

# imprecor

international press correspondence

fortnightly, N 29, June 19, 1975

\$ .75, £ .30

**SPAIN**



*the death agony  
of francoism*



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INPRECOR 76 rue Antoine Dansaert Brussels-1000 Belgium  
INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORRESPONDENCE  
Fortnightly information organ of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International  
published in English, French, Spanish, and German.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of INPRECOR.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: 1 year (25 issues) — US\$17; Can\$17; £7  
AIR MAIL TO U.S. & Canada: \$24. TO AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND: US\$30.  
SPECIAL SIX-ISSUE AIR MAIL INTRODUCTORY SUB: U.S. & Canada \$5.50;  
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# *the death agony of francoism*

The Francoist state of exception imposed over Euzkadi (the Basque country) has been unable to halt the advance of the mass movement there. In spite of the hundreds of arrests, the torture, the harassment, the virtual police-military occupation, and the terrorist attacks of the far-right parallel police gangs, tens of thousands of workers followed the call issued by the workers commissions, far-left groups, and other political organizations and went on strike June 11. At this point, information on the general strike is still fragmentary. But initial reports indicate that more than 50,000 were on strike in the province of Guipúzcoa and more than 20,000 in Vizcaya (Biscay). In some industrial cities, like Eibar in Guipúzcoa, the strike was almost total. General assemblies were held in many factories.

The strike came six days after the frame-up trial against Ignacio Garmendia and four of his comrades, Basque militants the Francoist regime had been planning to murder. The prosecutor had demanded the death penalty against Garmendia. But in the context of the rise of the mass movement, one of whose major demands has been that Garmendia and his comrades be freed, the dictatorship's court apparently thought better of it. On June 6 the military commander's office in Burgos, where the trial was held, announced that Garmendia had been sentenced to twenty-three years in prison; four others were sentenced to terms ranging from six to twenty-three years. That in itself is an initial victory. The dictatorship wanted Garmendia dead; the mass movement stayed the hand of the executioner.

But the state of exception is still in force. New frame-up trials are planned, notably against Eva Forest and Antonio Durán, against whom the dictatorship has also asked for the death penalty. Those trials, together with the state of exception, are a political test of strength between the dictatorship and the mass movement. If the terror now being inflicted on Euzkadi continues to fail to crush the mass movement and if the June 11 general strike acts as a springboard for a new leap forward for the mass movement, the Spanish bourgeois-

ie may well set its "succession" operation in motion, replacing the dictator in an attempt to divert and channel the mass movement. But the crisis of the regime and of Spanish capitalism is so deep that it can be said with certainty that any attempt to preserve Francoism without Franco or to halt the revolutionary movement in the Spanish state by granting a few concessions is doomed to failure. The succession operation will only give the mass movement yet another impetus.

In this context, organizing international solidarity with the revolutionary movement in the Spanish state is a primary task for the international workers movement, and especially for its vanguard. The outbreak of the new revolution in the Spanish state, particularly in combination with the ripening pre-revolutionary situation in Portugal, will have deep repercussions throughout capitalist Europe and even beyond.

In this issue of INPRECOR we are publishing three texts on the revolutionary movement in the Spanish state. The first is the appeal issued by the Euzkadi Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions calling for the June 11 general strike. The second, a resolution of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, analyzes the crisis of Francoism and Spanish capitalism and presents the program of the Fourth International in Spain. The third is a joint appeal calling for a boycott of the fake "trade-union elections" organized by the dictatorship. It was issued by the comrades of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria/Euzkadi to Askatasuna-VI (Revolutionary Communist League/Basque Nation and Freedom-VI) and the Liga Comunista (Communist League), sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International in the territory of the Spanish state.

Coming issues of INPRECOR will report further information on the general strike of June 11 and on the development of the struggle to bring down the Francoist dictatorship, opening salvo of the third Spanish revolution of this century.

June 15, 1975

# APPEAL FOR THE JUNE 11

The manifesto below was drafted by the Euzkadi Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions. This coordinating body was set up on April 20 on the basis of the already existing provincial coordinating bodies of the workers commissions in Navarra and Guipuzcoa. The formation of the Euzkadi Coordinating Committee is the result of a long process in which the call for the general strike of December 11, 1974, was a decisive turning point.

The Stalinists tried to obstruct this unification and coordination of the workers commissions; for example, the CP-led Comision Obrera Nacional de Euzkadi (CONE — National Workers Commission of Euzkadi) did not help in the process of unification.

Nevertheless, the Euzkadi Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions is waging a correct political battle to unify all the workers commissions with no exclusion in order to assure that this body of centralization will function democratically. This process of centralization, of coordination of the bodies of self-organization, is of the highest importance in unifying

These are serious days for the workers and people's movement. The fascist talons are sunk deep into our people. The provinces of Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya are living under detested fascist barbarism. No methods have been spared in savagely repressing anti-fascist militants: more than 2,500 of them have been taken to police stations and many are still being held; they have been subjected to all forms of harassment, bad treatment, and torture. Some have had to be taken to the hospital in serious condition, for example Father Tasio Erquiza, whose life is in danger.

The repression extends to all the people. The streets have been invaded by armed fascist goons who, protected by official police vehicles, are imposing a reign of terror, firing machine guns and planting bombs in many places. The police and the Civil Guard are absolute masters in the two provinces: They control all the traffic arteries; patrols of special brigades march through the streets; entire neighborhoods have been surrounded and searched, house by house; the cafés are checked systematically; passersby are brutally searched and asked to produce their identity papers in a similar manner; those who have no papers on them are arrested (and since the police stations and prisons are overflowing, they are put in sports stadiums, as in Bilbao). The murders, like those of Marquiegui, the Gernika couple, and Luís Arriola in Ondarroa, prove that all possible means are being used to spread terror throughout the population.

In addition, in Navarra there are more and more cases of the most combative comrades being fired, of the imprisonment and torture of workers in the police stations, and of fines. Lockouts are taking

on alarming dimensions; they have already occurred at Authi, Mas, and many auxiliary companies; they are threatened at Matesa, Modrego, Grafinasa, and Nadeco, thus creating anxiety and uncertainty in thousands of working-class households.

Such are the main lines of the tragic situation that has been created in our provinces.

This reality, with which we live every day, makes clear what are the aims of the policy of terror. The fascists hope with this brutal aggression to stamp out one of the major centers of resistance and, if possible, to create a testing ground for methods that can later be extended to other provinces and even throughout the country.

They think that the example set on December 11, 1974, by the working class and people of Euzkadi will not spread throughout the working class and people of all Spain.

They think they can exterminate all forms of working-class and popular organization — and parties — and terrorize the population.

With the state of exception they think they can quickly clean things up, sow terror, and thus ward off a united and combative, firm and determined response by all the people to the farce trial and murder that is being planned for Garmendia, Otae-gui, Arruabarrena, Genoveva Forest, and Durán.

Since they are trying to conceal all this through all possible means, declaring any sort of information "top secret," since so many fake democratic

# GENERAL STRIKE

all the present battles and directing them toward the fundamental aim of overthrowing the dictatorship.

Our comrades of the LCR/ETA-VI (Liga Comunista Revolucionario/Euzkadi ta Askatasuna-VI — Revolutionary Communist League/Basque Nation and Freedom-VI) have widely distributed this manifesto, especially in Catalonia, explaining:

"The LCR/ETA-VI is reproducing and distributing the manifesto of the Euzkadi Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions as a supplementary contribution to the preparation of the June 11 campaign of struggle and calls upon the workers commissions, all political organizations, and all mass structures to rally in Catalonia to wage a struggle in solidarity with Euzkadi.

"Down with the state of exception! Catalonia and Euzkadi, same fight against the murderous dictatorship!"

spokesmen are standing silent before this bestiality, and since the combination of political "opening" and stepped up repression is clearly being utilized, it is more than ever necessary to denounce this situation, to denounce the swine that are murdering our comrades at the urging of big capital.

In these difficult times, the real defenders of the interests and democratic aspirations of the people are coming forward for all the people to see. It is for this reason that there must be no delay in our denunciations in assemblies, our actions in street demonstrations, and all our other forms of protest. The working class and the people of Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya, like those of Navarra, Alava, and the rest of Spain will not permit it.

The hatred that the people feel today for all the police who have been loosed like maniacs with the sole aim of crushing the popular organizations by murdering at will must be transformed into a broad response of all the workers. We must offer this response in order to show the regime and its government that they cannot play with us, that they cannot shut our mouths so easily, that the workers and people of Euzkadi refuse to live even one more day under the state of exception.

The workers commissions and the other popular organizations of Guipúzcoa, as well as the political parties, have chosen June 11 as the day for all the workers and all the people to rise up with a single fist against the state of exception.

Comrades, the Euzkadi Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions issues this call to the whole

working class of Euzkadi to forge by our mobilization and action the unity in struggle of all the people:

FOR THE IMMEDIATE LIFTING OF THE STATE OF EXCEPTION!

AGAINST THE ATTEMPT TO MURDER GARMENDIA AND OTAEGUI!

FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE RIGHT TO WORK!  
AGAINST LOCKOUTS!

Let us begin now to hold assemblies in our factories to prepare the responses that we must offer in order to make that day the culmination of this fight.

DOWN WITH THE STATE OF EXCEPTION!

AGAINST THE HIGH COST OF LIVING, WAGE FREEZES, LAYOFFS, AND LOCKOUTS!

DISSOLUTION OF THE CIVIL GUARD, THE ARMED POLICE, THE POLITICAL-SOCIAL POLICE BRIGADE, AND OTHER FASCIST GANGS!

PUNISH THE ASSASSINS AND HANGMEN OF THE PEOPLE!

FREE THE POLITICAL PRISONERS! RETURN OF THE EXILES! AMNESTY!

NO DEATH PENALTY AGAINST GARMENDIA AND OTAEGUI!

JUNE 11: ALL UNITED AGAINST THE STATE OF EXCEPTION!  
ALL UNITED AGAINST FASCIST TERRORISM!  
ALL UNITED FOR FREEDOM!

## Resolution of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International



The Francoist regime has entered its death agony. Its structures are cracking and breaking one after the other under the pressure of an ever more impetuous mass movement. While the owning classes are becoming increasingly divided and paralyzed in their attempts to decide on a response in face of the growing discontent and anger of all the toiling layers, the proletariat is making striking progress toward the generalization, unification, and politicization of its struggles and toward an ever more direct confrontation with the dictatorship and its repressive organs. The days of the Franco dictatorship are numbered; the hour of the new Spanish revolution draws near.

A new and more advanced stage has been attained in the rise of the mass movement since November 1974. This rise has been accelerating since the outbreak of the powerful strikes and demonstrations

against the death penalty pronounced against the militants of the ETA by the war council of Burgos. In a series of impressive general strikes in solidarity with these militants, the proletariat living under the Spanish state has become conscious of its strength and has expressed a level of class consciousness higher than any seen since its defeat in the civil war.

General strikes such as those in Pamplona, Tolosa, Asturia, and Galicia have developed in support of sectors of the working class hit hard by the repression of employers and Francoism, by sackings, layoffs, and arrests. But most impressive of all was incontestably the general strike in the Basque country on December 11, 1974, in response to the appeal of the workers commissions, during which 25,000 workers mobilized for a platform of demands that included, in addition to immediate demands,

the demand for the release of political prisoners and the dissolution of the repressive corps. This general strike was preceded, on December 2 and 3, by the strike of 30,000 workers in the Basque province of Guipúzcoa in solidarity with the hunger strike of political prisoners. These acts of political class solidarity, unprecedented in the recent history of workers struggles in Europe, clearly express the maturity that has been attained by the prerevolutionary situation in Spain.

In all of these locally or regionally generalized struggles certain common features emerge. Forms of workers' self-organization (workers commissions, general assemblies, elected negotiating committees) are proliferating, and the highest form, that of elected strike committees, has begun to spread in a significant number of struggles (Pamplona, SEAT/Barcelona, Valladolid). Self-organization is giving an impetus to initiatives toward centralization. During the Pamplona general strike a struggle committee was formed including both the elected committees of several factories and the workers commissions of others, with the presence of representatives of student and neighborhood organizations. In Barcelona a united coordinating body of the workers commissions is already functioning; in the Basque country this objective is on the way to realization. In Madrid, Galicia, and Asturias significant efforts at coordination are under way. In Valladolid a central strike committee in construction was set up during the April 1975 strike; efforts to coordinate with the strike of the workers at the FASA/Renault factory were sketched out. The unification of all the workers commissions of the Spanish state, going beyond the insufficient framework of the present national coordination only of the forces controlled by the CP faction, is becoming increasingly possible. It is broadly felt as an urgent necessity by the workers themselves.

The workers' struggles are largely going beyond the stage of a fight solely for immediate demands. Alongside entirely justified immediate economic demands such as equal wage increases for all, a minimum salary of 800 pesetas a day (about US\$16), a halt to layoffs, and the struggle against the high cost of living, transitional demands are being raised, such as the sliding scale of wages, opening of the bosses' books, and certain demands for workers control, as well as democratic demands: release of the political prisoners; the right to strike; trade-union freedoms; freedom of association, assembly, demonstration, and the press; dissolution of the repressive bodies of the dictatorship. Some of these democratic demands, above all that of the dissolution of the repressive bodies, acquire an objectively anticapitalist dynamic in the context of the Francoist dictatorship. And in their entirety, united with the other demands and forms of struggle that have

emerged, they can only contribute to accelerating the challenging of the bourgeois regime, which needs the dictatorship to maintain its domination over the workers.

