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**PLATFORM  
of the  
Portuguese  
REVOLUTIONARY  
COUNCILS**

**& PRP (BR) MANIFESTO**



**Proletarian text  
No:1**

# INTRODUCTION

The past two years have marked a turning point in the international class struggle. The final defeat of US imperialism in Indochina and the collapse of Portuguese colonialism in Africa have marked the exhaustion of the revolutionary national liberation movements, whilst the events in Portugal have marked the reawakening of the proletarian communist revolution.

According to the Marxist dialectical conception, the essence of counter-revolution consists in the propagation in a new situation of the slogans of a past revolutionary period. In the period of proletarian revolution the greatest counter-revolutionary danger comes to be presented by the parties of revolutionary democracy. This fundamental principal of communism, laid down by Marx in 1850, is amply illustrated by recent events. Five decades of counter revolution in Europe, during which the only politically progressive force in the world situation has seemed to be the democratic and nationalist movements of Asia and Africa, has given a little lustre to the slogans of revolutionary democracy. This has allowed various 'communist' and populist parties to bask in reflected glory and retain at least a threadbare progressive mantle. But a year of revolutionary development in Portugal has exposed such nationalist and democratic illusions.

The fundamental doctrines of revolutionary communism are being verified once again. Against all the revisionist theories of 'advanced democracy', 'peoples democracy' or 'socialist democracy', it is being revealed that the proletarian revolution takes the form of a revolution against democracy, for the establishment of the undivided dictatorial rule of the working class. The Socialist Party, the party of revolutionary democracy and representing the small and middle bourgeoisie, has become the front behind which the forces of international capital and the Portuguese exploiters mobilise to attack the proletarians.

In opposition to the bourgeois rights of universal suffrage it becomes clear once more that proletarian political power must rest upon exclusive organs of the proletarian class: the soviets or revolutionary workers councils.

Against the petit bourgeois pacifism peddled by the modern revisionists, with their talk of 'peacefull transitions', the Portuguese revolution has shown that the military question is at the heart of political power, and that without a workers army the workers have nothing. Each turning point in the revolution, each shift in political power from one class fraction to another has been dependent upon a test of military strength: 25 April, 28 September, 11 March. On this point, a certain lack of clarity may still have persisted this April to judge from one of the documents that we publish here, where it is not clear whether what is called for is the general arming of the proletariat or, on the other hand, a reforming of the existing bourgeois armed forces. (see document no 1, introduction).

In opposition to the romantic slogans on 'national liberation' raised by populist elements within and without the AFM, and calls for a 'battle for production' in the interests of the national economy it has become clear that these are nothing other than an attempt to restabilise Portuguese capitalism.

In opposition to the democratic petty bourgeoisie who wish to consolidate the revolution and achieve a 'democratic self managing socialism', (within which by some strange coincidence wage labour and private property are to survive), it becomes clear to revolutionary proletarians in Portugal that: it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent until all the more or less propertied classes have been driven from their ruling positions, until the proletariat has conquered state power and until the association of proletarians has progressed sufficiently far - not only in one country but in all of the leading countries of the world - that competition between the proletarians of these countries ceases and the decisive forces of production are concentrated in the hands of the workers. (Marx, Address of the Central Committee 1850)

## THE TEXTS

If the proletariat is to rule it must assert itself as an independent class, acting in its own interests. To achieve its historic goals, the dictatorship of the proletariat and communism, it must be united by combination and guided by knowledge; by knowledge of scientific socialism, and by knowledge of the historic and international experience of the class war.

It is the policy of the Communist Organisation to attempt to fulfil this requirement to the best of its ability: a) by struggling to undertake and propagate concrete analyses of the economic political and ideological conditions of the class war, the results of which are published in our journal 'Proletarian', and in the 'Proletarian Pamphlets'; b) by publishing historical reprints that restore to the proletariat in Britain its patrimony; c) by making available translations of documents of the international proletarian struggle such as those contained in this pamphlet.

There are two texts included in this pamphlet: first the documents of the first Congress for Revolutionary Councils of Workers and Soldiers, held the 19th and 20th of April 1975 in Lisbon; second, the manifesto of the Proletariat Revolutionary Party -- Revolutionary Brigades, which though issued on the occasion of the elections to the constituent assembly is not an election manifesto but an anti election manifesto.

The bourgeois press has given what by its standards is a comprehensive coverage of recent Portuguese events, they have hung on the every word of the Heroes of Portuguese democracy such as Mario Soares and given us thumbnail sketches of the 'personalities behind the events'. But with typical bourgeois idiocy they remain blind to the events behind the personalities, so that when the proletarian masses of Portugal begin to organise themselves as a political force independent of the bourgeois parties their first congress could pass unreported. For us however it is not an event that can be allowed to pass unnoticed. For us any genuine mass construction of workers councils/commissions/soviets is of central importance. Our strategic advocacy centres around the need for the emergence of a true Marxist Leninist Communist Party able to give programmatic guidance to the workers councils as and when they appear. We adopted this position, (and with it the advocacy of industrial unionism to promote class economic unity) from appreciation of the historical reality that wherever the working class is in deep crisis - offensive or defensive - the inevitable and spontaneous form of this developing self awareness and autonomous action is always the workers council.

Without the mass catalysing and organising nodes of the councils no real social revolution can take place. But the very spontaneity of the conciliar movement is but the groundswell within which the scientific guidance of the party leads the proletariat towards seizing state power for the effecting of its dictatorship.

Our knowledge is not yet sufficient to say how far this view of the dialectical interaction between council and party is shared by the PRP. Their practice as evinced by these documents seem to indicate that it is, but in the texts themselves, this is nowhere made explicit. On the contrary, item 3 of the conclusions in the document of the Revolutionary Councils, which we presume to have been drafted under PRP influence, can be read as a caving in before the sheer spontaneous upsurge; "The existence of too many political groups within the class and their internecine fighting and attempts to control the class's autonomous organisations creates a division of the class and a general feeling of frustration with regard to political parties and the class's consequent need to create unitary organisations for the exercise of political power in the workplace, residential area and barracks."

This may just be a call for the principled unity of revolutionary organisations in

a real Communist party (is definitely not the PCP). It also, correctly, may be an attempt to make clear to the 'parties' the qualitative distinction between council and party - that the former is the mass mobilising organ, whereas the latter is the compact organisation of vanguard communist elements only. A dialectical relation unites and polarises these qualitatively distinct entities (it is not a matter of the numbers that each embraces, but of the degree of consciousness and discipline obtained). The attempt to reduce one to the other will abort any potentially socialist revolution, and the outcome will be some kind of bourgeois revolution/counter-revolution.

It may lastly be the case that the PRP has conflated the role of party with that of the council, or at this stage they may just be learning from the revolutionary initiative of the masses which they (correctly) do not want to stifle. We obviously hope that such revolutionary modesty is their standpoint and not sheer conciliar spontaneism. Only time will clarify their effective position, and not much time either.

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# REVOLUTIONARY COUNCILS of Workers, Soldiers and Sailors

The economic situation is one of grave crisis whose principal characteristics are unemployment and inflation. This crisis is not just part of the world crisis of capitalism; it is very deeply rooted in the particular characteristics of Portugese capitalism, which developed under the cover of a fascist regime almost totally dependant upon other countries. Increasing numbers of companies are going bankrupt, the investments which could create new jobs are not being made, inflation is not stopping, the balance of payments deficit is getting bigger and bleeding our reserves, the situation in the countryside is very serious and agricultural production is completely incapable of meeting our food needs.

Because of the big contradictions involved, the resolution of this crisis is only possible within the capitalist system under a repressive political regime. In the present political situation this signifies a return to fascist political reform. Stability cannot be achieved under bourgeois democracy.

