

## Report on Portugal

Published: CPB (ML) *The Worker* No.13 June 27<sup>th</sup> 1974

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Page 3

### Portugal

The working people of Portugal, who had suffered years of bitter repression and who had resisted, organized and struggled against fascism, rose up in united mass action and turned the military coup of the 25th April into a mass democratic movement.

When the armed forces decided to free a certain number of political prisoners, those selected refused to leave their comrades behind, forcing the release of all political prisoners. The workers made May Day their own, and when the junta was speaking of free trade unions, mass meetings all over the country had already elected factory committees and occupied the fascist controlled trade unions.

The many strikes and occupations that have taken place in mines and railways, factories,

shipyards and building sites, with demands for the immediate resignation of supporters of the Caetano regime in the board of directors, for higher wages and for control over their working conditions show the determination of the workers to oppose the employing class.

To achieve the integration of Portuguese economy with capitalist Europe it was necessary to reverse the colonial strategy. Portuguese big business was quick in collecting and building up their man, General Spínola, who pressed for a puppet independence of the colonies to protect western interests in Africa under a federal system. So the volunteer to the fascist army in the Spanish Civil War, the military observer in the Eastern Front of Nazi Germany during the second world war, the ex-Governor of Guinea Bissau,

responsible for the invasion of Guinea-Conakry by Portuguese troops and for the murder of Amílcar Cabral, was to become, with the help of the high bourgeoisie, the new Head of State in Portugal.

The Portuguese working people know that the only way forward is to strengthen their own organisations and to force through measures that will ensure the destruction of the social and economic basis of fascism. The new trade unions have refused to be involved in government decisions through the Ministry of Labour (although it is manned by a top revisionist). They are united around the demand for an immediate end to the colonial wars and the real independence of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau. In opposing the manoeuvres to concoct a

puppet independence in the colonies they recognise that only with independence under the liberation movements can they ensure the end of the economic basis of fascism.

The struggle against fascist ideology was expressed by the print workers of the main Lisbon newspaper, who on June 6th took over the front page of the newspaper and published a joint shop-stewards comunique:

"A true democracy is the condition of all progress. But democracy will always be exposed to reactionary dangers if its foundations will not grow from the struggle against privilege and capitalist exploitation and from the right of every man and woman to be part of the democratic process.

We call on the working masses

to be prepared to expose at all costs the attempts to pervert democracy into the big-business that fascism was before, attempts that are being carried out by silencing the voice of the people with the celestial choir of the 'grand red carnation masquerade'.

... considering that the laws have not changed and that they were created and exist to protect the privileges of the old regime against the rights of the workers, conscious that we express the spirit of true democracy and that only mass workers' mobilization can answer the reactionary manoeuvres of certain sectors of the Portuguese bourgeoisie, of capitalism and international imperialism, we are prepared to oppose those laws and take into our own hands the task to eliminate all fascist elements from positions of power in our society."