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PORTUGAL: the two camps radicalize



save the lives of Garmendia
& Otaegui!



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argentina

5 PST militants murdered

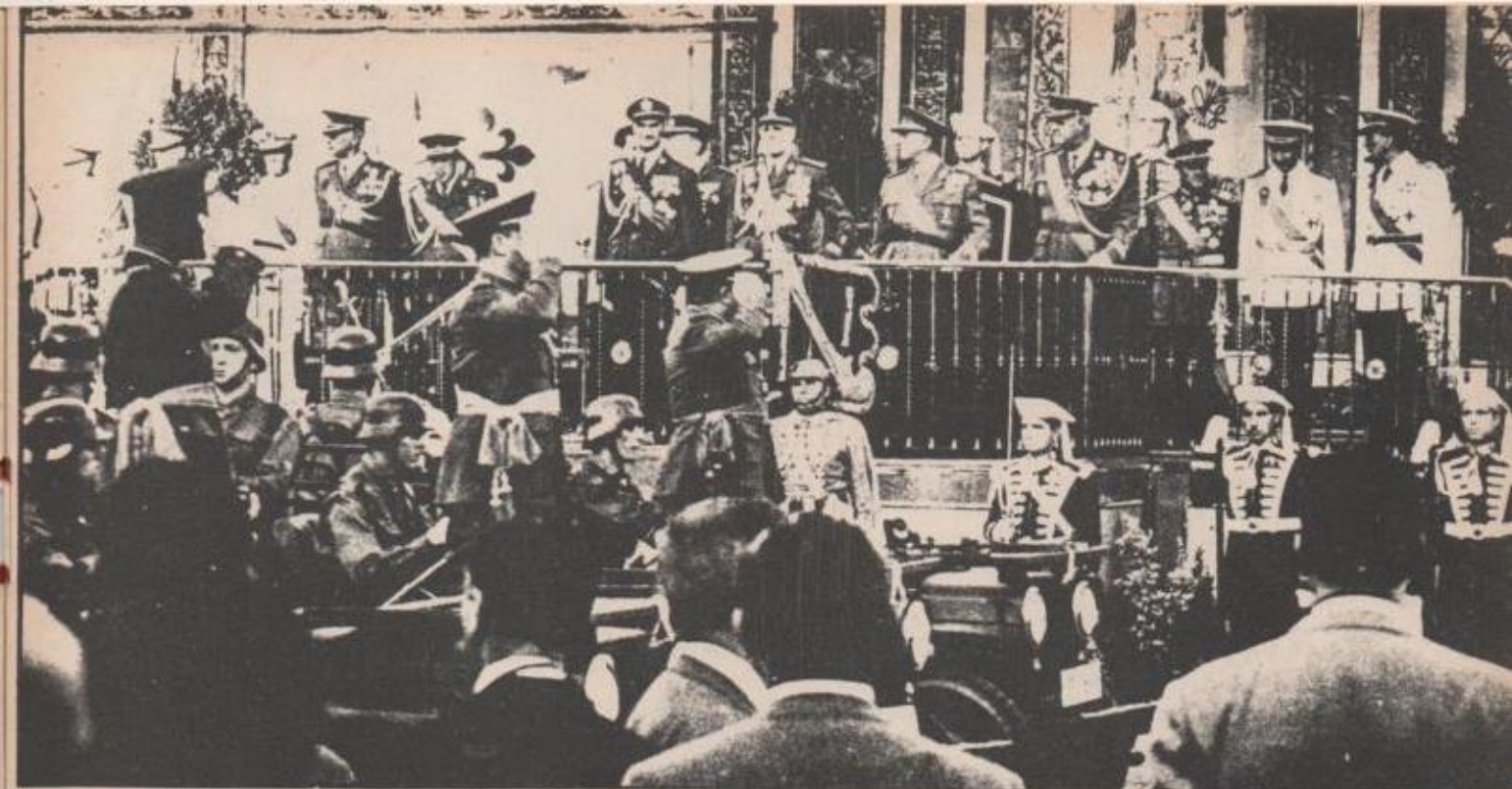
We have just received word that five comrades of the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party), sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, have been murdered by fascist gangsters. The bodies of the comrades were found, beaten and bullet-ridden, in Berisso, a suburb of Buenos Aires, near the Propulsora factory. The murdered comrades—Adriana Galdua, Anna Maria Lorenzo, Lidia Agostini, Hugo Frigerio, and Roberto Lascertales—had been doing work in defense of a strike at Propulsora. These assassinations are the latest in a long series of attempts to terrorize the Argentine workers movement and its vanguard. The Argentine working class, fresh from its recent victorious general strike, will certainly know how to respond to the desperate attacks of the far right: with the broadest possible active solidarity and self-defense.

Solidarity with the PST and all victims of rightist terror and repression!
For workers self-defense against the armed gangs of capital!

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spain: a difficult phase

by PACO ROBS

One year ago, there were real indications that the Francoist regime was facing imminent collapse: The colossal impact of the events in Portugal, Franco's critical illness, and the political offensive launched by the Spanish Communist party through the creation of the Junta Democrática* all pointed in that direction. It looked like the oldest dictatorship in Europe would come to a quick end.

Today, the Portuguese revolution is marking time and is in danger of going under, despite the decisive progress it has made in a remarkably short time; Franco has generally taken hold of the reins of power once again and is infusing new life into the fascistic far right; the

*The Junta Democrática (Democratic Council), which was created in August 1974 on the initiative of the CP, included sectors of the Christian Democracy, the Carlist party (which has since left), and two Maoist organizations of the far left, Bandera Roja and the Partido del Trabajo. Bandera Roja has since fused with the CP.

Junta Democrática is facing competition from the "Democratic Convergence" set up by the PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español — Spanish Socialist Workers party, the Spanish Social Democracy), both coalitions vainly seeking to precipitate a peaceful transition to liberal bourgeois democracy by organizing corridor combinations.

Although it stands on the threshold of its death agony, the dictatorship seems to have gained a second wind by unleashing a repression whose violence and ferocity have been rarely equalled in recent years.

The reasons for the present hardening of the regime must be sought in a powerful rise of the class struggle, of which the Basque country represents the most advanced point (see the statement of the LCR/ETA-VI on the general strike in the Basque country), and in the intensification of the crisis of the dictatorship, just at the moment when fissures in the army itself are seeing the light of day. This also indicates how dangerous this hardening is, ephemeral as it may be.



During the summer there were many arrests of militants of the ETA-V, the FRAP (Frente Revolucionario Antifascista y Patriótico — Patriotic and Antifascist Revolutionary Front), and the UPG (Union del Pueblo de Galicia — Union of the People of Galicia, an autonomist organization linked to the ETA-V). "Wilson," one of the major leaders of the ETA-V, was captured by the police, who consider him the organizer of the attack on Carrero Blanco. There is little doubt that he will be sentenced to death; the death sentence has also been demanded against five FRAP militants who are accused of killing a policeman in Madrid.

In addition, during a recent meeting of the Council of Ministers, Franco got a decree-law adopted suspending two articles of the constitution that guarantee the inviolability of private households and limit to seventy-two hours the length of time that a person can be held by the police without being charged; thus, a de facto state of exception for all Spain for a period of two years was enacted.

The far right is again gaining strength within the state apparatus. But the regime will find no way out through this resort to terror. The army, last resort of the dictatorship, has also been affected by the general crisis. Even if the affair now seems to have been squelched, the arrest of nine officers at the beginning of August revealed the existence of a structured current within the army opposed to the Francoist regime, the Democratic Military Union.

This organization, which seems not to have been unconnected with the work of the CP, is reported to include nearly 1,000 officers. Although a list of 300 of them is said to have fallen into the hands of the police, the regime was unable to take any action against them. The very last props of the regime have been undermined.

The Portuguese revolution

The events in Portugal have direct repercussions in Spain. A powerful accelerator of the crisis of the Francoist dictatorship during its first phase, the Portuguese revolution weighs on the present Spanish situation through both its conquests and its uncertainties.

At first, the Spanish reformist parties, the CP in the first place, considered the Portuguese revolution a striking confirmation of their policies: It was possible to move peacefully from a decadent dictatorship to a regime of bourgeois democracy without touching off a revolutionary process that would directly challenge private

property in the means of production or the state apparatus. But since the events of March 11 in Portugal and the sharp acceleration of the pace of the Portuguese revolution, Spanish candidates for Spínola's role have become increasingly scarce and the bourgeois liberals willing to accept an alliance with the workers parties have become much more discreet.

The Junta Democrática is trying to gain a second wind. The CP is attempting to convince the bourgeoisie that they have every interest in quickly replacing the dictatorship; otherwise they will have to do so under much more difficult circumstances later on, in face of a much more powerful mass movement. But the bourgeoisie is exhibiting an elementary class instinct, retreating before the already present threat of a working class that has recently given every evidence of its strength, combativity, and maturity.

Moreover, the deep division of the workers movement in Portugal also rebounds on the Spanish situation. The PSOE, which had refused to join the Junta Democrática, has just created the Democratic Convergence around a program of class collaboration quite similar to that of the Junta Democrática. The Democratic Convergence has the support of certain sections of the Christian Democracy, the Carlist party, and two Maoist organizations, the MCE and the ORT (Organización Revolucionaria de los Trabajadores — Revolutionary Workers Organization). The presence of these two revolutionary organizations, which are among the strongest of the far left (especially in Euzkadi, where they lead the workers commissions), provides the PSOE with a left cover and an influence among the workers vanguard that is rather greater than the PSOE had expected.

The powerful stimulus that was provided by the beginning of the Portuguese revolution has lost much of its force because of the division of the workers movement and because of the policy of class collaboration that nearly all the workers organizations are following, whether in the Junta Democrática or the Democratic Convergence.

By seeking to limit the mass movement to putting pressure on the bourgeoisie, and by refusing to mobilize the mass movement in a direct generalized assault against the dictatorship, the reformist leaderships of the CP and the PSOE are giving the Francoist regime an unexpected reprieve. How many more times will the executioner's axe fall while this reprieve lasts?

September 3, 1975



save the lives of garmendia & otaegui

The following statement was released on August 31 by the Political Bureau of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria/Euzkadi ta Askatasuna-VI (Revolutionary Communist League/Basque Nation and Freedom-Sixth Congress), sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Spain.

More than ever, every minute counts!

Follow the example of Euzkadi: Everyone in struggle, everyone on strike, everyone in the streets!

The dictatorship's aggression is brutal and hard. It is determined to murder Garmendia and Otaegui. The farce trial — during which witnesses did not even recognize Garmendia; and in spite of that he was condemned to death — could not have been more scandalous. What the dictatorship wants above all is a political act of clear significance: to show the workers movement what fate is suffered by those who struggle to overthrow it.

Every minute counts. Next Wednesday (September 10), the murder of the two militants of the ETA-V may be carried out. Only the broadest and most determined mobilization of the workers and all the people will be capable of preventing this.

Euzkadi has openly thrown itself into struggle. And with even more force and organization than during the Burgos trials of December 1970. The united call for the general strike launched by the workers commissions and the polit-

ical organizations (with the exception of the Nationalist party) was followed broadly.

In Vizcaya (Biscay, one of the three provinces of the Basque country) 5,000 workers of the big factories of Margen went on strike on Thursday (August 28), and many workshops of the Altos Hornos, Babcock-Wilson, Nava General Electrica, and other companies went on strike with them. At Margen, on the right bank, many large factories also stopped work: Westinghouse, Mecanica la Peña, Franco Española. Also in the Basauri region: There were stoppages at Firestone, Echeverria, Edeza, Bondas, Ripolin. In many centers of Bilbao the bank employees joined in the strike, and the police sacked the Bank of Biscay. The general strike with the closing of shops and very large demonstrations set the general tone in most of the other cities and villages of the province; in Lekeitio and Basiko the police fired on demonstrators to disperse them. There were also demonstrations in Bilbao: 1,000 people in Algorta; 400 people armed with iron bars in Erandio, demonstrations in Portugalete and Santurce, 1,000 people in the center of Bilbao. On Friday (August 29) the strike was total in all

the big factories and the general strike continued in the villages, with demonstrations getting even larger in some places (San Salvador, for example).

Bodies to coordinate and lead the struggle began to emerge everywhere. In those factories where a number of different bodies exist, they came together to direct the strike. Strike committees emerged, as in Sestas (the heart of big industry in Biscay) made up of workers commissions, the neighborhood and teachers committees, and the workers organizations. A technical committee was formed throughout the big industrial zone in which the workers commissions of all the zones, the neighborhood commissions, the bodies of teachers, the organs against repression, and the workers organizations participated.

Guipúzcoa is the province in which the struggle reached the highest level. Beginning on Thursday the stoppage was general throughout all the factories of the province and the strike was general in the great majority of the entire zone. The banks joined in the struggle in Central, Hispano, Cajas de Ahorro, and other places, as did the insurance companies. The hospital workers and physicians also joined the strike. Some shopkeepers organized pickets to extend the strike, which paralyzed trade. Demonstrations took place on Thursday and Friday: 3,000 people in Zarauz, where women and children and the entire village participated and barricades were built; 1,000 people in Renteria; in Hernani the entire village took to the streets, setting up barricades at the entrances to the village and spreading broken glass in the streets to prevent the advance of police cars; in Lasarte there were assemblies in the village; in Mondragon even the cooperatives stopped working, the strike was total and the mothers of political prisoners organized a silent vigil; there were also barricades in Elgoibar; there was a demonstration of 1,000 people in Azpeita. As in Biscay, the strike developed even more broadly on Friday, and the demonstrations continued. The general strike was complete.

