

REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER #3

December 26, 1975

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1. Iberia & Angola

The sudden turn of events in Portugal and Angola requires a corresponding shift in the focus of our activity. All signs point to a cooling off of the situation in Portugal at least for the immediate future. It also appears that the tempo of the struggle in post-Franco Spain will be slower than anticipated. On the other hand, the civil war in Angola - the second phase of the Angolan revolution - is escalating sharply and has undoubtedly become the hot spot in the world class struggle. The comparison with Vietnam is being made by all commentators. While popular sentiment is nowhere near the level reached in the Vietnam war, and is not likely to become so, opposition to intervention is widespread and conditions are favorable for mobilizing support for the MPLA, especially in the Black communities, on campuses and in radical circles.

While Portugal and Spain continue to be very important in terms of propaganda, emphasis on the level of united front actions and mass propaganda projects (teach-ins, etc.) should now shift to Angola.

In our opinion there is room for campaigns on two levels: a) a very broad coalition around non-intervention. Only the MPLA can benefit from this. Theoretically such coalitions could include the SWP, Maoists, liberal Democrats, etc. as well as supporters of the MPLA. b) More advanced left-wing coalitions for support to the MPLA, on the slogan of "Victory to the MPLA".

In the Vietnam anti-war movement, two opposite errors were made. On the one side, the SWP insisted on limiting the entire movement to the lowest level, opposing all more radical actions as adventurist. On the other side, Maoists, and assorted primitive leftists insisted that every action had to be "multi-issue", "anti-imperialist", etc. In reality the two levels of action are complimentary and we can and should participate or even help to initiate both.

In Los Angeles a broad coalition is forming, including the ACLU, left wing democrats, peace groups, the CP, NAM, some Black militants, etc. We and the SWP were invited to the initial meeting and participated. There was some discussion and incipient disagreement over the basis of the coalition, some wanting to limit it to non-intervention, some pushing for support to MPLA. Tentative proposals were made for lobbying on the Tunney amendment, a mass educational forum or teach-in, newspaper advertising, leaflets, etc. Meanwhile, a meeting has been called in the Black community, and arrangements are being made for some kind of collaboration or merger of the two.

It will take another meeting or two to determine the political character of the coalition that emerges. The Black contingent may insist on a pro-MPLA line, in which

case the true liberals may break away and organize a separate committee. The SWP, with its line, would have to go with them. In the event the coalition as a whole decides to limit its basis to non-intervention, we would remain within it, while trying to initiate a left wing coalition to rally support for the MPLA. In any case, we will of course exercise our right to advance our own position of critical support to the MPLA and for the socialist revolution in Angola and southern Africa.

There is certain to be a greatly increased desire for information and analysis regarding Angola and southern Africa. All comrades should become knowledgeable on this subject, and all groups should conduct internal discussions followed by public forums. We should participate wherever possible, in debates or panels on this question.

In addition to Inprecor there is valuable information and a bibliography in "Africa in Struggle" - a theoretical magazine published three times a year by 4th Internationalists in England. We ran out of them, so we are sending a photocopy to each area. They can be ordered directly from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.

It is essential that we have a pamphlet which presents our full position on Angola. The center is working on such a pamphlet which will consist of an edited compilation from Inprecor, with a substantial introduction tackling the central political issues, criticizing the two dominant lines on the left - uncritical support to the MPLA and neutralism-, explaining the meaning of the concept "critical support", and setting forth the responsibilities of the American left.

All locals should report any developments to the center and send copies of leaflets etc. The center is exploring the possibility of having pamphlets on Portugal and Spain published by other locals.

Late development in Los Angeles - The meeting in the Black community was the largest ever gathering there in years. About 150 people attended, most of them Black. CP sympathizers dominated the meeting and pushed for a line of uncritical support for the MPLA.

Core and Pan-African groups opposed this line from the right, and some, including the Pasadena Information Center people, questioned the uncritical aspect. Core was intent on disrupting the meeting, so CP type leaders called the police, but Core left before they arrived. Finally a motion was passed calling another meeting, at which a pro-MPLA policy statement will be discussed and voted upon.

The Pasadena Information Center people who are the most advanced group, are planning to organize an independent committee based on critical support to MPLA that will join in united action with the other elements.

What's most important is the intense interest that's been aroused in the hitherto dormant ghetto here. Comrades should check into developments in the Black communities in their localities.

