

PORTUGAL: OUR STRUGGLE

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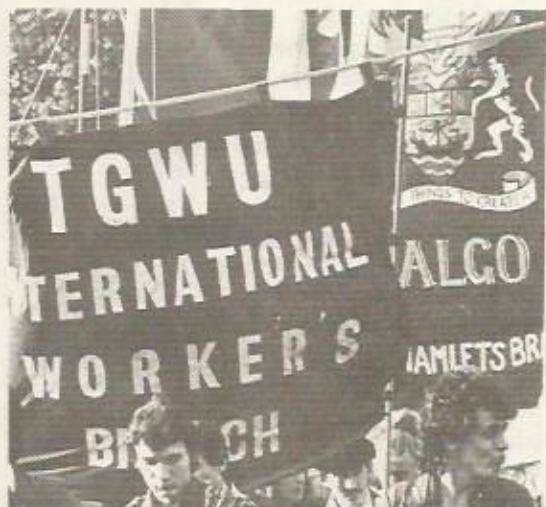


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FOR THE PAST EIGHTEEN MONTHS PORTUGAL HAS FASCINATED AND ABSORBED THE WORLD BECAUSE THERE, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ANY N.A.T.O. COUNTRY SINCE N.A.T.O. WAS CREATED, A REVOLUTION IS IN PROGRESS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO IGNORE IT' ANYONE WISHING TO TAKE PART IN POLITICAL DEBATE TODAY ALMOST ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD IS OBLIGED TO HAVE AN OPINION ABOUT PORTUGAL.

The Times, 8 October 1975.

Throughout 1974 and 1975 Portugal was front page news almost every day in the British press. Figures like Otelo de Carvalho were as familiar to the British reader as Jeremy Thorpe or Georgie Best. Every demonstration, wage rise, slogan or speech was reported and analysed as if what was happening in Portugal was of urgent and immediate importance for Britain.

And of course it was. More interestingly, it still is. And yet, if you pick up a British newspaper today, you will have to search the inside pages to find something out about what is happening in Portugal — and then you won't find much!

The reasons for this peculiar inconsistency in British reporting of events in Portugal will become quite clear from a simple comparison of what was being reported in, say, summer and autumn 1975 and the type of articles which are being penned by our worldly-wise journalists nowadays. Take a few headlines from October 1975:

"PRELUDE TO BLOODSHED" Daily Mail, 1st October.

"LAYING SIEGE TO FREEDOM" Guardian, 1st October.

"FOREIGN 'ARMY' IN PORTUGAL" Daily Telegraph, 3rd October.

"PORTUGAL HAS MONTH TO AVOID TRAGEDY" Daily Telegraph, 4th October.

And on they went: "*Red Sabres rattle over Lisbon sacking*", "*How I was caught in Mob Uproar*"; real blood and thunder stuff! Many bore little relation to anything which was actually happening. What was the 'Foreign army'? A number of foreigners present in Portugal. Was the larger 'army' of foreign tourists under the Fascist regime in Portugal ever referred to in such a way? Was the 'Plan for takeover of Power by Communists', referred to by *The Times* on 24th June 1975, a true representation of events? What plan? What takeover?

And who were the "Tyrants in Portugal" of the *Daily Telegraph*? The fascists who ruled Portugal for forty years? Not in August 1975!

No. It was only after April 1974 when fascism was overthrown in Portugal and the working people went on to fight for their own interests, under the continuing capitalist system which had given rise to fascism, that words like 'foreign armies', 'tyrants' and 'mobs' became the staple diet of British reportage of Portugal. It was only after the fascists were thrown out that 'democracy' became threatened, 'freedom' was laid siege to, and the British press found its 'democratic' voice.

And now, in 1976? Freedom is not restored in Portugal but the situation has changed since summer 1975. And what is the British press saying now?

"Portugal is pursuing much smaller objectives with a sensible appreciation of its own limitations" — *Economist*, February.

"It (the Government) has been able to begin introducing austerity measures without finding itself embroiled in big protest demonstrations as would have been the case a few months ago. This has created a more positive mood among businessmen."

"The crushing in November of an abortive left-wing military uprising has improved the economic horizon marginally from a business point of view." *The Times*, February 3rd.

Even Carvalho, who got coverage like the *Observer's* full double page spread with the heading "Enter Otelo — Centre Stage", has now slipped out of the news. Why? Because he has been leading a quiet and uninteresting life? Well, it depends which way you look at it..... in jail you don't have much choice! The arrest of Carvalho didn't get much coverage in the press. A lot less than the chance remark once made by Carvalho about rounding up the fascists and putting them in Portugal's stadiums. Something, incidentally, which was never done! Now the British press is worried about the fascists, but not Carvalho, a leading anti-fascist.

The clue to the mystery of British journalism, therefore, lies in the purpose behind the reporting. And as every trade unionist who has ever been involved in a strike knows, the idea that the function of the British press is the unbiased reporting of facts for the information of the readers is a joke.

WHO PAYS THE PIPER.....

In Portugal in 1974 the working class were not only winning 50% rises in wages, putting an end to such practices as 90% of the building industry being devoted to the building of luxury homes for a small privileged class. They were throwing up militant and democratic organisations in the factory, the neighbourhoods and the barracks — organisations which expressed the daily needs and the aspirations of the working people — so much so that during the summer of 1974 and into 1975 the working class looked as if it really could topple capitalism in Portugal. Of course, things aren't that simple. There were, and are, a lot of political problems to be solved before a working class state exists in Portugal. But that's how it looked to the capitalist class in Europe. And that's why they were so worried. And that's why they used their press to spread the word, to give advice to their fellow-capitalists and to counter the sympathetic feelings aroused in the British working class.

The *Daily Express*, on 13th November 1975, reporting the visit to Portugal of two Labour MPs who had come back convinced of the justice of the working class cause in Portugal, was quite explicit about the dangers of the situation for capitalism. In a leader (under the rubric 'Daily Express — the Independent Newspaper') with the heading "A Lesson for Us", (who's us?), they tried first to dismiss the reports of the two MPs with ridicule, and then in their final paragraph came out with their real fears:

"Let's all have a horse laugh at the lady dupes who were nuts enough to try to sell Portuguese Communism to us. But let's not forget that some of the nuts would like to get us where Portugal was a few weeks ago."

But all the British newspapers were sure of where the interests of their owners lay.

Remember Spínola who twice attempted to destroy democracy in Portugal after things didn't go quite in the right direction after the overthrow of fascism? Spínola, who is now plotting with a right-wing terrorist organisation in Spain? Spínola, who was thrown out by a working class who were well aware of the leading role he had played under fascism?

"His dedication to the cause of Portugal and of the Portuguese people shines through everything he says and does." *Daily Telegraph*, April 1974.