In the absence of a radical solution the situation will inevitably become worse, with growing dependence on overseas whilst working class living conditions deteriorate markedly with resulting serious political consequences.

The economic contradictions can be resolved only under socialism, with working class in power, never under the anarchy of capitalist production with the bourgeoisie in control and maintaining all of its privileges and demanding increasing sacrifices from the working class.

Because of the factors which make socialist revolution possible the Portugese situation is becoming a major headache for imperialism on a world scale.

Imperialism is no longer interested in economic exploitation of Portugal, but in its strategic position, since it knows that a change here would bring nearer a change in Spain and a profound reversal in Europe, where France and Italy have revolutionary movements. That is why we believe there is a real danger not only of imperialism supporting internal reaction, but also of an imperialist intervention through its military wing NATO. And, faced by such an intervention the sole possibility of resistance lies in a whole people armed and mobilised to defend what is ours.

The main feature of the present political situation is the existence of big internal struggles determined by the interests of mutually antagonistic classes.

Within the Armed Forces there are reactionary men and progressive men, just as there are within the MFA. The plots hatched by the reactionaries after April 25 involved the backing and participation of some of the most reactionary men in the Armed Forces who, quite logically, were defending the interests of the class to which they belonged -- the bourgeoisie. As long as the present structure of the Armed Forces holds good they will always contain an element of support for reaction and imperialism which will make use of them for the unleashing of counter revolutionary coups.

The development of the revolutionary process must inevitably involve a radical change in the present military structures, transforming them into a popular force at the service of the Socialist Revolution.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. It is obviously impossible for the just aspirations of the working class to be satisfied under the capitalist mode of production, and the same applies to the form of state capitalism, which is what some people are calling for and which doesn't even constitute a viable alternative and would rapidly degenerate into a repressive regime.
2. The reactionaries's constant threats and rumours, arising from the most varied sources; the failure to make a clean sweep of PIDE men, money-grubbers and legionaries, the bosses' lackeys and other reactionary agents, from the barracks and work-places, creates within the class a feeling of defencelessness and the need for the class to organise so as to move onto the offensive.
3. No matter what the result of the elections, they will not solve the class's basic problems.
4. The existence of too many political groups within the class and their inter-necine fighting and attempts to control the class's autonomous organisations creates a division of the class and a general feeling of frustration with political parties and of the class's consequent need to create unitary organisms for the exercise of political power in the workplace, residential area and barracks.
5. The organisation with which power is to be won and exercised must be constituted by organs which are elected by and arise from the class in its work centres, residential areas and barracks.
6. In the present situation there is an urgent need for the creation of revolutionary councils as the only means by which the proletariat can take power.
7. THE NEED FOR THE PROLETARIAT TO TAKE POWER IS URGENT

On April 20, 1975, the Congress approved a motion containing the following points:

1. Constitution of a 50 member Secretariat for the Revolutionary Councils of Workers, Soldiers and Sailors.
2. Congress elected the following elements:  
11 engineering workers; 1 electronics worker; 1 cutter; 1 office worker; 1 teacher; 1 hotel trades employee; 1 printing worker; 1 unemployed person; 11 military personnel (privates and officers).
3. Besides the above the following will make up the secretariat:  
2 delegates from the North; 1 for Viano do Castelo; 2 for Marinha Grande; 1 for Covilha; 2 for Alentejo and Algarve.
4. Parties and workers movements, the left of the Socialist party included, are invited to send a delegate to represent them on the Provisional National Secretariat.

The principal tasks of this Secretariat will be:

- a. Promotion of the election of Revolutionary Councils at general assemblies.  
The linking of these new councils to the secretariat through delegates.  
Propaganda for the Revolutionary Councils of Workers, Soldiers and Sailors.  
The publishing of several of the congress's documents to corresponding bodies, whether party political or not.  
The finding of a suitable headquarters.
- b. Holding periodical meetings to discuss and exchange experiences.  
The establishment of a stable National Congress of the Revolutionary Councils of Workers, Soldiers and Sailors.

ALL DECISIONS TO BE APPROVED BY MAJORITY

## PLATFORM OF OBJECTIVES: approved by the Congress for Revolutionary Councils

WHEREAS

1. After March 11 it was proved that there was little or no class organisation to reply to a likely reactionary coup. It having been verified that after February 7 the workers commissions, restrictions having been placed on their economic powers, faced an impasse.
2. Considering the existence of the spectre of unemployment hanging over the workers and restraining their claims and considering that this enables the reformists to control some factories.
3. Considering that the reformists have taken control of some military and civic structures and they will be able to introduce reforms which at most will enable the situation to be stabilised in the short term though never in the medium or long term.
4. Considering that the military power is divided into three factions: right, left and undecided.
5. Whereas there exists a true political power which is in the hands of military personnel of the most varied political tendencies, ranging from the left to a right wing which could be reinforced by the "don't knows" of which large numbers exist in the armed forces.
7. Whereas imperialism is not prepared to lose the strategic site occupied by our country, nor to countenance the influence which the revolutionary process could have in the West European countries where the proletariat is more politically advanced.
8. Whereas the confrontation with imperialism necessitates the armed organisation of the class.
9. Whereas the organisation of the class arises from autonomous forms through unitary commissions elected at the base, within the class.
10. Whereas the Revolutionary Councils are neither opposed to nor a substitute for the workers' commissions, which have an economic role, and the Revolutionary Councils are a more directly political form for the seizure of power, they propose:

### I-- IMMEDIATE TARGETS

1. Enlightenment of revolutionary militants among the workers and armed forces, as to the economic and military situation of our country.
2. Immediate election of Revolutionary Councils in all work places, military units, and residential areas.
3. Strengthening of links between revolutionary workers and soldiers.

### II-- OBJECTIVES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCILS

1. The urgent organisation and arming of the class so it can crush any reactionary coup, whether launched from inside or outwith the country, and organisation for the class's seizure and exercise of power.
2. The formation of a truly revolutionary army of the proletariat.
3. At the present stage account must be taken of the existence of several parties within which working class militants organise. The Revolutionary Workers Councils could begin to be the embryo of the true Revolutionary Party which would be the class's vanguard in the construction of socialism.
4. To take on step by step, the control of the administration, management and direction of the factories and rural work centres, and the command of military units. Every revolutionary council has to define the concrete objectives in its area.
5. The objectives of the Revolutionary Councils, once in power must be:
  1. Socialist planning of the economy as opposed to self-management and to state capitalism.

2. The Cultural Revolution.

3. A full social plan for the profound alteration of the economic, political and social structures, for the construction of the communist society through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

## MANIFESTO of the PRP (BR)

### INSTABILITY OF POLITICAL POWER

The days of the decisive confrontation of the bourgeoisie and proletariat are approaching. The PRP-BR have a name and a face for it -- insurrection.

The power of the bourgeoisie is being put to the test in the factories, the countryside, the streets, every minute. And invariably violence is seen as the means to be used by either side;-- on the one hand violence is seen as a necessary means by which the proletariat can gain power; for others violence is a means of oppression for keeping economic power in the hands of the bourgeoisie and for consolidating and toughening political power. This is because the political situation in Portugal is extremely unstable and has been for some time though it has got much worse in the last period.

Given the instability, the economic crisis, the strength and combativity of the working classes and the revolutionaries, the bourgeoisie is showing itself incapable of realising its class interests.

As a result of the instability we see scissions and the breakdown of political parties, the hurried forming of new parties to play a specific role in the electoral field and the reducing of relations among parties of the ruling coalition into an increasing clarification of lines and redefinition of positions in the field of party political formations.

Fear of losing power and ambitions of achieving it on the part of several political organisations are translated into various political manoeuvres of which some polls and demonstrations carried out or attempted on the question of unions are a clear example.