## 2. Literature & Sub-drive

Comrades, we now have only about four weeks (until approx. Jan. 22) to go on the sub-drive. We must have an intensified effort in this last period if we are to meet our goals. The drive should be our priority work for the time remaining. As comrades can see from the following list, the results so far, are very uneven. So get those subs in. Those areas that are falling behind in payment of their Inprecor bundles, must pay up immediately.

Area	Sub goal	To date	Bundle size	Owed - Bundle
Houston	8	6	15	0
Los Angeles	15	8	60	0
New York	10	0	25	0
Chicago	5	0	15	\$9.75
Baltimore-Wash	10	0	20	0

Area (cont.)	Sub goal	To date	Bundle size	Owed-Bundle
San Francisco	5	0	25	\$44.25
Iowa City	3	0	?	0
At large	4	0	-	-
Minneapolis-St. Paul	-	-	10	19.50
Total	60	14	160	\$73.50

### 3. News from the Locals

With the appended excerpts from a letter from comrade Bill B. of New York, all groups are accounted for. We are still waiting to hear from several members at large.

The letter intitaled by four comrades on the incident in Chicago is self-explanatory. All November and December dues should be paid by now so that our sustainer can be sent to our co-thinkers. Dues should be sent for the entire group even if not all collected. The center will do the same vis-a-vis our co-thinkers.

#### a) Excerpts of a letter from NY

We have set up a NY RMOC, with membership criteria, a newsletter (just beginning), and a committee structure (Iberian work, MEC, contacts, campus-more to be added?). I am the representative to the CC. We have nine members with the prospects of six or seven added from the old ranks. Also Charlie R. is coming to stay in NY from Buffalo. The possibilities for expansion in New Jersey are favorable.

As for tasks, we have begun Iberian work. We participated in a demo with SL, IS, RSL, etc. (we attempted to involve CP & SWP) against Spinola, at which I spoke. We hope to build a forum on Portugal in January. We are hampered by lack of Inprecors (for which we ordered a bundle from Europe-all info will be sent to you forthwith) and also a new collection of Inprecors articles on Portugal and or Spain and or Angola. We feel that this should be a national priority for RMOC.

We also work in a Portugal Education Workshop in the MEC. We have weekly meetings and last Sunday had a forum (at which Dan and I gave presentations). There is research being done as well as plans for film and slide programs and a newsletter. One very important development is the establishment of an ad-hoc press agency, Apoyo (?), with representatives from WBAI, Guardian, IS, "Seven Days", MEC, etc. It is linked with the FUR. They would distribute a compilation of Inprecors articles if we could provide it. We also hope to renew contacts with Portugal Information Center with whom Carl F. is now working.

Our work around the cutbacks is quite limited. The main response has been in CONY, while the state sector unions have had a fragmented, futile reaction. The student work especially with Black and Latino students, is dominated by the SWP, which has a purely linear view of political development - no transitional demands are added nor do they build properly at the base level, but rather capture student government leaders. The CP is ineffectual and SL and the Maoists are totally sectarian if not partly racist. We must develop a correct united front strategy for work with the SWP.

We have begun a pre-conference discussion. Originally we attempted a common program of readings (O'Connor, Braverman, Mandel) in order to work out a methodology, but have found this unwieldy. Now we will revise the order by examining concrete contributions first (we are to discuss your document on the Black question next week).

s/ Bill B., 12-18-75

b) Excerpts of a report from Chicago

Workshops at the November 15 teach-in mandated us to see if there was a basis for an ongoing coalition around Spain and Portugal (the coalition being a separate thing from the "Committee"). We called the coalition together and the meeting was attended by the CP, the Chicago Peace Council, the Revolutionary Socialists, the Spartacist League (uninvited), the New World Resource Center, URPE and several independents. Workers World Party missed the meeting due to an organizational foul-up on their part. The SL walked out of the meeting saying they could not work in an ongoing coalition of this type, a move which left no one in tears.

The Solidarity Committee was represented by Rich M., who hasn't joined us but agrees with our solidarity perspective. We have asked him to be co-chair of the committee along with an ex-professor named Geoff Fox. Fox was fired from the U of I for political reasons and hands up the Portuguese study group Mark and I are in. We see one of our prime tasks to convert the Solidarity committee into a real committee and not just a front group for the RMOC. (more on this later).

The coalition discussed the possibility of a rally around Spain and Portugal in late January or early February. It was projected as an indoor affair with films, perhaps some entertainment and of course speakers. Sort of an expanded, improved version of the teach-in.