The *Times* bemoaned the resignation of Spínola in October 1974, because of the "need to control wage inflation" in a period of 25% wage rises. And this was in the same article where they gave the fact of 25% inflation! The *Financial Times* quoted Spínola in its heading: "Strikes Threaten New Freedom". Both Spínola and the *Financial Times*, knew whose freedom strikes threaten, just as well as we know! Even the *Guardian* warned: "Leftists in danger of stifling Spínola reform programme". Was it really Spínola who was bringing in all the reforms?

With Spínola gone, the next best thing was the present, Sixth Provisional Government. The Government which is now paving the way for capitalist stabilisation; which has opened the stock exchange and is setting about encouraging private investment; which has taken over all the workers' papers and the worker-controlled radio and TV stations, and which has imposed a wage freeze. The *Daily Express* was exultant "Victory for Moderates", its headline ran. The *Guardian* had been chiding the moderates for their lack of decisive action against all the frightening upsurge of the working class in its editorials and *The Economist*, that spokesman of the direct interests of British capitalists, welcomed the Government because:

"The Prime Minister has indicated that private economic investment is to be encouraged."

When this Government sent in the troops to occupy the radio and TV stations, the *Economist* saw it as "the first step to restoring freedom of expression". And who were the troops which carried out this 'democratic' action?

"The Commandos under Colonel Jaime Neves who have shown themselves as the only disciplined military force in the country." *Economist*, 4th October 1975.

And Jaime Neves is only the most well-known, active fascist in the country! But we all know what the *Economist* means by 'freedom of expression'.

As for strikes in Portugal — they got the same press treatment as they get over here whenever they get big and dangerous:

"The strike, though ostensibly a union call for higher wages, appeared to be a communist inspired act of defiance towards the government." *Daily Telegraph*, October 1975.

A CHANGE OF TUNE

Since November last year the immense and powerful working class movement which the British press, speaking for Capitalism, was so afraid of, has not been so militant. A certain demoralisation and disorientation followed from the

defeat of a premature uprising of a section of the left military in Portugal. The repression, the taking over of the media, the arrests and intimidation of many of the old anti-fascist leaders, all made it easier for the Government to bring in extreme austerity measures; measures against workers' rights to strike, improve their living standards and conditions of work. And this in the middle of an immense economic crisis, with price rises of over 40%, 500 million escudos balance of payments deficit, more than a 15% drop in production last year, 10% of the workforce unemployed, expected to rise to nearly 20% this year.

This situation the British press finds acceptable. It is solutions such as that the working class will have to go back to some of the conditions which prevailed under fascism which the British press is reporting with quiet satisfaction. "The bills of the revolution are going to have to be paid", in the words of a Lisbon economist. Yes — paid to the businessmen. And that's why they are in a 'positive mood'. And that's why the capitalist press isn't so worried and therefore so interested in Portugal today.

"There is no reason", says Vasco de Melo Antunes, President of Portugal's equivalent of the CBI, "why Portugal should not be the California of Europe. It has strategic location, a good climate, and a large, untrained, potentially skillful workforce."

And that's much the same thing as they were saying under fascism:

"Foreign investors find in Portugal very propitious natural and legal conditions. The most important are a relative availability of manpower, easily adaptable to the newest manufacturing techniques, non-existence of strikes or lock-outs. . . ." Secretary of State for Industry, 16th February 1971.

When the workforce is in its right place, doing its work for the capitalists, front page headlines are not necessary!

"BUT THE CAUSE GOES MARCHING ON"

The lull of the struggle of the workers in Portugal is only a lull. The battle of the classes has not been won. And for that reason Portugal is still of 'front page interest' for the working class of Britain. The capitalist class may want Portugal to slip quietly out of the minds of the British working class so that they can get on with the job of ferrying aid to the reactionary and capitalist forces in Portugal through their agencies such as MIS, the EEC, the International Monetary Fund, Plesseys and the multinationals. But it is directly in the interests of all British working people that Portugal stays in the forefront of our minds. Just as the organisations of the capitalists will continue their intervention — as they did under fascism in Portugal — in their own class interests, so we must organise our forces to intervene on the side of our own class brothers and sisters.

Working people in Portugal found that after the overthrow of fascism their exploitation and oppression continued. Because capitalism was the real root of the exploitation — dividing society into those who owned and those who worked for the profit of the owners. And so the struggle has continued and the opposing interests of the two fundamental classes have become clearer.

In Britain we have not had forty years of fascism. Capitalism has for a long period been able to provide a relatively acceptable standard of living. The true nature of the system — with its 3,000 deaths a year from industrial injury and disease, its prosperity built at the expense of the destruction of the societies of the colonial world and the super-exploitation of their people, its constant running sore of homelessness and the fettering of the creative potential of its people — has been obscured. But today, with at least a million and a half workers unemployed, a £6 a week wage limit, with cuts in the already desperately inadequate council services, cuts in building programmes, rapidly deteriorating health services, it is becoming clearer to large numbers of British working people that it is the system which is at fault.

And it is the same world crisis of capitalism which forms the background to the struggles of the British and Portuguese workers. The forms of exploitation and the methods of fighting against them are the same. The Portuguese workers have a vast amount of recent and militant experience from which we can usefully learn in our own struggles; we have a long tradition of organisation and experience which have resulted in a great strength which could be of decisive use to the Portuguese workers. As trade-unionists, we know the effectiveness of solidarity, and the effect of defeats caused by isolation and lack of support.

Before long we will see again massive upheavals in Portugal when the Portuguese workers once more pit themselves against capitalism. If we were to throw our weight into that combat by our solidarity movement, countering the weight of the British capitalist class and its Labour agents who are trying to defeat the workers of Portugal — just as they are trying to weaken the strength of the Labour movement in Britain — then we could see in Portugal working people organising their own economy and having control over their own lives for the first time in Western Europe.

In such a situation capitalism in Europe would be greatly weakened; capitalism in Spain could not survive; and the weakening of our class enemy could not but strengthen the working class movement in Britain. This is the situation feared by capitalists, bosses and businessmen, and the agencies through which they continue their system, including the Labour Party which has loyally and consistently given its support politically to the anti-working class leadership of the Socialist Party in Portugal, and played its role as the trustworthy government of capitalist Britain in the EEC in putting economic pressures on Portugal during the period of working class victories.

This fear is our hope. But hope is impotent and can only effectively be expressed through action. **Our action** – against that of the capitalist class and its agents.

But first we must look at what did happen in Portugal in 1974. And at what were the events which caused capitalists all over Europe to take what was happening so seriously – so seriously that they harnessed all their resources to intervene so subtly in these events.

"PORTUGAL IS LIKE A PRESSURE COOKER. THE LID HAS BEEN KEPT ON FOR A VERY LONG TIME, AND IF SOME FOOL LETS ALL THE STEAM OUT AT ONCE THE THING WILL BLOW UP" Senior Official in Portugal, 1972.