In the course of the fight for the entirety of these demands striking workers learn the necessity of confronting the Francoist repressive forces and of taking the measures of self-defense that are indispensable to this aim. The defense of demonstrations and contingents; the protection of the commissions against arrest; the attempts to rescue from their executioners comrades arrested during demonstrations; the preparation, tomorrow, for a general assault on the prisons at the first sign of the collapse of the dictatorship — a broad workers vanguard has become conscious of all these points and is beginning to act on the basis of this consciousness.

This tumultuous extension of workers' struggles is stimulating and accentuating the rise of struggles of a whole number of popular layers, struggles that tend to converge with those of the proletariat. Particularly noteworthy are the housewives boycott movement against the rise of prices that has just occurred in several areas of the Spanish state; the mobilizations of small shopkeepers and peasants; the strike of doctors and hospital employees; the general strike of teachers on January 20, 1975; the rise of the women's liberation movement and the new rise of the student movement.

In these areas as well, a powerful pressure for unity is emerging. Spontaneously, the mass movement is making efforts to coordinate and centralize its battles through united and representative organs, which at the neighborhood or local level, in the big industrial centers and even on the scale of whole regions, assemble all those mass energies released by the rise of the current movement. The task of revolutionary Marxists consists of supporting and strengthening all these efforts so as to stimulate the maturation of the broadest organs of mass self-organization, in order that the unification of all these struggles may concentrate their energies on a central aim: the fall of the dictatorship, the shaking of the capitalist system, and the beginning of the Spanish revolution.

## THE DECAY OF THE DICTATORSHIP

The Spanish owning classes are confronting the final phase of the death agony of Francoism in a state of the deepest division and disarray, which goes hand in hand with a growing paralysis. The Spanish bourgeoisie is virtually unanimous in its conviction that the maintenance of the dictatorship in its present form does a disservice to its class interests and

no longer has any effectiveness even from the pure standpoint of repression. But it is deeply divided on the methods and objectives of modifying or replacing the dictatorship.

Under the impact of the post-war "long boom" of the imperialist economy, capitalist Spain has undergone profound changes that render the Francoist dictatorship a totally inadequate system for serving the economic interests of Spanish big capital or for assuring its class domination in face of the rise of the mass movement. The fascistic or fascist far right, the only force interested in maintaining the structures of the dictatorship after the disappearance of the dictator, has no social base of any solidity in any class or layer of Spanish society. It could almost be said that the only point of agreement among the Spanish bourgeoisie is that Francoism in its present form is no longer useful.

International capital is in turn exerting pressure in the same direction. The beginning of the Portuguese revolution accentuates the necessity for American imperialism to expand its bases in Spain or to substitute Spanish bases for Portuguese NATO bases. The international economic recession, which threatens to stifle the expansion of the Spanish economy, increases the entire European bourgeoisie's interest in integrating Spain into the Common Market, even though in the immediate sense the recession is increasing the economic obstacles to such an integration (1974 Spanish balance of payments deficit of more than \$3,000 million; growing difficulties in the export of agricultural products; uncompetitiveness of industrial products, etc.). But these political operations are difficult to carry to fulfillment as long as the Spanish government that would take part in them retains the stigma of a dictatorship that is universally hated for its acts of bloody repression and its denial of even the most elementary democratic rights to the toiling masses.

Likewise, the experience of the Portuguese revolution teaches the Spanish bourgeoisie that to maintain a dictatorship beyond a certain point can only entail negative results for capital without offering any appreciable advantages. The Francoist dictatorship is no longer capable of atomizing the working class and the workers movement. The workers are organizing themselves into various groupings and institutions that tomorrow will come to the surface as powerful mass movements, and even as unifying bodies of the soviet type. But the survival of the senile dictatorship prevents the bourgeoisie from organizing in a similar way, retards the reconstitution of its political parties, and cuts it off from any possibility of acquiring a mass base, however unstable, as is the case in Portugal today.

But while the bourgeoisie is almost unanimous in

its desire to put an end to Francoism in its present form, it remains deeply divided over the question of what kind of political regime to substitute for the Francoist regime.

The bourgeoisie is perfectly conscious of the explosive nature of the contradictions tearing the capitalist society of the Spanish state. The bourgeoisie knows that in spite of the progress of industrialization, social contradictions and regional differences are more pronounced than in any other imperialist country. According to official statistics, 1.22% of Spanish households account for a greater share of the national income than 52.6% of households. Per capita income among the five poorest provinces (Orense, Almería, Granada, Cáceres, and Málaga) is barely 10% of per capita income in the richest provinces. The bourgeoisie knows the temper, class consciousness, and combativity of the proletariat of Spain. It knows that the agrarian question is explosive in the South and the West. It is aware of the no less explosive character of the national question, especially in Euzkadi (the Basque country). It is following with anxiety the relative decline of control by the traditional organizations, the CP and the PSOE, over the working class, which allows little credibility for the project of reestablishing a bourgeois democracy in which the reformist and neoreformist leaderships would be capable of channeling the struggles of the masses into paths compatible with the maintenance and consolidation of capitalist rule by means of their policy of class collaboration and collaboration with the government.

The conclusions that can be drawn from the Portuguese experience can only confirm these fears. The project of changing the Portuguese dictatorship "coldly" has manifestly failed. And this project had a much greater chance of succeeding than such a project would have in Spain (because of the primacy of the question of ending the colonial war, in relation to which the fall of the dictatorship was able to satisfy the masses; moreover, the degree of combativity, consciousness, experience, and politicization of the proletariat was from the outset lower in Portugal than in Spain). After barely six months of preparatory rise, the mass movement in Portugal has taken such a tumultuous turn that it can be said that the Portuguese revolution has begun. In the event of a change of regime in Spain, it would not take six months for a spectacle even more disquieting for the bourgeoisie than the one that is presently unfolding in Portugal to develop.

This is why, out of fear of the proletariat and its revolutionary potential, the Spanish bourgeoisie is not prepared to commit itself to the road of "revolution from above" as the CP and its allies are begging it to do. All the guarantees that the reformists and the neoreformists are prepared to offer are in-



sufficient to alter this distrust, which is born of a sure class instinct. No "liberal" wing, however insubstantial, has come out of the Spanish bourgeoisie to collaborate with the CP and the SP before the fall of the dictatorship any more than it did in 1936. Like the popular front of that time, the Junta Democratica of today is reduced to seeking out the good graces of the shadow of the bourgeoisie, and not of any real part of it.

Under these conditions, the various "liberalization" projects worked out within or on the fringes of the dictatorship are simply farces. While preserving the essential characteristics of the dictatorship, they in no way halt its decomposition. By manifesting the bourgeoisie's incapacity for self-reform, they spur on the rise of the revolutionary mass movement.

In face of the extreme gravity of the present situation, the bourgeoisie has placed its hopes on a political solution whose function is to ward off the final assault of the mass movement by means of a "reform" of the dictatorship based on the accession of Juan Carlos to the post of chief of state, perhaps even before the death of the dictator. This political operation is condemned to failure from the outset. In fact, the minimal concessions to the mass movement that are an integral part of this project, far from slowing down the struggles, will give them an additional impetus that will definitively destroy any form of continuity of the regime.

In this sense, it is especially significant that during the prologue to this operation, which is what we are now witnessing, repression is being intensified, both by the police (the state of emergency in Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya) and by the employers, who are systematically refusing to negotiate with the workers commissions and the bodies of self-representation of the masses and are attempting to impose the Francoist "vertical unions" as the only "valid interlocutors" during struggles. It is equally significant that this intensified repression is proving absolutely incapable of preventing the upsurge of strikes and their generalization and is even encouraging their radicalization and politicization.

The Spanish bourgeoisie thus finds itself in a state of growing political paralysis of which the best symbolic expression is the Arias government, the weakest cabinet the dictatorship has had since its establishment. Lacking any authority, deeply divided, subject to successive "ministerial" crises, it clearly has all the characteristics of a "fin de règne" if not a "fin de régime." In the recent period top circles in the ministries, the church, and the professional organizations — the traditional bases of support for the dictatorship — have all in their turn been affected by the tide of agitation

and demands, and this is sharpening the aspects of the decay of the dictatorship.

Under these conditions the army alone is the sole and last real base of the dictatorship. But at the same time it is the only solid instrument for the defense and maintenance of the capitalist system in Spain. Out of this fact flows yet another profound contradiction that is racking the Francoist dictatorship.

The deep political divisions running through the Spanish bourgeoisie today and the profound class polarization that characterizes Spanish society cannot but have equally deep effects within the Spanish army itself. A clear differentiation is emerging between one wing that is linked to the far right and prepared to assume the political and repressive responsibilities necessary to maintain the dictatorship and a "professional" (technocratic) wing linked to the projects of "reforming Francoism," which does not desire to dirty its hands with lowly police business and is inclined to support both a change in the regime and, in general, the orientation that big capital would adopt in each case. This division penetrates the rank and file soldiers, intermingling with all the antidictatorial and anti-capitalist sentiments that are spreading among the popular layers of the Spanish state.

Because of this, using the army in a "preventive coup" would threaten to blow up its unity. But this unity is the last trump card of a bourgeoisie that has its back to the wall politically. It is therefore less and less likely that there will be such a coup in an effort to halt the decomposition of the dictatorship. Rather, the continuation of this decomposition until a new outbreak of the political, social, and economic crisis occasions its collapse appears to be the most likely variant.

## REFORMIST OR REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY

For twenty years now the Spanish CP and its various allies have obstinately pursued the strategy of putting pressure on the bourgeoisie (the "peaceful general strike") and of offering big capital ever more sweeping guarantees of class collaboration and respect for bourgeois order in an effort to win the replacement of the dictatorship by a bourgeois-democratic regime. The formation of the Junta Democratica is only the latest variant of a single and unchanging strategy: convincing the Spanish bourgeoisie that it can change its political system without its class power being seriously threatened.

Since its inception, this strategy has lacked realism and credibility in the sense that in itself it has drawn no significant section of the bourgeoisie toward any serious action against the dictatorship. It fails to take account of the acute and explosive nature of the social contradictions in the country, the degree of combativity and class consciousness attained by the proletariat, or the fact that the bourgeoisie is very acutely aware of this basic feature of the situation. Although 20 years of incessant maneuvers by the CP and the reformists aimed at "convincing" the bourgeoisie to replace the dictatorship with a bourgeois-democratic parliamentary system have achieved only the most meager success, the CP's significant weight within the mass movement has undoubtedly enabled it to make the Junta Democratica appear in the eyes of significant sectors of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie as an alternative political solution to the crisis of the dictatorship. The balance-sheet on this policy is thus that it slows down, fragments, and disorients the workers struggles, leading them into an impasse. In this regard, the balance-sheet is most nefarious, as is testified to by the CP's refusal to add its call to that of the far left and the ETA-V for the general strike of December 11, 1974, in the Basque country, by its efforts to reduce the function of the workers commissions to simply lending support to the "legal" administration of the fascist trade-union, and by its bureaucratic maneuvers aimed at isolating those sectors of these commissions that oppose this orientation.

The platform presented by the Junta Democratica is a recent demonstration of the degree to which the reformists and neoreformists are willing to make political concessions to the bourgeoisie in order to persuade them to have done with the dictatorship. This platform does not include demands for the dissolution of the Francoist repressive bodies, for the purge of the army, for the punishment of Francoist criminals and torturers, for the right of self-determination for the oppressed minorities of the Spanish state, even though these demands have been advanced spontaneously by the masses in dozens upon dozens of struggles during the past months.

The leadership of the CP and its allies want to assure the Spanish bourgeoisie that the regime can be changed under conditions that would leave intact not only its economic power and its private property, but even its state and its instruments of repression against the workers; this is the real content of their treacherous policy.

While the effects of this policy on the bourgeoisie remain weak today, this will not be the case immediately after the overthrow of the dictatorship. At that point, an alliance with the Social Democratic reformists, neo-Social Democrats, or Stalin-

ists could appear to significant sectors of the bourgeoisie as a last resort in halting the revolutionary upsurge with a palliative that does not immediately threaten their class rule. But the ability of the reformists and Stalinists to carry out this counterrevolutionary work does not depend solely on their intentions and political orientation, but also and above all on the scope of the social crisis and the mass movement, as well as on the level of the class consciousness of the masses, the degree of self-organization and centralization they have attained, the relationship of forces between reformists and revolutionaries within the workers movement, and the progress made on the road to the construction of the revolutionary party.

For years revolutionary Marxists have counterposed a consistent class strategy to the strategy of class collaboration put forward by the CP and its reformist and neoreformist allies. They consider that any idea of "peacefully" changing the dictatorship from above as a result of a section of the owning classes developing an awareness of the "advantages" of bourgeois democracy is unrealistic, diverts the masses from their class road, and tends to hold back and fragment the masses. Only the development of a revolutionary general strike can overthrow the dictatorship. Once this is done, the process that will open in Spain will be one of proletarian revolution and not that of an experiment in the peaceful transfer of power from one team of bourgeois politicians to another.

