "I think we must use foreign help." (*New York Times*, July 16.)

CP Rejects Bourgeois Parliament

Cunhal is every bit correct in rejecting the bourgeois democratic system which he calls "freedom and monopolists"—that is a splendid formulation and accurate as well (as quoted in a July 13 *New York Times Magazine* interview conducted by Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci). The monopolies can always reject "freedom" whenever it becomes inconvenient for them. But the social democrats and liberals, who presumably personify "freedom," have never quite disengaged themselves from the monopolies and have always managed to coexist with and serve them faithfully.

Cunhal is also absolutely correct when he denounces the

Popular Front, such as the one Togliatti made with Nenni in 1948 which resulted in the Italian CP disbanding the anti-fascist Partisan organizations and entering a coalition cabinet with the bourgeoisie. Here is a case where the monopolies could not quite comfortably coexist with freedom as envisioned by Togliatti and he and his colleagues were unceremoniously thrown out of the Cabinet as soon as it became convenient for the U.S. State Department.

Berlinguer's striving for his much beloved "historical compromise" with the Italian bourgeoisie is merely a cruder version of the 1948 coalition.

It should not be assumed that Cunhal is rejecting all compromise with the bourgeoisie and is all out for the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a superficial reading of his interview with Oriana Fallaci would indicate. But he does appear to be utterly uncompromising in the struggle against any bourgeois parliament which would be a screen for a later fascist takeover.

CP Reliance on Military

The most worrisome aspect of Cunhal's militant, defiant, and confident attitude towards the bourgeoisie is that it comes rather late in the day—hopefully not too late. Cunhal has banked everything on his relationship to the army and particularly to the Armed Forces Movement (AFM). He considers it a singular achievement and believes now that his party is "unexpendable" by the army.

His faith in his alliance with the AFM is wholly unwarranted and objectively a breach of the most elementary Marxist-Leninist principles on the class character of the state. (Incidentally, Lenin's classic on *State and Revolution* is one of the best sellers in Lisbon today.)

Granted that some limited rapprochement with the army in the struggle against the Caetano-Salazar regime was inevitable, given the circumstances that the military had for a considerable period been preparing for the overthrow of the fascist regime. But taking the responsibility for undeviating collaboration with the army on a practically unlimited scale is quite another matter. It's another form of class collaboration, in principle not qualitatively different from the character of the collaboration which the Italian CP is now carrying out, only theirs is with the civilian bourgeoisie.

The heavy price paid by the Portuguese CP for the collaboration is the loss of confidence of large sections of the workers who have become alienated as a result of the PCP's relentless drive to increase production—capitalist production—against "excessive" wage demands, all in the name of trying to arrest a consistently deteriorating capitalist economy. Cunhal admits that the economic situation is disastrous. Why is it so? Because the capitalist class is *sabotaging* production.

Asking the workers to withhold wage increases and the like will not stop capitalist sabotage nor will it in any way militate against inflation. No capitalist government has yet been able to stifle inflation except by creating unemployment, and even then the inflation still continues.

Workers' control of the entire economy and the destruction of the capitalists' political power is the answer.

To some degree Cunhal himself gives the answer. As summarized by his interviewer, accurately, we believe, it is

"either the dictatorship of the proletariat or fascism, the third force doesn't count, liberal socialism is rubbish."

Yet the CP has not acted upon this from the earliest stages of the revolution and instead tried to police the workers, making it easier for the SP and other elements to utilize and exploit the PCP's false policy. Of course it was pure demagoguery on the part of the Socialists and others.

If bourgeois democracy cannot prevail in Portugal, according to Cunhal, what then? Is not a fascist dictatorship inevitable? "We Communists," says Cunhal, "are equipped to prevent it, thanks to our alliance with the military."

Would that that were so. We would like to believe that we are wrong in doubting this and will cheerfully admit it if Cunhal is to be proven true.

However, the first part of his sentence, in our view, is cancelled out by the second part.

As matters stand, the facts speak against it. "A fact is a blunt thing," said Lenin.

Who Are the Leaders of the AFM?

Costa Gomez [*sic*], the President of the Portuguese government, is, in Cunhal's own words, a moderate (a bourgeois). He was the chief of staff of the fascist government, not a very good recommendation.

Admiral Crespo, the former high commissioner of Mozambique, another moderate, is openly suggested as a replacement for Premier Goncalves, said to be a long-time friend and collaborator of the CP even before the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship.

Foreign Minister Antunes, another moderate, only the other day posed the possibility of calling in the UN in the developing struggle in Angola. He is said to have raised the alternative of sending in more troops to "safeguard" Portuguese lives and property.

(If the PCP does not completely and without qualification denounce and disassociate itself from such renewed intervention, it will suffer the most severe setback in the mass movement, evoking utter revulsion from its most militant and class conscious supporters. And if the junta goes through with the projected intervention, then it invites the same fate as the Kerensky government after it resumed the imperialist war with the June 1917 offensive.)

