

EC DISCUSSION DOCUMENT  
1976 CONVENTION

not simply an "international perspective" -  
rather a perspective on the into context  
in which we work -  
plus examples that are helpful -

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

discussion of JRP is discussion of consciousness &  
the class -

Preface

The following discussion document on International Perspectives is substantially longer than the other 3 convention discussion documents. This was unavoidable due to our emphasis on Teamster work over the past 6 months, and thus the lack of time and resources to keep the organization informed of our analysis of international developments.

For the purpose of the convention, the key sections of this document are those on Portugal, Spain, and Southern Africa. Following the convention, there will be on-going discussion and education organized on the other important sections of our international perspectives.

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1. The depression of 1974-75, the Portuguese revolution, and the liberation of Angola are the events that mark the turning point in world politics. Together they opened a new era of revolution. The arena for this new period is focussed in Southern Europe and Southern Africa. These areas are the most advanced expressions of an international process, the crisis of world capitalism which is preparing the pre-condition for world socialist revolution.

2. The world economic crisis ended the long post-World War II boom. The post-war economy and expansion were based on two props. Arms production regulated the US economy, evening out the sharp edges of the business cycle. Capital that might have fueled run-away booms was drained off the system to pay for the waste production of war goods. The constantly expanding state market for arms prevented busts. The permanent arms economy was superimposed over capitalist imperialism. But imperialism in a sharply altered historical context. Arms spending developed in a period in which the US had no serious capitalist competition for the world market. While arms regulated the US economy, the US market and US capital dominated and regulated world capitalist economy. The imperialist rivalry of the period was primarily between Russia and the US, a struggle decisively political and military--and not competition for the world market. That imperialist rivalry, and the absence of serious inter-imperialist capitalist rivalry, were the pre-condition for the US's ability and willingness to afford the enormous drain of the permanent arms budget.

Britain?



3. In the new period we are in, capitalism faces a long-term, deep economic crisis. US capital now confronts strong competition for the world market from rival capitalist nations. The new economic crisis resembles the old crisis of capitalist imperialism, now coupled to the contradictions of the permanent arms economy. The crisis of imperialism arises from the system of national economies breaking out of the restrictions of state boundaries and become an international economy. World economy, however, is unattached to any state power, it is almost totally unregulated, undirected by any political center. The anarchy of capitalist production has been raised to an international scale, with ever more intense international booms and slumps. In the last period of world capitalist crisis, the anarchy of world economy leads to the breakdown of capital accumulation in the era 1914-45.

4. Today the potential exists for an even more destructive crisis. World economy is more concentrated and interrelated than before. Yet even the most integrated economy, the European Common Market, lacks political integration. The chaotic monetary system threatens stable trade. Every unevenness of national inflation, every devaluation, every nationally decided fiscal, monetary, or trade policy threatens the stability of the international system. The contradiction between international economy and national capital with nation states threatens to once again rip apart the fabric of capitalist equilibrium.

5. The crisis of capitalist imperialism is aggravated by the crisis of the permanent arms economy. US capital is no longer able to shoulder an ever-increasing arms budget. The stagnation of arms production drains the competitiveness of US capitalism. Arms production has had to be cut as a percentage of GNP, further destabilising the system in a period in which international competition sharpens the boom-bust cycle. Yet the mass of the inflationary arms budget has had to be raised. Continuing US imperialist rivalry with Russia, as well as domestic economy, demands a continuing huge arms budget. Stagflation cycles (chronic inflation and stagnation) are the specific form of the crisis of the arms economy. The economic crisis of the imperialist rivalry with bureaucratic collectivism is today joined to the economic crisis of inter-imperialist capitalist rivalry. Together they have introduced a long-term, deep crisis for the world capitalist economy.