In addition to a united provincial bureau, the struggle in each village was directed by coordinating bureaus composed of the workers commissions, factory committees, the neighborhood organs, teachers committees, and the political workers organizations. Today (Sunday, August 31) many very broad assemblies are taking place nearly everywhere throughout the zone in order to prepare for continuing the strike. In spite of the fact that there have already been four people wounded by gunfire, in spite of the "antiterrorist law," and in spite of the brutality of the police and the arrests, the working class and the people of Guipúzcoa are preparing to continue the fight.

In Navarra (the third province of the Basque country) there were work stoppages and assemblies in many factories on Thursday and Friday. Perfectly organized demonstrations, the marchers carrying placards and iron bars, took place on both days, attended by more than 2,000 people. On Saturday there were broad assemblies of the workers commissions in each factory; after that, assemblies were held by sectors. That night, pickets from sev-

eral workers commissions blanketed Pamplona with leaflets. Today, Sunday, there is a general assembly in the city, convoked by the workers commissions, with the support of militants from all sectors, in order to press forward with the general strike.

A central strike committee has been functioning since the beginning, composed of workers commissions, neighborhood and teachers committees, and the political organizations.

In Aleva on Thursday there was a stoppage at Aceros de Lledo, one of the main factories of the province, and demonstrations took place at Vitoria. On Saturday the strike spread to several factories and a demonstration of 1,000 people was organized.

That is the road that must be followed. That is the sort of struggle that can release Garmendia and Otaegui from the grip of the Francoists. Euzkadi must not stand alone at this moment. The mobilization is beginning to extend to other regions: stoppages in the construction industry throughout the zone north of Madrid and assemblies in various factories, as well as commandos in the center of the city; stoppages in some naval shipyards of Gijón ("El Dique") and intense agitation in the factories and mines; demonstrations in Barcelona, Seville, and other places in the Spanish state. International solidarity is also spreading: demonstrations and occupations of embassies in Stockholm, Paris, Rome, Bayonne, Hendaye, Toulouse, Amsterdam, and other places.

But we have to act fast. The struggle must be activated. Unity in action, the united front of all the workers organizations against the murderous repression, is the best road for the struggle, as the example of Euzkadi shows. There is no room for doubt, waiting, or hesitation. It is time to act, and to act in a united manner. Euzkadi must be able to count on all the peoples of the Spanish state and on the whole international working class, not just for symbolic support, but for effective unity in the direct struggle to save the lives of Garmendia and Otaegui.

And for that, in order to break the silence of the official press, it is necessary to popularize the example of the struggle of the workers and the people of Euzkadi. Moreover, it is necessary to popularize the example of the political prisoners, who, in a united manner, have begun a hunger strike in all the Francoist prisons.

Follow the example of Euzkadi! Everyone on strike, everyone in struggle, everyone in the streets! As the political prisoners of Segovia said in their appeal: Let us transform this attack by the dictatorship into an irreversible defeat and into a workers and people's victory that accelerates the definitive overthrow of the dictatorship!

FREE GARMENDIA AND OTAEGUI! FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS! DISSOLVE THE REPRESSIVE CORPS AND THE FRANCOIST COURTS! TRY THE FRANCOIST CRIMINALS! DOWN WITH THE MURDEROUS DICTATORSHIP!

PORTUGAL:

THE TWO CAMPS RADICALIZE

by A. UDRY

During the months of July and August in Portugal elements were set in place that will provoke new breaks, new disequilibrium, and more acute class confrontations.

As during the period that preceded September 28, 1974 (the date of the first reactionary attempted coup), the two fundamental classes of Portuguese society today are not completely certain of the relationship of forces. Only a test in real life will tell whether the hopes placed in the bourgeois offensive that opened with the Socialist party's and PPD's* resignation from the government actually correspond to the reality of the relationship of social forces. The Portuguese bourgeoisie has been wrong before!

A process of radicalization is going on within both camps, but this process has not yet led to a definitive outcome.

Reaction has taken advantage of the opportunity offered by the breach opened by the mobilizations of the SP and the "operation of the nine." For the first time since September 1974, reaction is raising its head, getting itself together and organizing sectors of the petty bourgeoisie.

In the camp of the working class the demonstrations of the workers commissions and tenants commissions at the end of July and on August 20 expressed the depth of radicalization of sectors that hold a decisive position in the workers bastions of the Lisbon region and Porto. Concurrently, the independent activity of the soldiers and their linkup with this workers vanguard also expresses the profound fermentation going on in the ranks of the army.

Simply the accumulation of all this explosive material indicates that a more or less protracted period of "con-

ciliation" is out of the question. The "calm revolution" of April 1974 is over. Clashes between the classes will become more acute.

The SP and PPD departure from the government on July 10 must be seen in the framework of the increasingly accentuated crisis of bourgeois political leadership. After the events of September 1974 and March 1975, a section of the bourgeoisie was counting on the MFA, or at least relatively large sectors of the MFA, to reunify the army and establish an element of relative

stability that would allow for the transition from the corporatist state to a strong state. Of course, the Portuguese bourgeoisie was strongly divided over what road to follow. Even those sections of the bourgeoisie that were relying on the MFA in the last instance were not putting all their eggs in that one basket.

But under the combined effects of the rise of the mass movement, the growing independent activity of the soldiers, and the political debates going on in the barracks (a turmoil stimulated by the heterogeneity of the MFA), the crisis in the army and the divisions in the MFA intensified constantly. The MFA turned out to be manifestly unable to stabilize and fulfill a Bonapartist function.

The "guiding document" of June 20, adopted by the General Assembly of the MFA, recognized and sanctioned the emergence of bodies of self-organization of the toiling masses (workers commissions, tenants commissions, popular assemblies). At the same time, it sought to integrate these bodies into the network of the institutions of the bourgeois state. Nevertheless, it soon became clear that this position of the General Assembly of the MFA was little able to alter the dynamic of the mass movement, which is moving in the direction of strengthening the structures of "popular power." The effects of the "guiding document" were thus contradictory: In real life, the attempt to coopt and integrate the workers commissions, tenants commissions, and popular assemblies was combined with an "official cover" for their development!

Soares himself stressed this point. On July 28 the national secretary of the SP produced a document entitled "Conquer the crisis, save the revolution," in which he took a straightforward position on the decisions of the MFA General Assembly. After reaffirming his support to the "Plan of Political Action" adopted by the High Council of the Revolution (a document "that assures the construction of socialism through the democratic road"), the SP stated that the "guiding document" compromises the

*PPD: Partido Popular Democrático — Popular Democratic party, the largest bourgeois party in Portugal.



the sp offensive permitted a regroupment among the bourgeoisie.

concretization of the democratic road, thus violating the plan and opening the way either to anarcho-populism or to bureaucratic totalitarianism.

For the SP, the struggle against "anarcho-populism" requires the establishment of a "government of national salvation" capable of bringing about "respect for the popular will." Such a government should be presided over by a "personality of the MFA." "In the present situation," the SP stated, "the immediate aim of the government of national salvation should be to create a climate of confidence, labor, and discipline in the country." It should also "reaffirm the principle that the tenants commissions and workers commissions are forms of popular power that must be developed so long as they do not claim to become a 'parallel power' to the state apparatus." Finally, the government of national salvation should "promulgate legislation severely punishing the armed militias, which should be liquidated within one month, along with the 'popular vigilance committees' and any other structures in possession of arms." The document continues by stressing that "on this question (that is, the question of the militias) there can be no compromise: The constitution of party-based militias would lead to the rapid disintegration of the MFA and would inevitably lead the country to the tragic confrontations that reaction dreams about."

So much for the first facet of the "defense of democracy" and the "struggle against anarcho-populism" that is developing under the aegis of the SP. The offensive

launched against the development of embryonic organs of dual power obviously goes hand in hand with a reaffirmation of the centrality of the institutions of the bourgeois state, of the Constituent Assembly against the "parallel power" of the workers commissions, tenants commissions, and so on. Thus, according to the program of the SP, the "government of national salvation" will aim at "reaffirming the authority and public function exercised by the Constituent Assembly. It is important immediately to set the salaries of the delegates elected by the people, and we (the SP) consider it an attack on the dignity of the Constituent Assembly that this has not yet been done."

Reasons for the resignation

The SP then offered an explanation for its resignation from the coalition government: The authority of the state could not be asserted and the government was incapable of struggling "against labor indiscipline and the demagoguery installed as the rule in nearly all the factories." Thus, what was involved was not a struggle against an alleged "military dictatorship," but instead a resignation from a civil power that, because of the crisis in the army, was unable to assemble the means required to enforce application of its decisions: "In this is posed the central problem of the authority of the state. Without revolutionary authority (1) there is no revolution; there is instead a progressive social disintegration that leads

to anarchy and can only favor the counterrevolution. Who commands the country? The Council of the Revolution? The Assembly of the MFA? The Copcon? The Fifth Division? The workers commissions? The manipulated press? The popular masses, galvanized by contradictory demonstrations?

"To be sure, there is no government. And it is for that reason that the SP left the government. . . . The laws are bent according to the pressures brought to bear in one direction or another. The MFA has abdicated its own authority in face of the growing influence of minority groups, as was obviously the case in the República affair and in the affair of Radio Renascença (a church-operated radio station taken over by the workers), in which the decisions (of the government) were not applied, the words of the President of the Republic and of the Prime Minister were not honored."

The opening of the government crisis after the resignation of the SP and the PPD was the signal for the opening of the offensive of the SP, followed by the PPD, which began to raise its head cautiously. The initiative of the SP was intended to exert pressure from the outside aimed at permitting a realignment of forces within the MFA in order to make it an instrument capable of barring the way to the development of the "revolutionary process," of reaffirming the authority of the state, of reestablishing discipline in the factories and the army, and of breaking the embryonic organization of self-defense. This overall plan was fully confirmed by Soares, who indicated in his letter to Costa Gomes at the beginning of September that "now more than ever, in the present phase of the disintegration of Portuguese society, the civil power needs the strength of the military arm if it is to impose respect for revolutionary authority." For the SP, then, there was no question of rejecting the MFA as such, but rather of bringing to bear the weight of a civilian mobilization in an attempt to restabilize the MFA.

The SP offensive permitted a regroupment among the bourgeoisie. For the first time, the bourgeoisie was able to launch initiatives without immediately facing responses from the workers, the sort of united responses that had regulated the stages of the revolutionary upsurge in Portugal until that time. This also clarifies the character of the mobilization of the Social Democracy.

The document of the nine

Concurrently, within the MFA, another offensive was launched, this one under the leadership of Melo Antunes; it became public on August 7. The "group of nine" is composed of Captain Vasco Lourenço, Major Canto e Castro, Commander Vitor Crespo, Major Costa Neves, Major Melo Antunes, Major Vitor Alves, Brigadier Franco Charais, Brigadier Pezarat Coreia, and Captain Sousa Castro.

Through the "document of the nine," Antunes, a politician in uniform, pushed an alternative to the crisis

of power onto the political scene. A crisis of power that the document characterizes in this way: "The question of power is the question of power within the MFA. Clarification of this problem is the number one task. Without this, it is not possible to fundamentally attack the problem of the organization of the state and to avoid its complete ruin."

In the same manner as the political document of the SP, the manifesto of the nine puts stress on "the progressive decomposition of the state structures. Wildcat and anarchic forms of the exercise of power have taken hold nearly everywhere (even within the armed forces). . . . It is necessary to vigorously denounce the anarchism and populism that inevitably lead to a catastrophic dissolution of the state during a phase of development of society in which no political project is viable without a state." For Antunes and his acolytes, it is a question of "assembling the conditions so that it (the MFA) can regain its credibility and carry out its historic vocation as respected arbiter and motor force of the revolutionary process." (Jornal Novo, August 7, 1975.)

Economically, the nine propose: "the maintenance of our links with Europe, the strengthening and deepening of our relations with certain democratic groupings (the Common Market, the European Free Trade Association)." Just as the SP affirms that "it is not so much the nationalizations that are open to question as the modalities and opportuneness of their promulgation" (which means: the fact that they came after the March 11 mobilizations), the nine declare that the "nationalizations have occurred at a pace that is impossible to absorb."

While it is true that various formulations in the document of the nine are more "leftist" than those of the SP manifesto, there can be no doubt about the class nature of the operation being carried out by the man who worked out the emergency economic plan published in February 1975. That plan was swept away by the mass movement, and at a pace that was intolerable for those who had envisaged the nationalization of the banks and insurance companies only as a future possibility.

The whole logic of the position of the group of nine points in the direction of a twofold objective: On the one hand, a strengthening of the institutions of the bourgeois state in face of the "anarchy" generated by the workers upsurge and the development (especially since March 1975) of democratic rank-and-file bodies of workers; on the other hand, a recomposition of the army as a factor of stability guaranteeing the transition from a corporatist state to a bourgeois democracy capable of imposing respect for its own authority. The references to "the construction of a socialist society, that is, a classless society in which the exploitation of man by man has been ended, to be achieved . . . gradually, peacefully, and without convulsion" should not mask the objective function of the project of the group of nine. Even though there is very great heterogeneity among those who have declared themselves in favor of this document — and it is thus absurd to totally assimilate the public spokesman for this current to the officers

of the hierarchy who have given him support — it is no less the case that the manner in which the dynamic of this offensive (going on both inside and outside the MFA) was understood reflected the military hierarchy's understanding of the role the initiative of the nine was playing in safeguarding the structures of the bourgeois state.

The denunciation of "anarcho-populism" and the proclamation of the necessity of reestablishing "democratic authority" (see the economic program of the SP) and "discipline in the factories" were intended to create the preconditions for deepening the links with the EEC and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), links that take the concrete form of industrial investments of imperialist capital.