The systematic propaganda of the Trotskyists for a revolutionary general strike objectively corresponds to the aspirations and natural tendencies of the broadest vanguard of workers and youth in the Spanish state. It is beginning to be transformed into reality by layers of the working class that are not part of the revolutionary organizations, so much has it represented the logical outcome of all the class struggles now underway. The impetuous rise of the mass movement has placed it on the agenda in a growing number of workers centers and industrial regions. The prospect of seeing it realized on a national scale has henceforth become an eventuality that the bourgeoisie itself must take account of.

But precisely because the strategy of the revolutionaries is beginning to become a reality, it is important to detail its content and specific features. What revolutionary Marxists rule out in Spain is a "peaceful" change of regime, the abolition of the dictatorship through the decision of a "liberal" wing of the Spanish bourgeoisie. This eventuality is already so much excluded in real life that any new stage in the decomposition of the dictatorship can only accentuate even further the impetuous rise of the mass movement.

However, what cannot be affirmed is that the dictatorship could fall only under the blows of an insurrectional general strike throughout the whole of Spain. The events of the past months have shown that revolutionary general strikes on a local and regional scale, by proliferating and spreading, are accentuating the decomposition of the dictatorship to the point where a new outbreak of the crisis could precipitate the fall of the dictatorship even before the attack on it has reached the stage of a revolutionary strike occurring simultaneously in all the industrial pockets.

The essential difference between the strategy of the revolutionaries and that of the reformists does not lie in the fact that for the revolutionaries a generalized and victorious confrontation with the repressive forces throughout the territory of the Spanish state is supposed to be an absolute prerequisite for the fall of the dictatorship. It lies in the fact that for revolutionaries there is no continuous solution to the development, broadening, and generalization of the struggles of the masses for their economic and democratic demands, the preparation for a general assault for the overthrow of the dictatorship through the mobilization of the masses, and the broadening of the mobilization toward anti-capitalist objectives that place the creation of organs of dual power on the agenda both in the factories and on a territorial scale. The aim of revolutionaries is to make the present upsurge of struggles result in a revolutionary situation that will make the fall of the dictatorship coincide with the beginning of an attack on the capitalist system and the bourgeois state. The strategy of the revolutionary general strike has this precise function; it is not intended to enumerate a list of conditions without which the fall of the dictatorship would be impossible to realize.

## **ACTION PROGRAM OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL IN SPAIN**

In accordance with this strategy, the action program of the Fourth International in Spain combines the economic, democratic, and transitional demands that have already been raised in the most advanced battles of the mass movement with all those demands that have as yet been adopted only by a sector of the broad vanguard but that must be introduced into the consciousness of the workers and tailing masses of the Spanish state so that the masses may find the revolutionary responses adequate to the central problems of the struggle against the Francoist dictatorship and capitalism.

The function of our action program is to take root and flourish in the struggles that are extending

throughout the Spanish state. Beginning from the unevenness of development and the differences in level of organization and political consciousness that still mark these struggles, the action program must assure that all efforts converge toward the road of victory: the unity and class independence of the mass movement and their organic articulation in the development, coordination, and centralization of organs of workers power.

Here are the slogans with which the Trotskyists approach the emergence of the third Spanish revolution:

### **1. Against capitalist exploitation, for the demands of the workers.**

One of the basic gains of the struggle of these past years has been the generalization of egalitarian economic slogans expressing demands that all the workers are seeking to win from the employers today. Given the full-blown economic crisis, and the fact that "social pacts" for the "democratic" future are beginning to be sketched out in face of the ruin of Francoism, the current applicability of these demands is more clear than ever:

- \*Equal pay for equal work regardless of age, sex, or nationality.
- \*Equal pay for agricultural and industrial workers.
- \*Minimum wage of 800 pesetas a day (about US\$16).
- \*Immediate and equal wage increases for all of 7,000 pesetas a month added to base wages.
- \*Forty-hour workweek in all sectors with no reduction in pay and no increase in the work pace.
- \*No deductions from or taxes on wages.
- \*Compensation for illness, accident, and unemployment, and pensions equal to full wages.

Nevertheless, no wage increase is capable of compensating in a lasting manner for the dizzying price increases. In 1975, for the third consecutive year, the real cost of living index will increase by 25-30%. Furthermore, thousands of workers are threatened by unemployment. The real number of unemployed is approaching half a million, and the situation will get worse in the immediate future with the return of 200,000 immigrant workers. The slogans of the sliding scale are already being raised in many struggles. Their extension is an urgent task:

- \*Sliding scale of wages: automatic monthly adjustments in wages and social benefits to compensate for all price increases according to an index drawn up by the workers organizations.
- \*Sliding scale of hours: division of working hours

among all available workers at the factory, industrial branch, and regional levels with no reduction in wages, under the control of delegates elected by the workers.

The capitalists are responding to the economic crisis with their "classical" weapons: fake bankruptcies, factory closings, massive layoffs, sharp increases in the pace of production. As for the workers movement, it also commands a classical weapon against capitalist pillage and deceit: workers control, the first experiments in which began to be made during the struggles at SEAT, Bianchi, etc.:

- \*Workers control of production: abolition of secret commerce; open the companies' account books.
- \*Workers control over forms of payment and the work pace.
- \*Workers veto over all layoffs and factory shutdowns.

In relation to all these demands, as a point of departure from which to realize them and as a weapon against demagogy about the "insuperable" economic difficulties of the employers, the workers should advance the following demands:

- \*Nationalization without compensation of the private banks and financial corporations (with the exception of the deposits of small savers).
- \*Nationalization without compensation of all closed-down companies; restarting of production under workers control.
- \*Elimination of all Francoist labor legislation — weapons for the superexploitation of the workers — and suppression of the fascist trade-union, the CNS, fundamental instrument of repression and control of the working class.
- \*One class union independent of the capitalists and their state, based on workers democracy, with the democratic election of delegates and leaders at all levels and with guarantees of the right of tendencies.

## 2. For the demands of all the exploited. For a radical agrarian reform.

The working class in Spain is not alone in its struggle. Students, professors, instructors, housewives, and small shopkeepers are also struggling for their own demands and in solidarity with the workers. The proliferation of local general strikes testifies to this. They presage the revolutionary alliance of the working class with the whole of the laboring people on a class line against any pact with the bourgeoisie. To advance along this line, the work-

ing class must adopt the basic demands that all these sectors advance in their struggle:

- \*Against capitalist profitization of education. For free, secular, bilingual, rounded, compulsory education up to age eighteen.
- \*Immediate expropriation of all private education centers.
- \*Against class medicine. For social security financed by the state and the companies, under workers control; the whole population must be guaranteed quality medical care and medicine completely free of charge. Nationalization without compensation of all pharmaceutical trusts. Immediate expropriation of all pawnshops, insurance companies, and private clinics.
- \*No rent higher than 10 percent of base wages. Immediate occupation of vacant housing by families without housing.
- \*Price-watch committees formed by delegates of workers, peasants, housewives, and small shopkeepers capable of combatting speculation, hoarding, gambling, and fraud in products of primary necessity.
- \*Long-term, interest-free credit for small shopkeepers.

But the fundamental ally of the Spanish working class is in the countryside. Twenty-five percent of the active population are peasants. They suffer with growing intensity from the effects of the ruin of the structures of agricultural property, production, and distribution in Spain. In addition to the agricultural proletariat, which already has a great tradition of struggle, especially in southwest Andalusia, the peasants themselves have entered into struggle throughout the Spanish state. A radical agrarian reform is thus on the agenda:

- \*Expropriation without compensation of the large landed estates and the big capitalists of agriculture. Abolition of any form of separation between property and cultivation. Land to those who till it!
- \*Nationalization of the marketing network for agricultural products and its administration by elected delegates of agricultural workers, members of agricultural cooperatives, and small peasants.

## 3. For the destruction of Francoism. For democratic rights. For the right of self-determination of oppressed nationalities. Against any oppression and repression.

The overthrow of the dictatorship must be pressed to its ultimate conclusion. Nothing must survive of Francoism, not even a shadow. A single virus could infect the country once again. The mass movement understands very well this fundamental condition for its victory. The slogans of the destruction of Francoism must be engraved in letters of fire in the consciousness of the masses:

- \*Dissolution of all the special repressive bodies and all the Francoist courts.
- \*Accounts must be settled for all the crimes of the dictatorship. Vigilance and purge committees in every factory, neighborhood, and city in the country. People's tribunals will judge the torturers and murderers and all fascist vultures.

The basic slogans of revolutionary antimilitarism will take on a burning applicability during the coming Spanish revolution. An army infected with fascists, Pinochet candidates, and military chieftains of the civil war will have to be purged. The capacity to offer the necessary response to any putschist undertaking will have to be organized both inside and outside the barracks:

- \*Purge the army of reactionary chiefs and officers. Dissolution of the mercenary and colonial corps.
- \*Democratic rights for soldiers. Creation and extension to all barracks of committees of soldiers and sailors, coordinated among themselves and with the workers organizations as well.
- \*Permanent self-defense detachments of the workers commissions and similar bodies capable of organizing the response to any form of repression against the mass movement and its vanguard, detachments that will be the embryos of the future workers militias.

After forty years of dictatorship, an immense aspiration for the integral exercise of all rights and democratic freedoms is being manifested in all the struggles of the masses. This is true to such an extent that there have already emerged projects of "short-cut democracy," such as that of the Junta Democrática, which seek to reduce these aspirations to the meager limits that would allegedly be tolerated by the Spanish bourgeoisie. The reformists seek in this way to once again place the hangman's knot of "democracy" around the neck of the Spanish working class. The Trotskyists will struggle energetically and with determined spirit for all democratic demands and against any form of repression and oppression, seeking to make sure that all limits imposed on the democratic rights of the masses are overstepped by the struggle of the masses themselves:

- \*Unlimited right to strike with no regulation whatever.

\*Freedom to hold meetings, freedom of association and the press, freedom to demonstrate.

\*Release of all political prisoners. Return of all exiles.

\*Elections to constituent assemblies, with the right to vote at age sixteen for all men and women residing on the territory of the Spanish state. Right to vote in these elections for all Spanish emigrant workers and the members of their families.

\*Abolition of any form of censorship. Freedom of artistic creation.

\*Full and complete sexual freedom. Right to sex information. Free distribution of means of contraception on demand. Free abortion on demand.

\*Abolition of all discrimination against women economically, juridically, and socially.

\*Complete separation of church and state.

\*Immediate and unconditional return to Morocco of the Spanish colonial territories in North Africa.

\*Immediate withdrawal of all Spanish troops from the Sahara. Unconditional independence for the Sahara, so that the people of the Sahara may freely decide their fate.

But there is one fundamental democratic right in Spain that is often forgotten or eliminated in the programs opposing Francoism: the right of self-determination for all nationalities oppressed by the Spanish state. A revolutionary program for Spain must accord a place of honor to this right, the place that it already occupies in the consciousness of the masses of these nationalities:

- \*Immediate election by universal suffrage exercised by all the inhabitants of the territory of each oppressed nationality of a national assembly of that nationality for the free exercise of the right of self-determination.

#### **4. For the breakup of all pacts with imperialism. For the Socialist United States of Europe.**

Spanish capitalism is fully integrated into the imperialist system. The opposition that certain European governments are expressing to the Francoist dictatorship's membership in NATO or the Common Market is only the reflection of these governments' deep fear of a reaction by the workers of their own countries against open collaboration with Francoism. But this involves no obstacle at all to other forms of military "mutual aid," especially with the United States and Portugal, or secret police pacts, especially with France. For the Spanish

bourgeoisie, respect for and broadening of these alliances is the best guarantee of its class rule, whatever the circumstances. For the Communist party, acting through the Junta Democratica, unconditional respect for the totality of these accords represents one of the key points of the "democratic alternative" to Francoism. For revolutionaries, the overthrow of the dictatorship is intimately linked to the breakup of all pacts with imperialism:

\*Breakup of all pacts and all military alliances with imperialism. Breakup of the Hispano-American pact and of the Iberian Pact. Yankee military bases out of Spain!

\*Breakup of all secret pacts of repressive and police collaboration with imperialist governments; immediate publication of the contents of these pacts.

\*Withdrawal of all British troops and military bases from Gibraltar. Immediate return of Gibraltar to the Spanish state.

Spain's relations with the European Economic Community must be approached from a consistent internationalist standpoint opposed to any "tactical support" to the incorporation of a non-Francoist Spain into the EEC, support justified by the alleged "aid" that such incorporation would bring to the "democratization" of the country, which is linked to the promise of an alleged future "democratization" of the EEC itself. The struggle of the Spanish workers has received and will receive genuine aid and solidarity only from their class brothers. To the EEC and to any form of international political alliance with the bourgeoisie, the Spanish workers must counterpose the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe.