The problem of the unions was scarcely the detonator of the long latent crisis among the parties of the ruling coalition. Before that there was the growth of big mutual recriminations, manoeuvring and counter-manoevring. In this crisis among the coalition parties the PCP, has always, stood out because of its rampant sectarianism and tremendous capacity for manoeuvring, in which it has frequent recourse to its pawns in the political chess game, the MDP-CDE, MES and Intersindical.

On the other hand, the PPD and the PS in fighting the PC do so not because they refuse to accept the dictatorship of one group ( they would accept the dictatorship of the fraction or fractions to which they belong), but because of the rabid anti-communism of which they are an instrument. The liberties and rights to which these bourgeois parties constantly refer are the liberties and rights of the capitalists to continue the exploitation and oppression of the workers.

The great anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist demonstration of 7 February settled accounts by a major working class and revolutionary victory over the bourgeoisie and the reformists. The latter tried by a variety of means to block this autonomous workers demonstration: their tactics ranged from wild slanders and accusations to a ban decreed by the Civil Governor of Lisbon. But the workers determination held firm and the demonstration went ahead.

The proletarian discipline of the demonstrators, the absence of repression by



the military and para-military forces, the obvious solidarity of workers and soldiers showed that a new power is being forged, and that the time has come for the forming of a revolutionary alternative.

The presence of workers, revolutionaries and soldiers joined as brothers in the same anti-capitalist, anti-reformist demonstration, realising in practice the concrete expression of the necessary conjugation between these now indissoluble forces will go down in Portuguese history: these were workers, revolutionary organisations and revolutionary soldiers and officers. Furthermore, with the existence of several powers which in some cases cancel each other out, with a government which fails to govern we face a situation of political impasse which cannot last for long. Since the situation of political impasse is of no use to the bourgeoisie it is getting ready to launch a coup (either a military or a constitutional one). If the working classes, the revolutionary organisations and the revolutionary soldiers, sailors and officers fail to organise and join forces quickly there will be a very serious danger of a return to fascism.

#### THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CRISIS

The instability of political power is closely linked to the profound economic crisis in the capitalist system in Portugal, which in turn is part of the general crisis of capitalism on a world scale.

As we did before April 25 we are continuing to state (and it is becoming increasingly obvious) that the economic, political and social crisis racking capitalism in Portugal was of such a magnitude that there was no hope of the stabilisation of bourgeois democracy in Portugal. A social-democratic solution is not possible because this country is almost totally dependant and without resources.

The crisis which capitalism was undergoing before April 25 has got worse rather than better. And this despite (one might almost say contrary to) the intentions of many of the authors of April 25, who wanted to save capitalism and reform it.

Company closures and rundowns have stepped up in recent months, and many thousands of workers have been sacked as a result. Imperialism is trying every trick as are the Portuguese capitalists used to decades of certain forms of exploitation and oppression of the workers. This was to be expected, of course, because they know that they are losing ground. But not everything is a question of tricks or economic sabotage as some call it, seemingly unaware of the laws of the capitalist system and revealing a complete lack of analysis when faced with the normal process of concentration and centralisation of capital. Investment capacity is falling because Portuguese and overseas investors do not consider the situation to be a favourable one and fear the loss of their profits and investments. For the same reason there has been a major flight of investment to overseas markets and companies are short of credits. Capital goes wherever it bears fruit -- this is the law of capitalist society.

Internal production of foodstuffs is increasingly insufficient to meet the needs of the population; instead reliance has to be placed on the world market for certain products which cost us thousands of millions.

There is a marked worsening of the deficit on the balance of payments, caused, above all by the growth of food imports, by difficulties encountered in placing certain Portuguese products in the world markets and by the fall in returns from tourism.

With the end of colonial exploitation the cost of living will get worse, as some prices -- of which sugar is the most obvious example -- already indicate. The sources of cheap raw-materials are at an end as are the obligatory purchases by the colonies (no matter the quality of Portuguese products). The consequences of

decolonisation on an economic level must reflect on the cost of living in Portugal and this can only be understood as a profound lesson that shows the need for a new form of production in Portugal -- socialist production. If not this increase in the cost of living can be a rich propaganda for the reactionary forces.

But galloping inflation, like the consequent worsening in the cost of living, was and continues to be an important factor in the mobilisation of the working class in economic struggles. As prices currently stand in the markets, the Portuguese minimum wage is an insult to the workers' dignity.

In this general context (economic, political and social), the hundreds of thousands of unemployed (made redundant, demobbed, back from the colonies or work in other foreign countries and those who are seeking work for the first time), and the dreadful housing and health conditions in which thousands of families live form part of the workers' struggles -- struggles which are assuming progressively more violent forms: strikes, demonstrations, factory seizures, squatting and land grabs.

It is within this context that one can understand the appearance of the so-called transitional plan, which is no more than an attempt to save the capitalist system through the introduction of reforms. But analysis of the plan shows its idea that the workers should work harder and better for "national reconstruction" -- in effect the reconstruction of capitalism in Portugal. And after that it talks of a "socialising plan" !

But these tactics are becoming less successful in taking in the working classes.

As the contradictions between bourgeoisie and proletariat and among the different fractions of the bourgeoisie grow worse, there arise increasingly desperate attempts to save capitalism.

Among them, reformism is, as it always has been in the history of the workers movement, a means organised within the working class by the petty bourgeoisie, to save the system.

The great working class revolutionary demonstration of February 7, aimed at the slanders and tricks of all types shattered the hopes of the bourgeoisie and its agents. It was the warning of the building of a new power, of a power which must overthrow the bourgeoisie and build socialism.

## THE POLITICAL PARTIES

At this point it is of interest to examine the parties and political currents on the present Portuguese political scene which could come to have an influence on the development of the present situation.

The CDS which appeared on the scene after April 25 and lies to the right of the the parties of the ruling coalition is already a major fascist party masquerading as a democratic one.

With its big financial resources and links with the most reactionary media, this party contains many people who were involved with the previous regime. One only need to look at who its members are, where they were before April 25 and the statements which they made then. One need only look at the Portuguese and foreign personalities invited to their aborted congress.

In forcing the closure of the CDS congress in Oporto, the popular masses gave a major lesson to these fascists and also to certain parties which doubt whether the CDS is fascist or democratic and prefer attacks upon those whom they call leftists.

The PPD can be considered as the representative of technocratic and social democracy, the party of the financial big bourgeoisie within which we find the most lucid representatives of that sector of the bourgeoisie which, within the capitalist system, tries to find a solution for its class. It was closely linked to Spilola and it is not yet clear what role it played on September 28.

At present, to put pressure on the MFA, the PC and other political forces or perhaps to justify a possible rightwing coup, there are PPD leaders, in particular its secretary general, who talk about a rupture and who state that if the present process continues no progress will be made on elections and the constitution because when the time comes the key places will all be held by men of the Left.

One thing is certain: if the time comes for "elections" the PPD very possibly could win enough votes (alone or with its allies) to launch a constitutional coup (winning a majority of seats in the constituent assembly and if barred from governing by other powers, using this to justify a military coup).

As for the PS, it is the representative in Portugal of traditional social democracy, of the social traitors as Lenin would say. It is a party which backs reform of the capitalist system and is an implacable enemy of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Many of its associates in the rest of Europe are brazen accomplices of imperialism. In Portugal this party represents the class interests of the small and middle bourgeoisie, though it has managed to penetrate some sectors of the working class, mainly because of the discredit which sectarianism has brought upon the PC.