Before the April 25th coup there were virtually no democratic or workers rights in Portugal. Nearly forty years of fascist dictatorship since Salazar came to power in 1926 had led to a situation where the mass of the people lived in terrible poverty. By 1974, Portugal had the lowest income per head in Europe, the highest infant mortality rate, an adult literacy rate of 40% and completely inadequate social service. There were no medical services at all to speak of in the countryside. No less than one-sixth of the population had been forced to emigrate to get work. Trade Unions were illegal. Until 1969, political opposition was banned, and even after that it was tightly controlled. The regime had a whole series of repressive organs: the National Republican Guard; the PSP riot police; the Legiao Portuguesa, the fascist militia; the Guardo Fiscal, an armed border patrol force; and the PIDE, the dreaded gestapo-like secret police whose informers were everywhere.

As if that was not enough, the Portuguese workers and peasants — together with the exploited colonies — had to pay for a huge military machine. The Portuguese army of 200,000 (out of a population of merely 9 million), was in the main engaged in Africa, attempting to suppress the liberation movements. Half the Government's budget was spent on the military, and Portugal topped the European table for proportion of income devoted to military expenditure — 7.2% (compared with Italy's 3% and Spain's 2.2%).

Portuguese capitalism had developed on the basis of protectionism and super-exploitation of the colonies. The fascist state tried to protect the big Portuguese monopolies from foreign competition, and Government funds were used to provide capital investment. But the conservative and inflexible social structures could not meet the needs of a capitalism in the post-second world war boom. Portuguese capital could not meet the competition of the rapidly developing European industries and the initial attempt to solve this by stepping up exploitation of the colonies proved more and more expensive as the national liberation struggles developed in the 1960's. By the end of the 1960's, more and more foreign capital was penetrating both Portugal itself and its colonial empire.

But this development confronted two problems: firstly, the logic of the ever-developing links between the Portuguese economy and European capital was for Portugal to join the EEC; and secondly, the situation in the colonies demanded a solution whereby Portugal retained its stake and control only indirectly — a neo-colonialist solution. The instability caused by this need for change was made far greater by the rise of democratic and working-class struggles in Portugal itself. Despite the terrible repression, these continued to grow. When Caetano, who took over leadership from Salazar, introduced some liberal experiments, workers took full advantage.

The example of workers', students' and women's and other struggles in other European countries had a big impact in Portugal. Very often this influence came via the hundreds of thousands of Portuguese workers in Western Europe. Paris, by 1968, had tens of thousands of Portuguese industrial workers, a large proportion of whom took part in the May events.

In January 1969, mass strike waves swept through the Portuguese industrial centres. In November of that year, 5,000 shipyard workers occupied the Lisnave yards in Lisbon. In 1970 factory and workplace councils started to develop. When the Caetano regime attempted to contain workers struggles by allowing free elections for the first time in the fascist 'trade unions', the left won in 18 of them forcing the government to declare the results invalid. This led the workers to establish Intersindical, the main aim of which was free trade union elections.

A strike of workers of TAP, the Portuguese airlines, blazed the trail in July 1975 by using most militant methods, including the seizure of aircraft. Despite the vicious way in which the authorities reacted — two workers were shot — the struggle won some of its demands. This success was followed by forty major strikes in textiles, engineering and other industries.

Even the relatively conservative students showed signs of radicalisation; Catholic bishops denounced the repression in the colonies (especially the massacres in Mozambique); and on a new front, the 'Three Marias' wrote a devastating critique of oppression of women in Portugal. Caetano complained bitterly in February 1974, just two months before the coup:

"egalitarians, students who imagine themselves above the law, trade unions which gamble with the national interest, leading capitalists who conspire against the state, priests who abuse their calling. The most serious thing is that many of these groups enjoy international solidarity."

— Quoted in New Left Review, 87/88.

Clearly, things could not go on. The solution favoured by the most far-seeing of Portuguese capitalists — entry into the Common Market and disengagement from the costly colonial wars — was not possible with the existing conservative regime.

THE AIM OF THE COUP.

Of course these sectors of the capitalist class had not suddenly been converted to democracy and progress. They saw huge dangers to their power and wanted to bring about changes which would leave that power intact. However, the fascist regime and all its ramifications had their own interests and resisted all change. Any moves towards any kind of democracy, greater workers' rights, lessening of repression, would undermine their bureaucratic and parasitic privileges. So they would have to be overthrown.

The big monopoly capitalists wanted to carry out some modernisation of Portuguese society in order to develop industry more smoothly, to remove political obstacles to membership of the EEC and to institute a neo-colonialist relationship with the colonies. Because the existing regime would resist an attempt to impose these policies with force, big capital had to turn to the only force able to carry it out — the army, many of whose leading officers had close links with the monopolies.

There was a problem in this however. Within the army a certain dissatisfaction was developing which was bound to spur certain sections of it on, further than the aims of big business. The Armed Forces Movement (MFA) had begun as a grouping to defend privileges in the army but had become infected with more radical ideas. The 60,000 casualties suffered in the colonial wars had led to much soul-searching and some members of the MFA were even influenced by the ideas of the national liberation movements. This meant that when the MFA began to organise itself it developed a very radical-sounding programme.

THE COUP AND AFTER.

The coup was carried out with great efficiency. The symbol of the fact that the fundamental aim of the coup was to re-structure capitalism in Portugal was Spínola, who was asked to head the new regime. Handing over to Spínola, while shaking his hand, Caetano said:

"General, I surrender the government to you. You must take care. You must take control. I am frightened by the idea of power loose in the streets."

And indeed, workers were not mere spectators in the process: they had been too long engaged in struggles against the Caetano regime. When the coup occurred they swung into action and took up the declared aims of the MFA. Otelo de Carvalho, strategist of the MFA, recently told a Lisbon weekly paper that the coup was originally planned for 1st May, but when army officers heard of the call for a 'Red May Day' by the underground political parties, they decided to bring the date forward to avoid any popular mobilisation which could 'jeopardise the success of the military operation.'

Immediately following the coup, the mass of the people forced the disbanding of the PIDE and the release of all political prisoners. The May Day immediately following was the occasion of hundreds of thousands of workers demonstrating under very militant slogans. The upsurge of the working class fed back into the armed forces, and the lower officers and the ranks started to purge the most hated supporters of the old regime in their units.

As the strike wave deepened, Spínola and his junta sought to contain the struggles of the workers by bringing representatives of the Communist and Socialist Parties into the first Provisional Government. They tried to enforce anti-working class legislation, with the blessing of those parties by virtue of the fact that they were in the Government. If it were not for the strength and militancy of the working class this strategy would have worked. Both the Communist and the Socialist parties were prepared to assist in the attempt to hold back the working class movement, though for different reasons. At first the Socialist Party did not have to take an active part in any attempts to repress the working class; they were building up an organisation at this time and their statements were very far to the left in order to build on those working people disillusioned in the Communist Party. But later, when the Socialist Party had grown and had wide influence in the country, the true face of its leaders was revealed, as we shall see later on. The Socialist Party had no intention of overthrowing capitalism, but only of gaining power within capitalism on the basis of claiming to represent the working class and therefore playing a role in the continued oppression of the class.