Francoist Spain is a golden refuge for fascists the world over and is one of the centers of international fascist terrorism. The overthrow of the dictatorship must also mean that all this rabble, whose intimate financial, military, and political links with the dictatorship are well known, is brought before the revolutionary justice of the Spanish people. Spain must instead be transformed into a land of asylum for revolutionary fighters of the whole world, into a center of international solidarity with the struggles of all the workers of the world. Solidarity must be organized especially with the Portuguese workers, on the road to a Federation of Socialist Iberian Republics against any project for turning Spain into a counterrevolutionary base against the Portuguese people.

## 5. For the unity of the proletarian front For a workers government

The basic strength of the present mass movement in Spain and the most solid basis for its future victory against the dictatorship and capitalism is its capacity for self-organization. The country has already witnessed thousands of distinct experiences on this field among the masses and the broad vanguard. For the moment, the sharpest evidence of the rise of self-organization of the mass movement is provided by the generalization of assemblies in the factories and by the expansion of their decision-making power. To struggle for the consolidation and extension of this process is an essential task of the Spanish revolution:

\*For the generalization of workers assemblies in the factories as decision-making centers. For the election by these assemblies of committees recallable by the assemblies. For the coordination and centralization of strike committees.

\*For the strengthening, construction, and extension of the workers commissions and similar bodies. For their coordination and centralization at all levels and among all sectors in struggle.

The political basis of the self-organization of the mass movement lies in its class independence from the bourgeoisie. An implacable struggle must be waged against the inclusion of the bourgeoisie or any of its political spokesmen in the organs of the mass movement and its vanguard. The representatives of the bourgeoisie must be expelled wherever they have been incorporated into such organs with the complicity of the reformists and other partisans of class collaboration.

\*For the breakup of all pacts between workers political organizations and the bourgeoisie!

\*The workers organizations must leave the Junta Democratica and any other alliance with the bourgeoisie!

\*For the workers united front against the dictatorship and capitalism!

The sharper the ruin of Francoism becomes and the more its overthrow by the mass movement approaches, the more the reformists agitate for the slogan "government of broad coalition," an instrument that would enable the bourgeoisie to tear victory from the hands of the Spanish workers and would assure the bourgeoisie the best possible conditions for reconstructing its state. The real authors of the fall of the Francoist regime — the working class and the toiling masses of the Spanish state — can expect nothing from such a government, except the denial of their essential demands once again. No conquest of struggle will be able to be lastingly guaranteed without the emergence of a workers

government based on the organs of mass self-organization that arise from the struggle for the overthrow and destruction of the dictatorship and responsible only to these organs. Only such a workers government will be able to move to the realization

of the revolutionary program that corresponds to the interests and demands of the masses, thus opening the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat: the coordination, centralization, and exercise of all power by workers councils.

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## THE NEED TO PREPARE FOR URGENT TASKS OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

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The fall of the Francoist dictatorship and the beginning of the third Spanish revolution of this century could change the objective situation in West Europe from top to bottom. Interacting with the revolutionary process developing in Portugal, it would powerfully stimulate an important new rise of workers struggles in France, Italy, and elsewhere. In a context of generalized economic recession and of prolonged social and political crisis, these struggles could in turn attain an objectively anticapitalist dynamic even sharper than in 1968 or 1969.

But it would be irresponsible to sow illusions about a possible passivity of imperialism and the international bourgeoisie in face of a crisis of its system that threatens to be one of the deepest and broadest since 1917-19. If threats against the Portuguese proletariat are proliferating, even though in this country the bourgeoisie still commands so important an ultimate trump card as the MFA and even though the degree of politicization of the workers is lower than it is in Spain (even if it is now advancing rapidly), one can easily imagine the ferocious assault that would be directed against the beginning of proletarian revolution in Spain, which has one of the most combative and politicized proletariats in the entire world, and where it is highly possible that organs of dual power will cover the country from the very moment of the fall of the dictatorship.

It is thus imperative for revolutionaries to immediately begin preparing themselves and the broadest vanguards of workers and youth to take up the many tasks of international solidarity with the revolution and the proletariat of the Spanish state, tasks that could be posed more rapidly than might presently be thought. Today, more than after July 1936, active solidarity with the rising Spanish revolution must become the cause of all the workers in Europe and throughout the world. And, drawing the lessons of the experience of the Spanish civil war, this solidarity movement, while spurning no potential support, and while espousing the most flexible forms of the non-exclusive united front, must express itself on the basis of broad class independence so that it cannot be used as an instrument of braking and blackmail that would divert the Spanish revolution from the paths that it will trace out itself, which can happen against the intentions and will of the international proletariat itself.

The best way to prepare to carry out the broader tasks of solidarity that will be posed tomorrow is to begin now to develop a vast international campaign of solidarity with the exemplary fight of the political prisoners in Spain for their immediate and unconditional release. The political prisoners who are rotting in Franco's jails have organized a battle whose dynamism, tenacity, unshakeable faith in the victory of the proletariat, and daily heroism are unprecedented in the history of the European workers movement, rich as this movement is in examples of indomitable fighters. The respect and admiration that this struggle imposes on everyone must be expressed in mobilizations throughout Europe, which will prepare for even more vast mobilizations when the death knell of the dictatorship sounds. The Fourth International calls upon its sections, sympathizers, and friends, the broadest possible workers and mass vanguard of Europe and the world, to throw themselves into these mobilizations.

May 31, 1975

# BOYCOTT THE ELECTIONS

The dictatorship is calling for "trade-union" elections. It needs them very badly. In order to impose them and make sure they take place it has not hesitated to repress every appearance of struggle or to arrest dozens of militants. The fundamental objective of the state of exception in Euzkadi (Basque country) is the attempt to "normalize" the struggles.

But in spite of everything, the dictatorship does not feel sure of itself. It fears that the combativity the masses have been exhibiting will result in the CNS (the fascist "trade union") being totally bypassed. The dictatorship of capital is afraid of losing this instrument, which is so vital in liquidating workers struggles and blocking all demands.

For the workers and all toilers committed to and organized in struggle, fighting the CNS and organizing a boycott of this electoral farce means:

\*In the immediate sense, extending and deepening the counteroffensive of the masses, which is asserting itself ever more clearly. Such an initiative would give a strong impetus to winning many demands and would prevent the government from shifting the burden of the capitalist-generated crisis onto the backs of the workers.

\*At the same time, a mortal blow would be dealt the CNS, a basic pillar of the dictatorship. Thus, one of the greatest obstacles blocking the way toward the revolutionary general strike and the overthrow of the dictatorship would be eliminated.

\*This would prepare conditions such that after the overthrow of the dictatorship and in a context of political and trade-union freedoms, we could set up a powerful workers trade union.

All this is possible; the latest struggles at Motor Iberica, in construction, and among the teachers and the resistance of Tubauta, Miniwatt, etc. are expressions of this possibility.

All the experiments in independent action and in forms of democratic self-organization that are now emerging and all initiatives in the direction of boycott must be supported and defended in solidarity with the workers struggles.

In this way it will become possible to organize the general day of struggle that the mass movement it-

self has placed on the agenda and that all of us tried to organize during the struggles of January and February. It will be possible to centralize the workers and people's response to the maneuvers of the dictatorship and to the repression and all the attacks that go along with it. That is the real meaning of a massive boycott of the elections! Such a boycott would represent an important step toward the general strike.

We call:

\*For the organization in the factories and work places of massive assemblies in which the objectives and methods of the struggle are decided; for the election, as the sole representative of the workers, of recallable committees to direct and coordinate the struggle in accordance with the decisions of the assembly; for the organization of coordination among these committees, the workers commissions, and the united bodies representing other layers wherever such committees do not exist.

In these assemblies a balance-sheet should be drawn of the role played by enlaces y jurados (the CNS delegates) during recent struggles. The conclusion can only be unanimous throughout the whole workers movement: The assemblies will decide on the immediate resignation of all honest delegates. Let honest militants organize the struggle in the framework of the assemblies and let them withdraw their candidacies from the CNS elections! The assemblies will decide on a massive boycott of these elections! Only in this way will it be possible to establish a relationship of forces capable of imposing direct negotiations with the leaders of the employers through commissions that have mandated instructions and simply transmit the decisions of the whole assembly, the only center of decision-making.

\*In the educational centers, assemblies must also be organized and forms of direct action must be planned, with the resignation of delegates from official bodies. Recallable committees must be set up, following the example set by the institutions of secondary education (Mila, Infanta, Emperador, Carlos, etc.) and by some university departments, such as journalism. Coordination must be developed between these committees and the unitary bodies, and they must begin to coordinate with the bodies set up by the working class and with the workers commissions. Together with the working class and the toilers, a mobilization must be prepared capa-



The following declaration was issued jointly in Barcelona May 20 by the comrades of the Catalonia Committee of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria/Euzkadi ta Askatasuna-VI (Revolutionary Communist League/Basque Nation and Freedom-VI) and the National Committee of Catalonia of the Liga Comunista (Communist League), sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International in Spain.

ble of extending the boycott of the trade-union elections.

We call for all those who are mobilized to unify their efforts so as to press forward this dynamic of struggle, beginning from the workers commissions and the united structures in the schools, the departments of the universities, the institutes, and the neighborhoods. We call for them to unify their efforts to convoke broad assemblies of all those in struggle in each branch, in each sector, especially, because of its importance, in the metal industry. We call on all political forces, all the workers commissions, and in particular the workers commissions of SEAT, Hispano Olivetti, Siemens, Pirelli, Clima Roca, and Unidat Hermetica and the workers commissions in the branches where combativity has been most strongly asserted (the construction industry, for example) to throw themselves into this effort.

The fundamental role of preparing and pressing forward the struggle for the revolutionary general strike capable of overthrowing the dictatorship devolves today on the workers commissions.

In this context, on the ruins of the CNS, the workers commissions must take the initiative in convoking trade-union congresses at all levels, all the way through to a General Constituent Congress, to lay the basis for the kind of trade union that the workers want: A single union independent of the employers, the church, and the state and entirely based on workers democracy.

Let us unify the objectives of struggle against all the attacks of the employers and their government:

\*Against lockouts and wage cuts: Sliding scale of wages and hours! No wages under 750 pesetas a day! (About US\$15.) Forty-hour workweek!

\*Against bad living conditions: Cut prices, raise wages! Reduced prices for products of primary necessity! Down with all forms of selection! For permanent, public, secular education entirely free of charge and paid for by the state, compulsory up to eighteen years of age! Down with the general education law! For social security entirely financed by the state covering the whole population and administered by the workers!

\*Against all repression and oppression: Rehiring of all people laid off! Free the political prisoners! Liquidate the state of exception! Reopen Valladolid! Immediate freedom for Eva Forest and her comrades! Cancel the trials now going on! Dissolve the institutions of Francoist repression! For the free negotiation of collective labor contracts with no state intervention! For the right to strike, to hold meetings, and to demonstrate! For a single union of all the workers independent of the employers, the church, and the state! For full and complete political and trade-union rights! For free self-determination for Catalonia and the other oppressed nationalities!

\*Total solidarity with the struggle of the Portuguese workers and people and with the masses of Indochina! Solidarity with the workers and oppressed of the whole world!

We insist that today more than ever the efforts of all parties, all organizations, and all fighters of the working class and the oppressed must be unified around the workers commissions. Unfortunately, instead of orienting themselves in this direction, the PSUC and the coordinating committee of the workers commissions (the National Coordinating Committee of Catalonia and Barcelona), which are dominant, are counterposing intensive activity aimed at what they call "cornering the elections." Other parties, like the PTE and the MCE, are in reality aiding such an orientation.

With this tactic these parties and these coordinating bodies of the workers commissions are once again opposing themselves to direct action and to the democratic organization of the masses. They are opposing themselves to the overthrow of the fundamental pillar of the dictatorship represented by the CNS, preferring instead to transform it and maintain as far as possible its structure, which has been imposed by the bureaucrats. They are opposing themselves to the struggle for a united trade union of all the toilers independent of the employers and their government. And while they are doing this they keep their hands tied by the pact they have concluded with bourgeois politicians in the Junta Democrática and the Assembly of Catalonia.

\*We call on all those in struggle to rally to press forward the battles that loom ahead. We call on

them to rally to give the workers commissions the place that they deserve in preparing and pressing forward the coming generalized struggle. Maximum advantage must be taken of these periods of mobilization to build the workers commissions as much as possible. A workers commission in each factory! Organize the democratic coordination of the workers commissions!

\*We call on all militants of all parties of the working class to unite their efforts in this direction. Nothing must be counterposed to the requirements of the impending mobilization.

\*We reiterate our desire to reach agreements — even partial or temporary ones — that allow for aiding the potential mobilization in one form or another. We are prepared to reach such agreements

with all parties without exception that base themselves on the working class and in particular with the parties and political organizations that uphold in one form or another the necessity of promoting a broad boycott of the farce of the coming "trade union elections." We hope in this way to contribute to bringing about unity in action in the development of the struggles of the workers and the oppressed masses. Such is the meaning of this joint declaration.