For some time they managed to hide their real face to a lot of people. The PS congress (attended by known Spinolists and imperialist representatives such as the delegates of Israeli reaction and of neo-colonialism in Zaire), the manoeuvrings and declarations on the question of unions, and the positions adopted by some of their top leaders put the PS back in the place where it really belongs. Now the PS in Portugal too is another of the tentacles of NATO and of imperialist interests.

The working class and revolutionary militants must see the PS as a dangerous enemy which in the Portuguese situation could become a major ally of reaction.

The PCP which for some time carried the hopes of the working classes and also of many revolutionary militants has also, because of objective conditions linked to the world wide working class movement, degenerated into a social democratic party. In recent years it has come to reveal itself as a legalist, electoralist party, subordinating itself to interests alien to those of the proletarian revolution in Portugal. Now, together with the PS, despite organic differences and differences of reference, it constitutes a current which continues in Portugal the work of the renegades Bernsein and Kautsky with whom revolutionaries had to break at other stages in the history of the working class movement.

Now, as before, there is nothing to be feared from ruptures and splits. Right from the first forms of organisation resulting from the awakening of the working class, splits have been the way to get by mistakes and degeneracies. The communist parties arose from a split within the social democratic parties, just as today there are revolutionary organisations formed from out of a split from the traditional communist parties.

After April 25 the behaviour and practice of the reformist-revisionists has become objectively the betrayal of the proletariat. Reformism-revisionism which abandoned the revolutionary road long ago has now shown the broad masses of the people and its own grassroots membership that many of those who were revolutionaries 40 years ago are no longer so in 1975.

The problem is that despite everything, many of those who suffered all these years are right now not fighting for communism or even on the side of the revolutionaries. Indeed most of the time they are against them, against the revolution and against the workers' struggles.

If reformist-revisionists get into power at this stage they will be placing themselves in a situation in which not even reformists should find themselves, since the fact of participation in government will stop them from being on the workers side fighting for reforms and wage claims. Reforms and wage claims made

against whom? Against themselves as government, paralysed by the economic situation and unable to take a single step forward within the system. This is the situation which here in Portugal leads reformism to a fine impasse for the demonstration of its contradictions! At this moment, in this country, reformism has no hope of deceiving; it can only unmask itself.

This is how successively in every factory in every concrete case, reformism-revisionism is speaking against the struggle being fought. It has used liberty to put the breaks on instead of for organisation and struggle. The strikes at TAP, the CTT, Lisnave, in the electrical plants, the general strikes, and now the squatting and land seizures were and are being fought and slandered by all the means at the disposal of the leadership of a party with big financial resources which enable it to possess daily newspapers, radio programmes and an apparatus of functionaries. But the tricks and slanders are getting home less and less to the grassroots militants who in practice are often revolutionaries with whom we are ready to stand shoulder to shoulder.

Other organisations, lacking history as a party or revolutionary alternative, have followed in the wake of reformist-revisionism, in the sad spectacle which opportunist positions always present (we refer to the MDP-CDE, MES and others which are trying to do the same thing).

But it is also certain that some organisations which describe themselves as Maoists make what they call "Marxism-Leninism" out to be like an algebra book, are blindly ignorant of social, economic and political facts (they say the same here as they would on the other side of the world) take reformism-revisionism as their main enemy, believe in the stability of bourgeois democracy, play the electoral game and thus objectively turning themselves also into counter revolutionaries.

Proclaiming themselves to be the vanguard of the working class or rating themselves its leaders, many of these groups try to manoeuvre in the sense of holding up the revolutionary process until they build (or rebuild) the "great party of the working class": the party which will enable them to control the working class in the form and semblance of what the PC was and is trying to do.

When the socialist revolution is made these organisations will still be expecting the formation of this "great party" (the good one); during the revolutionary process many of them will be swept aside because the working class needs no father and will choose its own vanguard.

#### MFA

For decades, the Armed Forces were one of the main supports of the ruling classes and of the fascist regime. This powerful class instrument of the bourgeoisie was used in the colonial wars in Africa to perpetuate the imperialist rule and exploitation over Angola, Guinea Bissau and Mozambique.

For many years the Armed Forces were commanded mainly by officers who came from the ruling classes, above all, the big bourgeoisie. With the development of the wars in Africa and with the need to keep tens of thousands of armed men in the colonies, the armed forces had to be expanded. But because of the risks involved the career had less appeal for big bourgeois elements. Thus as the Armed Forces grew bigger and the number of big bourgeois declined (army life is not much fun in war time), there was a change in the class composition of the officer corps of the Armed Forces. The proportion of petite bourgeois and working class elements increased

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The deep economic, political and social crisis of the system together with the realisation that a military victory of the Portuguese Armed Forces in Africa was impossible and that these forces themselves would be the scapegoat of fascist displeasure led to the formation of the 'Captains' Movement' in the MFA and later to the insurrection of April 25.

But the contradictions inside the MFA are huge. Besides, it is claimed that the MFA and the Armed Forces are the same thing. However, class analysis makes it very clear that in the Armed Forces there are representatives of all classes.

We have said several times that there were and are reactionary and progressive men inside the MFA. There were and there are those for whom April 25 was a desperate attempt to save capitalism in Portugal and to end the colonial wars in Africa, establishing new forms of colonialism. They wanted to solve the problems of capitalist society, but within the capitalist system and imperialism. In the MFA, which is an officers' movement, practice has shown that some remain loyal to their class but others, due to the dynamics of the process that followed April 25 and the violence of the reality they have had to face, have changed radically. The process which followed April 25 transformed some conservatives into revolutionaries and led officers of bourgeois origin to side with the proletariat and the socialist revolution. But many 'progressive' officers have found a refuge in reformism of different kinds.

April 25, far from solving the problems of the capitalist system in Portugal, accelerated the deepening of the crisis and many of the men behind the coup woke up to the reality and even broke with their class position. Now, since the MFA is clearly split into right, left and reformists, portraying it as a block hides the truth.

Many officers, either because they are revolutionaries or because they realise that there is no other way out, already see Socialist Revolution as the only option.

The proletariat will have to count, apart from the revolutionary organisations and the soldiers and sailors, on these progressive officers (and it is they who have the weapons) in their struggle against the bourgeoisie and reactionaries for the Socialist Revolution in Portugal.

#### NO TO BOURGEOIS ELECTIONS

Even before April 25 we stated (making clear the practical consequences) that the fundamental problems of the working classes cannot be solved by bourgeois elections. We denounced the reformist organisations for their legalism and electoralism and we said that only by armed insurrection can the working classes take power.

Since then, there have been changes in political power, the existing relation of forces was upset, several powers were created, but the essentials of the capitalist system remained intact. The capitalists remained as owners of the major means of production, trade and finance (factories, latifundia, supermarkets, banks); the bourgeoisie kept exploiting and oppressing the working classes.

And in the present deep economic, political and social crisis of capitalism in Portugal, with hundreds of thousands of unemployed, with the prices of most essential goods rising fast (with a consequent drop in working class living standards) the parties of the governing coalition fighting among themselves, the Right organising itself quickly, and the workers striking, demonstrating, occupying factories, taking over firms, squatting land and houses, the most reactionary sectors along with the reformists try to sidetrack the working class from their real battleground into bourgeois elections.

But, while all this happens, the Right is making many attempts to reorganise itself: the attempt to put Galvao de Melo and Spínola forward as candidates again, in

Portugal and abroad, the aborted congress of CDS in Porto, the hurried launching of the fascist party PDC. Sa Carneiro's challenge in Aveiro, the use made of the church hierarchy and the most reactionary catholic sectors (Proenca-a-Nova and Radio Renascenca for example), the CDS - PDC coalition, insinuations and serious threats made by these parties and by the PPD to the development of the revolutionary process in Portugal.