6. Within the context of crisis, the boom and slump continues. The world depression of 1974-75 is being succeeded by the recovery and boom of 1976-77. The boom will be too short-lived to lead to any breakthrough in the world crisis. The recovery itself will only intensify the difficulties of Southern Europe. It is in Europe where the contradiction between an integrated market and competing national capitals is greatest and that the threat is most explosive. In the weak links of Southern Europe, the economic crisis is leading to a pre-revolutionary crisis. Southern European economies still have large areas of structural backwardness and surplus labor. With the post-war boom in the Common Market, Southern Europe experienced very rapid growth, the rise of a large proletariat (2-3 times its pre-war



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offensive excellent strategically -

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size in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece and France), and thorough dependence on the stronger economies of Northern Europe and the US. Thus Southern Europe was originally a low wage market for Northern European and US multi-national growth. As surplus labor became tighter, however, there developed in Southern Europe a combative working class based in modern industry whose aspirations are for conditions similar to those of the advanced countries. The militancy of this proletariat was developed even before the crisis. The crisis now gives it an impulse toward revolution. The coming recovery will center in the US, Germany, and Japan. The level of political crisis in Southern Europe is such that little capital will be invested in these areas, when high profit returns are possible in more stable areas. With boom in the more advanced countries, rates of growth in Southern Europe will continue to deteriorate their position on the world market, necessitating sharper austerity measures, and further currency devaluations. The result will be more inflation and greater attacks on the living standards of the masses. This spur to class struggle will in turn intensify capital flight, lack of investment, etc. Economic crisis and political crisis will fatten off each other, opening the area to pre-revolutionary crisis.

proletarian workers?  
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7. Under the impact of the crisis and of sharper class struggles, there is a revival of class politics. Two tendencies are already evident. The first is the revival of traditional organizations, the growth of the Socialist Parties and the Communist Parties. The second is the strengthening of the revolutionary current within the working class. The new generation of workers, new to politics, will usually have to work their way through the traditional SP's and CP's before coming to full revolutionary politics. However, despite the hold of these parties, the new generation of workers has shown its willingness to follow the lead of credible revolutionary organizations for specific aspects of the class struggle. As the crisis develops, the employers' offensive will escalate in boom as well as in slump. The tendency will be not just to prevent new reforms, but to cut back on past gains to aid the competitiveness of national capital. The vehicles for this will be the traditional SP's and CP's. Increasingly, they will be shifted from being strategists for reform to being the first-line defenders of capitalist austerity. It is this which will open the road to the creation of independent revolutionary workers' parties. The timing and tempo of this, the subjective factor, is now the key to world politics. The conditions which open the possibility to socialist revolution--the failure of bourgeois democracy to deviate reforms--are also the conditions which open the road to the right, to fascist and semi-fascist solutions. Already there are the defeats in Chile and Argentina, where economic and political crisis did not produce in sufficient time a well-organized proletarian vanguard party.

8. The Portuguese revolution started as a democratic revolution against fascism. Initiated by the petit bourgeoisie, it has unfolded as a proletarian revolution. The purging of fascists from the state apparatus and factory administrations took on the content of workers' control. The struggle against neo-colonialism in Africa

became a struggle against the capitalists responsible for neo-colonialism. In the modern world the only force for democracy and anti-imperialism is the proletariat. The workers' struggles for these goals opened the dynamic of a permanent revolution, moving the revolution from a democratic to a proletarian revolution. The Portuguese workers raised all of the politics of revolutionary Marxism-- workers' control, soviets, workers' militias, armed insurrection, and the proletarian dictatorship. They have placed socialist revolution on the agenda. They have validated Marxism as the historic goal and direction of the working class struggle.

9. At the start of the Portuguese revolution, there did not exist a revolutionary party in Portugal. The essential nucleus for a revolutionary party had been grouped together in the PRP, the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat. At the start of the revolution, it had a small number of members, a revolutionary program, and was fused to a layer of revolutionary workers. At each stage of the revolution, the PRP proposed initiatives which advanced the struggle and led to its growing size and influence. It was the party to first pose the question of class power in the form of revolutionary councils of workers, soldiers, and sailors. It initiated the COPCON document, SUV, FUR, and many other measures which developed the revolutionary process. Building a party in the course of the revolution is the most dangerous task which can confront revolutionaries. It occurs in a situation in which the Portuguese workers became "a-partyist"-- hostile to the betrayal of the left parties and their use of the working class for their own sectarian goals. A-partyism had a progressive character. It developed the independence of the working class from the SP and the CP, along with developing its radicalism. It also provided an opening for the PRP which always fought for the workers' goals in a non-sectarian manner. At times, this tendency towards a-partyism has prevented the PRP from fighting sharply enough for its own organizational development. Today, a-partyism is not progressive. It plays into the hands of the CP. If it is not overcome, it will be an obstacle to the creation of the PRP as a mass party, and a great danger for the revolution.

