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Reynolds & Rice: report from

PORTUGAL

Discussions with the ex-LCI tendency,
with LCI, with PRT, with PRP, & with UDP

LUTTE OUVRIERE FETE: Report from Reynolds
& some observations by Price.

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REPORT FROM PORTUGAL

Rice & Reynolds visited Portugal from 10-6-76 to 16-6-76. We went because of news of a major split in the LCI, Portuguese sympathising section of the USFI. The split in fact comprises 40% of the LCI membership, or 120 comrades, including the comrades who were in the leadership of the LCI between the 2nd and 3rd Congresses (August 1975 - January 1976). We also heard that this group was having a founding congress on 10-6-76. This report was apparently a misunderstanding over the 'phone, but in any case we had extensive discussions with the leadership of the ex-LCI tendency.

What we did, therefore, was the following:

1. Discuss with, and try to influence ideologically, the leading comrades of the ex-LCI tendency.

When they took over the leadership of the LCI they were part of the "3rd International Tendency" (Mezhrayonka or Kompass) of the USFI. The Mezhrayonka tendency rejected the "new mass vanguard" conceptions of the European Perspectives Document as schematic and hindering a real proletarian intervention. They criticised the description of the German SPD and French SP as parties fundamentally similar to the British Labour Party, insisting they were more like the US Democratic Party. They also criticised the guerillaist orientation in Latin America.

The LCI leadership nevertheless supported participation in the FUR. Under the influence of discussions with comrade Vito of the Italian FMR (formerly the Italian segment of the Mezhrayonka tendency, but expelled from the USFI in March 1975) they made a self-criticism on the FUR, published on 24-11-75.

At the emergency 3rd Congress of the LCI (in January 1976) that leading group was ousted. Against cd. Vito's advice, they did not form a tendency. However, they did pose criticisms on several questions, most notably the concessions to bourgeois democracy in the LCI-PRT accords for the presidential elections (See WA article on this). Finally, the leading comrades were expelled, and many other comrades left, protesting against the expulsions and/or the accords with the PRT.

In our discussions with the ex-LCI comrades we worked closely with comrade Vito (who was, indeed, the means of us getting into contact with them). Of course we said so clearly when we disagreed with him. (*1)

The main contentious issues (on which we had agreement with cd. Vito) were the question of the presidential elections and the question of party-building. On the elections, the ex-LCI comrades favoured a position of voting for Otelo as well as Pato; on party-building, they tended to a flabby "wait and see" attitude.

We did not have detailed guidance from the I-CL on what to say (either to the ex-LCI comrades or to other comrades we talked to), and we had to extrapolate intelligently as best we could from previous I-CL discussions. We believe that the positions we defended on the major questions of the presidential elections and party-building followed clearly from I-CL discussions.

Unfortunately we were unable to discuss with more than the 2 leading comrades of the ex-LCI group. One scheduled broader discussion fell through as a result of the postponement of an internal meeting of the ex-LCI comrades, and we weren't able to contact the ex-LCI comrades in Oporto because of a mess-up with aeroplane departures.

2. A by-product of this work was an intensification of relations with the 'Internat-

*1) I should say also that I disagree with Vito's rather dogmatic insistence on the correctness of voting Pato as against abstention. In my view either position would be principled - the question is a purely practical one of whether the 'lever' critical support for Pato gives to revolutionary agitation for working class political independence, against Bonapartism, etc. outweighs the danger of possible association with CP policy. Because it is (I think) a purely tactical, not principled, question - thus not best judged by someone in Portugal for only a few days - and also remembering the WF discussions on the last French presidential elections (where I was alone in advocating abstention, and other comrades considered a vote for Mitterand would be correct) I did not make an issue of it.

ional Initiative' grouping (FMR/Spartacusbund/IKL). Cooperation was generally good. We talked to two Spartacusbund comrades in Oporto (one of whom is there semi-permanently, the other having been sent to relate to the split).

3. We also talked to other left groups - LCI, PRT, PRP, UDP - to collect information on their policies and on the situation more generally. In addition Rice was able to attend two of the Otelo campaign meetings.

CONCLUSIONS.

1. Our general assessment of the ex-LCI group was fairly negative. More important, in a sense, than their unprincipled position on the elections, was a general vagueness and Martov-like spirit about the comrades. Unprincipled positions can be changed by argument; a whole political psychology is more difficult to change.