The threats to impose right-wing power show that it will be attempted not only by the electoral road but by force if necessary. It is becoming increasingly clear from what spokesmen for the Right say that they will resort to a coup if the democratic road leads them nowhere. And even if they know that the electoral results favour them, they also know that the "revolutionary legislation" before the election can diminish and form an obstacle to their participation in the real functioning of political power. On the other hand, they know that because of the development of the revolutionary process and degree of consciousness of the masses, right-wing power can be maintained only by force. Thus the forces of reaction have two weapons in their arsenal: the electoral road, and armed conspiracy under the shadow of imperialism. Here again, some political forces, such as the PSP, show that they must be considered allies of reaction, the incidents at the PPD "comicio" in Setubal showed, on the one hand, that hardly any support for the right-wing organisations and their electoral game comes from the popular masses and on the other hand, that the PSP once was united with the PPD and willing to kill as it did.

These incidents show that it will be difficult or impossible to maintain a period of bourgeois democracy and that the electoral scenario will not work out. The elections will solve nothing, and those participating are right-wing or social democratic parties, and that includes the reformists, revisionists and various organisations that, though claiming to be revolutionaries, valued the present elections so highly as to offer five thousand names and their all out efforts.

The attitude adopted by these organisations (which claim to be anti-reformist and anti-revisionist, and thus, anti-electoralist) in participating in these "elections" can only be understood if we realise that many of them completely lack any concrete analysis of the situation in Portugal. Because of this, and by pretending to have scientific analyses, they also support the strengthening of bourgeois democracy.

The reformists' conception of the evolution of the situation is linked to a gradualist notion as reflected in the three "Emergency Economic Plans" advanced by the Communist, and Socialist Parties and by Prime Minister Melo Antunes and which are based on the idea that socialism must be established by stages, which will gradually produce reforms in the socialising sense, thus attempting to consolidate the present economy and avoid violent confrontations. According to them, one conquest after another "awakening the consciousness of the most backward masses, can be expected to make great reforms, so taking capitalism by surprise... and deceiving it. This is the theory of the reformist sectors, both civilian and military, though they present it differently. They also seem to believe that, if it is impossible to install these 'socialising' measures by the democratic road and they have to be introduced by force, they will be able to control its application.

On the contrary, we believe that gradualism and stages are suicidal. The present situation of economic crisis is the product of the capitalist system and will get worse as long as capitalism is maintained in Portugal. Only a profound change in the economic, social and political structure based on the socialist system will beat the crisis and find new solutions. To pretend, as the reformists do, that solutions are found by stages inside the capitalist system provides no solution to the problems and allows the Right to organise and prepare the ground for victory. In this country there can be only capitalism or socialism. The major means of production either belong to capital or are collectively owned. To pretend that

in any country you can live half in capitalism and half in socialism is to deceive the workers and in practice means choosing capitalism.

Whether by the electoral or the military road, the gradual and partial solutions are the best means of worsening the crisis and creating conditions for the triumph of reaction.

#### ONLY SOLUTION—SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

In the present situation there is only one means by which to oppose facism--the Socialist Revolution. The present state of Portuguese economy rules out any "developmentalist" or reformist hypotheses, as has been demonstrated. The only possible way out of the crisis is the socialisation of the large means of production, eliminating private interests and putting all the economy under national planning. But that is not happening. Economic control must be collective, there must be organs of proletarian power at the economic level, and they must be expressions of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This control by the workers, who thus take over production and national economic development because they know that the benefit is collective, is the only means by which this sore-pressed country can achieve the victory of the socialist system. We know that the establishment of socialism here is a difficult undertaking. The country's agriculture is reduced to almost nothing, its industry is dependent and it has a huge number of unemployed. Only by a great collective effort will it be able to develop, create wealth and be independent. The structure of the economy must be changed totally. And while it is true that the imperialists will maintain a boycott and their sabotage (as they already do) it is also true that today the so-called Third World, in particular the ex-Portuguese colonies, provide a great possibility for trade and of fraternal relations. This is the only possible road for national independence and the only possibility of preventing the country from being forced to follow foreign strategies because of economic dependence. The international situation makes it possible what could not be done in the Soviet Union in 1917 or in Cuba in 1954. Besides, the possibility of making Portugal a socialist country in Western Europe provides the springboard for a leap forward in history and the possibility of establishing advanced socialism, the existence of which will transform the face of the world. Indeed, it is true that, due to the conditions which exist in this country, a socialist regime will have advanced forms of power and will have to get rid of the technical-administrative bureaucracy. Collective economic control and proletarian democracy are the only chance of survival.

But for the revolution to triumph now in Portugal three poles must meet: THE WORKING MASSES, THE REVOLUTIONARIES AND THE REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY. Any one of these components will be defeated sooner or later if it is alone. Victory will be possible if all three are together.

The working masses have advanced since April 25 in forms of struggle which show their maturity, and their autonomous forms of organisation, independent of the parties, have ensured that the workers movement does not merely follow in the wake of interests other than their own. In the recent weeks squatting in lands and houses has become a concrete expression of the power of the working masses who in this way make conquests. Although directed by the organisation of the workers, they are not coordinated at a general level. Coordination at a general and national level of the different factory, countryside and neighbourhood committees doesn't exist. When the autonomous organisation of the workers exists as a coordinated force, it will make an major step towards the conquest and taking of power. With respect to the revolutionary military, their existence is everytime more evident and in many occupations they have been on the side of the workers, as they clearly were on February 7. Only blindness can prevent workers and revolutionaries from seeing that on the road to revolution they must have the revolutionary soldiers and officers on their side. But it is also true that during the insurrection the present Armed Forces must be dissolved to make way for a revolutionary army. The present Armed

Forces contain everything - reactionaries and revolutionaries - and must be purged of everything that is not revolutionary. Besides, the workers of every production unit will have to be armed and organised in proletarian discipline. The revolutionary army will be born of both. Without it the seizure of power and establishment of socialism will not be possible.

It is up to the revolutionaries today to be true vanguard, uniting these two components - working masses and revolutionary military. In this concrete situation people must decide whether they want to go at the head of the revolution or at its tail. But it is also true that from the insurrection and from the profound transformations in the army and inside the working masses a new revolutionary party or a reborn revolutionary party will be formed, including existing organisations. And many parties will disappear.

#### IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT

At present, having made this analysis, the PRP-BR states the immediate tasks of the proletariat as follows:

1. Consolidation and coordination of the elected Workers' Committees.
2. Creation of political workers' committees elected in workplaces.
3. Occupation of lands with expropriation and creation of cooperatives.
4. Squatting and the creation of committees in the occupied premises.
5. Development of the struggles in the factories through strikes and occupations.
6. Organisation of soldiers and sailors' committees.
7. Organisation of workers for armed defence against reaction.
8. Fight against elections, through propaganda and educational work.
9. Consolidation and enlargement of the party organisation.

#### IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

These are the immediate revolutionary objectives we are fighting for:

1. Expropriation of the major means of production - industry, latifundia, banks, insurance, foreign trade and major means of internal trade - rethinking the whole economy under socialist planning in wide-ranging consultation and agreement with the workers' committees who will put it into practice and control it.
2. Dissolution of the present legislative and executive structures and their replacement by local and central power organs from the elected workers' committees.
3. Dissolution of the present army and creation of the revolutionary army (uniting the armed workers with the revolutionary soldiers and sailors). The bases of this army will be created during the insurrection.
4. Struggle for national independence on the basis of not being tied to the strategy of any foreign power and strong economic and political links with the countries of the Third World, based on independence, fraternity and equality.



COMRADES, PROLETARIANS OF THE CITY AND COUNTRYSIDE  
 COMRADES, SOLDIERS AND SAILORS  
 COMRADES, REVOLUTIONARY MILITANTS

REVOLUTION IS THE ORDER OF THE DAY.