**FORWARD!  
TOTAL BOYCOTT OF THE ELECTIONS!  
FOR A GENUINE WORKERS TRADE UNION,  
UNITED AND INDEPENDENT OF THE EMPLOYERS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT!  
DOWN WITH THE MURDEROUS DICTATORSHIP!  
LONG LIVE THE WORKERS COMMISSIONS!**



# **PREREVOLUTIONARY SITUATION IN PORTUGAL RIPENS**

## **Resolution of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International**

The abortive coup d'etat of March 11 represented a heavy political defeat for the Portuguese bourgeoisie. The powerful popular mobilization paralyzed the political and military instruments on which capitalist reaction thought it could base itself. Today the bourgeoisie has been thrown onto the defensive, although this does not eliminate the possibility of putschist attempts by certain bourgeois factions. Its crisis of leadership is only intensifying. The degree of combativity, organization and

self-organization, and class consciousness of the workers has taken a new leap forward. Within the army, not only did the soldiers and sailors demonstrate a very great capacity for responding to the seditious elements, but the politicization and process of self-organization of the rank and file also developed forward. The crisis of the army is deepening. This has facilitated the counteroffensive of the so-called socialistic wing of the MFA against the currents more or less explicitly claiming allegiance

to the Spinoist project. While the grip of the neo-reformists has been strengthened, the audience of the revolutionary left, within the framework of the impetuous rise of workers struggles, is broadening considerably — in the factories, the neighborhoods, the trade unions, and the army. This was confirmed during the elections of April 25, in which the workers parties received a majority whose size was virtually unprecedented in the history of the workers movement. Thus, in a little more than a year there has been a progressive radicalization of the rising workers struggles, which is leading to the ripening of a pre-revolutionary situation.

## 1. CRISIS AND ECONOMIC SABOTAGE

Portuguese capitalism is facing a crisis of rare depth. To the structural weaknesses and disequilibrium inherited from the Salazarist era have been added the effects of the international recession, of decolonization, and of the sudden change in the relationship of forces between capital and labor. Economic sabotage, investment strikes by Portuguese finance capital and by multinational trusts, restriction or suppression of credits to small and middle-sized companies, and the flight of capital have further worsened the economic mess. Sectors as important as the construction and textile industries are going through a virtually generalized crisis. Agriculture, imprisoned in archaic economic structures, is unable to produce a sufficient quantity of food products at low prices.

Over the past year, the rate of inflation has officially been 35%, but in reality it is much higher for food products. The buying power of the workers has been heavily affected. Factory closings and layoffs have been proliferating since the beginning of autumn 1974. Some 250,000 workers are unemployed.

Both the reconversion of the apparatus of production with a view toward accentuated integration into the Common Market and the end of the colonial war required a profound change in the forms of bourgeois domination as well as a channeling of workers mobilizations whose anticapitalist dynamic could only be strengthened in such a situation.

The resistance and counteroffensive of the workers broke through the presidentialist coup d'état of September 28, the law on the right to strike and lockout, the law on occupations of houses, and the attempt to paralyze the workers through the creation of a vast army of unemployed. In face of this response of the toiling masses, which nullified the projects of industrial reorganization, capital

is more and more utilizing the weapon of economic sabotage, the intention being to rally the support of broad sectors of the petty bourgeoisie by proving that the government is incapable of cleaning up the economic situation.

## 2. THE RISE OF STRUGGLES

Since December 1974 a new phase has opened in the rise of workers mobilizations. First of all, broader and broader sections of the working class are becoming aware of the precarious character of the wage gains that were won at the beginning of the summer of 1974. For example, on January 14 some 300,000 workers demonstrated in Lisbon. They partially transformed the demonstration—which had been organized by the Intersindical (Trade Union Federation) and the Portuguese Communist party in order to support the MFA and the law on trade-union unity—into a vast mobilization against capitalist exploitation and for the unity of the workers in struggle. Second, the attack on job security, especially in the small and middle-sized companies, has touched off struggles of a new type: occupations, restarting of production, experiments in workers control. Finally, in face of the economic sabotage and the attempts of reaction to organize, many initiatives were taken that prepared the mobilization against the attempted coup.

Almost spontaneously and with extraordinary rapidity, the Portuguese working class is taking up, assimilating, and sometimes enriching the most advanced experiences of struggle that have developed in Europe since 1968. This is a result of the conjunction of various factors. First of all, the acuteness of the structural and conjunctural crisis of Portuguese capitalism limits considerably the objective base for the development of reformist experiments and explains in large part the process of progressive radicalization that has taken place over the past year. Second, since the second half of the 1960s, the working class has been strengthened socially. In the Porto and Lisbon regions a new generation of workers who have lived through the decline of the Salazarist regime has entered production in large numbers. This generation constitutes an essential part of the workers vanguard. Finally, a relative politicization was stimulated among these layers by the struggle of the African fighters; moreover, tens of thousands of workers who emigrated to other European countries not only gained an apprenticeship in workers struggles, but also acquired an understanding of the new situation that has been developing in Europe since 1968. In the framework of the fall of the fascist regime, a very great receptivity to the ideas that had been ferociously combatted by the dictatorship has been added to all this. The combination of the intensification of the

economic and social crisis, the rise of struggles, and the permanent atmosphere of political debate creates an extremely favorable terrain for the ripening of anticapitalist consciousness, even though the effects of forty-eight years of fascism on the workers' capacity for independent political intervention have not been fully erased.

Thus, beginning in mid-December, various experiences developed that augured the mobilization that was to unfold on March 11 and during the movements that followed.

1) Factory occupations became more and more numerous. Very often, they were coupled with the struggle to purge fascist managers and administrators, the struggle against economic sabotage, and the struggle for the demand for nationalization. Control of inventories, control over hiring and firing, and the opening of the companies' books became weapons that were increasingly utilized by the workers. Obviously, this did not mean that the workers had already assimilated all the richness or political implications of the totality of experiences in which they were actively participating. In addition to factory and bank occupations, there were land occupations in the South; these were defended militarily by the peasants and agricultural workers.

2) The workers went beyond the legal limits and, in reality, shattered the law on strikes, which forbids occupations, plenary meetings within the factories, etc. Similarly, the rank-and-file soldiers organized and held general assemblies in some barracks.

3) A significant workers vanguard reacted forcefully to the attempts of the fascists to reorganize: some meetings of the CDS (Democratic and Social Center), which includes many notables from the old regime, were boycotted, as happened on January 25 in Porto. The administrators of the Salazarist regime in the factories, the press, and the radio were swept away by the initiatives of commissions of workers and trade-union sections.

4) The trade-union movement was strengthened and expanded. Battles for the democratic functioning of the trade unions proliferated. Concurrently, the influence of the workers commissions grew, especially in the big factories in the Lisbon area. These bodies constantly include the workers vanguard and can represent the major part of the workers during times of mobilization. During the September 28 events they took the first initiatives in the workers mobilization. On February 7, more than 30,000 workers participated in the especially combative demonstration organized by the coordinating body of the workers commissions of Lisbon. In the fac-

tories, general assemblies elected committees of workers in order to strengthen the united organization of the workers. During occupations of the social infrastructure (private clinics, hotels transformed into child-care centers or rest houses for workers) management committees were set up, sometimes elected. In certain cases these committees established relations with the workers commissions in order to plan the utilization of the occupied institutions and to "place them at the service of the people." Popular assemblies, often stimulated by the CP, arose in the popular neighborhoods. They debated problems of sanitation, housing, and transport, and more or less took charge of the organization of these social services. In this way there emerged on various levels bodies that could provide the embryo of forms of dual power.

5) The linkup between workers and soldiers was manifested clearly for the first time on February 7. On that day the soldiers of RAL 1 joined the front ranks of the demonstration of the workers commissions and took up the slogans raised by the workers.

6) Manifestations by Portuguese of solidarity with the struggle of their Spanish comrades increased in number. Opposition to the Iberian Pact and Portugal's participation in NATO was asserted more sharply and testified to the advance of proletarian internationalism in the consciousness of broad sectors of the working class.

The response to the attempted coup d'etat must be viewed with this backdrop. The mobilization indicated that the lessons of September 28 had been assimilated by tens of thousands of workers. The mobilization itself embodied the richness of the experiences that had begun to mold the consciousness of the workers. But it also had the effect of multiplying the workers' initiatives, since it ended with a crushing victory over reaction and confirmed the confidence of the toiling masses in their own strength.

### 3. A POLITICAL DEFEAT FOR THE BOURGEOISIE

After the failure of September 28, the dominant faction of the Portuguese bourgeoisie was counting above all on strengthening its central party, the PPD (Popular Democratic party), so as to forge an electoral victory. Later, within the perspective of a deterioration in the relationship of forces between the two fundamental classes of society, the bourgeoisie showed that it was prepared to accept a process of institutionalization of the MFA as an instrument serving as a last resort in controlling the situation and rebalancing the state apparatus. This institutionalization, an expression of the Bonapartist function of the MFA, was supposed to take shape,

according to the wishes of the bourgeoisie, under the cover of an electoral victory for the center-left, of an offensive by the Spínolista sectors within the MFA, and of a certain degree of control over the process of decolonization, especially in Angola, through lending weight to the FLNA and UNITA.

Another faction of the bourgeoisie did not share this view. This faction, made up of the sectors most strongly hit by the fall of the Salazarist regime and decolonization, prepared for a frontal attack on the working class and its social conquests, for regaining a grip on the enlisted men, and for eliminating the most radicalized elements of the MFA.

The acceleration of the workers upsurge, the growing crisis within the army, the several Spínolista successes during the MFA elections at the beginning of March, and the lack of ability to sense political opportunities and to judge the real social relationship of forces (after forty-eight years of the corporatist regime) were the factors that certainly incited these circles to throw themselves into the attempted coup d'état. There were two significant features to the failure of the coup. The putschists were incapable of effectively organizing coordination between the military and civilian sectors and of assuring themselves direct support from the social layers prepared to back up such a project. The rapidity of the response, its breadth, and the resistance or open opposition of the soldiers and sailors to all the putschist maneuvers of the officers deprived reaction of the possibility of getting control of a significant part of the military and political apparatus in order to carry out its plans.

On March 11, after the attempted constitutional coup of July 1974 and the attempted civilian coup of September 28, the bourgeoisie fired a new round — without results, or rather, with results directly opposite to those that had been hoped for. The loss of Spínola, who could have played the role of a rallying point, intensified the crisis of political leadership in the bourgeois camp.

The economic emergency plan, which had been approved on February 7 by the council of ministers and reflected the influence of the PPD and the SP, was swept away. The nationalization of the banks and insurance companies, which was not explicitly called for in the plan but was carried out under the pressure of the mobilization of the workers, created a dynamic able to break through the limits within which possible nationalizations had been envisaged by the emergency plan.

Within the MFA, the relationship of forces was shifted in favor of the non-Spínolista sectors. The institutionalization, imposed against the coup

d'état, took on an objectively contradictory character. On the one side, it was carried out against the putschist sectors and in this sense tended to foster initiatives by workers and soldiers aimed at purging the fascist cadres; on the other side, the MFA consolidated its position as a body of autonomous power to a certain extent playing the role of Bonapartist arbitrator above the classes and tending to shunt aside the traditional instruments of bourgeois democracy (parties, parliament, etc.). Nevertheless, the failure of the coup represented neither a definitive victory for the so-called socialistic sector of the MFA nor the liquidation of the Spínolista sector of the armed forces. The latter, although weakened, not only continues to occupy a position in the High Council of the Revolution itself, but may recover lost positions inasmuch as the hierarchical structure of the army is maintained. In this sense, while it is certain that the institutionalization of the MFA guarantees the stability of the coalition government of class collaboration, this does not eliminate the long-term possibility of a gradual turn toward a rightist regime.

Under the impact of the massive mobilization of the workers, and in the hope of receiving financial aid following the nationalization of the banks, the petty bourgeoisie could certainly no longer provide a very stable support to the political formations of the bourgeoisie, which had to give ground to the CP-MDP within the government as well as within the economic and state apparatus.

On the defensive, the bourgeoisie after March 11 found itself compelled to accept the measures nationalizing the banks, insurance companies, transport, electricity, and steel, as well as the institutionalization of the MFA in a form that it was unable to have any say in. Confronting the April 25 electoral target date, it had to recover some credibility, with the hope that an electoral victory would permit it to influence the nationalization process and to enclose that process within a framework compatible with the survival of the capitalist system.

Under the cover of the signing of the Pact, and in view of the possibility of utilizing the electoral tribune, the bourgeois parties — more specifically the CDS — were able to reorganize their base and prepare for the counteroffensive. In this sense, it would be absolutely erroneous to underestimate the electoral results obtained by the PPD and the CDS, especially if they are compared with those of the CP.

Nevertheless, the bourgeoisie as a whole was not going to limit itself to concentrating all its efforts on the legal field alone, although after March 11 it emphasized strengthening itself electorally and

working toward achieving a certain realignment within the government, which included taking advantage of the anticommunist campaign of the SP. The bourgeoisie's crisis of political leadership, aggravated by the upsurge of the mass movement after March 11, will encourage it to opt for a terrorist tactic of harassment, sabotage, and attacks on the workers organizations and worker militants.

On the international field, the bourgeoisie is keeping open two options: aid or strangulation. For the moment, the European bourgeoisie, while utilizing various means of pressure and blackmail, seems to have decided to play the card of aid, understanding that in the immediate future economic strangulation could have radicalizing effects. Obviously, this does not prevent it from also directing efforts toward structuring and financing the reactionary offensive both in Portugal and in the colonies, especially Angola.