Nevertheless we feel it was a vital internationalist task to discuss with the comrades, and at least to establish fraternal contacts. It is almost certain that the group will break up. But if we pursue discussions with them energetically, we have a good chance of consolidating a healthy nucleus out of the break-up. They are certainly willing to listen to us.

We should continue contact with them, maintaining a correspondence with them, and getting some material translated into Portuguese for circulation in their ranks.

2. The International Initiative grouping obviously has some hard questions to ask itself about the errors of the Portuguese comrades they influenced. As far as we can see, the principal lesson is this: correct positions on any number of questions can be meaningless without a comprehensive international programme (as a living, active entity) and a systematic process of selecting cadres.

The experience also confirmed our assessment of the USFI as mainstream, and our insistence on the necessity of a painstaking process of ideological regeneration, not just organisational "reconstruction of the FI". Perhaps the I.I. grouping tends to have a too simplistic and easy picture of the process of founding an international tendency (if so, it would be in line with their tinges of "anti-Pabloism"). Reynolds discussed these points with Vito, but found him unresponsive.

Our discussions with the ex-LCI comrades also underlined the need for and absence of an adequate Marxist International. The comrades we spoke to were serious, intelligent, and well-educated - but in Britain they would be, perhaps, promising young cadres of the I-CL, IMG or IS. In Portugal, during their period of leadership of the LCI (a crucial period of the struggle), and now, they had/have among the most heavy responsibilities of any leading group in the world Trotskyist movement. Neither the USFI leadership nor the Mezhrayonka tendency has been able to help them adequately in facing those responsibilities (though it has to be said that the USFI majority has a far better record on Portugal than the other established international tendencies). We, or the FMR, even assuming either of us to have made no mistakes on the Portuguese question, simply do not have the capacity to guide them adequately.

But discussions with the Portuguese comrades can be worthwhile if only for their contribution towards our development to the point where we do have that capacity.

Nan Rice
Chris Reynolds.

DISCUSSION WITH EX-LCI comrade Alberto: Thursday 10-6-76.

ALBERTO gave Reynolds and the Italian comrade Vito a briefing on the expulsions and split in the LCI.

It started at a Central Committee meeting on 15th May. Paolo and I were accused of preparing split in liaison with the Italian FMR. They said our criticism of the accords with the PRT was in line with Roberto Massari's book on Portugal. Other organisational accusations were made. A non-parity Control Commission was set up and we were expelled by 13-6 vote of the Central Committee.

We considered the LCI's rapprochement with the PRT to be unprincipled, especially on the presidential elections. The PRT has also recently expelled a group of comrades and we believe them to be in political agreement with us. The political reasons for the expulsion were the rapprochement with the PRT, the forthcoming (August) 4th Congress of the LCI, and the 11th Congress of the FI. The rapprochement with the PRT derives from the international rapprochement between the International Majority Tendency (IMT) and the international tendency led by the PST of Argentina.

There had been a general decline in the internal regime of the LCI. But the LCI leadership hoped that the presidential campaign would smother the issue of our expulsion. The Porto LCI demanded withdrawal of the expulsions and 60% of the Porto membership have since left. The Coimbra LCI rejected the accords with the PRT and criticised the expulsion; most of them have now left the LCI. In Lisbon about 30% of the LCI membership have left, including almost all the workers.

About 120 comrades in all have left the LCI, and more will leave. About 100 are with us, and there is also the group led by Sergio in Porto, of about 14 comrades. Sergio's group is important because Sergio used to be the leading public figure of the LCI. For the moment that group is holding apart from us pending their own internal discussions.

An Angolan comrade in Porto who has left with us has contacts with the 'Socialist Revolution' group in Angola, which has criticisms of the USFI. It is a small group which used to have about 40 militants & has since declined.

REYNOLDS gave a brief outline of the history and politics of the I-CI and our relation to the International Initiative.

DISCUSSIONS WITH EX-LCI comrades Alberto & Paolo: Friday 11-6-76

ALBERTO: Since 25th November the conditions have been prepared for a bourgeois offensive. The Legislative Assembly elections results obliged the bourgeoisie to modify their strategy. The CDS did not gain as much as it hoped, and the elections also testified to the continued existence of a sizable revolutionary vanguard.

For now extra-parliamentary action is secondary in the bourgeoisie's strategy. Their tactics focus on preventing a CP-SP government, consolidating the military, and installing a bonaparte (Eanes) coupled with a parliamentary system.

The situation is still pre-revolutionary, though in a period of downturn. This is shown by 3 facts: the crisis of the state apparatus; the inability of the bourgeoisie to establish its authority in the factories; and continuing militant activity by the working class.