The Communist Party was in a different situation, having one of its members as Minister for Labour. So it could be clearly seen to be against strikes. The reasons it was, too, are clear, if one reads the statements of the leader of the Communist Party, Alvaro Cunhal.

"The Provisional Government. . . does not envisage profound reforms of the socio-economic structure. . . This same programme, of an anti-monopolist strategy will make use of emergency measures. These can easily be implemented without altering the present structures of Portuguese society."

In the present political conditions, the demands put forward by the workers must be realistic, must not be at a level which cannot be borne by the enterprises or by the national economy."

"The vast majority of employers are perfectly capable of satisfying. . . the major rises in wages demanded and other important and just demands."

As, so disastrously in Chile, and as also in Britain, the aims of the Communist Party, despite the opposite view given in the witch-hunts of the capitalist press, were to inch along the path to socialism through trying to increase its own strength in government, not confronting the real nature of capitalist society, that of class conflict, and the need to resolve that

conflict and overthrow capitalism by the democratic organisation of the working class to take power, advised and led by a party, but not substituted for by one.

When 35,000 postal workers (97% of the workforce) went on strike, soon after April 25th 1974, the Communist Party supported the use of troops to break the strike. Cunhal said that the demands of the strike, such as the 35 hour week, were unrealistic and that the strike was insupportable because it challenged the government's policy.

When the Government brought in a Labour Law which was more severe than even the Industrial Relations Act, the Communist Party supported it; strikes which met the attempted implementation of this law were denounced by the Communist Party.

"THE COUP HAS OPENED PANDORA'S BOX" — Financial Times, 29th April 1974.

But the working class was not going to give up so easily its newly awakened aspirations and its newly found strength. The battle of the classes in Portugal intensified. It was a situation where the world-wide recession had added to the problems of the regime in carrying out the aims of the coup — and in addition, the liberation armies in the colonies were winning. Portugal was forced to recognise the independence of Guine-Bissau and, soon after, of Mozambique. Workers were threatening capitalism's whole foundation of exploitation for profit. Inevitably the capitalist class went on to the offensive. Not satisfied with the ability of the MFA and the Provisional Government to control the working class, in September 1974 sections of the capitalists launched an attempted coup — the March of the Silent Majority — supported by Spínola. The response of the working class was to erect barricades to stop the demonstration; railway workers stopped trains; motor transport was searched by armed workers and rank and file soldiers. Under these circumstances, the MFA leaders were obliged to support the anti-coup mobilisations. Spínola was forced to resign.

The great success of working class action in defeating the attempt to challenge their new rights gave the movement a spur forward. Moreover, these actions and the successes against the reactionary officers helped to spread militant ideas in the rank and file of the armed forces. For example, as time went on, the very force created for use in breaking strikes — COPCON — became so radical that it was quite useless for that purpose.

The struggle for a single trade union began, supported by the Communist Party and other left groups but opposed by the Socialist Party, the right wing PPD, together with all the right wing forces. (Even up to today, various forces, including the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, to which the TUC is affiliated, have been trying to split the Portuguese trade union movement by carrying on the struggle for separate political trade unions.) A demonstration on January 14th 1975 of nearly 100,000 workers, demanding a single trade union, indicated the mass pressure which forced the Government to vote it in six days later.

During this period the militant working class movement demonstrated its opposition to the CDS, an extreme right wing party, under cover of which the former fascists were organising. For Geoffrey Rippon, who had been at a CDS conference, these demonstrations of the working class against the renewed growth of the fascists were a 'threat to democracy'.

Even the farm-workers were moving: 30,000 in the south demonstrated demanding the confiscation of landlords' estates. Not waiting for the government, the workers launched a wave of land seizures.

Thus the scene was set for Spínola's second attempted coup, in March 1975. But the response of the workers was even stronger and more determined than in the previous September. They built barricades and seized arms from the police. They called upon the rank and file soldiers to give them arms and they surrounded the paratroopers who were attacking left army units like the Light Artillery.

Having once again thrown back the attempt of capitalism to stabilise itself through military action, the Portuguese people went on to consolidate their gains and into action against economic sabotage by capitalism. They developed factory and area organisations; firms were seized when managements tried to close them down. The bank workers forced the Government to nationalise the banks.

AFTER THE ELECTIONS.

The elections were looming. This was capitalism's only chance to achieve a stable system. The elections were postponed to give more time to prepare. The MFA obliged the political parties to sign a declaration giving the military continuing control, whatever happened in the elections. The purpose of the elections was a parliamentary democracy in Portugal, the institution of a Constituent Assembly, but whose power would in fact be minimised by the MFA pact.

The working class parties got a huge vote in the elections. The large vote, the largest, for the Socialist Party was a left vote. Many workers preferred to vote SP instead of CP because they did not trust the latter. The strike-breaking of the CP reinforced anti-communist feelings stoked up by the Catholic Church and other forces of reaction. The Communist Party's reaction to the election results was to develop an alliance with the 'left' of the MFA, principally Gonçalves.

The Socialist Party argued that it should have a position in the Government which reflected its electoral strength. The Communist Party and its allies in the MFA blocked this, and thus allowed the right-wing leaders of the Socialist Party

to agitate on the grounds of lack of democracy. Meanwhile the activities and development of the working class movement continued to grow especially, at this time, in the media. The print workers, television workers and others began to refuse to allow anti-working class material to be printed or broadcast. This developed into struggles in which workers finally took over pro-Socialist Party papers like *Republica* and radio stations like the Catholic-owned *Renascença*. The Government vacillated in face of the workers actions. Usually ordering the evacuation of the occupied premises, it later drew back (especially when it found that the rank and file soldiers actually sided with the occupying workers).

THE STRUGGLE INTENSIFIES.

The take-over of *Republica* gave the Socialist Party the opportunity it was looking for. Distorting the facts of the situation, it claimed that what was involved was a Communist plot to suppress the Socialist Party point of view. This it was certainly not. There were certain mistakes made in the way in which the workers carried this out which are not within the scope of this pamphlet to go into, but the essential facts of the case were that the workers involved were from many political parties, the most dominant being certain of the far left, and the paper was used to report and discuss the working class struggle rather than, as before, dominated by the owner and not open to the views of the workers. But Soares, the leader of the Socialist Party, used the issue to resign from the Government and started to organise demonstrations demanding the resignation of the Prime Minister, Goncalves. These demonstrations gave a cover to right-wing forces, including ex-PIDE and fascist elements, to carry out a pogrom against communists in the North.

The capitalist press throughout the world took up the 'defence of democracy' in Portugal. The reactionary papers like the *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Express* shed buckets of crocodile tears over the 'suppression of the Portuguese Socialist Party's press'. These same papers having remained silent throughout the vicious suppression of all workers' rights under Salazar and Caetano. Neither did they manage to notice the killings, beatings-up and terrorising of left wing workers by mobs marching under the banner of the Socialist Party.