## 4. THE ACCELERATION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS

The defeat of the putschist project on March 11 by a massive and rapid mobilization of the toiling masses has led to a modification of the relationship of forces on two levels: on the one side between the bourgeoisie and the working class; on the other side between the revolutionary vanguard and the reformist currents.

1) This new shift in the relationship of forces is expressed in the intensification of the crisis in the army — its division and the proliferation of cases of discipline being broken and of the rejection by the rank-and-file soldiers of the "new hierarchy" to which the MFA claims allegiance. Politicization within the army has taken a great leap forward. It is being fed by the linkup that was made in several areas between the workers and soldiers on March 11, to such an extent that arms were distributed to popular vigilance committees. It was strengthened during the electoral campaign by the systematic political debate that went on among the troops. This, added to the problems of the very functioning of the army — weakness of barracks control, debility of officer control, miserable social and material conditions — is bolstering the process of self-organization, the open participation of soldiers in the work of the revolutionary organizations, and the rapprochement and common activities between soldiers and workers. Nevertheless, these phenomena are developing at a very uneven rate within the armed forces nationally, and this may facilitate reactionary maneuvers. In the short term, the armed forces thus no longer represent an entity sufficiently homogeneous and tightly enough controlled by the

military hierarchy to be easily used in a putschist project. This fact can only contribute to accentuating the general instability and to prolonging the period of crisis of bourgeois political leadership.

2) The massive rising of the workers at the announcement of the attempted coup led not only to the crushing of the seditious elements, but also to a considerable victory for the toiling masses: the nationalization of the banks and insurance companies in the initial period, and later the nationalization of about thirty companies in the transport, electricity, steel, cement, tobacco, and food industries, as well as the new measures preparing an agrarian reform.

From the objective standpoint, these nationalizations may obviously be part of a project that consists of supporting or strengthening the profit margins of certain private sectors within the framework of a capitalist economy. The nationalized sector would then function as the guarantor of the profitability of the private sector, furnishing raw materials and energy supplies at low prices by granting very low interest credits or by making pure and simple gifts and socializing the costs of developing the infrastructure necessary for national and imperialist investment.

Nevertheless, this series of nationalizations was decided on at the very moment when tens of thousands of workers, beginning in December, were demanding the nationalization of their companies, occupying the offices of the banks and insurance companies, and threatening to take the transportation sector under their control. Furthermore, the branches of the banking system throughout Portuguese industry create objective conditions favorable to touching off a dynamic going beyond the function that the major part of the MFA and significant sectors of the bourgeoisie initially assigned to the state takeover of the banking system and the various basic sectors.

A certain number of conditions must nevertheless be met in order to assure the development of such a process, in order to assure the destruction of capital's economic power and of all the positions of control and decision-making that capital holds within the economic structure. First of all, it is imperative to nationalize without compensation all the decisive sectors of the economy: heavy industry, the banks, transportation, the energy sector, the distribution sector, and foreign trade. To this must be added the elimination from the nationalized sector of all bourgeois administrators, the rejection of "co-management" and the generalization of workers control, centralized management of all property and all nationalized companies by a central body placed under the control of the work-

ers organizations and founded on the application of an emergency economic plan drawn up by these organizations.

But such measures of expropriation of the bourgeoisie are not possible within the framework of the present bourgeois state, in a context in which the bourgeoisie still holds political power and organizes its response in many forms, economic sabotage and the flight of capital being the preferred weapons in the present conjuncture.

The economic crisis that Portuguese capitalism is now going through, the nationalization measures weakening the bourgeoisie, and the rise of the mass movement clearly indicate that the precondition for taking economic power away from the bourgeoisie, for depriving it of its power of economic sabotage, lies in the elimination of its political power. It is here that all the initiatives of workers control, the occupation of factories, the restarting of production under workers control, the coordination of tenants committees to deal with questions of housing and of the social infrastructure take on their full importance and express the more or less conscious will of the toiling masses to take over political and economic power, to pass from a capitalist economy to a socialist one, which can only be achieved by the centralization of the instruments of self-organization of the masses. The very dynamic of the movement goes radically against the objectives proposed and ceaselessly repeated by the CP and the MFA, summed up as the battle for production, in a context in which the bourgeoisie still commands the determining decision-making posts and holds power on the economic and political field.

3) The change in the relationship of forces after March 11 and the deep radicalization, which attained a new stage after December, was also expressed on the electoral field.

On March 11 there was a fusion between the workers upsurge and the emergence of the mass movement onto the political scene. This was rapidly reflected in the demand for a deepening of the purge process at all levels — the army, industry, the press — and by the emergence of a more or less confused demand for "popular government," combined with the demand to expel the representatives of the PPD from the government. March 11 thus functioned as a catalyst for the political consciousness of the toiling masses.

Both the feelings of victory and strength acquired by the workers through the mobilization, through winning the nationalizations, and through the acceleration of the purges and the extreme weakness of any alternative bourgeois policy were reflected in the massive vote for the workers parties. Over-

all, the electoral results can only increase the workers' confidence in their own strength, intensify the anticapitalist mobilizations, and generate among the rank-and-file workers a will for unity in the struggle against the bourgeoisie and its parties.

Of course, the votes for the Socialist party came partially from the petty bourgeoisie under the impact of the anticommunist campaign of the Socialist leaders and thus represent votes in favor of a solution of order and of defense of private property. Even some factions of the bourgeoisie encouraged votes for the SP.

But it would be totally erroneous to reduce the vote of the SP to that. In its majority, the SP vote represented the primitive will of broad sectors of the workers to struggle against the conditions of exploitation and oppression to which they are subject and to struggle for socialism; it also represented an elementary defiance of the bureaucratic methods used by the Stalinist current. Moreover, it is significant that the SP obtained the most votes precisely in the regions in which the percentage of wage-workers is highest. In fact, the SP vote was the product both of the shift in the relationship of forces between capital and labor and of the still backward level of consciousness of many layers of workers who are radicalizing and becoming politicized slowly and at varying rates.

The CP obtained an electoral result that does not precisely reflect its capacity to mobilize and its organizational strength. Electorally, the CP paid a price for its policy of class collaboration, which led it to more or less openly betray many struggles and to subordinate any possibility for unifying the working class in anticapitalist struggle to the possibility of putting pressure on the state apparatus. The fact that the far left and the centrists got one-third as many votes as the CP indicates the scope of the CP's losses on its left. Finally, at the moment when the debate over what model of socialism should be followed is of concern to broad layers of workers, there is no doubt that the CP also paid a price for its unconditional defense of the "socialist model" represented by the bureaucratic regimes in the deformed or degenerated workers states. As for the MDP/CDE, it was totally marginalized and hence will more and more appear as a simple cover for the CP and a supporting body of the MFA.

Finally, the total results obtained by all the organizations claiming allegiance to the revolutionary left express the progress of the influence and implantation of the various Maoist, centrist, and revolutionary Marxist currents and the existence of broad layers of workers who are breaking with the policy of the reformist organizations, especially in workers bastions like Porto, Lisbon, Setúbal, etc.

There is no doubt that the SP will seek to use its electoral strength to intervene within the MFA and achieve a certain reorganization of the relationship of forces and to try to develop a weight within the trade unions and the factories that corresponds to its electoral strength. As for the CP, while asserting itself as the unconditional defender of the MFA, it will have to demonstrate its capacity for mobilization in order to consolidate its position and to counteract the projects of the SP.

4) At first sight, it appears as though March 11 and April 25, 1975, fostered the strengthening of the reformist organizations. During the attempted coup, the CP and the Intersindical took the leadership of the workers movement and succeeded in the immediate sense in capitalizing on a large part of the mobilization.

The initiatives taken by the Intersindical and the calls for the general strike — which was a break with what the Intersindical had done on September 28 — placed the trade-union organization at the head of the response and can only strengthen its role as the unique representative of the working class in the eyes of the workers. Obviously, the Intersindical may offer its services to marginalize the instruments of self-organization, to limit somewhat the experiences pointing in this direction, and to increase the credibility of its campaign for the "battle for production."

On the other hand, the election results allow the SP to put itself forward as the principal workers party (on the electoral field) and hence to raise its claims within the government, the municipalities, and the trade unions.

Nevertheless, this affirmation of the strength of the reformist and neoreformist workers parties is occurring in a context of the rise of the mass movement, of radicalization of new layers of workers, and of proliferation of independent actions of the masses in the neighborhoods and factories, actions that consolidate the workers' feelings of strength and independence. Thus, conditions are being created for the exacerbation of the contradictions within the reformist formations themselves and for the strengthening of the revolutionary vanguard and the expansion of its audience among the layers influenced and organized by the reformist parties.

This twofold process is at the root of the leftist tactical adaptations the CP has made since the end of 1974. The time has not yet come for the CP to oppose mobilizations head on. After March 11, for instance, contrary to the policy that was followed after September 28, the CP and the Intersindical demanded nationalization measures and many trade-

union sections took initiatives within this perspective. The adaptations that the CP and the Intersindical have to make to recover, preserve, or strengthen their position nevertheless act to intensify their internal contradictions and modify the relationship of forces with the vanguard. Viewed in this light, the continuation of the relative hegemony of the reformist formations, which is the major negative factor for the future of the revolutionary upsurge, will be subject to many modifications, depending on the independent activity of the masses and on the capacity of the revolutionary vanguard to unify broad layers of workers around its initiatives.

During the phase opened by March 11, the CP is thus trying to isolate the struggles of the vanguard and hold back all experiments in self-organization, whether in the barracks, the neighborhoods, or the factories.

Just as it crudely opposed strikes in the name of consolidating the democratic stage during the first period, today the CP is putting the emphasis on the "battle for production" in order to guarantee the "economic and financial stability gravely threatened both by the recession and by the disorganization provoked by economic sabotage." The "battle for production" is replacing the "battle for power," as was previously the case in Chile. The CP thus regards sticking as closely as possible to the MFA as a guarantee that the "democratic stage" will be consolidated. This line can only strengthen illusions among the workers in the "vanguard role of the MFA" and divert the anticapitalist dynamic of the struggle toward a project of class collaboration. Nevertheless, after waging an electoral campaign with triumphalist overtones, the CP has to demonstrate its capacity to mobilize and its organizational strength, and thus assert its role as the leading party structuring the workers, as opposed to the SP, which is the leading workers party on the electoral field. A certain sectarianism toward the SP rank and file does not make for an adequate response to this problem; especially in that there is real pressure toward unity within both parties. Hence, it will be difficult for the CP to stick strictly to the battle for production. It will have to either participate in or go along with the mobilizations of the workers and peasants, while at the same time trying to control these mobilizations. The CP will not escape from these oscillations very quickly.

As for the SP, during the election campaign it found itself torn between its attempt to capture votes from the petty-bourgeois clientele of the PPD and the necessity of reestablishing, preserving, or if possible consolidating its links with the working class. In the post-electoral period, continues to be affected by the same type of contradictions. The program of its leadership consists of trying to chip



off a wing of the MFA that, under the jargon of "Portuguese socialism," would take measures that could maximally limit the import of the nationalizations, give assurances to imperialism, and "reestablish order." (It is more interested in doing this than in forming any alliance of a center-left type with the PPD.) The pressures that the SP is subjected to from the European Social Democracy tend in the same direction, and the anticommunist campaign falls perfectly within this framework.

Nevertheless, this party has been swollen with thousands of members who have just emerged onto the political scene; they are not marked by the legalist Social Democratic tradition and are liable to radicalize rapidly. This will inevitably have repercussions within the party; it augurs the formation of new leftist currents and centrist splits. The themes of workers control and self-management demagogically put forward on the May 1 posters of the SP already indicate the existence of this type of pressure within the SP.

In face of the very rapid expansion of the ranks of the CP and the SP, in face of the weakness of the political training of the members and their receptivity to the propaganda of the far left in the atmosphere of permanent political debate and of intensified combativity, revolutionaries command very great objective possibilities for expanding their audience among those workers organized or influenced by these parties. This dialectic of relations between reformists, neoreformists, and centrist forces and the revolutionary left is such that the latter already commands sufficient weight to initiate movements that effectively win the adherence of significant sectors of the masses.

Hence, the audacious and flexible application of the tactic of united front as developed on various levels — from the factory and the neighborhoods up through the most important initiatives — is decisive for the revolutionary vanguard both in responding immediately to any reactionary offensive, to any challenging of the democratic rights of the workers movement, and in expanding the influence of the revolutionaries and cutting down on the duration of of the reformists' grip on the working class. By calling for the unity in action of the entire working class and of all its currents without any exclusion, revolutionaries will be able to take advantage of the desire for unity that exists among broad sectors of workers in order to strengthen the anticapitalist front.

Any real rupture of this unity in action threatens to profoundly disorient the toiling masses, to generate phenomena of disarray and of the beginning of demoralization, and thus to provoke a stagnation of the revolutionary process that would facilitate



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a reactionary counteroffensive. That is why the bureaucratic methods used by the CP leaders against workers democracy, the sectarianism of these leaders (obstruction of trade-union elections, the República affair, etc.), and the attempts of the SP leaders to slow down the revolutionary process in the name of defense of bourgeois democracy are now stirring up division within the ranks of the proletariat and constitute real attacks against the interests of the proletariat.