Eanes' candidature, supported by the bourgeoisie, the Socialist Party, and the majority of the Armed Forces hierarchy, prepares the conditions for a Socialist Party government supported by the Right. De Azevedo does not have the bourgeoisie's support; the Navy and some petty bourgeois sections back him.

The CP wanted to support Eanes but couldn't because of rank and file reaction. They tried to nominate Costa Gomes but he refused. So they put up Pato. But Pato does not have the support of CP militants; his is a formal candidature. Maybe the CP will withdraw Pato before the elections in favour of Eanes. For the CP the main enemy is Otelo.

Otelo has the support of the revolutionary left, but is not organically linked to the workers' movement. He is a member of the armed forces, but a black sheep. He has the support of many workers' organisations. His is an electoralist campaign, anti-party, supporting the Armed Forces, propagandising abstractly on "people's power", backing "national independence". The campaign is based on the GDUPs

("Dynamising Groups of Popular Unity"), backed by MES, UDP, PRP. The main thing is that his campaign has the support of vanguard workers inside and outside the CP, and encourages a certain revitalisation of the workers' commissions.

We should support a vote for Otelo as part of a United Front approach - utilising a certain hostility of the working class against the bourgeoisie and establishing relations with the vanguard. Even the most combative militants of the SP support Otelo.

RICE: The logic of Alberto's argument seems to be to support Otelo only, not to vote "Otelo or Pato", which the comrade says is his position.

ALBERTO: No. We agree that Pato is a candidate organically linked to the workers' movement.

REYNOLDS: I disagree that a pre-revolutionary situation continues.

Otelo's campaign MAY revitalise workers' commissions etc. to some extent. But the question is how to formulate an independent revolutionary intervention - otherwise the political consciousness to make use of that revitalisation will be lacking, and the revitalisation will turn into a weakening of the working class in face of Bonapartist dangers. One might say that Roosevelt in the USA in the '30s had the support of the most militant workers, and that his election created better conditions for trade union organisation. But Trotskyists would never vote for him. Because Otelo's is a personality campaign, with no organic links to the workers' movement, there is no way critically voting Otelo can be coupled with a united-front approach - though critically voting Pato can.

VITO: After 25 April 1974 there were 2 bourgeois projects: the consolidation of a strong more or less bourgeois democratic regime linked to the EEC, represented by the SP etc- and the left bonpartist policy. 25th November was a semi-defeat for the working class - and also a defeat for the second bourgeois project. Thus the MFA has disappeared. The CP is left without a clear project and oscillates. As regards bourgeois strategy there is the victory of the project of a regime of the type of the French 5th Republic. The pre-revolutionary situation was terminated by 25th November, though we do not have a counter-revolutionary situation. Since 25th November there has been a very low level of class struggle. The divisive politics of the PC and PS have had a very bad effect in the working class.

Under the 4th & 5th governments there was a radicalisation, with the CP involved, directed towards figures like Otelo. Today, with that movement gone, with the radicalisation in the army gone, Otelo is simply a bourgeois politician. He is the most plausible populist candidate, running a multi-class campaign. He does not have the support of the majority of the bourgeoisie; he is trying to revive a failed project of the bourgeoisie. He has the support of the vanguard - but a vanguard in a situation of downturn and disorientation. His campaign departs from the framework of reformism - but by seeking solutions outside the working class. It's something like the Peronist project in Argentina but it can't have the success Peron had.

The downturn is reflected by the absence of a revolutionary candidature, even a propagandist one. The LCI has a "centrist sui generis" position - "Against Eanes, Against De Azevedo, Vote Pato", i.e. not mentioning Otelo. Pressures push them towards supporting Otelo, but that's prevented by their links with Trotskyism and the USFI. On the other hand they don't have the courage to say that Otelo is a bourgeois candidate who must be defeated. We should say that.

ALBERTO: We have always supported the presentation of an independent revolutionary Marxist candidate.

We don't have a public position on the presidential elections, and given lack of time for discussion I don't think we will be able to have one. The "vote Otelo or Pato" position is one put forward in a document for internal discussion.

On Reynolds' points. There is no analogy between Roosevelt and Otelo. Otelo does not have the support of any organised section of the bourgeoisie; also he is supported by the MOST COMBATIVE SECTIONS of the working class. Pato is linked to sections of the working class movement - but does not have their support. Workers understand the formal nature of the Pato candidacy.