Throughout August 1975 and up to the 5th September, the Socialist Party maintained its attempts to get rid of Goncalves, whom it saw as the main protagonist, within the military, of an alliance with the Communist Party. It is certainly true that the Communist Party opened the door to such attacks. It made no attempt to rest any power that it had on the developing working class struggle, by encouraging workers' democratic organisations, uniting with Socialist Party workers in the struggle against capitalism. Rather it acted in bureaucratic fashion, taking positions where it could without democratic election; directing its energies towards gaining and consolidating governmental and bureaucratic positions rather than towards the development of real solutions to the problems faced by workers in the factories, the poor and homeless in the cities, the peasants, small farmers and agricultural workers in the countryside or the white collar workers and small enterprise workers throughout Portugal.

Nevertheless, it could not and did not suppress workers' struggles in the way required by the now more and more fearful capitalists. Occupations and other forms of workers' control were increasing daily. Through agencies like the IMF, EEC etc., the capitalists of the United States, West Germany, France, Britain and others put big pressure on the Portuguese authorities. They were absolutely frank: there would be no loans to Portugal unless the Government took steps to tame the working class which was setting such a bad example.

As the pressure grew for the replacement of Goncalves and thus the appointment of a more right-wing Government, left groups and the Communist Party formed a united front to oppose such a development. The Communist Party used the workers' desire to defend a Government which was seen to be defending their rights, to further its own ends as a party. It directed the demonstrations towards support of itself, inviting President Costa Gomes to speak at united front rallies and opening up talks with the Socialist Party on an unclear basis. It was expelled from the united front.

THE FALL OF GONCALVES AND A MOVE TO THE RIGHT.

Eventually, in early September the top officers gave in to the right wing pressure, dismissed Goncalves and appointed Admiral Azevedo as Prime Minister. Whilst the Socialist Party was given much greater representation in the new Government the Communist Party was still there, in a more minor capacity. The main aim of these moves by the top officers of the MFA, Portuguese and international capital, the Socialist Party and the right wing, was to re-establish the authority of the institutions of the state. Soares, in particular, was to the fore in calling for 'the re-establishment of discipline'. The top army officers were really alarmed by the gradual breakdown in the hierarchical system in the armed forces. The various right wing forces were able to mobilise the peasantry of the north because the latter had been hit hard by the economic crisis. The richer peasants worried by the land takeovers in the south managed to channel the feelings of the poorer ones into blaming their troubles on the 'anarchy' brought about by the 'Communists and their allies in the Government'. And, of course, the influence of the reactionary Catholic Church was thrown into the campaign.

However, as the new Government developed its attack on the workers, and in particular tried to re-establish right wing control over the media, a fresh development shook it to the core: the development of rank and file militant organisation within the armed forces. Its attempts to establish an elite disciplinary force — the AMI — and to witch-hunt militant soldiers was defeated. This further encouraged the working class to fight back on economic and democratic demands.

Thus the early weeks of the new Government led to a situation where it could not operate and indeed, after striking building workers had surrounded the Governmental Palace refusing to allow ministers to leave, it 'went on strike'.

It claimed it could no longer function until 'discipline had been restored'.

The response of the top military leaders was to start a gradual purge of left officers, and to disband unreliable units. It was the attempt to remove Carvalho and reorganise left units in Lisbon which provoked the attempted November 25th uprising. In this incident, units refused to accept the authority of newly appointed officers and then went on to mutiny. Certain left groups, like the PRP and MES, totally miscalculated the situation and went on to call for a general insurrection. At this point, the illusions about the left of the MFA and people like Carvalho exacted their price. Many of the most militant workers had very much over-estimated the role of these people and were therefore shocked at the ease with which a handful of paratroopers managed to disarm and neutralise the mutineers. Furthermore, Carvalho and his fellow 'left' officers in COPCON and elsewhere were shown to be without any political strategy, even vacillating during the course of the mutiny.

The Azevedo Government became much more confident after this defeat, and went on to purge the army and arrest Carvalho and others. However, despite its attacks on the working class through the austerity programme, it has not so far been able to carry out the requirements of capitalism and quell once and for all the ability of the working class to fight back. The organisations of the working class remain intact and even, since the reduction of illusions in the left of the MFA, consolidated as organisations which have to be used in defence of living standards. Despite its purging of the army, the arrests of hundreds of left officers and so on, the Azevedo Government has not taken the risk of using the army directly against the core sections of the working class. Thus, although a demoralising experience was undergone as a result of the defeat of the November 25th mutiny, the working class has not suffered a fundamental defeat.

However, the political right has become much bolder: since January this year bomb attacks against Communist Party and other left wing offices have become a daily occurrence; the PPD seems to be gaining at the expense of the Socialist Party, and the extreme right wing CDS has come out into the open to organise itself.

The Azevedo Government wants to consolidate its position by ensuring a right wing victory in the coming elections. We should be clear what its aims are: Portuguese capitalism will never re-stabilise itself unless a very severe defeat is inflicted on the Portuguese working class. The basic gains won since April 25th remain intact. There are still, despite some setbacks, such as Republica and Renascenca, very large areas of workers' control. The necessary cuts in the living standards of the Portuguese workers will be resisted very fiercely.

In this summary of events in Portugal since the April 25th coup we have tried to demonstrate the basic feature of what has occurred: the rise of the working class and the development of new forms of struggle leading to the thwarting of the aims of capitalists in bringing about the fall of Caetano. Despite all the complications the struggles in Portugal have, in essence, been a very highly developed class struggle.

The question is: who will learn most quickly the lessons of the Portuguese struggle? Will it be the workers of France, Italy, Britain and elsewhere? Or will it be the capitalists and their agents in those countries? As we shall see, capitalists in Britain, who have had long-standing economic and political links with Portugal, are certainly taking the lessons to be learnt very seriously.

BRITAIN'S OLDEST ALLY – A NEW ALLIANCE.

"Caetano assassino. . . . Caetano assassino. . . ." was the cry which greeted the distinguished fascist representatives of 'Britain's oldest ally' and rang in the streets of London in Summer 1973. Such sentiments were not, of course, uttered by the ancestors of those who had forged the mutually lucrative Anglo-Portuguese alliance, dating in its earliest form back to 1703. Nor were they heard on the lips of members of the Labour opposition.

No. Those forces were either sitting under the chandeliers, wining and dining their fascist friends at the invitation of the Lord Mayor of London, a Labour peer, or they were not objecting to such fraternisation.

The slogans chanted by the thousands of anti-fascist militants who dogged Caetano's tracks on his British visit, indicated the beginning of a new alliance – that of the British with Portuguese working class. An alliance which has been developed in recent months through the interchange of visits between bodies of the labour movement in each country; such as that between the workers' commission in the Plesset subsidiary in Portugal and the Plessey sites Coordinating Committee in Britain, as early as 1975. This alliance must be further developed to counter the other alliance, the Anglo-Portuguese alliance, whether of the fascist or 'democratic' variety – that alliance being for the stabilisation of capitalism.