Those are the conditions the capitalist powers are demanding before extending aid to Portugal. And that is the real standpoint from which this question must be posed; it is formulated the other way around in the economic program of the SP, which talks about "the lack of definition of the conditions that must be obeyed by foreign investments, which are in any event necessary for economic development." (Jornal Novo, August 23, 1975.) It would be preferable to assert that the real "lack of definition" denounced by international capital is none other than the rejection of "obedience" that has been manifested by the Portuguese workers.

Reaction's open offensive

Taking advantage of the mobilizations of the SP — in which the slogan "Down with Communist dictatorship" occupied a central place — reaction began to gain in confidence as of the middle of July.

The attack was developed on various levels. The many different initiatives tallied with each other objectively, although they were not necessarily coordinated.

Internationally, American imperialism and its parallel agencies are pressing ahead with financial blackmail and with military maneuvers in Madeira, the Azores, and Angola. In addition, U.S. imperialism was certainly not uninvolved in the preparation of the paramilitary organizations that are now operating in northern Portugal and using Spain as a bridgehead (although the U.S. role may be direct or indirect).

European imperialism is relying mainly on economic strangulation. Moreover, through the medium of the Social Democratic governments of Helmut Schmidt and Harold Wilson, European imperialism has a vehicle for its policy of putting pressure on the Social Democratic leadership of Soares.

In conjunction with this deployment of imperialist strength, Portuguese reaction is organizing its armed gangs. The acuteness of the class struggle, the fear of losing control over the rank and file of the army, and the weakening — although not the disappearance — of the coercive apparatus are combining to stimulate this type of initiative among not inconsiderable sections of the bourgeoisie.

The de facto convergence between the operations launched by Soares and the group of nine and the qualitative strengthening of the organization of reaction has stimulated a disorientation that puts the brakes on any determined response from the workers. The Communist party's inability to develop a real unity initiative in the direction of the SP while the attacks on CP headquarters and members were going on obviously intensified the wait-and-see attitude of broad layers of workers.

An extremely dangerous combination thus emerged during the months of July and August:

On the one hand, a carefully orchestrated campaign was launched by Costa Gomes and warmly hailed by the SP, Antunes, and Soares. This campaign was developed around the theme: It is time to call a halt; the revolution has gone too far. In view of the deepened economic and social crisis, this leitmotiv managed to gain some credibility among certain sectors of the working class, not to mention the petty bourgeoisie, especially because of the total failure of the various governments to respond to the actual needs of the toiling masses.

An offensive was thus opened against the workers — in the name of the stabilization of the "revolutionary process" — an offensive that, because of its pernicious nature, did not stimulate the responses that had been offered by the workers in September 1974 and March 1975, the responses that have regulated the pace of the Portuguese revolution up to now. Moreover, this offensive unfolded in the context of the division of the working class, subtended by the uneven development of anticapitalist consciousness among the workers.

On the other hand, taking advantage of this disorientation and this wait-and-see attitude among the working class, reaction mobilized its forces. The reactionary forces have many points of support. An important part of the military hierarchy, which has had to pull in its claws for many months now, is prepared to serve the reactionary projects openly whenever the opportunity arises and is already prepared to offer more or less discrete collaboration. Among the police there are many people who work with fascist and semifascist nuclei. Agents of the ex-PIDE-DGS (the Salazarist secret police) supply the cadres of the ELP (Portuguese Liberation Army, a fascist military organization) and, acting from Spain, support the infrastructure of these armed gangs.

A considerable fraction of the former colons, "refugees" from Angola (the number of which is expected to reach 300,000 by the end of November), can serve as foot soldiers for reaction and even for a terrorist campaign. In addition, a section of the military cadres still stationed in Angola today are capable of swelling the ranks of the counterrevolution in the army in the future.

Finally, the reactionary project has a mass base. First, the clergy, under the aegis of da Silva, archbishop of Braga, is acting as the driving wedge of the anticommunist campaign. The clergy is screaming about the danger of communist "dictatorship" at a time when it is not

the churches but the CP headquarters that are being burned down — and by "believers." Second, the discontent of the petty bourgeoisie — especially the peasant smallholders in the North — has been directed against the workers movement, essentially (for the moment) against the CP and the far-left organizations. With this backdrop, Spínola is attempting once again to put himself forward as the unifier of all those who propose to launch a sharp attack against the workers movement as a whole.

In face of the recrudescence of reactionary activities in a context marked by the objective convergence of these two offensives (in spite of their differences), it is essential for the revolutionary left to stress the necessity for self-defense. It is imperative to seize all opportunities to encourage the formation and development of workers and people's militias and to try to get them to function along with the soldiers. This self-defense must not be based on minority structures, but must instead draw support from the organs of "popular power," the workers and tenants commissions on a neighborhood and citywide scale. A united campaign of the revolutionary left around this theme is of the greatest importance in the present political conjuncture.

Second, the workers movement must be capable of offering a response to the discontent of certain layers of the petty bourgeoisie in order to reduce the social base of reaction. These solutions must fall concretely within the framework of overall proposals demonstrating that the satisfaction of the essential needs of the toiling masses requires not a halt to the revolutionary process but on the contrary a step forward not only in the demands that are raised but also in the actual organization of the workers.

The crisis in the army

In publishing his document Antunes was aiming at tightening up the ranks of the army, especially within the MFA. The document asserts that "the question of power is the question of power within the MFA." Hence, all his efforts are centered on stabilizing the MFA, on recomposing its General Assembly so as to make the MFA an effective instrument of intervention, a "respected arbiter." This constitutes the precondition for any real attempt to reestablish discipline in the army, without which the arbiter is nothing but a basket case.

The results of the offensive have been contradictory. There is no doubt that the "group of nonradicals" — as the August 7 *Jornal Novo* called them — has acted as a rallying point for broad sectors and for the traditional hierarchy. In this sense, the offensive has had some success, especially if it is considered in the strict framework of the recomposition of a so-called moderate current among the officers.

But to limit the analysis to that would be to divorce the problem from the social conjuncture in which the Antunes operation took shape. During July and August the work-



ers — for the second time since the fall of the Salazarist regime — had the right to vacations. There was thus a pause in the mobilizations of the entire working class. This lull allowed the "group of nonradicals" to do their work without having to confront any rise of struggle, without having to decide on the practical measures that would have to be taken in face of a new rise of the workers mobilizations for their own demands. If a new wave of workers struggle erupts in the middle or at the end of September, it will act to reveal the heterogeneity of the regroupment that has occurred around Melo Antunes. The accord that has been offered by the SP and the compromises that have been made by the CP will then be put to the test. That constitutes the first flaw in what has been too quickly presented as a real alternative to the crisis of political leadership of the bourgeoisie.

Moreover, the Antunes document provoked the appearance of other documents, particularly an alternative text drafted by revolutionary officers of Copcon and entitled "Revolutionary Self-Criticism of Copcon." This document stresses that "the proposals presented (by Antunes) can be coopted by the right," that "the maintenance of a coalition government will certainly not allow for advancing toward the construction of socialism," and that "to claim to construct socialism without challenging bourgeois, or more precisely capitalist, democracy" is to make a mistake. (*Jornal Novo*, August 13, 1975.)

The document then criticizes "the MFA's insistence on seeking to resolve contradictions through compromise solutions negotiated with bourgeois parties." Finally, it describes workers power as the functioning and strengthening of "these bodies (factory councils, neighborhood councils, etc.), which must serve as an instrument for economic solutions and which must be real organs of political power, the only barriers capable of victoriously opposing fascist and imperialist aggression."

There are many ambiguities and insufficiencies in this document. Not only is the conception of the organs of democratic workers power tainted with the ultimatism characteristic of the PRP-BR (Partido Revolucionário do Proletariado-Brigadas Revolucionárias — Revolutionary party of the Proletariat-Revolutionary Brigades), but the criticism of the CP is strictly limited to a denunciation

of its bureaucratic methods; the necessity of self-defense is not stressed; the crucial problem of the unity of the working class is not broached.

Nevertheless, the Copcon document has emerged as a real alternative to the Antunes document, at least in the barracks in the South. Above all, it has given rise to real debates among the soldiers, debates that have concluded with proposals for amendments made by general assemblies of soldiers, of the RALIS (the light artillery regiment in Lisbon) and of the RIOQ (the operational intervention regiment of Queluz). It has stimulated a hitherto unequalled political fermentation in the army.

The boomerang effect of the initiative of the nine is obvious. This effect locates the partial recomposition that has occurred in the MFA, or at least in the MFA General Assembly, within a new context that throws more light on the limits of its extension toward the search for a restoration of discipline and unity among the rank and file of the army.

The publication of the Copcon document and the response it has received in the barracks reflect the influence within the army of the revolutionary left, whose capacity for mobilization was demonstrated at the end of July and again during the month of August.

The response of the revolutionary officers of the Copcon also interrupted Carvalho's drift toward Antunes and contributed to undermining the myth around this general, whose insistence on maintaining the unity of the MFA is a result of his attachment to esprit de corps.

If to this one adds the battle around the nomination of Gonçalves to the post of armed forces chief of staff, together with the divisions and debates that the nomination provoked, it becomes obvious that the "regroupment of moderates" is taking place within an MFA that is torn at the seams and, even more important, within an army in which the polarization of various options is tending to lead to political clarification.

Finally, the crisis of the hierarchical system is deepening. This is manifested both by the demands for the purge of reactionary officers and by the actions taken by soldiers breaking with their commands. On August 30, for instance, a RALIS company went to Mascavice to keep watch over a depot of war matériel because a rumor was going around that the paratroopers of Amadora, under the command of the reactionary Jaime Neves, were making a sortie. Likewise, during demonstrations that were supposed to be held in the center of the country, the soldiers of the Santa Margarida barracks refused to go out with ammunition.

Even in the North, this crisis of the hierarchical system, this "horizontal division," is making itself felt, although it is still tainted with many ambiguities. In fact, the crisis sometimes gives rise to deformed modes of expression and can even take on anticommunist accents or make use of the accusation of "social fascism." The diffuse influence of Maoist and Social Democratic ideology (the

SP also utilizes the term social-fascist, just as the CP sometimes uses it to refer to the SP) curiously combines with some elements of a reactionary ideology.

The form taken by this opposition to the hierarchy is all the more comprehensible when it is recalled that the structures of the army have not been substantially modified, that the officers, whether members of the MFA or not, still eat in the officers mess, get the best food, receive higher salaries, and so on.

The whole complex of this crisis in the army, which is uneven in the various parts of the country and in the different branches of the armed forces, makes it difficult, for the moment, to use military force to "reestablish order and discipline in the country" without running the risk of aggravating the crisis even further and, in the event of frontal attacks, without running the risk of civil war.

Nevertheless, it would be dangerous to underestimate the position of strength that is still held by the bourgeoisie within the bourgeois state apparatus and the army, that is, the possibilities the bourgeoisie commands to push back the revolutionary upsurge during an initial period before delivering bloody blows against it. Likewise, it would be criminal to place confidence in any automatic process leading to a growing paralysis of the bourgeois army. Hence, the task of revolutionaries consists precisely of seizing on the points of rupture that are now appearing and of utilizing all their strength to accentuate the disequilibria.

In face of the attempt to recompose the MFA and in face of the caste reflex being expressed in opposition to the activity of the soldiers themselves, the slogans of the election of officers by soldiers represents the "democratic" response that should be presented against those who, while talking a lot about social democracy, are actually the major advocates of strengthening the hierarchical system in the army, of officers' strictly controlling the mechanisms of nomination to the MFA, and so on. In face of the crisis of the hierarchical system, the putting forward of material demands, like the fight to actually assure the emergence of independent organs of the soldiers, constitutes a central axis of revolutionary anti-militarist work. In face of the threats of reaction, the linkup between these independent organs and the instruments of rank-and-file workers democracy, as well as the purge of reactionary officers, become objectives of prime importance.

Only the concretization of such slogans and perspectives can effectively prevent a project aimed at restoring the discipline (and thereby the unity) of the bourgeois army from coming to fruition. If these demands were won, the relationship of forces could be very noticeably shifted in favor of the working class.

A broad workers vanguard

Between June and August we saw the confirmation of the weight of a workers vanguard having its main strength in the major factories of the region of Lisbon and Porto. On June 20 some 5,000 workers participated in a demonstration called by the "revolutionary workers committees." This demonstration, whatever its ultraleftist tone, partially reflected the process of maturation that was under way among key sectors of the working class in Lisbon. On August 20, though, more than 50,000 people took part in a mobilization called by the revolutionary left. The maturation of this workers vanguard was also expressed in the putting forward of radical slogans calling for the generalization of workers control, the expropriation of all capitalist companies, and the establishment of economic planning based on the needs of the toiling masses.

This workers vanguard is partially composed of the nucleus of workers who through their permanent mobilization and exemplary struggles assured the continuity between the cycle of generalized struggles in May-June 1974 and the second cycle, which began in December 1974. Today, there is a desynchronization between the mobilization of this vanguard and the attitude of the working class as a whole. This is expressed, among other ways, in the heterogeneity of the forms and functioning of the organs of "popular power."

Nevertheless, the response received among the ranks of the reformist parties and the relationship of forces between these traditional parties and this workers vanguard indicate that, in the framework of a deepening of the social and economic crisis, there is an objective possibility on the one hand of carrying out a fusion on a higher level and opening up a new cycle of struggle and on the other hand of responding to the present dangerous division of the working class.

The first cracks are appearing among the SP rank and file in reaction to the political orientation of the Soares leadership. Many Socialist workers, justly repelled by the bureaucratic methods of the CP in the municipalities, popular assemblies, and trade unions, nevertheless began to manifest an initial opposition to the political options of the Social Democratic leadership when they saw the development of the attacks on the headquarters of the

CP, the Intersindical (the trade-union federation), and the revolutionary organizations.