Vito's analysis of "2 bourgeois projects" contradicts the analysis of the MFA as a petty bourgeois sector with a radicalised support hindering its utilisation in bourgeois projects. The centrists used to have more influence in the MFA than the CP did.

25th November was a defeat, but didn't finish the pre revolutionary situation. There has even been some revival of radicalisation in the army since 25th Nov., as well as workers' struggles. The Peron analogy has its limits. Otelo only has the support of the most advanced militants of the working class, and of no section of the bourgeoisie. His talk of national independence reflects the Maoists, not the nationalist bourgeoisie. He has a petty-bourgeois programme, influenced by the centrists, directed towards the working class. He is a member in disgrace of the military hierarchy. His candidature expresses the most negative illusions of the vanguard, but also the continuation of workers' struggles; it can permit a certain revitalisation of the workers' organisations, even if on an erroneous basis.

As for the LCI's position, I think it is motivated by their rapprochement with the PRT. On Pato we are in agreement.

REYNOLDS: The comrades are replacing politics with sociology. That advanced workers support Otelo and the bourgeoisie opposes him is not sufficient grounds to vote for him. It merely means he represents a failed bourgeois policy in which many advanced workers have illusions. An analogy: the Common Market debate in Britain. Most advanced workers and left organisations supported "getting Britain out"; most serious sections of the bourgeoisie supported staying in the EEC. But I-CL insisted on an independent working class political line - abstention in the referendum. The ex-LCI comrades should say clearly what they think is the class political nature of the Otelo candidature.

ALBERTO: Otelo's candidature is defined by a petty-bourgeois programme, working class support, and a dynamic of revitalisation of the workers' organisations, against the attempts to consolidate a strong state. We vote Otelo against the bourgeoisie without supporting his programme.

A Pato vote is not a class vote, since the CP expresses no hostility against the bourgeois candidates. CP members will vote Pato more out of mechanical party loyalty than class loyalty.

I agree about the Common Market but I don't think the analogy holds.

VITO: Your position is a tragedy for all of us. It means you abandon this major political campaign, renounce the possibility of explaining to the masses the reasons for your existence. You will appear merely as another variant of centrism.

PAOLO: If we campaigned against Otelo and for a Pato vote, we would appear as tailing the CP.

ALBERTO: The CP concentrates its main denunciation against Otelo. Anyway we have a different position from the centrists.

PAOLO: The centrists agitate for Otelo in an unprincipled way. But the masses see in Otelo, not a saviour, but the symbol of a past period.

VITO: There is a principled difference here. In principle I am against voting Otelo, who is a bourgeois candidate.

ALBERTO: I agree with the principle of not voting for bourgeois candidates. But the question is whether Otelo is a bourgeois candidate.

REYNOLDS: A serious political tendency must appear before the masses with clear principles which justify its existence. If you come forward explaining your existence on the basis of criticism of the LCI internal regime, or of the LCI-PRT accords, the masses will say: "you may be right, but we do not care".

VITO: Your politics are suicidal. The best situation would be for the centrists sui generis of the LCI to appear with the position of voting Pato but being ambiguous: on Otelo, the revolutionaries for voting Pato against Otelo. Now you have only a few days to save the situation.

ALBERTO: The circumstances of the split did not permit clarification. Many comrades left the LCI on the question of internal democracy, or other questions. Vito's position seems like the PRT. Our position seems like the position the FMR takes on the Italian elections, saying vote for either the CP or Proletarian Democracy.

VITO: But in the Italian case the question is inside the workers' movement. The point is that Pato is a workers' candidate with a bourgeois programme, Otelo is a bourgeois candidate with a bourgeois programme.

ALBERTO: Otelo is a centrist candidate with a petty-bourgeois programme.

VITO: Programmes are either bourgeois or proletarian; there are no petty-bourgeois programmes.

REYNOLDS: That's not true. Petty-bourgeois programmes can exist, though they are generally utopian. Wages for Housework is an example.

VITO: A programme means a whole conception of the organisation of society. The petty bourgeoisie in this epoch has no independent conception of the organisation of society.

ALBERTO: Centrist organisations have petty-bourgeois programmes.

REYNOLDS: In any case, to say Otelo is a centrist candidate is to imply that he is a workers' candidate, since centrism is a current in the workers' movement.

ALBERTO: No. He is the candidate of the centrist organisations, but he is not organically linked to the workers' movement.