In the course of the revolution, the PRP has grown from a small handful to the essential core of a party. The Nov. 25th coup speeded up the disintegration of the centrist and petit bourgeois revolutionary tendencies, while tempering the PRP as a revolutionary party. The dozens of radical sects at the start of the revolution confused the process of party building. Today, only the PRP and the Maoist UDP are serious poles to the left of the CP. The PRP's ability to build a party in the next working class upsurge is therefore strengthened. In the summer and fall of 1975, Portugal was in a revolutionary situation. In this period the PRP played a key political role in sharply posing the question of workers' power, winning over sections of the army, and arming the proletariat. The PRP fought for the only successful resolution of the revolutionary situation, the policy of armed insurrection. The organizational weakness of the PRP made it impossible to break the hold of the CP. The CP's opposition to working class power sealed

Goal to write a long piece on Portugal

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the fate of the revolution at this stage. The unsteady tension of dual power cannot last long. It must be solved by one class or the other.

The bourgeoisie found a working class mobilized for power, but without the class organization and revolutionary leadership sufficient to achieve it. The right wing struck on November 25th. With the decisive right-wing leadership, the revolutionary situation dissolved with comparative ease. The army and state apparatus were purged. In the factories, the old administrators were brought back. The developing organs of dual power fell apart. Yet the bourgeois offensive was not strong enough to crush the workers. Powerful workers' commissions and workers' control survived. The bourgeoisie remain divided on how to contain the workers' movement. The crushing of the workers' movement would require civil war. The petit bourgeois remember and fear fascism. It hesitates to support decisive bourgeois policy which will lead to the restoration of fascism. As a result, the bourgeoisie and the petit bourgeoisie are still divided and political crisis continues.

The immediate revolutionary situation was dissolved, but the revolutionary period continues. The political and economic crisis deepens. No bourgeois government is yet strong enough to introduce measures able to resolve the crisis on a capitalist basis. Neither class is yet able to win, which, in this context, means the ability to crush the other class. The alternatives remain socialism or fascism, and new revolutionary situations will develop.

The Russian Revolution solved its tasks in 9 months. The German Revolution went on for 5 years, due to the absence of a revolutionary party at the outset of the revolution. The Portuguese revolution has already lasted more than 2 years. It will continue until the PRP has been transformed into a mass party able to be used by the workers as the instrument for their liberation. If the PRP does not achieve this in sufficient time, the bourgeoisie will come to a unified policy, will mobilize the petit bourgeoisie to crush the working class, and will re-introduce a fascist state which will destroy all working class organization. Already a new working class revival is underway. It started in February, around the liberation of political prisoners. In March and April, it moved to struggles over wages and workers' control. In the parliamentary elections of April, the bourgeois offensive, while not derailed, was set back. The right failed to win enough votes to create a strong bourgeois government able to open a constitutional road to the counter-revolution. Revolutionary workers used the elections to start a new offensive against the right, breaking up right-wing meetings and fighting the police. The right plans to overcome this setback in the presidential elections. It has achieved unified support for Eanes, head of the armed forces and organizer of the Nov. 25th coup. This support stretches from outright fascists to the SP. A clear left alternative exists in the candidacy of Otelo de Carvalho. Carvalho is not a firm revolutionary. He is a centrist who has vacillated at crucial moments. In the period since Nov. 25, he has been forced to break with the MFA (Armed Forces Movement), and has linked his release from prison as the lever to free all