In Porto one of the most heavily working-class branches of the SP demonstrated its defiance of the leadership. In Evora more than 50 workers (out of a total of 300) quit the SP to protest against Soares's strategy.

In the trade unions as well, lists presented by militants of the SP are taking up not only the correct demands of workers democracy but also some struggle demands that are often to the left of those proposed by the CP. That was the case, for example, in the union of bank employees. All this points to the possibilities that exist within the SP of driving a wedge between the rank and file and the leadership and stimulating distrust of the leadership's policies. It is thus vital to launch practical unity initiatives toward the SP rank and file and to develop systematic unitary propaganda toward the SP leadership in order to force it to take an open position both on the decisive problems of workers self-organization and on the central demands of the workers.

Concurrently, in this phase of exacerbated confrontation, the conciliation policy of the CP, its strategic orientation of trying to worm its way into the bourgeois state apparatus, will inevitably provoke feverish zigzags and give rise to many bureaucratic manifestations tending to limit the autonomy of the mass movement. This tortuous course has already caused a relative isolation of the CP and a significant disorientation among its combative rank and file, which is not under tight control. Minicrises are now cropping up within the CP, in Setúbal, for example, in the suburbs of Lisbon.

On July 18 the CP called for the building of barricades against the SP; on August 8 the Central Committee decided to make an opening toward the SP. After first supporting Gonçalves, the CP shamelessly cut loose from him. After indicating that it was prepared to accept a compromise when the offensive of the group of nine was under way, the CP reached an agreement with the revolutionary left on August 25 when the prospects for such a compromise were called into question by the appearance of the Copcon document. (The text of the agreement is printed below, along with a statement of the United Sec-



retariat of the Fourth International commenting on the agreement and the tasks of revolutionaries.) Four days later, a new compromise was on the agenda; the CP leadership anxiously wondered how it could go about making its rank and file accept the inclusion of the PPD in a new coalition government under the leadership of Pinheiro de Azevedo!



Hence, taking account of the objective needs of the working class as a whole in defending its gains and in assuring the advance of the revolutionary process, taking account of the uneven development of class consciousness, and taking account of the differentiations within the SP and the CP, a tactic of workers united front must be developed. This tactic must be centered around self-defense and around the development of rank-and-file democratic structures that permit both the utilization of the initiative capacity of the workers vanguard and the beginning of the resolution of the problem of unity where it can be posed in the most understandable fashion possible, in practice and on the basis of requirements that are recognized by all the workers.

Thus, an analysis of the relationship of forces between the classes cannot be detached from the ability (or lack of ability) of the revolutionary left (and the revolutionary Marxists within it) to base themselves on the objective conditions and extend the dynamic that has emerged in the most advanced workers bastions during the past several weeks to much broader sections of the working class.

Then, the breakup of the equilibrium that is heralded by the present radicalization both in the camp of the revolution and in the camp of the counterrevolution could have an outcome favorable to the working class. Whether this will happen or not will be determined in practice, and the synchronization of the pace of the workers upsurges in Spain and Portugal will have a strong influence on the result.

September 4, 1975

TEXT OF THE AUGUST 25 ACCORD

In the presence of representatives of the MFA, which simply convoked the meeting, representatives assembled from the following political parties and organizations: FSP, LCI, LUAR, MES, MDP, PCP, PRP-BR.* The meeting took place on May 1 and approved the following points:

1. The Copcon document and the document "Line of Programmatic Action and Tasks of Transition" constitute a valid working basis for the elaboration of a revolutionary political program.

*FSP: Frente Socialista Popular — Popular Socialist Front; LCI: Liga Comunista Internacionalista — Internationalist Communist League, Portuguese sympathizing organization of the Fourth International; LUAR: Liga de União e Acção Revolucionária — League of Revolutionary Union and Action; MES: Movimento de Esquerda So-

2. Such a program represents the indispensable instrument for uniting and articulating the actions both of political forces engaged in the revolutionary process and of the popular masses.

3. The document "Line of Programmatic Action and Tasks of Transition" constitutes the basic guiding document for the activity of the government so long as the necessary conditions for the formation of a government of revolutionary unity have not been established.

cialista — Left Socialist Movement; MDP: Movimento Democrático Português — Portuguese Democratic Movement; PCP: Partido Comunista Português — Portuguese Communist party; PRP-BR: Partido Revolucionário do Proletariado-Brigadas Revolucionárias — Revolutionary party of the Proletariat-Revolutionary Brigades.

4. The creation of a front including the revolutionary political parties and other organizations, the revolutionary militants, the MFA, and the autonomous organs of popular power referred to in the guiding document of the MFA-people alliance constitute an outlet for the revolutionary process.

5. The undersigned have decided to form a provisional secretariat for the purpose of working out actions that permit a common offensive against reaction and for the advance of the revolutionary process. The undersigned declare that this platform is open to all organizations, revolutionary militants, and organs of popular power that wish to adhere to it.

STATEMENT OF THE UNITED SECRETARIAT OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

The prerevolutionary situation that opened in Portugal with the beginning of 1975 has gone through an exacerbation marked by the government crisis, but above all by the massive emergence of the autonomous movement of the masses, as revealed by the August 20 demonstration, the impact of which has begun to make itself felt on the reformist organizations.

1. The division of the MFA, triggered by the rise of the class struggle, makes it impossible to stabilize the army, which has been profoundly undermined by the crisis of the hierarchical system and by the political debates and divisions (especially around the Copcon document and the "document of the nine"). In the short run, this breakdown of the army, which is occurring in a context of generalized social crisis, makes it impossible to launch a reactionary coup d'etat without running the risk of civil war. In face of the MFA's incapacity to stabilize its Bonapartist function, the bourgeoisie has moved to counterattack on several fronts:

*internationally, through blackmail threats of economic strangulation on the part of the European imperialist powers (whether with or without Social Democratic governments) and through the financial and military pressure exerted by American imperialism on Portugal and the Portuguese dependencies (the Azores, Madeira, Timor, and Angola).

*nationally, through the de facto junction of the terrorist attacks, the anticommunist mobilizations exploiting the discontent of the petty bourgeoisie of the North, and the civilian and military political offensive combining the orientation of the SP leadership with the great maneuvers of Melo Antunes and sections of the military hierarchy.

2. The August 20 demonstration, which drew 50,000 people, more than a thousand of whom were soldiers,

revealed the maturation of the combativity and the elevation of the level of consciousness of important sections of the working class, especially in the workers bastions of Lisbon and the southern region. The radical character of the demands advanced by these sectors — for the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, workers control, and the reconversion of production — objectively place on the agenda the necessity of a centralization of the autonomous organs of the workers (workers commissions, popular assemblies, "moradores" commissions) in order to respond to the need for socialist planning of the economy.

Nevertheless, the present geographical limitation and uneven development and functioning of these organs must be stressed.

3. The situation is thus characterized by an increased polarization between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, although this does not imply that there will be an immediate qualitative modification of the relationship of forces between the two fundamental classes.

With the accentuation of the economic crisis, which will provoke an intensification of workers struggles that will run up against the government's inability to meet the workers demands, the possibility of the current pre-revolutionary situation being transformed into a real revolutionary crisis emerges.

For this, it is important that all initiatives be taken so that the autonomous organs of the workers are developed, coordinated, and centralized, thus permitting a real response to the demands of the toiling masses and to the division of the working class that has been accentuated by the leaderships of the SP and the CP. Toward this end, it is necessary that the autonomous organs take charge of the defense and generalization of workers control, the expropriation of the capitalists, the arming

of the proletariat, and the enactment of measures to establish a monopoly of foreign trade, to deepen the agrarian reform, and to institute planning.

In face of the attempts of the "group of nine" to reestablish discipline in the army, to put an end to the beginning of the emergence of workers militias, and to stabilize the MFA as an instrument of the hierarchy, it becomes all the more imperative to forge links between the revolutionary soldiers and officers and the workers commissions, moradores commissions, etc., and to generalize the election of officers by assemblies of soldiers.

Likewise, it is necessary to advance adequate measures (selective price support, moratoria on debts, credit, direct liaison between consumers and small-scale producers, etc.) in order to neutralize reaction's utilization of layers of the petty bourgeoisie, the minifundistas of the North among others.

Finally, the centralization of the autonomous organs of the workers in order to carry out these tasks will take the form of the convocation of a National People's Assembly composed of delegates of the workers commissions, the moradores commissions, the assemblies of military units, and the popular assemblies.

4. The essential obstacle to the realization of this strategic objective lies in the policy of division followed by the leaderships of the SP and the CP.

The policy of the Social Democratic leadership, which manifestly aims at halting the revolutionary process, is beginning to meet the first signs of resistance from the SP's rank and file workers, in spite of the sectarianism and bureaucratic methods utilized against the SP by the CP leadership.

Concurrently, the zigzags of the Stalinist leadership of the CP have provoked disorientation among the CP rank and file at a time when a workers vanguard is forcefully emerging onto the political scene.

Thus, it is not only necessary but also possible to carry out an audacious policy of workers united front directed at both the SP and the CP in order to consolidate a response by the working class as a whole to capitalist reaction, to defend the gains of the workers, and to spur on the development of the revolutionary process. The autonomous organs of the toiling masses are the bodies that are best suited to realize this united front, for in their present form they already group together Socialist workers, Communist workers, revolutionary workers, and workers who belong to no political party.

5. The unitary accord of August 25 testifies to the shift in the relationship of forces between the workers vanguard and the reformist apparatuses.

In the present conjuncture, it was politically correct to seek a united front accord with the CP. But the accord of August 25 did not respond to the actual requirements of the situation.

a) The accord in effect sanctioned the CP's policy of supporting the government and maintaining the unity of the MFA, precisely at the moment that the MFA was being ripped apart by the pressure of antagonistic class forces.

b) The accord mentioned no concrete objective that would permit the unification of the working class and the actual stimulation of workers self-defense and self-organization.

c) Because of this absence, and because of the lack of proposals to the SP (a party that currently groups together nearly half of the proletariat), the accord sanctioned the present division of the workers movement and did not contribute to surmounting this major obstacle to the development of the revolutionary process.

d) Furthermore, the "unitary accord" envisaged the formation of a "front" in which the MFA is included on the same footing as the autonomous organs, parties, and revolutionary organizations of the workers movement. This not only appeared as a stamp of approval on the CP's project of creating a "democratic and socialist popular front," but also fell within the framework of the perspective of integrating the autonomous organs, in opposition to their real independence of the institutions of the bourgeois state.

e) Thus, the accord could easily serve the objective of the CP (as it did during the August 28 demonstration), which is to utilize the weight of the workers vanguard to negotiate compromises on the level of the state apparatus, the government, the army, and the MFA under the best possible conditions.

Now, the relationship of forces permitted revolutionaries to seize this opportunity to lead the CP to take a position on the implementation of the essential tasks necessary for the progress of the revolution. Here again, the lack of concrete objectives and the concessions made to the CP's political orientation prevented the lessons of the policy of the CP leadership and of the rupture of the "front" from being clearly drawn before the masses.

6. In the workers and people's counteroffensive based on the real dynamic of the mass movement, the Trotskyist militants of the LCI will stand in the front ranks of all initiatives fostering the extension, generalization, and centralization of the autonomous organs of the workers and the self-defense of the workers.

It is through the capacity of revolutionary Marxists to fulfill these tasks that the revolutionary party, indispensable for the victory of the Portuguese socialist revolution, will be able to develop.

The Fourth International and all its sections and sympathizing organizations will support the comrades of the LCI by all the means at their disposal and will press for all mobilizations of solidarity with the revolutionary struggle of the Portuguese workers.

September 2, 1975

BANGLADESH



the coup: its roots and consequences

by JAWAD HUSSEIN



The overthrow and execution of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman marks the end of one phase of Bengali politics and the beginning of another. Mujibur Rehman was the only bourgeois leader capable of holding his own party together and of simultaneously playing a Bonapartist role in Bengali society as a whole. His removal from the scene by young army officers eliminates the most solid pillar of bourgeois stability and will open a period of instability in the country. The bourgeoisie in Bangladesh and South Asia as a whole, not to mention the United States, will not find it easy to replace Rehman; some of the jubilation with which bourgeois circles greeted his death may soon give way to complete and utter despair.

Only three years ago, Mujib received a hero's welcome when he returned to Dacca from Pakistan. Three million people lined the streets and by popular acclaim Mujib was awarded the title of "Bangabandhu" (friend of Bengal). But three weeks ago, when Mujib and his entire family were wiped out, there was little public response. Not even a demonstration or a strike. It is not difficult to grasp the reasons for this sharp and rapid decline in his popularity.

Crisis and corruption

The task that confronted Mujib and his Awami League after Bangladesh won independence was not an easy one. In a country of 80 million people (with the highest population density in the world), and an underdeveloped one to boot (90 percent of the population lives in the countryside), they set about attempting to construct a capitalist state. But in spite of help from the Indian government and aid from the Soviet Union, the Awami League failed to deal with the social crisis.

This was not surprising, for the solution to the problems facing the Bengali masses required a socialist revolution. Instead, the Awami League began to lay the bases for a bourgeois state. Many of its leaders became rich overnight. The lust for money resulted in scenes reminiscent of the American wild West, with gun battles breaking out between rival gangs of Awami Leaguers trying to appropriate foreign aid being unloaded on the docks.

For a certain time, Mujibur Rehman was able to pose as the "Father of the Nation" and to appear as though he

stood above the contending gangs in his own party. But the reek of corruption soon spread to envelop his own family, and his personal position was increasingly challenged. Earlier this year, he tried to strike back by banning all political parties except the Awami League, instituting a one-party state supported by Moscow and the pro-Moscow political forces in Bangladesh itself. These forces dissolved their own organizations, liquidating themselves into Mujib's party. The other parties went underground.