Against these sowers of division, revolutionary Marxists struggle for strengthening the unity in action of all the organizations and representative bodies of the working class and for the consolidation of these bodies through the creation of a network of democratically elected workers, soldiers, and peasants committees that can both guarantee respect for the broadest democracy and assure the forward march of the revolution. The most urgent task is to move toward the creation of such bodies of democratic and proletarian power. Any delay in the emergence, coordination, and generalization of these councils threatens to drive back the advancing revolutionary process that was accelerated after March 11, 1975.

The disastrous aspect of the policy of the Maoist current, which characterizes the CP as "social fascist" and makes it the main enemy, is especially highlighted if one considers the fluidity that exists within the very ranks of the CP and the SP and the

response that the far-left currents are able to receive there. Insofar as the Maoist current, and more especially the UDP, commands significant influence in the broad workers vanguard, the Maoist policy effectively functions as an element dividing the class and threatening to isolate this workers vanguard from the heart of the class.

## 5. THE ROLE OF THE MFA

In a context marked by an open crisis of bourgeois political leadership, by a real division within the army, by the growing influence of the reformist workers parties, and by the continuing rise of workers struggles, the MFA after March 11 consolidated its position, centralizing the essential legislative and executive priorities.

Since April 25, 1974, the assertion of the strength of the MFA has been the fruit not only of the role it played in the organization of the coup d'etat, but also of the crisis in the army generated under the blows of the defeat suffered in the colonial war and of the political weakness of the two fundamental classes of society.

On the one side, after half a century of corporatist rule, the bourgeoisie did not command political instruments capable of functioning effectively in the framework of bourgeois democracy in face of a progressive upsurge of the mass movement. On the other side, the workers' lack of political experience after forty-eight years of dictatorship did not enable the working class to immediately give expression to its own solutions. It is the convergence of this twofold political weakness that created the possibility of the MFA's occupying this central place, especially after the failure of the two hasty presidentialist coup attempts in July and September 1974 and after the March 11 debacle.

In reality, the MFA represents two different phenomena: on the one side an integral part of the state apparatus (President of the Republic, Council of the Revolution, Army General Staff, etc.); on the other side a movement composed of a part of the officer corps having a base among the noncommissioned officers and soldiers and permeated by all the social and political currents of a Portugal drawn into a revolutionary process. As an integral part of the state apparatus, it guarantees the maintenance of capitalist relations of production, especially during times when the rise of the mass movement within the context of a deep crisis of political leadership of the bourgeoisie places in danger the very survival of the system of capitalist rule. As a movement, its social composition, petty bourgeois in its majority, implies that it is far from homogeneous ideologically. Likewise, there has been a

modification in its composition, a radicalization of certain of its sectors, and, at the same time, a growing polarization among its diverse components. Along with Spinoist currents, which do not occupy stage center during the present phase, there are various currents that are more or less influenced by the reformist ideologies of the workers movement but that possess no organic link with that movement. Most of them are manifesting deep distrust of the mass movement, distrust that is characteristic of this military elite that has established paternalistic relations with the masses. They are placing the emphasis on strict control of the activity of the masses, on the arbitrator task that the MFA must fulfill, which reveals the will of the MFA officers to perpetuate their Bonapartist role.

Moreover, this Bonapartist function is expressed concretely both in the MFA's institutionalization and in the pact that it pushed through between the bourgeois and reformist workers parties, a pact whose objective function is to conceal the exacerbated contradictions between capital and labor, between exploiter and exploited, that are manifesting themselves more sharply every day.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to stabilize this objectively Bonapartist function inasmuch as the mass mobilizations themselves on the one hand stimulate the differentiations within the MFA and thus generate realignments among the various tendencies and on the other hand necessitate permanent adjustments aimed at more or less controlling the mass movement. Confronted simultaneously with a crisis within the army, an acceleration of the radicalization of the working class, and a deeper and deeper economic crisis, the MFA will find it difficult to preserve its ever more fragile unity, especially since the options that will present themselves will make it increasingly risky to play a game of balancing and of making concessions to both the left and the right.

In the event of a convergence between a new wave of struggle on the one hand and a bourgeois offensive taking the twofold form of a campaign of economic sabotage by international capital and a reorganization of the reactionary current within the army on the other hand, a breakup of the MFA is not excluded. In this context, the generalization of forms of self-organization and self-defense and the confrontation of the workers movement with the bourgeoisie could precipitate a new situation characterized both by the emergence of organs of dual power in the factories, countryside, and barracks and by the emergence of the first experiments in coordinating these various organs. In face of this polarization, it is not excluded that some elements of the MFA, influenced by reformist currents and

even by the far-left organizations, could pass to the camp of the working class at decisive moments.

But revolutionary Marxists, contrary to centrists, will not passively wait for this possible division to weaken the apparatus of the bourgeois army, nor will they simply wait for the beginning of the mobilization that will lead to the armed insurrection; rather, they will seek to create all the conditions such that this split may accompany the development of the struggle of the laboring masses. Such a split will be strongly stimulated by the generalization of a system of dual power that permits the immense majority of the working class to be won to the camp of the revolution and prepares the final confrontation.

From now on, the transformation of the struggle for the generalization and centralization of the instruments of self-organization (resignation of officers, election of committees to control military operations) and the linkup of the organized struggle of the soldiers and sailors with the workers movement will enable the ground for the confrontation to be prepared.

On the other hand, in the event that international capital does not strangle the Portuguese economy, that the social and economic crisis is prolonged without any modification in the relationship of forces between the classes, that reformist hegemony is maintained because of the delay in the emergence of a revolutionary pole, and that the mass movement retreats because of divisions within the working class and the absence of precise objectives for advancing the revolution, there could possibly be a relative stabilization of the Bonapartist function of the MFA and a counteroffensive of the currents more or less openly owing allegiance to Spinoism. This could not but find expression in measures aimed at regaining a grip on the army, imposing limits on the activity of the mass movement, repressing the revolutionary organizations, strengthening the hierarchy, and suppressing the organs created by the soldiers. Obviously, this does not imply that the period of instability that resulted from the March 11 victory would end, but rather that the process of upsurge would go through a certain retreat before new confrontations occurred.

The not very distant prospect of the fall of the Francoist regime introduces into this overall picture a factor that will be decisive for the future of the Portuguese revolution. A radical change in the political situation in Spain could either relaunch the mass movement in Portugal in the event that there had been a certain pause or combine with the ongoing rise of struggle and create an explosive situation in the whole Iberian peninsula, the fantastic repercussions of which would rapidly be manifested throughout all Europe.

## 6. THE TASKS OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISTS

1) The fusion between the March 11 mobilization and the general rise of struggles since December has accelerated the spread of experiments in self-organization at all levels and in self-defense and workers control and has also raised the level of anticapitalist class consciousness.

Nevertheless, these experiments remain fragmented and dispersed and hence prevent the potential combativity that was manifested on March 11 from being channeled into a unified effort. In order to safeguard the gains of the victorious response to capitalist reaction, to fully utilize the advantages that the working class commands in the present situation, and to rout any new anti-working-class counteroffensive, it is essential through a flexible tactic of united front to regroup around the initiatives of the proletarian vanguard the broadest layers of the working class, the poor peasantry, and the soldiers and to strengthen the autonomous combat organs with which the toiling masses have endowed themselves during successive mobilizations. In order to do this it is crucial for revolutionary Marxists to make use of all possibilities of coordinating, centralizing, and unifying all these instruments of struggle of the workers and soldiers: workers commissions, building and neighborhood commissions, committees of soldiers and sailors, antifascist vigilance committees, leagues of poor peasants, etc. The democratic centralization on a national scale of all these organs within a structure permitting the linkup with all the workers organizations, trade unions, and parties would be capable of stimulating the emergence and generalization of organs of dual power. In this way a state of affairs would be created limiting or preventing the coopting of the workers upsurge and creating the best conditions for the rapid rise of class consciousness through overall confrontations with the regime and for the construction of the revolutionary party.

It is within this perspective that during the election campaign, during the huge demonstrations of May 1, and during their daily propaganda, our comrades of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista put forward the slogan of a national assembly of workers.

2) In the present phase the LCI, unlike most political currents, is systematically emphasizing:

- \*the vital importance of the nonexclusive united front of the working class to defend its social and economic gains and its democratic rights and to wage the offensive against capital;
- \*the necessity of a permanent mobilization of

the workers that enables them to impose their demands, to expel all bourgeois ministers from the government, and to form a WORKERS AND PEASANTS GOVERNMENT, that is, a government of the workers organizations and of representatives of the agricultural workers and poor peasants: a government of the SP, CP, the Intersindical, and other bodies representing sectors of the working class and of the agricultural workers. In order to advance the revolutionary process decisively, such a government would have to base itself on a system of workers, peasants, and soldiers councils.

3) In order to definitively sweep aside capitalist reaction and deepen the workers upsurge and the independent activity of the masses, revolutionary Marxists will wage massive political campaigns around the following axes:

\*for the nationalization without compensation and under workers control of the major industries and sectors of distribution, and for the state monopoly of foreign trade;

\*for the generalization of workers control in all sectors already nationalized, which means, among other things, the right to remove administrators named by the state, the right to hold meetings and general assemblies in the work places during working hours, veto right over hiring and firing, etc.;

\*for the centralized management of all property and of all nationalized companies by a central body placed under the control of the workers organizations and founded on the application of an emergency economic plan drawn up by these organizations;

\*for the expropriation of the large landed estates under workers control and for a radical agrarian reform;

\*for the strengthening of the antimilitarist movement, the generalization and coordination of the committees of soldiers, sailors, and airmen, in order on the one hand to assure the total purge of reactionary officers, to elect commanders in general assemblies, to control the functioning of all military operations, and to take charge of the defense of the material interests and rights of the soldiers and on the other hand to assure the systematic linkup with the workers organized in the neighborhoods and with the workers organizations and trade unions in order to prepare the most rapid and determined response both to fascist provocations and to any new attempted coup;

\*for the dissolution and disarmament of the police of big capital: the GNR and the PSP;

\*for a central united trade union with respect for the right of tendencies, democratic elections of delegates and officials at all levels, and total independence from the state;

\*for the suppression of all laws restricting trade-union action, the action of workers in the factories, and occupations of empty housing, and against any measures restricting the activity of the revolutionary organizations;

\*for the generalization of armed self-defense pickets and the arming of the trade unions and workers commissions;

\*for Portugal's withdrawal from the Atlantic alliance and for the breakup of the Iberian Pact;

\*for the active solidarity of the Portuguese workers with their comrades in Spain in their struggle to bring down the Francoist dictatorship.

To deal with all these tasks, the comrades of the LCI will have to:

\*assure themselves of an ever broader implantation in the working class;

\*extend the influence of the revolutionary Marxists in all the sectors that are now mobilizing and offer them a perspective of struggle for socialism;

\*consolidate the organization of hundreds of adherents in order to make the LCI a real political striking force capable of contesting reformist hegemony on the concrete field of class struggle.

In face of the workers upsurge in Portugal, an international anticommunist campaign is being intensified and imperialist threats are proliferating. There is no doubt that at the moment of an accentuation of the revolutionary upsurge, especially if it coincides with the fall of the Francoist dictatorship, the imperialist threats will become ever more pressing. The European and American bourgeoisies are not prepared to rest with folded arms when the revolution breaks out on the Iberian peninsula.

From this point on, revolutionary Marxists, the Fourth International, must take all possible initiatives of political solidarity with the struggle of the Portuguese workers in order to prepare the broadest layers of the working class and the youth to prevent a counterrevolutionary intervention in the future. The rise of struggles in Europe since 1968, the strengthening of the revolutionary vanguard, and the response that has already been acquired within the European working class by the fight of the Portuguese toiling masses represent the best guarantees of the mobilization of the European working class against international capitalist reaction.

June 6, 1975

## LEBANON:

# THE FALL OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT

by S. JABER

The Lebanese can be justly proud: The military government announced in Beirut on the night of May 23 lasted less than three days, making it one of the most ephemeral military governments in history. This government did not resign willingly. It was forced to do so; it was overthrown by an extraordinary armed insurrection, by the mobilization and determination of the broad masses, for whom arming has long since gone beyond the stage of "desire." In this sense, the Lebanese experience, after that of Portugal (which was different in that the alternative there opposed two types of officers), once again confirms what revolutionaries have always said about what methods of struggle are adequate in fighting reactionary coups. These are the lessons that we have tried to stress in the following article, which is based on a political resolution of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Group, affiliate of the Fourth International in Lebanon.

To understand the events in Lebanon, it is necessary to locate them within the recent evolution of the Lebanese state.

At the end of 1970 Suleiman Franjeh, candidate of the bourgeois opposition to the Bonapartist Shehab regime (in power since 1958), took over as president of the republic. The conjuncture was favorable for the bourgeoisie and its imperialist masters: black September in Jordan, the fall of the Baathist left in Damascus, the death of Nasser, etc. The anti-imperialist wave was in full ebb. Franjeh judged the occasion favorable for trying out a "reform" technocratic government aimed at slowing down social struggles. But it was a failure. Social struggles by both workers and students broadened continuously, fed by a growing socioeconomic crisis characterized by a high rate of inflation. So after the carrot, Franjeh turned to the stick. The regime took the offensive. From spring 1972 to spring 1973 the Salam government was charged with repressing the ongoing social struggles in the most brutal manner. Several hundred striking teachers were fired; two striking workers of the Ghandour factory in Beirut fell under police bullets; two peasants participating in a demonstration in the south of Lebanon were also gunned down. On each occasion there was a stirring of popular anger, but it was quickly deflated by the maneuvers of the bourgeois and

Stalinist reformists. Bourgeois morale was in good shape; an atmosphere of fear gripped the country.