The new alliance will be of class interests, just as the old was; the new alliance, resting on the interests of both working classes to see a new, a workers' Portugal. Not the Portugal chatted about over the port by Caetano and his English friends. Not the alliance described by the *Economist* in 1972:

"Up to this day, it is hard for an Englishman not to feel at home in Lisbon, that city of trams and policemen in white topees, of gentlemen's clubs and innumerable breath-taking but vaguely shabby plazas and palaces sloping down to the Tagus and the sea. Even in their celebrated saudade, their melancholy laced with nostalgia for past greatness, the Portuguese have something in common with the post-war British."

Such a Portugal has little in common with the Portugal we saw, in the last section, emerging from the struggles of the Portuguese working class.

THE PRICE OF THE ALLIANCE

British capitalist involvement in Portugal has been long and thorough. Even when, under Salazar, there was very little foreign investment allowed, close links were maintained with Britain. So much so that until 1939 Portuguese currency was tied solely to the pound. In terms of trade Britain was always the dominant capitalist power in Portuguese relations, and within that relationship Britain played the dominant role. The percentage of Portuguese exports which went to Britain remained fairly steady at 24% from the 1920's to 1973, while imports from Britain were 33% of Portuguese imports in the 1920's and 10% in 1974.

Britain has used her Portuguese alliance to take advantage of the extremely profitable results of fascism. There was a cheap source of labour, repressed by the forces of the fascist state such as the PIDE, so much that militancy was rare and the working class was easily super-exploited to fill the pockets of foreign capitalists. Plesseys made £3 million profit in the space of three years from its Portuguese subsidiaries. How this kind of profit was extracted is clear if one looks at the conditions of the workforce from whose exploitation profits came:

"In 1973 the average wage of the Plessey women workers was £7 for a 47½ hour week, with average consumer prices in Portugal only slightly lower than in Britain. Because of the nature of the work, mainly the assembly of highly detailed components, great strain was caused to the workers' eyesight. Most of the women after a short period of employment needed to wear glasses, and to have the lenses changed frequently. If they left, they did not receive any compensation or pension. The women worked in groups of ten doing piecework and were forbidden to talk to each other. They were not allowed to go to the toilet, either in the first or last 30 minutes of their working day. From each two groups of ten workers only one woman was allowed to go to the lavatory at a time, and to spend no longer than ten minutes in the toilet. The women were allowed thirty minutes for their dinner in the factory canteen. But the long queues often caused them to be late back at their work, in which case they would be sent home with loss of pay as a punishment."

—Our Common Struggle, No. 3 (Bulletin of the Portuguese Workers' Coordinating Committee)

Plessey's annual report and accounts for 1972 stated that:

"Significant contributions to profits continue to come from Portugal."

Britain was in the forefront of the rush, in 1965 when Portugal opened its doors to foreign investment, to exploit Portuguese workers in this way. Of the 600 firms in Portugal more than 200 are British. All the major British firms are there: Plessey, GEC, British Leyland, Sandeman, Allied Breweries, Cadbury-Schweppes, ICI, Coats Patons, Courtaulds, — to name but a few. British involvement in Portugal rose from 156.2 million escudos in 1971 to 553.3 million in 1973.

These British firms were in Portugal because profits were higher. But the extraction of profits depends on the ability to exploit workers without resistance. When in Portugal the 'potentially skillful', 'easily adaptable' workforce, so highly praised in the ads entitled "Portugal, a safe investment", "Discover the Possibilities of Investment in Portugal", and so on, started to use its talents to look after its own interests, British firms couldn't get rid of their workforce quick enough. Thus foreign firms closed down subsidiaries; managers fled the country without even paying wages, one firm paid with a cheque which bounced; firms deliberately bankrupted their subsidiaries through transfer pricing, that is, underpricing either exports or imports to show a profit or loss where it suits the firm best.

A firm making Schweppes products under licence obtained a loan which they cancelled after the firm was nationalised. Plesseys, having talked about expansion of their operations just a month before the April coup, began planning to transfer their operations from their only three-year old plant at Princesa, to Malta, making 400 workers redundant. The reason they gave? "World-wide falling demand for their product".

ITT, who had a major responsibility for sabotage of the Chilean economy under Allende, began to shift orders away from their Portuguese subsidiaries soon after April 1974 which left their export-orientated firms bankrupt within a year. In August 1975 the parent company informed the Portuguese Government that it was withdrawing all financial and managerial backing from its subsidiaries. In Cascais, where STC, a subsidiary of ITT operated, ITT built a brand new factory before the coup. After the workers at these factories had secured big wage rises, orders began to be cancelled. By November 1974, 870 workers, nearly 50% of the labour force, had been laid off. By August 1975 the company was in debt to the tune of £2.7 million.

At the same time, 300 women workers at STC in New Southgate were laid off. Because there were "no orders from Portugal". The operations of the multi-nationals in one country do not simply affect that country. Capitalism plans internationally; that is why it can be so effective. In 1971, when Plessey's were building a new factory just south of Lisbon, 700 workers were laid off in Scotland!

Other methods too are operated. At this moment, firms are refusing to give credit for orders from Portugal — demanding cash, against all known business norms. ICI is one example, the information coming from the Workers' Commission at the ICI subsidiary TINCO in Portugal. Last year even Bank of Portugal guarantees were refused.

Firms are refusing to supply the necessary goods to Portugal. The Labour Government—supported British Leyland, which has been trying to milk as much profit from British workers in the midst of an economic crisis in Britain, is responsible for fifty buses lying idle in Lisbon, because of its refusal to supply spare parts. It has been joined in its action by CAV and Lucas.

Tractors, purchased in the days when: 'peasants still doffed their hats to you if you were respectable enough to wear a collar and tie' (*Economist* report on Portugal 1972) don't work now because Massey Ferguson, that honourable and respectable firm, refuses to replace worn out sore plugs. We should bear this in mind when we read in the press about the appalling problems faced by the agricultural north of Portugal.

POLITICAL ECONOMICS!

Some of the operations of the firms we have looked at would seem a little short-sighted on the purely economic front. But it is quite clear that these actions are not in the interests of immediate profit and returns, but because capitalists also have an eye to the political system which protects their freedom to exploit. When that system is threatened, as it was in Portugal, they pull out to make their profits elsewhere BUT they also use their control over the means of production to exert political blackmail against the forces of their enemy class, workers.

Thus *The Guardian*, during the period of strikes in October 1975, wrote:

"Portugal has been turning sour again. . . . Only the Portuguese can solve their undeserved problems, but support from outside can be helpful."

And the *Economist* in December of the same year:

"If the West now cares about a democratic Portugal, it must be prepared to pay."

This kind of blackmail is repeated in an even more blatant way on the more political level. Take the EEC. The EEC is essentially an association of the capitalist classes in Europe to protect them against both US and Japanese capital and the effects of the competition between the various national European capitalisms. Britain's association with Portugal brought Portugal into EFTA and managed to secure preferential trade agreements with the EEC for Portugal's exports. It was agreed by the EEC that all restrictions on Portuguese/EEC trade would be removed by 1977. In July 1973 the EEC cut duty on exports of sardines by 40% and tomatoes by 30%.