But unrest continued in spite of the one-party state. The immediate cause of Mujib's overthrow and execution was his favoritism on behalf of his own family. Let us examine some examples of this favoritism:

1. Sheikh Nasir, Mujib's younger brother, became "god-father" of North Bengal, accumulating vast amounts of wealth through currency smuggling. During an army investigation of smuggling, a Major Salahudin got too close to Nasir. Some days later, a group of gangsters entered the major's office in the town of Jessore and shot him dead. They were never apprehended. Sheikh Nasir was killed in the coup.

2. Sheikh Moni, a nephew of Mujib, used to be a staff reporter on a weekly newspaper; he drew a monthly wage of 300 taka (about US\$22). Under his uncle's administration he became the owner of two daily newspapers worth more than 10 million takas. Moni was unofficial boss of many ministries and directorates and became secretary of the Awami League, the country's only legal political party.

3. Another Mujib nephew, Sheikh Shahidul Islam, was boss of the student wing of the Awami League. Islam used to regularly terrorize the women's hostels in Dacca; he was well known as a rapist. He kidnapped and forcibly married the 13-year-old daughter of a senior official of the State Bank. He later became boss of the perfume monopoly of the country, presumably in an effort to mask the stench of his other activities. He was also killed in the coup.

4. Sheikh Kamal, Mujib's son, was involved in smuggling and looting. In 1973 he was shot at by police during one of his looting operations. (The police were unaware of his identity.) The policemen in charge of the operation subsequently lost their jobs. Sheikh Kamal used to count his bribe money by weighing it on special scales. He too is reported to have been killed in the coup.

5. Kamal's younger brother Jamal was recently trained at Sandhurst, the British military academy, but he was better known for his involvement in a smuggling racket with a group of Hong Kong businessmen. He was also killed in the coup.

The new officers

The young majors who killed Mujib are now themselves facing a severe crisis. They have no clear perspective except an anti-Indian attitude; their appointment of a

well known pro-U.S. politician, Mushtaq Ahmed (formerly a minister in Mujib's government), as president is hardly likely to solve anything. In fact, it is extremely doubtful whether Mushtaq will last out the next few months. Since the Bangladesh officers have no social program whatsoever, they will even find it difficult to halt corruption, even temporarily. The experience of martial law in Pakistan during the Ayub regime (1958-68), which was also aimed at wiping out corruption, failed abysmally in this task. And the reason is simple: Corruption cannot be weeded out by moralistic appeals or the indiscriminate use of bayonets. It is deeply rooted in the social crisis and can be assaulted frontally only by tackling this crisis. There are absolutely no signs that the Bengali army is capable of doing this. On the contrary, the distinguishing feature of Bangladesh has been the extreme weakness of the state and the state apparatus. This weakness was not unrelated to the way the state came into being, which made the figure of Mujibur Rehman extremely important for the cohesion of the state and its apparatus. Even Mujib found it difficult to contain the growing crisis and had to resort to a one-party state. The personal corruption surrounding him merely exacerbated the anger of large sections of the population, since it contrasted so vividly with the growing poverty in the country. Thus, although many might be relieved that Mujib has been eliminated, this relief will buy the army and its supporters a few months at most.

In any case, the Bangladesh army is itself a relatively new entity. Its only traditions are those of the armed struggle against the Pakistani army. There were never any "martial traditions" in Bengal. The British very carefully avoided recruiting Bengalis to the army, for British imperialism regarded Bengalis as politically unreliable, and the Pakistani and Indian ruling classes followed the same tradition. Thus, Army Commander in Chief Shafiqullah, who had recently been posted to the Foreign Office, is only 38 years old. He was one of the two generals in the army, which is a force of only 50,000. The other general, Ziaur Rehman, also young and a veteran of the war of independence, has replaced him. The rest of the army is run by young colonels and majors, all of whom received their rank in the 1971 war.

Among the colonels are Mainul Husain Chaudhry, Motiur Rehman, Nasim, M.H. Khan, and S.A. Bhuiya, who were all leaders of sectors during the 1971 war. Together with Majors Azizur Rehman Chaudhry, Ijaz, Ibrahim, and Murshed, they developed an opposition to the Awami League. The sentiment expressed in the statement "We fought to free our people, not to see these Awami League bastards get rich" was widespread in the army and even within the much-hated Rakhi Bahini (Security Force), which was used to repress all opposition.

However, the new leaders, civilian and military, will be confronted with the same problems that finally resulted in the overthrow of Mujibur Rehman: social and economic chaos compounded by famine conditions in large areas of the countryside. We can therefore expect continued instability for some time.



The opposition

What of the left? The pro-Moscow groups were solidly behind Mujib — some of their leaders even claimed at public meetings that "he is the Lenin of the East." When Mujib's police opened fire on pro-Moscow students demonstrating against U.S. imperialism in 1972 (killing two of them), the pro-Moscow groups remained silent.

There can be little doubt that the overthrow of Mujib, the anti-Indian stance of the new regime (however carefully disguised it may be at the moment), the recognition of the new regime by Peking, and the gradual release of the Maoist prisoners, represent grave blows to the entire strategic line of the pro-Moscow groups. Having backed Mujib fully, they will now pay the price for supporting a one-party state, remaining silent on key political issues, and acquiescing and even actively encouraging repression against the Maoists.

Previously, the largest opposition force in the country was the JSD (Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal — National Socialist party), a split from the Awami League, led by Major Ahmed Jalil and Abdur Rab. For a time, this formation represented a real threat to the Awami League, but it was brutally repressed. It is not impossible, however, that the JSD could come forward and play a major role after the death of Mujib. The National Awami party (NAP), led by the old peasant leader Bhashani, has been pushed to the sidelines, and Bhashani himself is hopelessly confused and compromised.

There are three major groups in the Maoist underground:

1. The People's Revolutionary party of East Bengal has the largest trade-union and peasant base of all the far-left groups. During the war of independence it estab-

lished its own training camps and its armed units fought against the Pakistani army.

2. The Proletarian party of East Bengal was the most important armed-struggle group after the war of independence. It held a completely ultraleftist position and decided to continue the war against the Awami League.

3. The Communist party of East Bengal, led by the veteran Maoist leader Taha, also held an armed-struggle position. But after suffering a major setback in the Rajshahi district in 1974, the group withdrew from the armed struggle.

These groups differ from their counterparts in India in that some of them have genuine experience in mass armed struggle. During the war they fought in close collaboration with the young majors and colonels of the Bangladesh army. To varying degrees, they all remain within the framework of Maoist orthodoxy, but with Peking's recognition of the new regime, they may well find their political and material aid cut off and may even be denounced as "Lin Piaoist revisionists." Some of these groups will undoubtedly return to opportunism and will not oppose the new dictatorship — on the grounds that it has overthrown a "puppet of social imperialism." They may well refuse to demand the release of all political prisoners. Revolutionary Marxists will have to fight against any manifestation of this sort of opportunism even more vigorously than in the past, for what is on the agenda in Bangladesh today is the permanent revolution: The only solution to the crisis in the country lies in the overthrow of the capitalist state and its replacement by a proletarian state. There is no possibility of any intermediary stage of "new democracy" (of an unspecified class character) or of bourgeois democracy. Any political organizations that refuse to understand this will find themselves in a blind alley.

For the moment, the situation in Dacca remains confused, and it would be premature to discuss the orientation of the new regime in any detail. Reports that the new government had inaugurated the "Islamic Republic of Bangladesh" have been vigorously denied by Dacca, much to the embarrassment of the Pakistani Foreign Office, which had awarded instant recognition to the new regime. But a drift away from the Soviet Union and India remains likely, and should a civil war erupt, revolutionary Marxists will have to demand that all regimes stay out of Bangladesh and will have to fight to oppose any new Indian intervention.

But the most striking feature of the events in Bangladesh is that they demonstrate the instability that continues to prevail on the South Asian subcontinent, an instability that has characterized the region ever since the 1971 explosions. The extent of the social crisis in the area is such that this instability will drag on, although unevenly. Indira Gandhi should learn some lessons from Bangladesh before she decides to institutionalize the state of emergency in India.

September 3, 1975



TOWARD CIVIL WAR?

by C. GABRIEL

Since the conference held at Nakuru, Kenya, during which the leaderships of the MPLA, the FNLA, and UNITA made an agreement to "disarm civilians" as a sort of amendment to the Alvor accords, there has been a sudden acceleration in the development of the political situation in Angola.*

It was only the leadership of the MPLA that had any illusions in the Nakuru conference, which was a sort of ritual battle aimed at saving the coalition government. Neither Holden Roberto of the FNLA nor Jonas Savimbi of UNITA considered the coalition government to be the stable form of political regime after independence, which is scheduled to take effect on November 11, 1975. (See INPRECOR, No. 31, July 31, 1975.)

The strength of the mass movement in the urban areas rendered illusory any attempt to establish a government within which a nationalist organization under pressure from its rank and file and two organizations acting as the fifth column of imperialism could coexist.

It was in the framework of this illusion that the leadership of the MPLA had been "making use of" the mass movement, seeking to utilize it tactically in an attempt

* The "Alvor accords" were signed on January 15, 1975, in Alvor, Portugal. The signatories were the Portuguese government, the MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola — Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), the FNLA (Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola — National Front for the Liberation of Angola), and UNITA (União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola — National Union for the Total Independence of Angola). The accords set up a coalition government composed of representatives of the three Angolan organizations and a representative of the Portuguese government (General Silva Cardoso at the time), who was assigned to be "arbitrator" and chief of defense and security.

to influence the relationship of political forces within the government and to wage political battles. The appeals for moderation, the proclamations calling for "increasing production," and the Nakuru agreement itself all illustrated this right-wing line, which the MPLA leadership had been following ever since the Alvor accords were signed. (For more details, see INPRECOR, No. 31.)

Then came the MPLA decision to expel the FNLA from Luanda, thus opening a new period of confrontation and civil war. Does this mean that there has been a change in the character of the MPLA leadership? Undoubtedly not. But the relationships between this petty-bourgeois leadership and the masses are extremely complex in the present social conjuncture.

MPLA: Past and present

In origin and training, the MPLA leadership comes from the urban petty bourgeoisie. (See INPRECOR, No. 2, June 20, 1974, and No. 3, July 4, 1974.) Its move to the rural armed struggle allowed the MPLA leadership to build itself a peasant base resting on small-scale village production in areas of extremely backward social development. In this social context, talk of "the end of exploitation of man by man" did not at all have the same sort of repercussions as it does in an urban setting. During the last several years of struggle, while bureaucratic tendencies were rapidly developing within the apparatus, the cities were being swelled with new wage-earners, a result of new trends of investment and industrialization.

During the phase following the April 25, 1974, coup in Lisbon, a very important phenomenon arose: the entrance into the MPLA of youth from urban milieus that had radicalized during the recent period; this was especially

the case for students returning to Angola from Lisbon. These elements rapidly took charge of some of the middle level responsibilities in the organization, acting in the framework of "people's power" and the neighborhood commissions. Because of their links with the masses, they constituted a force of considerable pressure on the leadership of the MPLA. Despite their insufficiencies, the Maoistic influences to which they are subject, and their reference to "people's democracy," these elements sought to express the anticapitalist potentials of the urban mass movement. For them, "the end of the exploitation of man by man" has a precise anticapitalist meaning, a meaning they have been able to teach the workers movement to some extent.

That is why pressure on the leadership of the MPLA inevitably intensified, both before and after the Nakuru accords. For example, there was the communiqué of the workers of Siga, issued after the announcement of the Nakuru conference, which said: "But we, as members and sympathizers, progressives of Siga, we demand that our president and all the comrades of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau refuse to agree to the summit's being held outside the country; on the contrary, they should demand that it be held in the country, in the capital. That is why we workers of the Siga factory support and encourage our dear comrade president Dr. Agostinho Neto, to refuse to give an inch on the question of holding the summit outside the country and outside the capital."

In fact, all indications are that the heterogeneity of the MPLA has strongly increased since April 25. There must be many conflicts today, particularly between this new layer and the cadres formed in the armed peasant struggle. This type of conflict comes on top of many others, which, within the bureaucracy itself, involve relations with the African states, relations with UNITA, the Portuguese situation, and so on.

But nothing can be explained solely by "pressure from the rank and file." In reality, for a whole period the leadership's attitude toward the mass movement will be determined by the social conjuncture. In fact, in spite of its multiclassist line, for the moment the MPLA leadership has no bourgeois support at all, whether Angolan or colonial. The negotiations and political battles with the FNLA and UNITA cannot be regulated by interposed bourgeois circles. Today, the mass movement is the MPLA's only decisive argument. This situation can certainly change, either radically through the MPLA suddenly receiving support from bourgeois circles, or not so radically, through the vehicle of an MPLA-UNITA agreement. UNITA, which senses the winds of change in the military situation, could effectively come forth as the "winning horse" by maintaining pressure on the right wing of the MPLA leadership.

A person like Lucio Lara represents the right-wing component of the MPLA leadership and tolerates forms of mass self-organization only because he has no political means with which to oppose them.

But such a prospect remains improbable, or at least dan-

gerous for the cohesion of the movement. The civil war will thus play a decisive role in determining the relationship of political forces within the MPLA.

MPLA counteroffensive

While the Nakuru conference was quietly going on, the FNLA, naturally, took advantage of the MPLA's respect for the mythical "legality of Alvor" to open up a real offensive.

On June 15 it attacked the northern villages of Forte República, Brito Godins, Caombo, Duque de Bragança, Cuale, and Cangola. On June 18 the FNLA moved on to other villages, among them Quinculungo, Samba Cajú, and Barra do Dande. Supported by its rear areas in Zaire, the leadership of the FNLA then tried to transform the Angolan provinces of Zaire and Uige into real independent and impenetrable bastions. At the same time, the FNLA again initiated its practice of intimidation and terrorism in Luanda.