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revolutionary prisoners. Otelo is running on the program of the COPCON document, socialization of the economy under workers' control, democratization of the army, and the creation of a state based on the organs of popular power. The significance of the campaign is not its electoral support, but its use as a vehicle for the mobilization of workers around the question of popular power. Already this had enormous impact in reviving the working class. The Carvalho campaign has become the campaign of the movement for popular power. In this campaign, the PRP has the possibility for large growth. The UDP supports the campaign, but is against the slogans of popular power, preferring a more conservative anti-fascist emphasis. The CP is placed in a bind. The workers hate Eanes. But if the CP does not support Eanes, it will not be part of the future government. If it does, party discipline will crumble. The SP is also experiencing crisis over support of Eanes. Its working class left-wing is in open rebellion, some sections publically supporting Otelo. Cooperation with the bourgeoisie now threatens the CP's relations with the working class. The campaign may provide the basis for splitting the CP. Now that it has initiated this mobilization, the test of the PRP will be whether it can use it to also build an independent revolutionary party. Speed is crucial.

Eanes's victory, and his agreement to appoint a weak minority SP government, with operational officers in the cabinet, will open up a new period of political instability. This instability, along with mounting economic crisis, may provoke a new revolutionary situation. The next revolutionary situation will have no better outcome than the last unless the PRP emerges as a mass party. The tempo of events has been slower than we had originally expected. But within the next year or two, a party able to seize power must be built. It can only be built through the PRP. The drive of the working class to revolution will aid this. Proletarian revolutions, because they are the conscious expression of the majority of the workers, are often interrupted in mid-course, set back, and forced to start up again, achieving what seemed to be already accomplished. The working class recoils from the difficulty of its tasks, until the situation has been created which makes all turning back impossible, and conditions themselves make revolution inevitable. Revolution is inevitable. Success is not. The fate of Chile and Argentina await the Portuguese workers unless they construct a mass revolutionary party able to destroy the old state and introduce a new state based on workers' councils, the proletarian dictatorship.

In Spain, a pre-revolutionary period is maturing. The big capitalists understand that fascism cannot survive Franco. In the last years before Franco's death, they began the work for the transition to bourgeois democracy. The ruling class understand that the working class and the oppressed nationalities can no longer be dealt with solely by a policy of repression. Working class militancy threatens to turn to revolutionary activity if no reformist labor organizations are developed as a buffer between the working class and the bosses.



The continued growth of a Spanish economy increasingly integrated with Europe demands entry into the Common Market. This is precluded so long as fascism remains. Therefore the capitalists have shifted from fascism to bourgeois democracy. Two years ago, they forced through Arias's appointment as prime minister by Franco to prepare the transition. Small and medium capitalists, recognizing the Arias regime as the representative of big capital, are still more oppositional. In the last period, they have developed sympathies for the Democratic Convergence (the SP and Christian Democratic coalition).

The Arias's government's attempt at reform from above is not working. The Francoist right, the "Bunker," prevents the introduction of any but weak, tentative reforms. Democratization demands trade union rights. But in the economic crisis, the government has attempted to introduce wage controls. The fascist reformers draw back from legalizing trade unions. They also want to continue the ban on the CP, the largest party in the working class.

Their vacillating reform, rather than containing workers' desires, have stimulated a mounting level of class struggle. Within the shell of the regime, a pre-revolutionary crisis is breaking out. There is no peaceful reform from above by fascism. Demonstrations, strikes and general strikes are being met with arrests, the fascist police interfering in strikes, killing workers. As a sign of the weakness of the regime, the army and the church have carefully disassociated themselves from these dying gasps of Francoism.

When the Spanish revolution begins, it will start on a higher level than the Portuguese revolution. The revolution which overthrows fascism will be proletarian in its dynamic from the beginning, with a high level of class consciousness and organization. Factory assemblies, workers' commissions, and the links between the commissions which enable the calling of a general strike, exist already under fascism.