We are preparing a packet containing the committee's newsletter, a copy each of our leaflets, the button, etc. with which we plan on approaching possible endorsers/sponsors for the Solidarity Committee. Now that we can list several things we've done and are planning to do, we are in a position to convert the committee into a viable formation. Hopefully, Frank F. can be of some aid in this process.

Several comrades from Chicago plan to go to the YSA convention in Milwaukee, perhaps one of the comrades from Iowa City will be able to go with us. We plan a low key intervention with a comradely request that the YSA address itself to solidarity work on Spain and Portugal.

The reports in the RMOC newsletter provide a stimulus in breaking out of our regionalism. We can be proud that our little current is the only American group doing consistent solidarity work around Portugal.

s/G

c) Statement of the four on the Chicago incident

On Sunday, November 30, 1975, four people entered the former office of the Internationalist Tendency of the SWP, using a key, and removed a Gestetner mimeograph machine, a number of pamphlets, and an additional amount of miscellaneous items relevant to the operation of the mimeo (stencils, etc.). This group included two members of the Chicago Red Circle and two non-affiliated comrades. All four had been members of the IT steering committee at the time of the April conference.

Since the repossession of Sunday last, three "individuals" from the New Faction have contacted the CRC, charged the comrades involved with "hooliganism, piracy, gross violations of the norms of the workers movement", assorted other epithets, and demanded that the mimeo, etc. be returned immediately. In addition, they stated their intention to circulate their own statement on the "facts" of the case to the memberships of the NF and certain individuals who they believe can prevail upon the four to return the mimeo unconditionally.

Therefore, the four comrades so charged feel it important to issue a statement, outlining the facts behind the operation as well as their views on the methods employed.

By way of preliminary explanation, it is essential that a false debate not be introduced. The words "steal", "piracy", and "theft" have been adduced by the NF leaders

to imply that materials acquired by the NF after the April conference were among the those taken from the office. However, all the materials in question had been paid for by the Internationalist Tendency before the NF was declared in April. (This is of course in the figurative sense, because the stencils taken were recent purchases, but were bought as replacements for those extant at the time of the split.)

For the four involved the issue can be reduced to two problems: (1) Does the NF have an unquestionable claim to the materials taken, that is, were the materials actually "stolen" from the NF, or do the materials more properly belong somewhere else? (2) why were these methods used in retrieving the materials?

It is useful here to recall some pertinent information about the April 1975 conference at which the "IT (New Faction)" was declared. At that conference, there were three caucuses formed around different political perspectives: the PC majority, the PC minority, and those supporting an amended Alec/Christopher resolution. (PC maj., PC min., and A/C respectively) The vote on these resolutions was 10 for the PC maj., 4 for the PC min., and 6 for the A/C. This gave the PC maj. a plurality, not a majority of the officially recognized delegates at the conference. (the term "officially recognized delegates" is used here because had the members of the outside groups been allowed decisive delegated vote, a policy which was changed only at the last minute at the insistence of the PC maj., the perspectives vote most likely would have been substantially altered to the disadvantage of the PC maj.)

The next agenda point was on membership, under which two resolutions were introduced. The PC maj. caucus resolution would have excluded supporters of the A/C from the IT and would have prevented the recruitment of the independent groups except as individuals, after first renouncing their support for the A/C resolution. The counter-resolution called for the immediate recruitment of the outside groups by the IT and provided that exclusion from the IT would be based upon violations of the policy of reintegration as outlined in the PC maj. resolution. The vote was 10 for each, putting the IT at an organizational impasse.

At this point the PC maj. adjourned to caucus to discuss their response to the 10-10 vote. Realizing the adamancy of the PC maj. on the question of recruitment of the outside groups, the combined PC min.-A/C caucus then submitted a compromise proposal which would defer recruitment of the outside groups but would prevent a purge of the then present members of the IT who supported the A/C resolution. This proposal was rejected by the PC maj. caucus and minutes later the conference was convened to hear the declaration of the NF.

The declaration of faction was necessitated, the reporter stated, because the PC maj. was unable to achieve a majority on the organizational problem of the tendency. He further explained that while the NF considered itself to be the continuity of the IT politically, the declaration represented a split from the IT organizationally.

To sum up, the genesis of the NF lies in a frustrated attempt by the PC maj. to achieve a clear majority on the political resolution or even a plurality on the organizational dispute. By their own admission, the formation of the NF represented a distinct organizational discontinuity with the IT as it existed at the beginning of the April conference. Yet this NF, without prior consultation, "under false pretenses", unilaterally appropriated (or stole, if ~~one~~ prefers Barzman's vernacular crudity).