On July 4, after several days of quiet observance of the famous Nakuru accords, the FNLA again took to the attack, striking at the villages of Tango and Kasumba Kambaia in the Cuanza-Norte district.

On July 9 in the capital the FNLA opened up with machine guns on the headquarters of the National Union of Angolan Workers, a mass trade-union with a strong implantation (and tied to the MPLA), and on the funeral procession of a woman militant of the MPLA. At 9:00 a.m. on July 10 it attacked the headquarters of UNITA and then moved to attack the MPLA headquarters.

The FNLA then concentrated a large number of troops in Luanda and was prepared to take all power and settle accounts with the mass movement. It was under these circumstances that the leadership of the MPLA decided to launch a counteroffensive aimed at driving the FNLA out of Luanda.

The operation lasted only a short time (two or three hours) and resulted in complete victory. The July 16 communiqué issued by Paulo T. Jorge of the Algiers office of the MPLA presented the FARPA (Forças Armadas Popular de Libertação de Angola — People's Liberation Armed Forces of Angola, the armed forces of the MPLA) as the main protagonist in these clashes and was content merely to mention that the population of Luanda had "hailed" the FARPA troops and helped them empty the offices of the FNLA.

Was this another purely military operation? Probably. But this time the consequences directly involve the population's future ability to resist an FNLA offensive to retake the city. It is thus now that the question of the arming of the people, of armed militias, and of military potential is really posed. That is why the Portuguese army is not neutral.

The Portuguese army

Much more than in Mozambique, and vastly more than in Guinea-Bissau, the colonial army in Angola is a divided army.

Of course, some of the troops, disgusted by the unending war and sensitized by April 25, have made common cause with the MPLA, which they see as "the ally of the MFA."

But the existence in Angola of a significant bourgeoisie, combined with the pressure of an urban life that is rather far removed from the scene of combat, has permitted extensive osmosis between the army and the colonial bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

Coutinho had difficulty keeping control of his troops, especially the air force. Later, General Cardoso threw in with the FNLA and UNITA. Today Macedo, Cardoso's right-hand-man, who is more favorable to the MPLA, has taken over.

But whoever the top commander may be, the Portuguese army is divided, and a large fraction of it is prepared to oppose the MPLA. Some Portuguese troops attacked the MPLA headquarters in Luanda (Villa Alice), killing nearly thirty people. In the wake of the latest clashes, the Portuguese army has begun a general retreat toward Luanda and the big cities, thus abandoning the northern part of the country and making it easier for the Zairois army to provide unrestricted aid to the FNLA. In the course of this retreat, the Portuguese army has compelled the entire white population to move into the big cities, to abandon plantations and commercial establishments, and to demand repatriation to Portugal. The Portuguese army has remained neutral in the actual fighting between the FNLA and the MPLA, being content to offer its good offices for possible negotiations.

In such a situation, the presence of Portuguese troops is pernicious. In the worst of cases it raises the danger of a stab in the back to the MPLA; in the best of cases it maintains the worst illusions among the mass movement and retards the movement's desire for self-defense.(1)

Thus, the only slogan to raise in this regard must be: Portuguese troops out of Angola, all arms and matériel to the MPLA and the popular committees! Although it has been announced that South African troops have entered the southern part of Angola and have dislodged the MPLA from Pereira Deça, the Portuguese general staff in Angola has yet to take a position on this intervention. Those in Portugal who are fighting for the pure and simple boycott of metropolitan troop transports to Angola are doing only half the work that has to be done. The arming of the popular militias and of the MPLA must be included in this battle. And refusal to go to Angola "against imperialism and social imperialism" obviously amounts to refusal to support the MPLA, which is implicitly designated as the "agent of Moscow."

On the other hand, to say nothing at all about the presence of Portuguese troops under the pretext that if they

are on the scene they can offer a big helping hand to the MPLA is also a grave error. The present situation and the nature of the Portuguese army in Angola excludes such a possibility.

Counterrevolution on the march: FNLA and UNITA

The FNLA today benefits from a favorable relationship of forces that it lacked on April 25, 1974. Because of this, it has increased its credibility in the eyes of the imperialist factions that support it. Fundamentally tied to and dependent on the Zaire regime, the FNLA depends in part on the relations between Zaire and world imperialism. Mobutu is not a puppet on a string. He is now a dictator who takes advantage of the colossal riches of his country to sell his counterrevolutionary role in central Africa to the highest bidder among the various factions of imperialists. Various alliances and conjunctural influences may be formed and re-formed around the Mubutuist regime and around the squabbles among competitive interests.

While recognizing the current privileged alliance between Mobutu and North American interests, we can say that in the future other pressures may come into play; French President Giscard d'Estaing's trip to Kinshasa could be a harbinger of this sort of development. The MPLA has denounced the existence of an American aerial bridge linking Zaire to an airbase in Angolan territory that was graciously abandoned to the FNLA by the Portuguese general staff. The Paris daily *Le Monde* has also noted the possible existence of French arms deliveries to the FNLA and the presence of a French officer on the scene. At a time when South African troops have penetrated into southern Angola to retake cities held by the MPLA, there is no longer any doubt that the trip of FNLA vice-president Daniel Chipenda to Namibia several weeks ago was decisive in the simultaneity of the military operations. The leadership of the FNLA will thus have to draw together and calculate the careful support it receives from here and there, from day to day.

The reentry into Angola of thousands of refugees who had moved to Zaire creates an insoluble problem of food shortages in the zones controlled by the FNLA.

The refusal of the conference of the Organization of African Unity to approve a Zairois motion condemning Portugal's attitude toward Angola demonstrated the precariousness of the FNLA's African diplomatic support; this precariousness is a result not of any sympathy for the MPLA but rather of fear of the economic and military power that a Kinshasa-Luanda axis under the aegis of a Mobutu and a Holden Roberto would represent.

For its part, UNITA has been playing the game of apparent neutrality between the MPLA and FNLA since April 25.

Its main priority during this period has been to seek support from reactionary sectors of colons, including the

Angolan Unity Front (FUA — Frente de Unidade Angolana) of the fascist Falção, all in the name of a multi-racial Angola. But the flight of the colons back to Portugal has cut the ground from under the feet of UNITA.⁽²⁾ That development, combined with the repeated clashes between the MPLA and the FNLA, compelled Jonas Savimbi's organization to make a change in tactics.

Basing itself fundamentally on regionalism, UNITA set about to construct its own fief. Implanted south of the Cuanza river, it sought to prevent the war from becoming generalized throughout the South. Savimbi encouraged economic activities in "his" zone. He affirmed that he would guarantee the security of the lives and property of the European population. Rumors were floated that this region might secede under UNITA rule in the event that a generalized conflict broke out in the country. In fact, the southern region is the richest in the country, and the one most heavily penetrated by European interests (the Benguela railroad, the Cassinga mines, etc.). Support from European Common Market circles, especially from French and German interests (Krupp holds the majority of shares in the Cassinga iron mines) is a trump card that Savimbi does not want to lose.

But the generalization of the conflict makes it difficult for UNITA to implement this regionalization. That is why we are now witnessing an incredible poker game between the MPLA and the FNLA, with UNITA as the stakes. While Savimbi's troops were making common cause with FNLA forces against the MPLA, the MPLA announced that it was opening negotiations with UNITA.

On Sunday, August 17, there was a big mass demonstration in Luanda in support of the MPLA. Lopo de Nascimento, a member of both the MPLA and the coalition government, took the opportunity to tell Agence France-Press that an alliance between his organization and UNITA was necessary! At that very moment, the two organizations were clashing in Luso in the Southeast; in Lobito the MPLA was surrounded by troops of the FNLA and UNITA acting jointly.

Lopo de Nascimento's remark provides a good illustration of the opportunism of the MPLA leadership, which has publicly recognized UNITA's implantation in the South. (See the interview with MPLA leader Agostinho Neto in the May 3 issue of the Lisbon weekly *Sempre Fixe*.)

But it also points out the conflict-ridden character of the FNLA-UNITA alliance, which forces UNITA to utilize its regional "representativeness" for all it's worth. Since UNITA is rather weak militarily, it is prepared to rally to the MPLA depending on the fluctuations of imperialist support to the FNLA. But this in no way eliminates its counterrevolutionary character; it does not wipe out its attacks on the self-organization of the workers and on strikes; it does not eliminate its alliance with certain imperialist sectors.

The FNLA and UNITA today constitute the only forces imperialism commands for imposing a neocolonial solu-

tion in Angola. Given the already considerable presence of foreign investors in the country, the convergence between the interests of the investors and the ambitions of the FNLA and UNITA place these two organizations in the center of the negotiations.

The urban mass movement was making no mistake when it sacked the FNLA's "house of the people" (sic) in Luanda and found a series of well equipped torture chambers and dungeons in which dozens of victims were locked up.

That is why, once again, the leadership of the MPLA is offering responses that are inadequate to the future needs of the struggle.

MPLA leadership maintains its line

In his statement of July 16, Paolo T. Jorge, a member of the MPLA foreign relations commission, set the tone for the organization when he claimed that the prime cause of the new situation was "lack of respect for the Alvor accords, fundamentally on the part of the FNLA, but often in collusion with UNITA." And he added, going a bit further: "In the legitimate concern for overcoming the armed conflicts and arriving at a new common platform for the MPLA, the FNLA, and UNITA — in spite of the political and ideological differences and the varying historic antecedents among the three movements — and in order to permit a harmonious development, in order and calm, of the process of decolonization, the leaders of these three organizations met in Nakuru, Kenya, in June 1975 and signed a new protocol more or less reaffirming the fundamental clauses of the Alvor accords. But, once again, the FNLA was not going to respect the new accords, despite (sic) the obvious good faith of the leaders of the MPLA."

That is how an important member of the apparatus describes the recent history of his country!

In the July 19 issue (No. 14) of its journal, *Victoria Certa*, which appeared at the height of the counteroffensive, the MPLA published a short article on people's power in which the necessity of developing this power was expressed this way: "The organizational forms of people's power must be strengthened and amplified so that the people may freely express and defend their interests, which are, fundamentally, the interests of the workers and peasants. These classes must be broadly represented in the popular organs, independently of the liberation movements, the tribes, or the races. The people must express themselves in an organized way; they must struggle and freely choose their vanguard."

In a communiqué broadcast by Luanda radio, the Political Bureau of the MPLA "launched a vehement appeal to the popular neighborhood commissions to form vigilance groups in all the neighborhoods, composed of conscious and disciplined citizens, with the objective of preventing marginal groups, whether in the pay of reaction or not, from committing acts of banditry such as

murder, theft, vandalism, and violence." The MPLA called on the coordinating body of the popular neighborhood commissions to act "together with the Luanda municipality to study how to offer a practical solution to the problems of burying cadavers, of the lack of water and light, and of other problems within their competence." (A Capital, July 17, 1975.)

These statements on people's power remain broadly ambiguous in that they define people's power as simply having a practical function and not as a strategy for the development of self-organization and self-defense as the first form of state power of the toiling masses. The relationship between the MPLA and the state apparatus remains especially obscure because respect for the Alvor accords is asserted repeatedly, and that means respect for a form of bourgeois government. That is the fundamental contradiction that injects the worst illusions into the mass movement. If MPLA troops today are surrounded by FNLA troops in Lobito, Luso, and Nova Lisboa, hundreds of miles from the FNLA's base area in Zaire, and if UNITA has made the South its fief, these developments have occurred because of the formal equality conferred on the three organizations by the Alvor accords. In the midst of a civil war, at a time when the fate of the Angolan revolution is at stake, it is irresponsible to cite the Alvor accords as the backdrop for the political battle of the MPLA.

This confirms as strongly as possible the nationalist choices of the MPLA leadership.

The MPLA leadership launched its counteroffensive only because its very survival was threatened by the FNLA. Every member of the leadership knows that since the MPLA has no support except that of the masses, it could rapidly be physically eliminated by the FNLA.

But the analyses of the MPLA leadership have completely disregarded the fact that the present unstable relationship of forces is a result precisely of a year and a half of rotten compromises with these agents of imperialism. The leadership continues to offer the masses a moralistic analysis that speaks in terms of "wicked people who refuse to keep their word."

In order to struggle against the FNLA, the battle of the Angolan masses must be situated in the framework of the entire African revolution. The masses of the neocolonial countries must be awakened, and one must not be content simply to wage a battle of words in the councils of the Organization of African Unity.

As far as UNITA is concerned, here is the analysis Agostinho Neto presented in the interview published in the May 3 *Sempre Fixe*: "UNITA today is following the same road as the FNLA, and that is why there is no possibility of our working together within the government. It cannot be said that UNITA is neutral. Of course, the main clash is not with UNITA; but we nevertheless have good reason to think that if UNITA was alone on the scene, its attitude would not be different. Even under these conditions, we still hope that UNITA will take the path of conciliation, the path to real peace."

A curious conception of conciliation and peace, after having placed UNITA and the FNLA on the same footing! This sort of reasoning does not help to educate the mass movement. Just the opposite; each statement is carefully measured so as to satisfy everybody and to leave the door open for new rotten negotiations to establish some kind of "government of unity."

It is certainly true that UNITA has now carved itself out a base in the South. But the clock cannot be turned back by making a tactical alliance behind the back of the urban mass movement. What is primarily needed to expose UNITA is a body of slogans directed at the peasantry and petty-bourgeois sectors. And if this is being prepared, everything could be called into question once again by polishing up Savimbi's image with a last-minute alliance.