April 10, 1973, saw the Israeli pirate raid on Beirut, the raid that killed three leaders of the Palestinian resistance. The masses were enraged at the inaction of the state. They turned out massively for the funerals of the three victims. Some 250,000 people took to the streets, shouting their defiance of a state that murders workers but remains passive in face of Israel; 250,000 people organized by the armed militants of the Palestinian resistance. There was a radical change in the atmosphere. It was again possible to breathe the free air of 1969 and 1970, when the resistance was at its height. The bourgeois state saw all its efforts crumbling. It was not long in reacting.

In May 1973 the Lebanese army launched an offensive against the Palestinian resistance. The reason for it was clear: The linkup between the rise of social struggles and the Palestinian resistance had to be prevented from being renewed; the resistance had to be prevented from taking the bull by the horns. American imperialism could only approve. But the army failed; it halted its offensive without having created a relationship of forces favorable to it. And there was threat of worse; the Muslim masses — whose anti-imperialism was strengthened by their confessional opposition to the pro-West Christians (which dates from the rise of Nasserism) — threatened to come to the aid of the resistance. The bourgeois regime had to alter its tactics.

From that point on, it based itself on the reformist faction of the Lebanese bourgeoisie represented by Kemal Jumblatt, leader of the Druze community and of a grouping of progressive organizations in which the Communist party holds a strong position, having followed the purest Stalinist tradition of tailoring the "national" bourgeoisie. The members of Jumblatt's party who were ministers in the Takeddin Solh governments expressed the equilibrium of forces between the bourgeoisie and the popular masses during this period. But at the same time, the bourgeois army was trying to polish up its image. It strengthened itself and launched a series of man-hunts against "outlaws" of various guerrilla groups. This culminated in the military quartering of the old markets of the city of Tripoli in northern Leb-

anon, an old Nasserist bastion and still in the forefront of anti-imperialist struggles. Since it was only a question of "delinquents," the reformist left did nothing; it even applauded the upholders of "order." In reality, by creating a new image the army was creating the conditions for an intervention in the field of social and political struggles. The threshold would soon be crossed.

At the beginning of March this year the army repressed a demonstration in Sidon in southern Lebanon in support of fishermen struggling against the creation of a capitalist monopoly of fishing. There were victims, among them a former Nasserist parliament member. The city rose up: barricades, popular committees, armed Lebanese and Palestinian militants; the defense of the city was organized. An attempt at mediation by reformists, Jumblatist ministers and Stalinist representatives, failed miserably. New clashes between the population and the army touched off a solidarity movement in Beirut and Tripoli. There were demonstrations with red banners organized by armed Lebanese and Palestinian militants. The state had to retreat; the bourgeois regime had been flouted; the reformists could do nothing; they had to follow the wave, out of fear of being completely cut off.

This time bourgeois morale was very low. They were terrified. At the beginning of the year the bourgeois far-right, represented by the Phalangist party — an agent of American imperialism and armed to the teeth by imperialism, the membership of which is almost exclusively Christian (Maronite) — had already launched a violent propaganda campaign against the Palestinian resistance. In face of the Sidon insurrection the Phalange organized a big demonstration to support the army; it was held in the Christian neighborhoods of Beirut, which served only to aggravate the confessional polarization with respect to the army. This, it is true, drowned the class content of the ongoing struggles, but at the same time it bolstered general Muslim opposition to the army (whose chief of staff is traditionally a Maronite). Continuing its trajectory, the Phalangist party pushed toward a conflict.

On April 13 twenty-seven Palestinians were slaughtered in cold blood by the Phalangist militia, a deliberate provocation aimed at touching off a confrontation that would necessitate the intervention of the army and the proclamation of a state of emergency. In reality, the Phalangists wanted the establishment of a military government, which alone would be capable of guaranteeing the bourgeois order and imposing the imperialist conditions on the Palestinian resistance several months before the opening of the Geneva conference on the Middle East.

The response of the Palestinian fighters was violent: All the Phalangist headquarters were attacked with machine guns and mortar; factories and stores belonging to Phalangists were dynamited. It was a real war, during which the Phalangists deployed their whole army.

Concurrently, the reformist left warned against the army intervention that was demanded by the Phalangists. The head of the government, himself a bourgeois reformist, refused to proclaim a state of emergency. Under these conditions, a move of force by the army would have been seen not as an act of arbitration, but as an action to support the Christian far right; the Muslim majority of the population opposed it. (It should be noted that the head of the government is traditionally a Muslim.) The Phalangists lost the first round; the strong state was blocked.

They then prepared for the second round. The first step was to provoke the resignation of the Solh government. The Phalangist ministers withdrew, followed by their allies and the representatives of other bourgeois factions. On May 15 the head of the government found himself compelled to resign, but not before publicly denouncing the Phalangist plot. On May 21 the Phalangists again launched the battle, which had died down after the first round; they struck with all their strength to turn the tension to their advantage. They thought they had created conditions sufficient to carry out their plan; the president of the republic was with them.

On the night of May 23 the new government was announced: seven generals and one civilian (a banker, as if by chance!). The mixture was well thought out: several generals capable of pleasing the Muslim population had been chosen. But it did not work!

Far from frightening people, the announcement of the military government provoked a general insurrection of all the Muslim regions of Lebanon, an insurrection that fused with the Palestinian resistance already in place. Barricades went up everywhere, sandbags were laid out, armed blockades were formed, advance posts clashed with Phalangists, who were joined by all the reactionaries of the Christian neighborhoods of Beirut.

The military government was called upon to resign by a general assembly of religious leaders, notables, and bourgeois Muslims. But in fact, these people were only repeating what the insurgent masses were affirming out loud. The Muslim bourgeoisie, frightened by the prospect of a clash between the army and a population that was obviously much more numerous but also very well armed, had no choice but to line up with the mass opposition to the military government. The force of disuasion was very

great; the army could not risk the adventure. It is itself threatened by confessional division.

On May 26, at 2:00 p.m., the military government presented its resignation. The Phalangist plot had failed; bourgeois order was more than shaken; American imperialism received a new slap in the face after the blows that had been dealt it by the peoples of Indochina. Twelve years after Iraq, ten years after Indonesia, eight years after Greece, and two years after Chile, it was proven once again — this time through a positive demonstration instead of a negative one — that a reactionary coup can be thwarted and vanquished only by the determination of the masses to confront it with arms. Portugal has already shown the way.

But in Lebanon the arming of the masses is a constant fact of political life. At bottom, the insurrection was spontaneous; moreover, that is why it was

confessional to a large extent. It is here that all the opportunism of the Stalinists becomes clear: They followed the wave, participated in the mobilization, and took up arms and fought the Phalangists. But their tailendism was obvious as well: They participated in assemblies that included Muslim notables and based themselves on the confessional wave without once distinguishing themselves by a class voice. They harmonized totally with the confessional chorus instead of articulating the real character of the conflicts, their antibourgeois and anti-imperialist nature. They allowed the Muslim bourgeoisie to coopt the movement. Further, they proclaimed their support for the new head of the government, Karameh, a notorious capitalist! For them, the struggle against the bourgeois far right is carried out in alliance with the moderate and reformist bourgeoisie. For us, this struggle is only a springboard for the struggle against the bourgeoisie as a whole!

## THE INTERVENTION OF THE RCG

The Revolutionary Communist Group in Lebanon, affiliated to the Fourth International, actively intervened in the recent events in Beirut.

\*Militarily, our comrades of the RCG were part of the general armed mobilization in the popular neighborhoods. They participated on the barricades and in the armed patrols. In some neighborhoods, they were members of political-military coordinating committees including the organizations of the Palestinian resistance, the Stalinists, and the nationalist organizations.

\*Politically, our comrades distributed several thousand leaflets on May 24 calling for the overthrow of the military government. They produced a special issue of their fortnightly, *Mal'amal* (What Is To Be Done), dealing with the fall of the government of the generals, several hundred copies of which were sold in the popular neighborhoods.

## editorial (cont'd. from p. 32)

"the instrument of a terrorist plot prepared against Argentina by the international conspirators of the Fourth International." The specialists in torture shrink from no accusation, no matter how grotesque, in justifying their actions.

Denunciation of the savage repression being carried out by the Argentine government and militant solidarity with the workers, the vanguard, and all the victims of this policy must become priority tasks today. We must not allow the conditions for another Chile to be created in Argentina today.

FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!

LIFT THE STATE OF SIEGE AND REPEAL THE "SECURITY LAW"!

SOLIDARITY WITH THE MOBILIZATIONS OF THE ARGENTINE WORKERS!

SOLIDARITY WITH ALL THE VICTIMS OF THE TERROR AND REPRESSION CARRIED OUT BY THE ARMY, THE POLICE, AND THE PARALLEL GANGS OPERATING IN THE SERVICE OF LOPEZ REGA AND ISABEL PERON!

June 10, 1975

One year after the death of Juan Perón, Argentina is racked by a generalized economic, political, and social crisis.

During the past few months the world economic recession has had its effects in Argentina, causing a fall of agricultural and industrial exports and an increase in the costs of imports. The plans for massive investment and accelerated industrial development and the hopes that had been placed on European and Japanese investment and on aid from the bureaucratized workers states have not been realized. Inflation, which was supposed to have been brought under control, is once again running at a gallop, prices increasing 10.4 percent last month alone.

The economic projects of the Peronist regime have failed completely. The policy of the so-called Social Pact, which was supposed to put the brakes on workers combativity and contain wages by relying on the role and increased weight of the Peronist trade-union bureaucracy and by making some concessions, has also failed. The successive readjustments of wages have lagged far behind the rate of inflation. During past months there has been a proliferation of prolonged strikes and partial mobilizations of the workers (as in Villa Constitución) in defense of the buying power of the workers and of democratic and trade-union rights; these mobilizations have challenged the Social Pact, which is now seen by everyone as a weapon of the bourgeoisie against the workers.

Once again, the Argentine workers movement, especially its most advanced and combative sectors, has shown its strength against the maneuvers and attacks of the bourgeois regime.

But the weight of a powerful trade-union bureaucracy completely beholden to a bourgeois political leadership (Peronism) and the absence of any political expression for the most combative sectors of workers who have broken in practice with the bureaucracy continue to limit the offensive capacities of the proletariat.

Although the present mobilizations, which are mainly defensive, have been able to stymie the projects of the government, they have had no political outlet and thus have not endangered the regime, at least up to now.

The strength and combativity of the Argentine proletariat, which has not experienced a major defeat like the Brazilian proletariat in 1964 or the Chilean proletariat in 1973, continues to be the main obstacle to the economic, political, and social stabilization of the Argentine bourgeoisie's and imperialism's regime of exploitation, as was the case under the military dictatorship.

As has been proven both by the failure of the military dictatorship and by the failure of the Social Pact, this stabilization requires that the working class be driven back, that a profound defeat be inflicted on it. But today the regime of Isabel Perón is too weak and, most important, too badly divided to openly commit itself to such a road. Lacking any overall strategy, it is carrying out a day-to-day policy aimed at preserving an institutional legality that has been emptied of all content by an avalanche of emergency laws, a legality behind which the most savage forms of selective repression are proliferating.

Revolutionary militants, combative worker leaders who have broken with the trade-union bureaucracy, Peronist militants who have become oppositionists, and journalists and artists who are simply considered too liberal are the victims of this repression today.

The victims of the AAA (Argentine Anticomunist Alliance), whose bodies have been found riddled with bullets or burned up during the past year, are counted in the hundreds. A powerful parallel police force is at work, and it enjoys the complete complicity of the regime, as is proven by the murders of Silvio Frondizi and the deputy Ortega Peña, kidnapped or slaughtered in the middle of Buenos Aires.

The number of political prisoners "placed at the disposal of the executive power" and supposedly awaiting trial runs into the thousands. The aim of this policy of terror and repression, whose scope and brutality goes well beyond that of the policy of the Lonnie military dictatorship, is clear: to crush the Argentine vanguard and eliminate the most conscious and combative militants of the workers movement, whose action, as can be seen in the many recent conflicts, is challenging both the regime and the influence of the trade-union bureaucracy over the workers; to prop up the Peronist government with the armed forces. To justify such a policy and such methods, the Argentine government, which in its official propaganda continues to call itself a "people's government," has resorted to old methods: According to the regime, the struggles of the Argentine vanguard are not rooted in the objective conditions and social contradictions of the country but are instead the product of an international plot against Argentina directed from abroad. This is the way the murders and arrests of many Latin American refugees in Argentina — Chileans, Uruguayans, Brazilians — have been justified and exploited.

In the same way, after the recent arrest of fourteen revolutionary Marxist militants, two of whom were murdered in cold blood "while trying to escape," the police announced that they had dismantled