But what is happening now? Does the agreement, a supposedly trade agreement, continue? No. Because the political situation has changed and the working class in Portugal was having too much influence on the economy. Therefore in July, instead of making things easier for Portugal, the EEC put restrictions on Portuguese textiles, at Britain's instigation. Far from pursuing an agreement, the EEC, led by the Labour Government, were exerting the most damaging political blackmail they could.

In such a situation of economic crisis in Europe, the EEC and IMF function to help capitalism in the various countries in Europe to weather the storm. Portugal requested aid. Aid was refused. The IMF has now offered aid only on the condition of the imposition in Portugal of severe austerity measures and 30% devaluation. The EEC withheld aid until the political system was more to their liking – that is, a more stable capitalist set-up. Proof of this is readily available – and not from statistics hidden away in the corridors of power. A statement made by an EEC official was quoted by *The Times*, October 10th 1975:

"It is not part of our policy to interfere in the internal affairs of Portugal, or to dictate what kind of social or economic policies they should adopt."

But on October 9th 1975 a document had come to light in Brussels which gave the lie to such a statement. This document stated that investment aid to Portugal would be cut off if the Portuguese situation developed 'unfavourably'. The lie was further exposed time after time in the British press. Thus the *Financial Times*, May 1st 1974:

"Officials in Brussels said that a Portuguese application to join the EEC could prove embarrassing at the present time."

The Times, reporting on the new 'moderate' Government in September 1975:

"After months of hesitation the EEC appears ready to grant Portugal the financial aid needed."

Why? Because:

"They welcomed the new Government as a significant step to a free, democratic society in Portugal."

And one based on the suppression of working class rights; that is clear! Two days later the *Economist* said:

"Help is urgently needed from outside . . . but there is no reason why aid should be given unconditionally."

The use of sanctions against Portugal by the EEC and Britain, is quite clearly political and only to aid the capitalist class. The role the Labour Government has played in this is quite blatant. Look at the way in which the Labour Government dealt with the problems of the textile industry in this country. Instead of taking the necessary measures to solve the problem at its root, it tried to find ways at the expense of the workers of other countries, and consumers at home. And in the process made quite a violent stab at the backs of the Portuguese workers. Import controls on Portuguese textiles. And although these controls have come to apply to all textiles they were first applied to Portugal, not even Britain's main textile supplier. The effects of this decision are going to be horrific in an industry which is one of Portugal's most important and employs a large proportion of its workforce. For years British capitalism has benefitted from the Portuguese textile industry: from the cheap materials extracted from the colonies and from the labour of Portuguese workers paid 77p a day for a 60 hour week. Now, through years of hard struggle, when the workers in the textile industry have won a 42 hour week and have doubled their wages, profits are not so easy and there's no harm done if Britain reduces trade! So, one mail order firm making T shirts has switched to Brazil, where the repression is greater and profits therefore higher.

Between May and September 1975 Portuguese textile exports to Britain dropped by over £1 million and British exports to Portugal of yarn and machinery dropped from £1,083,000 to £826,000. And yet again it becomes clear as we examine the unfolding story of Portugal, not from the biased viewpoint of the capitalist press, but from the facts of the struggle and the facts of British involvement, that the class war in Portugal has forced all those with any connections with Portugal to take sides. Britain has the strongest links of all. And from the beginning until today those links have been the links in the chain of capitalist domination in Europe. Every action of the Labour Government has been to seek ways of strengthening those links.

Since fascism was overthrown in Portugal, Britain has had a Labour Government. Yet far from that Government welcoming such an overthrow, seeking ways to help the Portuguese people continue their fight against oppression, it has argued in all the capitalist organisations in Europe for active measures against the Portuguese people. It is even, at present, arranging to train two members of the fascist GNR in Britain.

It has allied itself with a party whose leadership has sided with reaction in Portugal, been in the forefront of demanding an end to the achievements of workers' control and rights won in struggle, which has made speeches in praise of the most prominent fascist in Portugal, Jaime Neves. The leader of that party is Mario Soares. Soares, who supported the Azevedo Government in its imposition of austerity and repressive measures, support also given, as we have seen, by the organs of the capitalist class in Britain, like *The Times*, the *Daily Express*, the *Daily Telegraph*. Soares, who joined in the chants of 'Discipline . . . Discipline . . .' in a demonstration of support for that Government, with the PPD, the right wing party which has Tory support in this country. And every trade unionist knows the kind of people who go on demonstrations chanting such slogans in Britain. Soares, who said this year:

"We can draft and implement an economic plan to revitalise tourism, attract back capital and raise productivity . . . the mood of the workers is changing."

Familiar stuff to the British working class! As is Callaghan's reply at the Labour Party Conference where Soares was guest of honour, when Soares was asked why he was collaborating with the capitalists of the PPD, who were no different from the Tories, and why he had supported the eviction of workers from a factory:

"Let those who believe parliamentary democracy and the achievement of socialism through that way to be a bourgeois luxury . . . they have the luxury of proclaiming their beliefs here today in a

very stable, sound society."

And in a way, Callaghan summed it all up. The only luxury the Labour Government can provide for the working class is the luxury of 'proclaiming our beliefs' in a society whose 'stable' and 'sound' capitalist structures prevent any of those beliefs from having any meaning.

Just as the Labour Opposition in 1973 did nothing to prevent the Caetano visit, today it assists the anti-working class forces in Portugal. The Labour Government is the heir and guardian of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance, as it is the heir of the Tories and the guardian of the same capitalist policies. Its alliances are always on the side of capital in Portugal and Britain. And it will be challenged, not just by British workers for its anti-working class policies in Britain, not just by Portuguese workers for its policies towards Portugal, but by the combined weight of the British and Portuguese working classes in the new alliance — the Portuguese Solidarity Movement.

THE MEANS TO THE END.

In this pamphlet we have tried to show the meaning and the relevance of the unfolding events in Portugal for British working people, those who want an end to the injustice, oppression and exploitation in our own country and throughout the world. We believe that the actions of the Portuguese workers have begun a process towards that end. Their success will have repercussions throughout Europe; their victory will be a victory for the whole European working class movement.

In 1917 Lenin tried to explain the apparently ironic fact that socialist revolution should have broken out in Russia, the country least suited for it in terms of economic development, by saying that 'the Imperialist chain broke at its weakest link.' Today the weak link of Portugal has buckled. And Portugal has revealed to Spain its future.

In Spain, as in Portugal, there is no longer a basis for the creation of a stable capitalist 'democracy'. And if the upsurge at present taking place in Spain continues to develop and coincides with the renewed offensive of the Portuguese workers, the strength of the working class on the Iberian Peninsula could be invincible. The birth of a Socialist Iberia would be in process – heralding the birth of a Socialist Europe.