Peking and the Angolan counterrevolution

For many months the Soviet bureaucracy was content to support the MPLA without taking a clearly hostile attitude toward the FNLA. Soviet diplomacy was guided partially by respect for the Alvor accords, but above all by the need to keep all options open in face of an uncertain future. But for some time now the tone has changed. On August 17 *Pravda* accused the FNLA of being supported by "Peking, the racists of South Africa, and the multinational monopolies that want to maintain control of the natural resources of Angola."

Support to the MPLA, which is designated as "the tested revolutionary vanguard in the country" (*Krasnaya Zvezda*, August 17), is decisive for Soviet diplomacy in southern and central Africa. The defeat of the MPLA would lead to a decisive penetration by U.S. diplomacy and to a retreat from the positions that have been won by the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia and by the African National Council (ANC) in Rhodesia, which represent the best hopes of Kremlin diplomacy.

Nevertheless, the Kremlin has already gotten a big assist from the openly counterrevolutionary attitude of the Chinese leadership. It is known that Peking sent more than 200 instructors to the FNLA after the signing of the Zaire-China accords. A comrade of the *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire* (French section of the Fourth International) who recently returned from a visit to Angola has reported that an FNLA prisoner revealed the presence of Chinese on the advanced front lines, in Caxito.

The explanations of the Angolan situation in the Chinese press today contain implicit denunciations of the MPLA. The July 26 issue of *Chine Nouvelle* wrote that there is "no conflict of interest" among the various liberation movements in Angola and that the clashes among these movements are due essentially to the "maneuvers of disension" carried out by the Soviet Union: "On the eve of the independence of Angola and just after the sign-



ing of the Nakuru accords by the three Angolan organizations, the Soviet social imperialists flagrantly provoked an armed conflict in Angola in order to undermine the independence of this country and gain control of it because of its strategic geographical position."

Chine Nouvelle accused the USSR of sending "large quantities of heavy weapons" to Luanda (which means, implicitly, to the MPLA). "Although the OAU recognizes the three Angolan liberation movements," Chine Nouvelle wrote, "Soviet social imperialism has viciously classified them in three categories: revolutionary, non-revolutionary, and counterrevolutionary . . . and this despite the fact that the three movements have persisted in the armed struggle for years."

On July 12, Shai Tse-min, president of the Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, received an FNLA delegation in Peking. The delegation was headed by Hendrik Vall Neto, secretary of state for information in the coalition government. This individual is the same man who in February had personally led an FNLA commando in an attack on the Luanda radio installations, kidnapping and torturing an announcer who was a sympathizer of the MPLA and mistreating the workers because they had given too good a response to the campaign for people's power. The reception in Peking (broadcast by Hsinhua and monitored in Tokyo) took place just

at the time that the MPLA was driving the FNLA out of Luanda.

For an anticapitalist struggle!

One cannot remain neutral among the three liberation movements under the pretext of a gradualist conception that regards the struggle of "Angolan nationalism" against the Portuguese presence as a first stage in a longer struggle. The international penetration of capital into Angola makes the question of "Portuguese neocolonialism" totally dependent on the submission of the Angolan economy to the imperialist interests that hold shares in the various concessions. That is why the priority task must be to expose the connection between forces like those of the FNLA and UNITA and the interests of the various imperialist factions. (See, for example, INPRECOR, No.31, July 17, 1975.) That is a strong and pertinent critique of the Portuguese reformists who pronounce themselves against any neocolonial solution but remain silent about the agreements Lisbon has entered into with a multitude of imperialist companies, agreements aimed at plundering Angola. The divisions within "Angolan nationalism" are very clearly reflections of the conflicts between the upholders of an immediate neocolonial solution and a mass movement that has made the first ex-

periments with self-organization and is partially controlled by a petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership.

When we talk about support for the MPLA, it is the Angolan masses we are talking to, and we tell them: "We support the MPLA because today it is the political and military force in which you place confidence and whose ranks you fill. We support the MPLA because today it is the only military force that is opposing the most brutal reaction that the African revolution has ever seen. But the MPLA will not be able to definitively satisfy the demands for which you are fighting — for the end of all exploitation, for an Angola that is really free of all imperialist constraint. Your leadership believes it can conciliate your struggle with African diplomacy and 'national unity' by not carrying out a real socialist revolution. When we support the MPLA it is your struggle that we are supporting, the struggle of the workers and poor peasants, of the militants and revolutionary cadres of the MPLA. But we warn you against the zigzags of the national leadership, against its illusions and hesitations."

Convinced that a class line passes through this movement, we believe that the road that leads to a radicalization of the struggle and to its transformation into a social revolution passes through the construction of an authentic communist leadership. It is thus that the conscious elements of the movement must be able to organize and put forward their own perspectives.

In the present period, a class struggle tendency would assert itself by rejecting any new political accords with the FNLA and UNITA, by drawing a critical balance-sheet of the previous accords, and by denouncing the formula of coalition government. Such a tendency would go beyond the vague formulas of Maoistic elements about "people's democracy" and would formulate the concrete tasks of the socialist revolution. The development of neighborhood committees and popular militias as preparatory forms of the state power of the masses; the expropriation without compensation of the capitalists; a body of slogans aimed at the peasantry; clear responses on the self-determination of ethnic groups, the use of national languages, the destruction of the present property forms in the coffee-growing zones, etc. — all this should contribute to relaunching a mass movement that has already been tired out by famine and massacre.

Break down nationalist illusions by denouncing the masquerade of African diplomacy, by calling upon the Congolese, Zairois, and Zambian masses to mobilize, and by calling for militant solidarity from African revolutionaries and the international revolutionary movement — that is the best response to the appeals for unity issued by a Kaunda (the Zambian president).

Such a regroupment of the vanguard would not only lay the basis for a recognized revolutionary leadership, but would also represent the only alternative to the present MPLA leadership, which threatens to break up into factions at any point, over the question of negotiations with UNITA, the question of a unilateral declaration of independence, or many other issues. The risks of the internationalization of the conflict have not disappeared.

There is already talk of a South African military intervention to "protect the Calueque dam on the Cunene River, a region which is claimed by Namibia and in which South Africans have heavily invested in the production of hydroelectric energy. South Africa is also reported ready to assume responsibility for the transport of Zambian and Zairois copper that could no longer be carried by the Benguela railroad.

All these factors converge to lend the struggles of the Angolan people a decisive role in determining the future relationship of forces throughout southern Africa at a time when the Rhodesian regime is negotiating its last card and when Pretoria is planning to lock the Namibian people into concentration Bantustans.

The MPLA today is fighting for control of the coasts. Moçamedes, Benguela, and Lobo are the scenes of battles that are decisive for supply and logistics. The clashes at Caxito, thirty-five miles north of Luanda, the most advanced point held by the FNLA, prove that Holden's troops have at least temporarily failed in their attempts to retake Luanda.

On August 15 General Antonio Ferreira Maceda, General Cardoso's successor as Portuguese high commissioner in Angola, declared the coalition government incapable of carrying out its responsibilities and decided to assume sole executive power. It was in face of this decision that the MPLA, the sole real master of Luanda, mentioned the possibility of a unilateral declaration of independence. But this juridical formula is not decisive, especially since in the minds of the leaders of the MPLA it could imply new negotiations for diplomatic recognition from a series of African states.

In face of the shilly-shallying of Portugal, we must now demand all power to the MPLA.

**PORTUGUESE, SOUTH AFRICAN, AND ZAIROIS
TROOPS OUT OF ANGOLA!**

**FOR INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUG-
GLES OF THE ANGOLAN WORKERS AND PEASANTS!**

HANDS OFF THE ANGOLAN REVOLUTION!

August 22, 1975

Footnotes:

1. The question of air power is decisive in the current relationship of military forces. The first organization that gains access to any aircraft will have every opportunity to turn the situation in its favor fundamentally.
2. For several weeks thousands of Portuguese have been waiting at the airports in Luanda and Nova Lisboa to fly back to Portugal. Some are driving in columns of hundreds of cars toward Namibia, where South Africa lodges them temporarily before transporting them to Portugal. There are anticommunist and anti-MFA demonstrations in Luanda nearly every day. The question of these reactionary repatriots is not unimportant for the internal Portuguese situation.

egypt: twenty revolutionary marxists arrested

At the beginning of August the Egyptian government announced through its controlled press that twenty revolutionary militants had been arrested in early July, among them five young women. They were accused of belonging to the Internationalist Communist League, the new name of the former Mustafa Khamis Revolutionary Communist Group, an organization adhering to revolutionary Marxism. (For the text of the first manifesto of the Mustafa Khamis Revolutionary Communist Group, see INPRECOR, No. 14/15, December 12, 1974.) According to reports appearing in leading Cairo dailies, the arrested militants were accused of having established relations with the revolutionary Communist Group in Lebanon and with the Fourth International and of having organized to overthrow the political and economic regime in Egypt and replace it with an "extremist Trotskyist Communist regime." (The most extensive account of the arrests appeared in the August 3 issue of the daily el-Akhbar. Below is a translation of major excerpts of el-Akhbar's article.) The "evidence" presented by the state allegedly consisted of a typewriter and some printed material, including leaflets and pamphlets.

In its August 16 issue the Lebanese daily Beyrouth published a partial list of the militants arrested. They included:

- Oussama Khalil, an employee at Cairo University;
- Ibrahim Azzam, a student at Cairo University;
- Najwa Abdel Ghaffar el-Baassi, a student in the school of economics and political science at Cairo University;
- Randa Abdel Ghaffar el-Baassi, student in the commerce department of Cairo University (according to el-Akhbar, she is an agronomy student at Ain Shems Univer-

sity in Cairo);

- Muhammed Beshir el-Sibai, employee in the foreign relations department of the Egyptian news agency;
- Doctor Muhammed Bayuni, veterinarian;
- Muhammed Tayel, Ibrahim Ramadan, Muhammed Saïd el-Jerjawi, Atef Salim, and Salim's two sisters (unnamed), all students at Cairo University;
- three worker militants, whose names were not provided.

The same newspaper reported that the comrades were being held in el-Kalaa prison in Cairo and that the state had barred their relatives from visiting them. Sources connected to the prosecutor's office said that many of the prisoners had refused to speak without the presence of a lawyer and that most of them had requested that they be defended by the well known Egyptian lawyer Ahmed Nabil el-Hilali. The August 3 issue of the Beirut daily el-Anwar reported that two of the twenty arrested, Muzahim Takriti and Abdel Kader Shakir, were Iraqis who had allegedly been sent to Cairo to "instruct" the Egyptian militants in the use of "disappearing ink and coded writing."

An especially ominous aspect of the arrests was that the prosecutor, acting in deliberate bad faith, tried to link the arrested comrades to the Arab Communist Organization (ACO), a far-left organization that has been facing repression in Lebanon, Syria, and Kuwait. In a deposition to the court the prosecutor noted that five alleged members of the ACO had recently been hanged in Damascus. The fact is, however, that neither the Egyptian comrades nor the Revolutionary Communist Group in Lebanon has any links to the Arab Communist Organiza-



Cairo, January 1972. Students attempt to assemble for demonstration against Sadat regime.

tion save one: The Arab Trotskyists have always defended the ACO against repression by the bourgeois Arab regimes. The fundamental political differences between the Arab Trotskyists and the OCA over such questions as terrorism are no secret, for they have been discussed often enough in the revolutionary Marxist press in the Arab world.

The aim of the Egyptian regime in making this amalgam is quite clear: to set the stage for handing down the harshest possible sentences against the Egyptian comrades and to justify the close collaboration of the Egyptian, Lebanese, and Syrian secret police by claiming that all the regimes in the Arab region face an international "terrorist conspiracy," an accusation that has served as a principal witch-hunting weapon for the imperialists and their allies for some years now.

Why the arrests?

The Sadat regime clearly plans to make an example of our comrades in an attempt to intimidate all the revolutionary and leftist movements presently active among the Egyptian workers and peasants. The regime is alarmed at the mounting political activity of the workers and all the tailing masses in the country, activity that the repressive apparatus has been unable to suppress.

The new rise of the Egyptian mass movement began with the student strikes and demonstrations of January 1972. Since that time, the students have taken to the streets on numerous occasions, generally to protest the government's capitulationist policy toward the Zionist state of Israel and its imperialist supporters. By autumn 1974 the growing economic crisis and consequent social tensions had led to a reawakening of the Egyptian working class. In September 1974, the month in which the government headed by the economic "liberal" Abdel Aziz Hegazi took office, workers strikes swept Helwan, Shubra el-

Khaima, and other working-class centers. The strikes were so powerful that the regime was forced to grant significant economic concessions. The autumn 1974 strike wave culminated in the massive workers demonstration in Cairo on January 1, 1975. The government responded to the demonstration with a wave of arrests.

This repression, however, failed to stem the tide. In late March the workers of Mahalla el-Kubra mobilized in one of the most advanced struggles in the recent history of the Egyptian workers movement, organizing strike committees, occupying factories, and resisting armed attacks by the repressive forces.

The Mahalla el-Kubra mobilization convinced the Egyptian ruling class that the Hegazi government had to go. The rising working-class struggles were a major obstacle to Sadat's policy of an economic and political "opening" to imperialism and imperialist capital. Western capital has no great wish to plunge into an unstable situation, particularly during an international recession. Moreover, the organizational forms that emerged during the struggles in Mahalla el-Kubra pointed to the possibility that the Egyptian workers could precipitate a generalized social explosion.

The solution decided on by the Egyptian rulers was to replace Hegazi, the symbol of the "economic opening," with Mamdouh Salim, a career police officer. The policy of the "opening" was continued, and even deepened. A few verbal concessions aimed at calming the workers down were offered. But the appointment of a policeman as premier was a symbol of what was to come: a big intensification of repression in an attempt to pacify the "internal front" referred to by the Cairo prosecutor. The arrest of the comrades of the Internationalist Communist League represents an initial test of whether the regime can succeed in decapitating the workers movement.