Only the working class can bring democracy to Spain. When it does, it will move to purge the state, the police, and the factories of fascist collaborators. The strong but illegal workers' commissions will develop as organs of dual power in the factories, much more the instruments of struggle than the trade unions. Through purging and the power of the workers' commissions, the revolution will move quickly towards the question of workers' control. As in Portugal, the greatest obstacle to the proletariat marching to revolution is the CP. Social democracy in Spain, as in Portugal, is primarily an exile group of petit bourgeois, with little active base in the working class. Capital and Western imperialism, with the SP's cooperation, will use it as a counter-weight to the CP. The CP, excluded from the Democratic Convergence, constructed its own alliance

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with "dynamic sectors of capital," the Democratic Junta. To achieve legality and entry into a bourgeois government, the CP has come out in support of the Common Market, a bigger army budget, and a national reconciliation with fascists, etc. It has opposed the growing radicalism of the Spanish workers, and tried to break some general strikes.

The failure of the Arias regime to carry out a peaceful transition, the growing radicalism of the workers, and the CP's willingness to break strikes for an alliance with the bourgeoisie, convinced the latter to merge the Democratic Convergence and the Democratic Junta. Sections of the petit bourgeoisie recognize that they need the support of the CP to carry out democratization while containing the workers' drive to revolution. In return, they have promised to legalize the CP and the possibility of a popular front cabinet.

The CP will continue to trade off workers' aims for alliances with the bourgeoisie. At the initial stages of the revolution, it will grow rapidly in members and influence, as the largest organized force within the working class. Already workers have been willing to break with the CP and accept revolutionary leadership. At crucial moments, the revolutionary left will be able to outflank the CP when the working class refuses to allow its struggles to be subordinated to the CP's maneuvers with the capitalists.

A large number of revolutionary non-stalinist groups have developed in Spain. Growing up in illegal conditions, isolated, they are often confined to one or a few cities, and fragmented on questions of theory. They share a common sense of themselves as a movement--the communist left--The most significant of the many groups are Action Communista, and the Organization of the Spanish Communist Left (OICE). The former led a general strike in Catalonia this winter, the latter played a leading role in the uprising in Vitoria. The ideological debate within the communist left failed to produce a regroupment into a revolutionary Marxist party last year. Now, their theoretical differences are being tested in action. A rapid sorting-out is needed if a unified party is to develop at the crucial start of the revolution. Construction of a revolutionary party in Spain must move more rapidly than in Portugal. If the Spanish revolution begins while the Portuguese revolution is going on, it will enormously strengthen the latter, and open the possibility of the two revolutions going forward to victory together.

15. Italy is the sick man of capitalism. With large areas of structural backwardness, its crisis is more intense than the rest of Europe. Italian workers are militant, and class conscious, keeping wages up and preventing layoffs. The exhaustion of foreign reserves led to the collapse of the lira which in turn produced austerity measures. These have now locked Italy into worse stagnation and hyper-inflation, weakening Italy

## Italy's recovery and competitiveness.

*A* The Christian Democrats, Italy's right wing party, are incompetent and not to be trusted with running a modern economy efficiently in an economic crisis. They lack the support necessary for introducing severe austerity measures. That support could be provided by the CP. But a coalition government with the CP threatens further capital flight, further decline of the lira, and a radicalization of the workers. The U.S. and the Vatican, the two pillars of the Christian Democrats, are against a coalition with the CP.)

*X* 16. The June elections will probably force through a coalition government. In the elections the CP should emerge as the largest party in Italy with over 35% of the vote. The CP will be in a position to form a government with the SP and some smaller bourgeois parties. The CP, however, prefers an "historic compromise," a coalition with the Christian Democrats. The lesson the CP draws from Chile is that the way to prevent a right wing army coup is to collaborate with the right wing party, and its policies. The CP historic compromise is the defense of the competitive position of the Italian national capital, the introduction of honest, efficient administration, and the containment of the working classes' living standards.

Italian capital has exhausted social democracy. Now it will lean upon the CP for support for its policies within the working class. Yet it hesitates before this decline. The CP has done everything to give assurances. It is for coalition with a disintegrating right wing party. The CP has pledged no nationalization. It promises to maintain Italy in NATO and the Common Market. It supports pluralist, bourgeois democracy. While it criticizes Russia, it refuses to break with Moscow. Consequently, none of the guarantees are enough for Washington. Kissinger argues that the entry of the CP into the government will start a European domino reaction. CPs will then enter governments in France, Spain and Greece. NATO will break up. Dependent on Washington, the CD's have resisted voluntary coalitions with the CP. After the elections, they may have no other options.