WE MUST ORGANISE IN THE WORKPLACES  
 WE MUST ORGANISE IN THE ARMED FORCES  
 WE MUST ORGANISE FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION.

LONG LIVE THE WORKING CLASS!  
 LONG LIVE COMMUNISM!

March 10, 1975 : Central Committee of the PRP-Revolutionary Brigades.

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None of these texts translated and published by COBI are given because they represent our politics 100%, nor inversely because the organisations concerned have expressed support for COBI formulations. All of them are given as vital working documents for proletarian revolutionaries, especially since they represent international and not insular experience.

Drawing strength from the pioneering scientific practice of the Socialist Labour Party, we rather present these texts in the spirit of their (1917) Foreword to the Socialist Sunday Schools Song Book:

"A few of the above songs are tainted with bourgeois ethics, which we do not entirely approve of, but we have retained them, from an historical point of view. To the student of the Materialist conception of history they are quite significant."

We do not thus imply that any of these texts are bourgeois products. On the contrary, we disseminate them in Britain precisely because they are genuine attempts by committed revolutionaries to supplant the bourgeois ethic of democracy and humanitarianism by outright proletarian assertiveness in ideology, and dictatorship in state-power.

Inbued with correct proletarian aggressiveness and internationalism, is the following "Address to the Revolutionary Workers' Councils in Portugal", published by Union Ouvriere in No.8 of their paper of the same name. A split (centred upon Bordeaux) from the Trotskyist Lutte Ouvriere in December '74, L'Union Ouvriere have repudiated Trotskyism for the central and qualitatively different perspective of 'abolishing wage-slavery itself' (whereas Trotskyism is a radical petit-bourgeois brand of traditional social-democracy). In so doing L'OU have earned for themselves the appellation "ultra-left", a label also applied to COBI by those who do not understand the substance of Marxism-Leninism, but brandish its shell as a witchdoctor would.

While the Address makes many of the points COBI would, we must add our particular disquiet over some points in the preceding (PRP-BR) document : while correctly denouncing bourgeois elections and looking towards proletarian insurrection, the PRP)BR actually hampers the seizing of state-power by saying: "The proletariat will have to count... on these progressive officers (and it is they who have the weapons) in the struggle against the bourgeoisie and reactionaries for the socialist revolution in Portugal." (p.12).

As we said earlier, to rule is to be assertive, not on a few occasions but as a habit. Relying on officers, no matter how 'progressive' or 'radical', a) robs the proletariat of political/ideological initiative; and b) physically makes the proletariat dependent on officers goodwill for arms - the ultimate means for making and holding state-power. Here the 'Platform' (p6) excels.

We think PRP's mistaken views here are connected with a blind revolutionary optimism in general. It seems to believe that Socialist Revolution is inevitable for the negative reasons that "the economic, political and social crisis racking capitalism in Portugal (is) of such magnitude that there (is) no hope of the stabilisation of bourgeois democracy in Portugal. A social-democratic solution is not possible because this country is almost wholly dependent and without resources". (p.8). But precisely because of dependence and lack of resources is a social-democratic outcome most likely in the

- in the absence of a developed and organised proletarian consciousness. What is understandable (and indeed inevitable for a time) in the mass organs of workers mobilisation - the councils - is unforgivable and intolerable in the organisation claiming to be the vanguard of the class.

History shows that social-democracy is the best and ever-willing re-former of capitalism. This is not something of which the bourgeoisie is unaware, as witnessed by the international support given to the PS at the party level, and to Soares and 'democracy' at the state level - especially by the EEC. It should be remembered that at the recent summit of the EEC, it was specifically stated that the granting of aid and even credits to Portugal was dependent on the establishment and 'free functioning' of (social) democracy. It should further be remembered that in addition to a general business 'loss of confidence' in Portuguese exports, they have been specifically embargoed by the EEC; and in large measure this is what is whipping up the small farmers in the catholic north, in turn exciting the schemes of petit and small bourgeois throughout Portugal.

With an awakening proletariat, social-democracy cannot take over peacefully and constitutionally. But a Weimar-type takeover after bloody suppression might well occur if the proletariat are not well armed physically and ideologically. Neither in organisation nor weaponry should bourgeois armed forces be aped; all and every type of conceivable weapon should be trained with, and plans of offensive action prepared. Only a class taking for itself, by itself, all that it needs to go onto the offensive, can possibly make a revolution in its own interests.

In this regard it is our duty to draw our brothers' attention to the role of the supposedly insurrectionary (conscripted) army that permitted Hindenburg 'the hero' to remain as head of the armed forces, allowing the social-democrat government to recruit the proto-fascist Freikorps to repress the proletarian upsurge. And in 1923, it was the Reichswehr itself that deposed workers' governments in Saxony and Thuringia. Chile, Hungary 1918-20 and every other revolutionary crisis proves that the only army proletarians can rely on IS ONE THEY THEMSELVES COMPOSE - the armed, organised, trained WORKERS !

COBI; 27th August '75.\*\*\*\*\*

#### ADDRESS TO THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS IN PORTUGAL:

In Portugal the development of the movement of social revolution has already reached one of the highest points in Western Europe for several decades. The magnificent revolt of May-June 1968 in France, which despite breaking with the lethargy in which the bourgeois states in Western Europe had been sleeping since the end of the war, could not muster enough strength to pass beyond the arena of radical dispute; and if it was finally rolled in the electoral mud by all the reunited forces of social preservation, from the Gaullists to the Stalinists\*, it is because it never posed the problem of alternative power except in a literary way. Today it seems that the most advanced sections of the proletarian movement in Portugal are taking up the problems which May ('68) left for them. The fact that the Stalinists and their trade union organisation are in power is clarifying things in the eyes of ever increasing numbers of workers, while the class recrimination and antagonism allow us to predict violent confrontations.

But the dynamics of the social revolution, it has come about that we others, workers and communists, don't heed the movement for the reconstruction of capitalist enterprises undertaken since April 25th by the "progressive" bourgeois officers and by the Stalinists, engendered by the "democratic" chatterboxes of the PPD and the PS. We only listen to the independent workers' movement which, from month to month, has asserted itself with ever more force and an ever clearer consciousness as to its own objectives, culminating in the demonstration of June 17th last, where the workers of the Lisnave distinguished themselves.

\* As scientific socialists, COBI vehemently opposes this remnant, because blind, Trotskyist demagogy. Using 'Stalinist' as a blanket perjorative is

When, for the whole length of that demonstration, workers marched past shouting: "WE ARE THE FIRST SOVIET OF REVOLUTIONARY PORTUGAL!" "IMMEDIATE DISSOLUTION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY!" or the most repeated slogan: "OUT WITH THE RABBLE, POWER TO THOSE WHO LABOUR!", there is no doubt that the ruling classes of all countries recognised, and this time in the full light of day, the face of their mortal enemy.

We, workers and revolutionaries, boldly salute those of the Portuguese workers who, having known how to appraise the Stalinists for what they are, proclaim that: "the just requirements of the workers cannot be satisfied under the capitalist mode of production, EVEN IF IT TAKES THE FORM OF STATE CAPITALISM" (first conclusion of the First Congress of the revolutionary Councils of workers, soldiers and sailors, 19th April, 1975).

We, workers and revolutionaries, rejoice to see a significant section of the Portuguese workers assert, contrary to the official lies of all the capitalist fractions, civil and military, that "you speak of the participation of the workers in the construction of a socialist society, WHEN THAT SOCIETY DOESN'T YET EXIST". (Manifesto of the Revolutionary Workers' Councils to the proletariat, 15th April, 1975).