" - a Gestetner mimeograph machine bought by the IT in September 1973, worth approximately 450 dollars (actually in Sept. 1973 it was worth exactly \$414.75, a figure quote directly to the three individuals referred to above. One can only speculate as to why the figure was inflated),

-mimeographing supplies (paper, ink, stencils) worth about 25 dollars (here too the figure seems inflated, but it is alie that there was any ink taken from the office).

-office equipment including two heavy staple guns worth about 50 dollars (inflated again).

-books and pamphlets worth about 100 dollars." (Letter from John Barzman to Mark Lobato, Dec. 8, 1975)

In addition the NF took from the IT all the monies in its account, and other office supplies such as a desk, typewriter, files, back documents, etc., etc. These materials had been collectively paid for by the IT as it existed before the split of the NF. This appropriation was mad, it will be recalled, without prior consultation with a single person not in the NF. All this is conveniently "forgotten" by Barzman in his letter to M. Lobato.

The argument that in a political organization, a plurality assumes the role of a majority, hence the NF was entitled to the materials of the former IT, are not compelling here for two reasons. First, on the decisive question involved, the organizational one, the PC maj. had not received a plurality. Second, the IT was not a political organization, but a tendency, the significance of which should be unnecessary to explain to the NF or comrade Barzman, given his particular vehemence on precisely this point at the conference.

Thus, in the authors minds, the above paragraphs establish with certainty that any claim to exclusivity made by the NF over the materials is a false one. However, stating this merely poses the question as to where the legitimate claims lie. It is not the province of this statement to decide; indeed, just as it was unfounded for the NF to appropriate for its exclusive use the money, mimeo, etc., so too would it be presumptuous for four comrades to do the same, without the authority of the majority of the former IT. The decision rests, then, with those comrades who constituted the IT at the time of the April conference. The proposal of the four on how to make this decision is based upon the above conception of claim, and has a bearing on the answer to the second problem raised, namely, what was the nature of the action itself.

To explain the action as an act of piracy is infinitely wrong because (1) it assumes that the supplies were the exclusive property of the NF, which were then taken from them, a premise shown to be erroneous, and (2) it assumes that the comrades had taken the supplies for their exclusive use, or the exclusive use of the CRC, a premise equally without foundation.

Two reasons explain the methods and timing of the action. The first is that the CRC can make use of not only the mimeo, but also the various pamphlets for its ongoing political work. This is in direct contrast to the NF, which has explicit policy of having "no public existence other than participation in the activities of the SWP", a policy which precludes selling INPRECOR or IMG pamphlets, and proscribes all but a very limited use of the mimeograph (i.e., for the irregularly produced newsletter). The pamphlets in the old office had been there since before the April conference, and no doubt would still be there today. As a simply practical matter, the action was seen as a solution superior to requesting permission for every use of the mimeo, or receiving prior sanction for the distribution of FI publications, a procedure which may well have not been approved by the NF.

The second reason concerns the precipitous nature of the action, explains why it was not undertaken for eight months, and why it was carried out secretly. The possibility of reunification of at least a majority of the NF with those comrades expelled from the IT in April, has only recently, to the thinking of the four, been completely ruled out. The quantitative steps towards disintegration have finally assumed qualitative dimensions. However, because this has come about only recently, the four had not even considered an action of this type. It would be obviated if a reunification took place. But more importantly, to explain the secretive nature of the action, the four had heard from a member of the NF that Lakhdar, as an act of good faith for the reintegration "fight", had entertained the idea of donating the mimeo and supplies to the SWP. This, it must be stated, was only rumor, and was never confirmed by Lakhdar himself. However, given the political, not to say emotional instability which comrade



Lakhdar has exhibited in the past, and given the relative ease with which the NF under his leadership initially appropriated the money and supplies of the IT, the four felt it necessary that no chances be taken. The project was undertaken to insure that the entire former IT would be consulted about the claims on the supplies, a consultation which was not guaranteed had the NF been confronted with a challenge to its claims before the fact.

Since the operation, the materials have been stored with the CRC. When contacted by the NF, the CRC, with the support of the two non-affiliated comrades who took part in the action, made the following proposal to the NF representatives, which they rejected:

1. That the mimeograph and supplies will be returned to the old office immediately upon receipt of a statement, signed by three leadership comrades of the NF, to the effect that (a) the CRC will have access to the mimeo any time the CRC deems it necessary, and (b) that these leaders will agree to participate in and respect the authority of the referendum referred to above.