*X* 17. The CP will enter the government not to introduce reform, but austerity. Its entry will have a profoundly different impact on workers' consciousness. Workers will feel that this is a victory produced by their actions, strikes, occupations, and mass movements. It will increase workers' self confidence and desire to achieve their class aims. CP entry into government during an economic crisis may unleash a new mass offensive from below and open up a pre-revolutionary crisis. A CP responsible for government policies in an economic crisis will be unable to contain workers' struggles. This situation opens up great vistas for the revolutionary left. The Italian revolutionary left is already a considerable factor in working class politics. Three left organizations have daily papers, and a combined membership of 20,000-30,000. They share traditions of a Maoist, centrist character. It is anti-Stalinist, third worldish. It is apologetic of China's foreign policy, but



unwilling to be subordinate to it. Lotta Continua, the most middle class and spontaneist of the 3 groups is now tailing the CP and declining as a serious force. The largest group, PDUP, is centrist. It is split between a group which believes the CP can be won to revolution, and a more radical working class section who want a coalition government with the SP and the CP. Some of the left wing's positions shade over to those of Avanguardia Operaia. This group is the most important, although not the largest, of the Italian left groups. It has a serious rank and file strategy and base in the unions, and is based on a strong factory cell organization. It is not a fully Marxist organization. Its pro-Maoism makes it unclear on questions of workers' democracy and revolution. At an early stage of the crisis, Avanguardia may emerge as the only credible left alternative. It is the revolutionary workers in Avanguardia whose winning the organization to a fully marxist policy which is decisive for the construction of a revolutionary workers' party in Italy. This may require a period of splits and fusions. It is the future development of Avanguardia which is the best prospect for the creation of a revolutionary party in the coming period.

17. In southern Africa, the completion of the struggle against colonialism and white settler rule is closely tied to the beginning of social revolution. Capitalism in southern Africa rests upon the developed capitalist economy of South Africa. White supremacist rule in South Africa was reinforced by Portuguese colonialism. The populations of Portugal's colonies, Angola and Mozambique, were part of the reserve labor force of the South African mines. This Portuguese-South African relationship survived the formation of independent African states in southern Africa--Zambia, Zaire, etc. These new states are universally plagued by the legacy of colonialism, continuing imperialist exploitation, and dependency on their old colonial rulers for loans, credits, investments, etc. The neo-colonial dependence of independent Africa, the continuing presence of Portugal, and South African military protection preserved white rule in Rhodesia.

18. These conditions laid the basis for the policy of detente outlined by South Africa. White rule inside South Africa was adjusted to meet the need for a large, black industrial work force. "Separate development" was developed to force blacks to live in desolate "autonomous tribal homeland" areas while working in the developed white-owned industrial regions. Detente also meant establishing economic relations with independent African states to provide markets for South African exports and capital. Detente was also a response to those independent black states who wanted a negotiated settlement with South Africa. The long-term aim of detente was the creation of a tacit alliance between white and black capitalist regimes in southern Africa. This policy was a general success until the outbreak of the Portuguese revolution and the unravelling of Portuguese colonial power.

19. Portugal, because of its own poverty, could not establish indirect neo-colonial transformation of its former colonies. The collapse of its rule in Angola opened up possibilities for more radical alternatives represented by the national liberation movement, MPLA. The MPLA, led by urban petit bourgeois elements, was forced to wage a 15-year armed struggle in order to unify the country, overcome tribal divisions, and defeat Portugal militarily. In doing so, MPLA was obliged to mobilize the urban working class and sub-proletariat. Through MPLA, an organized, politically conscious working class movement began to develop. MPLA, unlike earlier national liberation groups, was also forced to struggle against neo-colonialism. The neo-colonial alternative was organized in Angola in the form of the FNLA and UNITA. MPLA waged a simultaneous battle against neo-colonialism as well as tribalism. This made the role of the nationally conscious urban and agricultural proletariat even more important than in previous national liberation struggles in black Africa.