(It is well known that the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), which considers itself Marxist, is supported by Soviet arms. It is now reported to be in control of Luanda, the Angolan capital. The National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) is reported to be moving an army against Luanda from Zaire. Assuming the very best motive on the part of the Portuguese junta—that is, to help the MPLA defend Luanda against a neo-colonialist maneuver—this still would be a rank error. Any intervention by the troops of a country still legally the colonial power would only discredit the MPLA and confuse the situation. As Engels said, freedom for the colonies cannot be brought in from outside on a sword; that would only boomerang and weaken the real forces of liberation.)

General Carvalho, the head of the security forces, is described in the bourgeois press as erratic in his relations with the military groupings and prone to move from left to right, a thin reed to rely upon in a showdown crisis.

As late as July 5th to 7th, General Carvalho, along with Captain Vasco Laurence and Major Jose de Canto e Castro, met with the so-called moderate (bourgeois) faction

headed by Foreign Minister Melo Antunes, Major Vitor Alves and, very significantly, Admiral Vitor Crespo. It was a secret caucus meeting. Premier Goncalves was not there, nor were some of the others close to him (*New York Times*, July 8). Fortunately, Goncalves and his supporters along with the CP either reversed or somehow broke up what seemed to be a developing crisis and a split—what the SP and the Popular Democrats had been counting on, and what the CIA and its allied foreign intelligences in Europe have been feverishly working at.

According to one report, there are no less than a thousand foreign newspaper people of the various wire services, magazines, newspapers, electronic media, etc. in Portugal today. A veritable army of intelligence, most of them not from the U.S. but working on behalf of U.S. intelligence. This is the kind of intelligence the liberal establishment thinks the CIA is *properly* engaged in. They only object to covert operations—after the fact, naturally.

Workers' Commissions

There is absolutely no question that the danger of counter-revolution is real. That and that alone explains why the military finally validated plans to build what are called workers' committees and "commissions" based upon popular support. The bourgeois press was quick to call it a move to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat—when what is really involved is an elementary measure of self-defense.

The PCP, however, necessarily feels the danger to itself, its organization, its mass following, and to the working class, far more keenly than any member of the High Council of the Armed Forces. It took the opportunity to get the High Council to validate its own version of the so-called commissions based on popular support.

These commissions can properly be described as "committees for the defense of the revolution," such as the Cubans developed. Of course they are subject to the approval of the existing military regime. But it does not take a great deal of political acumen to see that these committees can also be the foundation for a broad, popular, mass-based struggle against the counter-revolution.

The fact that the government validated them lends them legality but does not necessarily exclude their independent action during the course of the struggle. Certainly the counter-revolutionary elements who have been observing these developments in the country are not blind to this either. Should these committees at long last be set up and begin functioning on a mass basis, they will contain the very same soldiers, workers, and neighborhood people in the various communities who were responsible in the main for warding off the counter-revolutionary fascist attempts of last September and March. These were organized by the

Portuguese CP, its allies and mass organizations.

One so-called radical weekly here, the *Militant*, organ of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), has denounced the committees and dismissed them out of hand as being mere minions of the CP and the military. Their choice instead? The Constituent Assembly. Of course—the same choice as the bourgeoisie. This is the most scoundrelly embellishment of a phony bourgeois parliament that a working class organization can make.

It is one thing for Marxists to seek participation even in the most reactionary bourgeois parliament. But it is another thing to actually *prefer* this phony bourgeois parliament to working class, broad-based committees which in truth and in fact have proven their mettle by twice defeating the counter-revolution—last September and again in March. The *Militant* takes advantage of the fact that the CP paper here, the *Daily World*, does not adequately or correctly defend these committees. But that's another matter. The SWP's defense of the Constituent Assembly is a vulgarized space-age version of Kautsky's defense of the Constituent Assembly when the Bolsheviks dismissed it in Russia.

Cunhal understands perfectly well what the Constituent Assembly means. His problem is how and by what means to conduct the struggle.

Although the *Militant* article maintains that the SP is just as bad as the CP, it is nevertheless a thousand times more for a corrupt, imperialist-controlled social democracy than for the CP. Jerry [sic] Foley, writing in a previous installment in the *Militant*, considered the electoral victory of the SP as a real opening for "socialism."

But that election also opened wide the gates for the counter-revolution. That is the lesson of bourgeois parliamentarism. It does not negate the necessity of working class parties to utilize elections when necessary and appropriate, but they must never become captives of parliamentary cretinism, prisoners of bourgeois democratic illusions.

On With the Revolution!

While we have consistently criticized the CP for its policies in Portugal, and in no way share the position on the military held by the CP, in the crucial battle that is unfolding we are completely with them and with all the other working class organizations that are sure to take the brunt of the bourgeois counter-revolutionary assault once it is unleashed. We only hope that this time the counter-revolution will not only be thrust back, but that the CP and its allies will break out of the limitations imposed by their alliance with the military and will push through, along with other working class organizations, a full-scale proletarian revolution and end slavery to monopoly capitalism once and for all.