But if the radical demonstrations in which the vanguard of the Portuguese proletariat have taken part several times to date can be omens for the future in the eyes of the European proletariat, and especially the Spanish proletariat, nevertheless communist workers whose eyes are turned towards Lisbon still have many reasons to fear the worst. And we can only speak frankly to you, comrades. In making criticisms of you, we are conscious of contributing to a self-criticism of our class. Your defeat, in effect, will be our defeat. And we only make these criticisms to you because, we hope to see the proletarian movement asserting itself ever more strongly and surpassing our insufficiencies of today, on a world scale.

#### REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS, SOLDIERS AND SAILORS, COMRADES!

The first thing which disturbs us, reading the Manifesto and the Conclusions of the First Congress of Workers, Soldiers and Sailors Councils, is the lack of clarity of these documents on a vital question for the revolutionary proletarian movement: that of the nature of the Armed Forces Movement, being presented here as composed of "progressives", "rightists" and "the undecided!" But the CLASS nature of these diverse military tendencies is never explicitly denounced as ENTIRELY CAPITALIST (whether state capitalist or not). Worse, the drafters of these documents of the CRTSM even consider themselves honoured by the "support" of OFFICERS who are in the foremost positions of power today.

If the Portuguese workers who act or identify themselves with the existing Councils don't rid themselves of their illusions about the "left" of the military, the demagogues, 'self-managers', 'socialists' and company, they will only be able, in the short term, to serve them as a running-board to achieve new capitalist stability (whether like the Peruvian, Yugoslav or Algerian, it doesn't much matter) which, not only will be the negation of the communist movement, but which, furthermore, can only result sooner or later in the communists being crushed.

The Carvalhos and company are not more "to the left" than Boudienne or Tito, and their way of being "to the left" is no more than a way "to the left" of saving capital. It could be that the deep social crisis which is crossing Portugal will not be able, before long, to resolve itself, on capital's ground except by attempting to encircle the working class YET MORE CLOSELY, by making them actively participate in the safeguarding of the NATIONAL STATE. And, if the workers do not move onto their guard about this, the 'Councils', recovered by the military "left", could be the most fitting means for this encirclement, after the old unions and parties have been rendered bankrupt.

bad enough; but to use the term for the rank revisionists that compose the official CP's, which repudiated Stalin cathartically in 1956, and ever after in daily theory and practice, is nothing but the most banal phrasemongering. In logic, the term should be confined to the (alas rare) organisations like COBI, that regard Stalin as the continuator of Leninism, to which they adhere.

This wouldn't be the first time that capital has subordinated "workers' councils" to itself! Remember, comrades, the German social-democrat counter-revolutionaries were trusted by the 'councils', that they dominated, all the better to crush the workers!

The worst danger would be to fall into a fetishism of the 'councils', in which, falling prey to the darkness, the workers would disarm themselves. And it must be forcibly said this very day, that if Carvalho dominates such institutions even for a day, they will establish themselves as being nothing other than the ultimate forms of the power of capital. The conclusion which forces itself upon the revolutionary proletariat is that the workers must expel from their councils and commissions ALL the officers, even of "the left", and CONTRAST THE HIERARCHY OF THE MILITARY DEMAGOGUES "OF PROGRESS", WITH THE COMMUNIST COUNCILS OF ORDINARY SOLDIERS AND SAILORS.

That is the second point on which we wish to give you our point of view. Most of the time you justify your acceptance of bourgeois officers in your ranks by the need to have recourse to them in order "to arm the class". However, even supposing that the bourgeois officers would give arms to the proletariat, the whole past history of class struggle is there to teach us that this could only be on the condition that we defend THEIR interests, that we crush THEIR enemies, that we serve as foot-soldiers in THEIR class war. And besides, the working class can arrange lots of means to arm itself, if only it has the revolutionary audacity to seek them. Start from the irresistible power that can be that of the mass of sailors and soldiers, if they can be won over to the communist revolution.

The class struggle in the barracks does NOT, as numerous comrades believe, so mystified that they cannot distinguish a bourgeois officer from a worker, take place IN THE BOSOM of the caste of dignitaries of the national state army. It takes place between the great mass of ordinary soldiers and sailors and that caste of officers IN ITS ENTIRETY. Lastly, the arms are produced, transported, etc., by the proletariat. The arming of the class can only be its own work and the product of the offensive combination of ALL those means. It is illusory and criminal to expect from the bourgeois officers the defence of those who, socially, are the negation of their existence.

If it is through fear of confrontation that the Council militants take refuge under the cloak of Carvalho and the young wolves of COPCON, they are committing a double error: this will not avoid INEVITABLE confrontations and this will only disarm militants a little more, politically, as communists -- by reducing them to the pure and simple role of outriders for a capitalist fraction.

But that is not all. If the workers cannot place any reliance on the officers "on the left", they can no longer tolerate political forces who describe themselves as "communists" or "socialists", but who have no other goal but to perpetuate capital after making themselves managers of its nationalisation, being able to divert our movement as a class. Now, one can read in the fourth point of the proposal of 20th April of the CONGRESS OF COUNCILS, that "The parties and workers movements, the left of the PS included, are invited to represent themselves through a delegate on the Provisional National Secretariat (pro-councils)". That is to say, amongst others, the social-democrats and the Stalinists.

It is naivety or deceit to believe that Soares or Cunhal can, in any way whatever, work for the success of a movement whose victory involves the destruction of their power. Therefore, this cosy possibility of the Stalinists and "liberal" bourgeois of the PS participating in the secretariat of the pro-council movement can only have one practical effect, if indeed they one day actually require to participate in it: that will be to kill in the egg, from within, the revolutionary possibilities of groups of workers who believed they ought to "invite" them.

It is ridiculous to think that the stalinists are able to participate in the council movement like a 'neutral' component, that will add to "numbers" without destroying the orientation. Inevitably, and if they are reduced to such a position they will do it for certain, the agents of the capitalist centralisation of the economy who are invested en masse in the independent workers associations, will by force, falsehood and their powerful display, subordinate the "soviets" to themselves or annihilate them. At the present hour, far from inviting Cunhal and Soares onto the secretariat of organisations which could have a decisive role in class struggle, RATHER IT IS EXTREMELY NECESSARY TO DENOUNCE THEM EVERYWHERE AS THE LEFT CRUTCH OF CAPITAL, THE AGENTS OF THE COUNTERREVOLUTION, THE ENEMIES OF THE PROLETARIAT, AND BLUNTLY EXPEL THEM FROM ALL THE WORKERS ASSEMBLIES, OR THEY WILL MAKE THEMSELVES ADVOCATES OF PASSIVITY WAITING TO BECOME TOMORROW, IF THE NEED ARISES, THE EXECUTIONERS OF THE COMMUNISTS WHO THOUGHT THEY COULD ACHIEVE SOME SORT OF "CLASS FRONT" WITH THEM. They are, and will remain, agents of state capital. The revolutionary workers must treat them as such. All other ways can only lead to the repetition of the massacre of the Spartacists in Germany by the controlling social-democrat "majorities" in the "councils" who were in effect only the "workers" emissaries to their ministers.

A final point, but not the least important one. It stands to reason that our criticism starts from a definition of what capital is, and from that which is its communist negation. That is the point of departure from which we must evaluate the revolutionary content of initiatives and groups.

In writing "socialist planning opposes itself to self-management under free competition and to State capitalism", (5th point of the Objectives of the Councils, approved at the Congress) you seem to perceive the dangers of the two crudest deceptions that capital can throw to the workers, like bones to gnaw at, the better to perpetuate its own existence: the "self-management" of atomised capital, and the nationalisation of our servitude. But your formulation remains hazy, and one can read many things into it -- of which the strongest are the least revolutionary ("self-management" a la Tito or one of his successors for example).