Although it is the workers of Portugal and Spain who are leading the way, the path has already been indicated over the past few years in all European countries. The struggles of May 1968 in France were the beginning of many, many occasions when workers in Western Europe, for the first time for many years, took into their own hands the task of challenging bosses and governments which were acting against their interests. In Britain it was the working class movement which refused to allow a Labour Government to bring in anti-Trade Union legislation in 1969; which brought down the Tory Government in 1974 for trying to smash the miners. By their own actions it was ordinary trade unionists who freed, in 1972, five dockers imprisoned for trade union activities. It is solidarity like that of the printworkers at a small London printworks, Briants, who used their occupied factory to produce leaflets, posters and pamphlets for that fight, which shows the potential of British workers in their fight against capitalism.

Throughout Europe we have seen time after time the same class consciousness, the same unity, the same ability to organise in a democratic and effective fashion, as we have seen on a higher level in Portugal. That alone shows the possibilities of unity in the struggle against capitalism. We have already seen that the enemy itself is a united force against workers throughout Europe.

Nor is it only Europe. Recent years have also seen the refusal of the oppressed African and Asian nations to accept the domination of foreign capitalist powers. And many of the workers and peasants of those nations have learned in the process to reject domination by any form of capitalism. Successes like that in Vietnam, Guine-Bissau, Mozambique and now Angola are not remote events in countries too far away to have any relevance for us. They too show that we live in a period when, on a world scale, capitalism is being challenged all along the line because it cannot satisfy the most elementary needs of people.

And so, although at the present time it is the Portuguese workers who most urgently need our solidarity and who, also, have the most to teach us in our fight against oppression in our own country, we must remember that they are only in the front line. Every one of us knows that the outcome of the first struggle in a series is extremely important. It can decide the whole outcome of the rest. Will they be ones leading to defeats, because the first was lost? Or will they be ones leading to a series of victories, because of the impetus given by the first victory?

Therefore the tasks of solidarity are an integral part of our own ongoing fight against the present policies of the Labour Government, against the Tories, against the bosses and against all forms of oppression and repression. To fulfill such tasks requires organisation – something the trade union movement well knows the value of.

And this is what the conference which is taking place on the 13th March is the first step towards – the building of an organised solidarity movement with the Portuguese working class.

From this conference we must do all we can to develop links between shop floor workers in Britain and workers in Portugal. This is particularly the case with the multi-nationals which, as we have seen, draw their strength and effectiveness in exploitation from their international character. Workers in Portugal have already created a joint shop stewards committee of Plesseys and ITT. Delegates of these committees should be brought into working contact with similar committees in this country. Close links between all these committees, of an international nature, can have a big effect in aiding workers in all countries by monitoring and exchanging information, exchanging and developing experience and co-ordinating acts of solidarity.

We have seen the way in which British capitalism has, together with other European capitalisms, intervened in Portugal and tried to block the advance of the working class movement. It is only British workers who can stop that interference. A campaign must be built to document evidence of economic manipulation, boycott and sabotage; to get support from all trade union and labour party branches; to put pressure on the British Government to end its interference, especially through supporting reactionary forces in Portugal and the imposition of import controls.

Such a campaign must set itself the task of redressing the balance on Portugal – in the flow and type of information; in television and radio, in the newspapers; by producing its own newsletters, bulletins; holding meetings, showing films, distributing leaflets.

We have the capacity and resources to carry out such a campaign. The forces of the working class are everywhere – these are our forces and they are potentially far, far stronger than those of the opposing, capitalist, class. If we can mobilise and utilise our resources to fight and win this campaign of solidarity with our Portuguese brothers and sisters, we will have taken a great step towards the development of a massive force against capitalism in Britain and throughout the entire world.

“Workers of the world, unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains.” Karl Marx’s words of over a hundred years ago are still true. And those chains are beginning to break. In Portugal, the weakest link can be broken. But it still requires all our united strength.

Further information about Portugal can be obtained by reading:

- RED WEEKLY** Weekly paper of the International Marxist Group, British Section of the Fourth International
- INPRECORR** Fortnightly international journal of the Fourth International
- OUR COMMON STRUGGLE** Bi-monthly bulletin of the Portuguese Workers Coordinating Committee
- NEW LEFT REVIEW** No. 87/8 Article on Portugal by Robin Blackburn

A full list of British firms in Portugal can be obtained from the pamphlet:

HANDS OFF PORTUGAL Produced by the National Rank and File Organising Committee

PORTUGAL SPAIN – TOWARDS THE IBERIAN SOCIALIST REVOLUTION Produced by the International Marxist Group

EYE WITNESS IN REVOLUTIONARY PORTUGAL by Audrey Wise

Send for further details to: Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.

A Solidarity Movement, of necessity, encompasses the widest political views. It will not remain united, nor will those involved learn from it, unless it allows and encourages the widest and free-est debate within the framework of maximum unity in solidarity.

This is a pamphlet of solidarity but it also of necessity expresses certain political views. We would welcome, therefore, any comments, criticisms, contributions to further discussion and to enable more material to be produced to reach wider and wider layers of the working class movement in this country with our message of Solidarity with the Portuguese Working Class.

— Jacky Gray and Pat Jordan

Produced by

INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.

NATIONAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE

SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN WITH THE PORTUGUESE WORKING CLASS

Saturday 13 March 1976 10.00-6.00 Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC2.

Sponsored by:

Ray Buckton, Gen. Sec. ASLEF; Alan Sapper, Ge. Sec. ACTT; Ernie Roberts, Asst. Gen. Sec. AUEW; Mick McGahey, President, Scottish NUM; Emlyn Williams, President, S. Wales NUM; Jack Dunn, Sec. Kent NUM; Reg Taylor, Nat. Exec. TGWU; Jack Collins, Kent NUM; Brian Crossland, Plessey Beeston Convenor; Ken McMillan, Lanarkshire Joint TC Secretary; Dan Draper, Plessey, Isle of Wight AUEW; John Spencer, London Co-Op; Ken Coates, Institute of Workers Control; Sid Bidwell, MP; Audrey Wise, MP; Joan Maynard, MP; Stan Newens, MP.

AGENDA:	10.15 Chairman's address
	10.30 The Political Situation in Portugal (PWCC)
	11.00 Delegates from Portugal: Industrial Worker Agricultural Worker
	12.00 Questions and Discussion
	1.00 Lunch
	2.000 Economic Boycott and the Role of the Multinationals Introduction and Discussion
	3.00 The Role of the United States, EEC and NATO Introduction and Discussion
	4.00 The Future of the Solidarity Campaign: Resolution and Amendments Election of National Committee (Voting Rights to affiliated bodies only in elections)

Conference papers will be circulated in advance.

Organisation	Annual Affiliation Fee	Number of Delegates for conference allowed
Shop Stewards Committees, Trade Union branches, CLPs, Trades Councils, Campaign Support Group	£5	Two
District & Regional TU organisations, Student Unions	£10	Five
National Organisations	£25	Seven
Individuals	£2	Observers only

To: The Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC2

Please send delegate credentials for the National Delegate Conference of the Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class

We enclose .£. (Conference fee £1 per delegate)

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