Our support for MPLA in the Angolan war was based upon a series of factors; MPLA represented the only genuine national force, as opposed to the tribalist and neo-colonialist FNLA and UNITA; the considerable degree of working class organization and consciousness organized inside the MPLA; the impact of an MPLA victory on the whole struggle in southern Africa; the importance of an MPLA victory in strengthening the revolutionary struggle in Portugal. We rejected the theory of "superpower rivalry" as the dominant aspect of the war, because it was clear that MPLA's acceptance of Russian and Cuban aid had not made them Russian puppets; Russian aid did not cause MPLA to desert the camp of national liberation.

However, in no way does this mean support of the social program of the MPLA. The MPLA in power has now partially consolidated a new government. The evidence indicates that, as we predicted, the MPLA in power is establishing a national capitalist regime, though a weak one. We of course demand US recognition and an end to all US economic blockade and sabotage of independent Angola. However, we are for deepening the revolutionary struggle that began with the war for national freedom--we are for extending the popular power movement, for the workers' strikes which means building an independent workers' movement and party to carry forward the struggle against the MPLA regime, caught between the demands of the newly independent working class and the demands of world capitalism.

20. The collapse of Portuguese colonial rule led South Africa to step in as the force to prevent an MPLA victory. The complete failure of South Africa's effort has accelerated the crisis in all southern Africa. The momentum toward full-scale war in Zimbabwe is now irreversible. The African states have been compelled to put their weight into it. Detente with South Africa is now in a crisis from which it may never recover. The acute political and economic crisis in Zaire and Zambia have also been accelerated.



The next step in southern African liberation is the war in Zimbabwe. The white Rhodesian regime has now been virtually deserted by its allies. The West has promised economic aid to African states to cushion the effects of breaking economic links with Rhodesia, and has declared its support for "immediate orderly transition to majority rule."

The West sees the handwriting on the wall. The white regime is not likely to survive the next 2 years. It can no longer guarantee the safety of foreign investments, of access to vital chrome and nickle exports. Even South Africa has stepped back from commitment to militarily defend Rhodesia. It hopes that pressure brought by the guerillas and the economic squeeze will convince the whites to negotiate while they have time left.

The factional and tribal alignments in the Zimbabwean national movement are far more complex than they were in Angola. ZANU has been committed to uncompromising armed struggle and the total destruction of the white regime. Its rival, ZAPU, has been associated with the idea of "negotiated settlement" with the white settlers, a stance so hopeless and discredited among the Zimbabwean masses it has now been suspended. However, ZANU itself is an amalgam that includes tribalist elements and leaders (like Muzorewa) with long opportunist histories. In addition, there are important militant sections of the national movement who are not at this time associated with ZANU. Clearly, of the existing tendencies, we are most favorable to ZANU; however, it is certain that there will be re-alignments and a fundamental sorting out between armed struggle and "compromisist" tendencies in the course of the war which has now begun.

At this stage all sections of the Zimbabwe movement are dependent on arms and base areas in Zambia and Mozambique. The role of these African states is to use the guerrillas to topple the white regime, but not to allow an independent revolutionary Zimbabwean movement to grow or to take power. White rule in Zimbabwe will be destroyed, probably fairly soon. However, any genuine liberation depends on totally crushing the economic power of the white farmers, industrialists, and civil service.

21. While the political crisis of confrontation with white rule intensifies, another process continues throughout southern Africa, the creation of a more advanced modern, conscious working class. The rapid rate of foreign investment in the African states is creating the core of a heavily industrial work force, which can give organization and leadership to other, less developed proletarian or semi-proletarian layers. The South African economy, with its large, black industrial proletariat, now also requires skilled black labor, which requires more than seasonal work at starvation wages. Through struggles in Angola, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa, traditions of struggle are being forged. The economic and social base for a revolutionary workers' movement is rapidly being developed, even as the structures of white rule and neo-colonialism begin to crack.

Even the weak neo-colonialist African bourgeoisies realize that the action of the black South African proletariat will be central to completing the liberation of Africa. Yet they fear the possibility of future proletarian revolution in Africa as much as they feel the military and economic weight of South Africa today.