2. That this referendum be held amongst the members of the former IT and the members of the outside groups, to decide whether the NF, RMOC, or some other party should maintain possession of the Materials.

3. That the qualifications for the referendum be as follows: for former official members of the IT, payment of assessment for the April conference; for the outside groups, membership in good standing with their respective organizations at the time of the April conference. That anyone meeting the above qualifications be excluded if he or she now belongs to or is a supporter of an opponent organization of the Fourth International.

4. That this referendum be by secret ballot, to be supervised by a parity commission composed of 1 NF, 1 RMOC, 1 non-affiliated.

5. That upon validation of the results, the mandate of the referendum be accepted as final by all concerned.

This proposal can best determine the mandate of the majority of the former IT, the determination of which had not before been attempted.

s/ HG, ML, GM, RM - December 11, 1975

# BERIAN FLAME

THE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE  
WITH SPAIN AND PORTUGAL



P.O. BOX 4591  
CHICAGO 60680

ORGANIZE NOW TO STOP CIA-NATO INTERVENTION

At the beginning of the 1970's as Nixon was "Vietnamizing" the Indochina war, U.S. imperialism, with some success, was consolidating its stranglehold on other powder kegs in Latin America and the Mideast. But then, with Ford/Kissinger feeling confident, the unexpected happened--lightning struck twice. After a half century of corporatist rule, the Portuguese workers poured through the crack opened up by the April 25, 1974 coup. In its wake, the African liberation movements of FRELIMO, PAIGC and MPLA have won independence from Portuguese colonial rule. Then came the dramatic and long awaited thunderclap of victory in Vietnam.

But U.S. imperialism is not idle. Tested methods from Chile, Vietnam and decades of counter-revolution are being applied in Portugal today. This consists of: 1. a plan of economic destabilization and boycott, 2. hundreds of millions of dollars sent to right wing parties, 3. tours of northern Portugal by deputy director of the CIA, Vernon Walters and ambassador Frank Carlucci, who was active in establishing the Brazilian dictatorship. 4. Former CIA agent Philip Agee has revealed a large CIA-military force operating in Portugal. This gang has assisted the fascist ELP based in Spain.

Even if the U.S. government was not so heavily involved, we feel that support to the just struggles of the Portuguese and Spanish workers and poor peasants to end poverty, misery and exploitation would be reason enough for the existence of a Solidarity Committee with Spain and Portugal. As it is, "our" government has placed itself at the head of international reaction. Everywhere that the oppressed fight for their interests they confront their own rulers as well as the red, white and blue bo jack. This is why we call on all democrats, anti-imperialists and those who will not forget three decades of imperialist slaughter in Vietnam, to take up their banners anew inscribed with the blood of Santiago..... Portugal Will Not Be the Chile of Europe!

**FRANCO DIES (AT LAST) -- FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS**

Franco's death sounds the deathknell of fascism in Spain. When the executions of the Basques were announced all of Euzkadi rallied to their defense. On Sept. 11 300,000 went on general strike. In the following days 100,000 demonstrated in Paris, in Rome hundreds of soldiers led 30,000. Meanwhile Kissinger was putting the final touches on agreements guaranteeing Spain as an arsenal of the U.S..

At Franco's funeral Rockefeller stood next to Pinochet, the butcher of Chile. The U.S. advised Juan Carlos to go slow in carrying out reforms. So far he's taken this advice, for example his "general amnesty" will free only 1/5 of the political prisoners. Only an international solidarity movement will bring about a real total amnesty. Our cry must be, "Free All Political Prisoners Now"

Labor Donated



## Solidarity Activities and Tours Held

A teach-in and day of solidarity with the struggles of the people of Spain, Portugal and Angola was held in Chicago on Nov. 12. About 125 people attended; discussion was constructive with an awareness of the need to respect to the seriousness of the situation. It was considered a good start in building a solidarity movement. The program included speakers from: the Solidarity Comm. with Spain and Portugal, the Chicago Comm. for the Liberation of Angola, Mozambique and Guine-Bissau, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the Communist Part and Workers World Party. This was followed by a discussion period and workshops.

In the past few months two Portuguese revolutionaries have spoken in Chicago. Antonio Silva of the PRP addressed a meeting organized by the IS. In November the Solidarity Committee organized several meetings for Joao de Sousa a member of the MES. The de Sousa tour was sponsored by the Portuguese Information Center of New York.

- \_\_\_\_\_ I want more information  
\_\_\_\_\_ I want to help organize  
\_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is a contribution

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