There are four main reasons why Sadat has decided to

single out the Egyptian revolutionary Marxists for attack: First, the Egyptian comrades have played an important role in the student demonstrations against Sadat's policy of capitulation to Zionism, and with the signing of the latest accord with Israel the regime has grounds to fear further mobilizations in opposition to the new step in capitulation. Second, the comrades have been actively involved in organizing and defending the workers struggles for economic demands. Third, the regime especially fears that the revolutionary Marxist organization could emerge as a bridge linking the student protests against Sadat's policy toward Israel and the workers mobilizations; the regime is fully conscious of the tight connection between the "internal" and "external" fronts and is equally conscious of its own need to prevent that connection from being perceived by the Egyptian masses. Fourth, the regime hopes that by charging that the Egyptian comrades have established relations with "foreigners" of the Fourth International, it can isolate the comrades from the rest of the Egyptian left and thus succeed in its repressive plans and simultaneously conceal its own capitulation to imperialism behind a nationalist veneer.

The need for solidarity

It is of crucial importance that the bourgeois Egyptian regime be defeated in these attempts, not only because

of the intrinsic importance of the Egyptian workers movement, but also because of the vanguard role this movement plays for the entire Arab revolution. A defeat for Sadat's attempt to stamp out the Egyptian revolutionary Marxist organization would help to prevent repressive attempts in other Arab countries. Conversely, if Sadat succeeds in Egypt, it will be easier for the other Arab regimes to take similar steps in their own countries. The arrests in Egypt have already been used by the Lebanese bourgeois press to launch a campaign against the Revolutionary Communist Group in Lebanon.

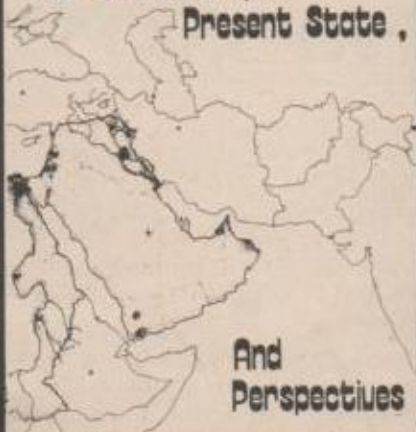
The Arab left and revolutionary movement has already begun to respond. On August 4 a joint communiqué in defense of the Egyptian comrades was released by four organizations, including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Popular Front-General Command, a split from the PFLP. (The text of the communiqué is printed below.) This solidarity must now be extended internationally so that Sadat's attacks on the most elementary democratic rights of freedom of association and freedom of the press may be defeated.

RELEASE ALL IMPRISONED REVOLUTIONARY MILITANTS IN EGYPT!

SOLIDARITY WITH THE EGYPTIAN MASSES AND REVOLUTIONARY MILITANTS!

New IMG pamphlet containing translation of documents by Fourth International organisations in the Arab world. Available from RED BOOKS, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. — price 30p & 6p p&p

THE ARAB REVOLUTION Its Character, Present State, And Perspectives



EL-AKHBAR'S REPORT

The following article, published under the headline, "Arrest of a Communist Organization Having Relations With Communist Organizations in Lebanon and France," appeared in the August 3, 1975, issue of the Cairo daily el-Akhbar. The subtitles are el-Akhbar's.

The intelligence services of the State Security have succeeded in arresting a communist organization having connections with communist organizations in Lebanon and Paris. Twenty members of the organization have been arrested, among them five young women. The name of this communist organization is the Internationalist Communist League; its aim is the overthrow of the political and economic regime in the country and the imposition of an extremist "Trotskyist" communist regime. The security services followed the activities of the organization from August 1974 to the arrest of its members last July. This communist organization had connections with the Revolutionary Communist Group in Lebanon and the Fourth International in France (which is an extremist communist group).

The state intelligence services presented photographs, tapes, printed matter, and documents proving the activ-

ity of this communist organization in Egypt. A typewriter was also found, as well as several pamphlets ready for distribution, in the apartment of the organization in Cairo.

Yesterday the prosecutor's office of the State Security distributed details about this organization during the examination of a request for the release of Randa Abdel Ghaffar el-Baassi, an agronomy student and member of the organization. The request was considered by the State Security Court, Counsellor Hussein Mustafa Omar presiding; the prosecutor's office was represented by Abdel Magid Mahmoud.

An organization of a new type

At the beginning of the session, Randa denied the accusation that she belonged to the organization. In his deposition, Abdel Magid Mahmoud said, "At a time when it is necessary to strengthen the internal front, this League has come along to destroy any progress on the road to the strengthening of that front." And he added, "This League is trying to found a secret, destructive communist organization, not of the traditional type, but an extremist Marxist Trotskyist organization that establishes relations with foreign communist organizations. This organization has thus voluntarily agreed to become the agent of outside forces foreign to our convictions."

He also said, "This organization contacted several Marxist Trotskyists abroad, after which they formed a communist organization including the accused, the aim of which is to overthrow the political and economic regime of the country and to impose an extremist communist regime. Their activities began during the summer of 1974; at the same time, the observation of their activities by the security services began. The intelligence services of State Security presented thirteen reports to the State Security prosecutor's office, and the organization was then arrested last July 3."

Support from abroad

The accused admitted having contacted the Revolutionary Communist Group in Lebanon, which is regarded as a section of a communist party in France (the Fourth International). They formed a communist organization following these two organizations and began their activities by creating what they called the "Mustafa Khamis Communist Group." Then the organization transformed itself into the Internationalist Communist League and adopted the Marxist Trotskyist line; they depended on and subordinated themselves to the Revolutionary Communist Group in Lebanon; contact and support were maintained between the two organizations. The Lebanese organization sent two delegates with directives to the organization in Egypt, and they met with the members of the Egyptian group and were arrested; their names are Mozahim Tokriti and Abdel Kader Shakir. The Lebanese organization

offered financial support for the purchase of a typewriter for printing pamphlets and leaflets; the members of the Egyptian organization were also trained in the use of disappearing ink and writing in code. The Lebanese organization also sent books and journals for the education of the Egyptians, among them el-Munadil, which is published by the organization in Lebanon. The members of the organization rented an apartment in which to hold their meetings. The prosecutor requested that Randa be held in prison until the investigation was finished and until other accused members of the organization, who have fled, are apprehended.

He then explained the role of the accused Randa Abdel Ghaffar el-Baassi, a 19-year-old student in the agronomy school of Ains Shems University, and he mentioned that leaflets and pamphlets had been found in her desk.

Adel Amin, attorney for the accused, moved for her release on the grounds of her young age and the absence of evidence proving that she participated in meetings; her only role, he said, was that her sister, Najwa Abdel Ghaffar el-Baassi, a student at the engineering school of Ain Shems, and Ibrahim Azzam, Najwa's husband, were accused in the affair. He added that the printed matter found in her apartment did not prove that she belonged to the organization. The court decided to release the accused but to keep her under constant surveillance. It is known that the release of those accused in such affairs takes place only after confirmation of the decision; the prosecutor has the right to oppose the decision of the court. (The article continues by attempting to make an amalgam between the Egyptian comrades and the Arab Communist Organization and reports that five members of the latter organization had been hanged in Damascus.)

SOLIDARITY AGAINST THE REPRESSION!

The following statement was released on August 4, 1975. It was signed by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Front-General Command, the Arab Socialist Workers party, and the Revolutionary Communist Group.

In early July the Egyptian regime arrested twenty leftist militants, accusing them of belonging to the "Revolutionary Communist Group." This is a new step revealing the real face of the bourgeois Egyptian regime. This regime has adopted the slogan of an "opening"; but this is an opening to imperialist capital, its reactionary spokesmen, and its thoroughly exposed agents. Alongside this "open-

ing," the Egyptian regime has intensified its attack on the progressive, patriotic, and revolutionary forces. It has accused the latest detainees of belonging to the Arab Communist Organization. This is a false accusation which can be relegated to the most despicable of police traditions: confusing organizations of a certain character with other organizations that adopt mass struggle methods.

The truth is that the Sadat regime is sunk in a deep economic and political crisis. Its policy of opening up Egypt to imperialism has failed on two grounds. While unemployment is increasing and the standard of living of the toiling masses is decreasing constantly, Sadat's capitulationist intentions are running up against the stubborn wall of entrenched Zionism. Confronted with this situation, the bourgeois regime in Egypt has no choice but to repress the living revolutionary forces, which are struggling alongside the patriotic masses of workers and students.

However, such desperate measures cannot halt the rise of the mass movement and its mobilization against a regime of exploitation and betrayal. The solidarity of the patriotic revolutionary Arab movement with the Egyptian masses and their revolutionary militants, which is its duty, is an indication that the revolutionary Egyptian

movement will not be halted, no matter how much repression is unleashed against it, nor will it be isolated. On the contrary, it will always receive the complete solidarity of all revolutionaries in the Arab region and throughout the world.

Also, we warn the Lebanese regime that it should not use the ongoing arrests in Egypt as an excuse to wage a similar campaign in Lebanon. The patriotic and progressive movement in Lebanon will zealously defend the democratic rights it has won through struggle. It will stand firm against any attempt to extend the campaign of the Egyptian regime against the left into Lebanon.

RELEASE ALL THE LEFTIST PRISONERS!

HANDS OFF THE PATRIOTIC REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT!

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
Popular Front-General Command
Arab Socialist Workers party
Revolutionary Communist Group
August 4, 1975

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bassies in all countries, demanding that the rights of the prisoners be respected, that the torture be stopped, that humane conditions of detention be established, that the prisoners be allowed visiting rights and free correspondence, that they be granted medical care and daily exercise as well as the right to receive and read all the press that legally circulates in the country and the right to carry on any manual or intellectual activities that they desire.

Democratic organizations throughout the world, the mass movement, all the committees set up to defend democratic rights and the rights of man, trade unions, intellectuals,

and student organizations must exert pressure on the Uruguayan government for the defense of political prisoners.

Footnotes:

1. The "Fuerzas Conjuntas" (FF.CC. — Joint Forces) is the name of the body that coordinates the three military branches and the police.

2. "The baths" are a form of torture that consists of plunging the prisoner into water or excrement, threatening suffocation.

FREE THE POLITICAL PRISONERS

A very severe repression against worker and revolutionary militants is raging in Uruguay, creating an extremely difficult situation for the clandestine organizations.

On March 23, seven militants of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Uruguay), sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, were arrested by the "Fuerzas Conjuntas"(1) during a search operation. The following week, seven more militants were arrested. New searches and arrests are still going on.

The fourteen arrested comrades were held for two months in the barracks of the Fourth Cavalry Regiment and were then transferred to the barracks of the Fifth Cavalry Regiment. The FF.CC. utilized physical and psychological torture, "scientific torture" under medical control, in an attempt to wring statements out of the arrested comrades that would enable the police to diagram certain organizations and arrest other militants.

Through the same methods the police tried to force the prisoners to sign confessions declaring themselves advocates of the principles and actions of guerrilla organizations.

The torture was intensive during the first three weeks; it was conducted not only on a daily basis, but several times a day. Throughout these three weeks, the prisoners were kept hooded and handcuffed, even when they were allowed to sleep. Their hands were untied and the hoods were partially removed only when they ate or went to the toilet (twice a day).

For twenty days the lives of these comrades were in danger: There were electric shocks, the "baths"(2), blows from special rubber clubs, death threats, and threats of rape against women comrades.

On June 9 the military court pronounced sentence: Twelve of the militants were sentenced to terms of two-to-six years in prison. Ten of the comrades sentenced were accused of "conspiracy and attacks on the Constitution"; the two others were accused of "attacks on the Constitution and conspiracy followed by preparatory acts," one being accused of founding a nucleus of the

Following is a list of the prisoners, as reported in the May 29, 1975, *El País*:

- *Carlos Raul Astellano Del Rio, 29, teacher.
- *Fernando Alfredo Souto Souto, 25, employee.
- *Maria Liliana Caviglia de Soto, 19, student.
- *Freddy Sixto Cabrera Dos Santos, 19, employee at Plastela S.A.
- *Ricardo Francisco Garcia Damonte, 19, student.
- *Roman Suarès Trelles, 19, employee at Cambio Bafa.
- *Luis Alberto Villarubia Mesones, 31, student.
- *Aldo Bruno Gill Baptista, 19, employee.
- *Hugo Javier Martínez Baez, 19, employee at the Anglo-Uruguayan Institute.
- *Walter Roberto Longo Porcile, 19, student.
- *Ruben Schubert Coronel Clavijo, 19, employee at Fabrica de Ladrillos Morris.
- *Julio Cesar Vuolo Castro, 19, employee.
- *Maria Cristina Araujo López, 20, employee at a shirt factory.
- *Maria de los Angeles Barboza Pena, 21, teacher.

Juventud Socialista de Avanzada (Vanguard Socialist Youth), the other of being a leading member of the PST(U). Three days later another of the accused, a young miner, was released. One militant remains in prison without having been tried.

After three months of total isolation, during which they were denied the right to write or to be visited by their families, the prisoners were authorized to receive limited (censored) correspondence from their immediate families. They are now serving out their terms in an old railroad car, separated by sex, awaiting their final transfer to one of the barracks or prisons in which the 7,000 political prisoners of the regime are held.

In the meantime, sixteen other militants have been cited by the military court, which means that a warrant has been issued ordering that they be brought before the court.

In this situation, the most difficult that has confronted worker militants under the dictatorial regime established in the country in June 1973, we call on all democrats and revolutionaries throughout the world to initiate powerful solidarity actions.

The persecution of militants and the dangers faced by the thirteen militants presently in the hands of the military must be denounced. These denunciations must be conveyed by letters and telegrams to the Uruguayan em-
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