There is a strong possibility in the immediate future of explosive struggles by the black South African proletariat against the policy of bantustanization, or "separate development," which forces them to accept "citizenship" in so-called "tribal homeland areas." The exact shape or form such struggles may take cannot be easily foreseen. However, in the current crisis, even relatively small actions against grievances like this could rapidly explode into mass strikes and struggles of revolutionary scope.

Successful revolution in southern Africa requires a unified, revolutionary workers' movement in the various countries that directly links the struggle against white colonial rule to the struggle for working class freedom and living standards. Within the national liberation movement, independent workers' parties must be organized that are prepared to carry the struggle for liberation to the end, and in the course of that struggle to fight for workers' control and the socialist revolution. So far, the independent class organization of workers, and even more-so, revolutionary political organization, exist only in fragmentary form. An underground trade union movement has started to develop in South Africa, leading a series of successful strikes in the last 2 years, beginning the process of organizing the South African proletariat, the hope of all Africa. A breakthrough on any particular front of struggle could be the trigger for the new phase of struggle in southern Africa, the trigger for the revolutionary process to bring down the whole rotten structure of capitalism. This is the crisis which has opened in southern Africa, through the end of Portuguese rule and the victory of Angolan national liberation. The struggle in southern Africa is not separate from the struggle in the advanced industrial countries. It is part of proletarian struggle internationally for the socialist revolution. It must now be organized into its own revolutionary workers' parties. The struggle in southern Africa and in southern Europe are the camp of the future, the third camp of socialist revolution.

22. In response to the world crisis, a revolutionary movement is slowly developing. In the post-war period, the revolutionary movement was reduced to small propaganda groups. Composed of a few hundred members or less, mainly students and intellectuals, they had few ties to the labor movement. The student radicalism of the 60's and the colonial revolution revived revolutionary groups. But the tendencies that grew were often new left, third worldish, and Maoist. Now with the rise of the class struggle, the petit bourgeois left is declining and proletarian revolutionary currents are being strengthened at an increasing rate.



Left weirdast in US, Germany + Sweden -

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The most important aspect of this is the crisis of Maoism. The rise of class struggle has lifted the revolutionary camouflage for China's foreign policy. In Angola it collaborated with neo-colonialism. In Portugal, China has consistently lent support to the SP. In opposition to Russian imperialism, it is increasingly for Western imperialism. The greater the development of the workers' struggles internationally, the more the counter-revolutionary character of China's policy will be shown to be. Increasingly the question of class versus class, supplants China's third world strategy. The proletarian currents, those that have used the period immediately before the crisis, the period from 1968 on, to implant themselves in the workers' struggles, have grown. From propoaganda sects they have grown to groups of several thousand members, the beginnings of credible revolutionary alternatives. In this period, some of them are being shaped into the nuclei of revolutionary parties. These proletarian tendencies include the PRP in Portugal, Communist Left in Spain, Avanguardia in Italy, and its allied international groups, and others such as Lutte Ouvriere and Revolution in France. It also includes the growth of the International Socialist tendency to 6 countries.

The basis does not yet exist for the creation of an international organization. Increasingly revolutionary events will sort out these groups in practice. In the next few years, there will be attempts to hold international conferences, create international links, etc. This is the most to be expected until there is a decisive break-through that will start a process of re-groupment and the creation of a new international.

For a whole historic period, the colonial revolution went on in a context of a world dominated by capitalism and Stalinism, and their imperialist rivalry. In the next period the struggle in the colonial and neo-colonial world finds allies in the proletariat of the advanced world. The Portuguese revolution and its relationship to the national liberation struggles in Africa is the first instance of this. The correct relationship between national liberation movements and the revolutionary proletarian movement, which the Comintern established in the 20's, and that we have always fought for, is being re-established. The national liberation movement and the revolutionary workers movement are both absolutely vital components of the world socialist movement. The re-establishment of the close relationship between them finally takes internationalist politics out of the realms of abstraction. There is once more a third force opposing western and stalinist imperialism, the growing force of the proletarian revolution. The necessity for the movements of national liberation to choose between two evils is receding. We are the only natural allies of national liberation, that is the core of real internationalist politics.

THE END