Capital is no more a matter of FORM OF PROPRIETORSHIP (individual or state) than a matter of the MODES OF MANAGEMENT (technocratic, "democratic", centralised or atomised); it is the SOCIAL RELATION in which, separated from the means of production, they see the products of their labour escape from them like their master (whether that master is personified by the individual boss or the capitalist agent). Capital is the process of dispossessing the producers of all that they produce, through the mechanism of the WAGES SYSTEM, the social relation which produces and reproduces, beyond the manufactured goods, the subjection of the wage-earners and the domination of the class of capitalist managers. TO SMASH CAPITAL MEANS TO SMASH THIS SOCIAL RELATION AND NOTHING ELSE. To be sure, that takes place through the destruction of the bourgeois state and all the means of political domination by the ruling class, and by the relentless assertion of the revolutionary class at all levels; but also it takes place by making all production SERVE THE NEEDS OF THE PROLETARIAT, the collective appropriation of all those products, production for use and not for market exchange. And our class cannot surrender to anyone the trouble of SOCIALISING the world, for it is by itself affecting this socialisation of the world that the proletariat can destroy itself as a slave class, and only in this way.

There is no other way for us to become at last the masters of a mode of production which has made of us pure and simply a raw material, and for us to be able to use our strength as men finally free to revolutionise the whole of our life to the infinite possibilities OF SOCIETY WITHOUT CLASSES. If you don't touch the wages system you can beautifully modify all its FORMS as much as you like, but all the old shit will not fail to reconstitute itself. And all your struggles will have only resulted in giving you new chains.

## REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS, SOLDIERS, SAILORS, COMRADES!

You must now understand that which disquiets us when we see much good revolutionary energy placed, in your country, at the service of "progressive" capitalist officers. The principal weakness of our class today lies **IN ITS OWN SELF**, and it is there that it must be cured.

The Council Movement, raising in Portugal untenable contradictions which are tearing apart our class, can play a decisive role in the coming period. Not only in your country, but on a worldscale. And not only today, but tomorrow. But it could also transform itself into a vulgar appendix of the bourgeois state.

Therefore we can never restate enough:

That communist workers must stretch all their forces to conserve for their councils their **CLASS INDEPENDENCE**, hunting out all the officers, all the stalinists, all the reformists and their doubles, under whatever mask they hide.

That rank and file soldiers and sailors must set up their own combat organisations, **INDEPENDENT OF and OPPOSED TO THE MILITARY HIERARCHY**.

That the occupied factories must be reconverted into means of production **WHICH THE PROLETARIAT NEED**.

That the distribution of products must be directly carried out by the producers, between the urban and the rural and the diverse factories without the accumulation of profit being tolerated.

That by seizing the means of production, of distribution, and in the mobilisation of the soldiers and sailors in liason with the soviet organisations of proletarian combat, that the means for the communist victory can be secured.

But also, **THAT** if the Councils can be instruments of our emancipation, **THESE MEANS, LIKE ALL MEANS, HAVE NO OTHER VALUE THAN THE USE WHICH IS MADE OF THEM**.

The revolutionary workers of our fraction, and more generally, all the workers of the world, can only hope that their class brothers in Portugal will know how to raise themselves to the level of the tests which the future reserves for them, and that by their valour and the radicalism of their initiatives, they will make all the powers of the planet tremble.

In this hope we address our revolutionary greeting to you:

Down with wage labour !  
Down with class society !  
Long live the communist revolution !

10 July 1975

The Organisation Committee of  
L'Union Ouvriere.

COBI notes and slogans:

"We have seen that the capitalist process of production is a historically determined form of the social process of production in general. The latter is as much a production process of material conditions of human life as a process taking place under specific historical and economic production relations, producing and reproducing these production relations themselves, and thereby also the bearers of this process, their material conditions of existence and their mutual relations, ie, their particular socio-economic form. For the aggregate of these relations, in which the agents of this production stand with respect to Nature and to one another, and in which they produce, is precisely society, considered from the standpoint of its economic structure. Like all its predecessors, the capitalist process of production proceeds under definite material conditions, which are, however, simultaneously the bearers of definite social relations entered into by individuals in the process of reproducing their life. Those conditions, like those relations, are on the one hand prerequisites, on the other hand results and creations of the capitalist process of production; they are produced and reproduced by it."

"... the capitalist mode of production, like any other, does not merely constantly reproduce the material product, but also the social and economic relations, the characteristic economic forms of its creation. Its result, therefore, appears just as constantly presupposed by it, as its presuppositions appear as its results. And it is this continual reproduction of the same relations which the individual capitalist anticipates as self-evident, as an indubitable fact. So long as the capitalist mode of production persists as such, a portion of the newly added labour continually resolves itself into wages, another into profit (interest and profit of enterprise), and a third into rent. In contracts between owners of the various agencies of production this is always assumed, and this assumption is correct, however much the relative proportions may fluctuate in individual cases. The definite form in which the parts of value confront each other is presupposed because it is continually reproduced, and it is continually reproduced because it is continually presupposed."

From: Capital Volume 3, pp. 818-9, and p.872 of 1971 English--language edition.

AGAINST DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOTISM, THE BEST POSSIBLE SHELL FOR CAPITALISM !

AGAINST THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF CAPITAL IN EVERY FORM !

FOR THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT !

FOR THE GLOBAL COMMUNIST SOCIETY WITHOUT CLASSES !

"Workers of the World Unite !  
And thus Multiply our Might".

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\* WHAT IS THE COMMUNIST ORGANISATION IN THE BRITISH ISLES? \*  
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1. COBI is a Marxist-Leninist collective, formed on 1st January, 1974, in secession from the British and Irish Communist Organisation, now become revisionist. Its purpose is to integrate Marxist-Leninist theory with the concrete conditions prevailing in the British Isles, and guided by this concrete development of Marxism-Leninism, to promote the development of communist politics among the working class. It aims, through its activities, to help bring about political and ideological conditions in which the formation of a new communist party will be a meaningful step in the development of communist politics as a link in the chain of proletarian internationalism.
  2. We take the natural economic unit of the British Isles as the area of our organisation and oppose any attempts by bourgeois or populist nationalism to fragment working class organisation within the above economic unit. We resolutely base ourselves on the proletariat of the whole British Isles without exception. As a European state develops we shall extend ourselves accordingly.
  3. In terms of the development and strength of its economic organisation, the working class of Britain is second to none in the capitalist world; its political and ideological development is, however, much less advanced. In particular it lacks its own political party. Without such a party, a real communist party, it will be unable to decisively defeat the capitalist class, build socialism and advance to communism.
  4. The history of the struggle to build such a party in the British Isles has been largely one of failure. The conspicuous exception to this was the Socialist Labour Party of Great Britain, whose emblem COBI has adopted and whose valuable experience we intend to assimilate.
  5. A major reason for this failure has been the inability of revolutionaries in the British Isles to make a complete break with capitalist ideology; their failure to break with the pragmatist outlook of the British capitalist class has led them to underestimate the importance of the Marxist-Leninist theory of scientific socialism. Without the guidance of this theory there can be no communist politics.
  6. For these reasons COBI takes as its immediate tasks: the application of communist theory to the conditions of the British Isles, and ideological struggles against opportunist distortions of communism, such as modern revisionism and Trotskyism.
  7. COBI demands the maximum ideological unity amongst its members. All members, in addition to engaging in practical work, must improve their understanding of scientific socialism and contribute to the ideological struggle. Nobody will be admitted to full membership of the organisation unless they have demonstrated their commitment to class struggle and their understanding of scientific socialism.
  8. To supplement the efforts of its full membership, COBI encourages a wider group of associate members to work in cooperation with it.
- For full elucidation of these premises see Proletarian No.1, and if you wish to know more about COBI contact:

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