VITO: That the centrist organisations support Otelo testifies to their criminal politics. Throughout Europe we have seen centrism drifting to open support for bourgeois politics: in Italy, in Britain (over the EEC issue), in Portugal, in Spain.

ALBERTO: There is no clear convergence between the Portuguese centrists and the bourgeoisie.

VITO: I'm angry because your mistake comes from lack of international discussions. You don't understand that a group can be worth anything only on the basis of principled positions.

ALBERTO: We are confident that we will grow.

REYNOLDS: You have to start with principles; and then, of course, concretise them in analysis and tactics. You don't appreciate what a big responsibility you have before the international Trotskyist movement, being in such a crucial position in Portugal.

ALBERTO: We fought inside the LCI on principled positions. But people left the LCI on a variety of positions. It is better to wait and discuss than to take a wrong position hurriedly.

VITO/REYNOLDS: But the LCI have already identified your position as "vote Otelo or Pato".

ALBERTO: It's only a position for internal discussion.

VITO: It's a position you're responsible for unless it is contradicted.

ALBERTO: The USFI will slander us whatever we do.

VITO: Why didn't you send someone to present your case at the LO fete?

ALBERTO: We had to sort ourselves out in Portugal first.

REYNOLDS: The question of hesitancy about establishing yourselves as a tendency in Portugal, & about presenting yourselves on the international level, is linked, I think, to your attitude to Otelo. It's the chronic syndrome of post-war Trotskyism; failure to assert a confident independent working class intervention, reliance instead on the "revolutionary process" and its various vehicles.

VITO: Like Ben Bella!

ALBERTO: We could not speak at the Lo fete because we could not present positions for the group. If we had done so, it would not have solved the problems anyway. I have previous experience with a small group outside the USFI. You can distribute our documents when they appear publicly.

REYNOLDS: What concrete plans do you have for work?

PAOLO: After a conference in 3 - 4 weeks' time we will get out a newspaper.

ALBERTO: We will work round the upcoming national congress of trade unions (August). We will push for democratic organisation; an anti-capitalist programme; rights of tendency organisation; industrial unionism; independence from the State. Generally we will maintain a certain level of intervention in the workers' movement. At our conference we will have the following items on the agenda: Balance sheet of the LCI; analysis of the various currents in the workers' movement; united front, and slogans on government; tactics for building the party, strategy, programme of action; the Fourth International.

We are taking things at a slow temp to avoid centrifugal tendencies. Our worker comrades are coming under big pressure from the UDP.

REYNOLDS: You should realise that you will lose many of the people who have split from the LCI whatever you do .

ALBERTO: Yes, we will lose some; but not, we think, too many.

DISCUSSION WITH EX-LCI comrades Alberto and Paolo: Monday 14-6-76

REYNOLDS: What policy did you put forward around 25th November?

ALBERTO: In November we analysed the situation as one of the radicalisation of certain sectors of the working class. There was a leftward movement of the axes of class collaboration and a setback for reformism. We called for the centralisation of the workers' commissions and other demands towards unifying the class. In the 25th November crisis we called for a general strike, linking this with demands around 3 axes: sliding scale of wages; workers control/workers self-defence; and a series of demands for the small peasants and other petty bourgeois layers. We thought the 3rd element was important because of the ouvrierist, almost 3rd period, approach of the CP at that time.

That was our position; some of the other comrades who have split from the LCI came from different origins in the LCI.

REYNOLDS: Did you put forward a government slogan round 25th November?

ALBERTO: Not a precise slogan. We had rejected the formula of "government of revolutionary unity" (*1)

REYNOLDS: What was the basis of the opposition to your leadership at the 3rd Congress of the LCI? (10-11 January 1976)

ALBERTO: There were 4 tendencies at the LCI Second Congress on 3rd/4th August 1975.

*1) "Government of revolutionary unity" was the FUR slogan.

The first tendency was the IMT-loyalist tendency. The 2nd tendency was that of Sergio. It had been the LCI leadership up to one month before the 2nd Congress. It put forward the idea of a "front of revolutionary unity" before the emergence of the FUR and the 25th August platform. The 3rd tendency, ours, was the majority at the congress. The 4th Tendency was similar to the first, but had more nuanced positions, for example on their assessment of the MFA.

On the question of participation in the FUR, the divisions were not the same as at the 2nd Congress. Parts of the 2nd, 3rd & 4th tendencies all supported participation. The first tendency and the remainder of the 4th did not oppose any alternative perspective to the FUR. But after they had seen the USFI finally come down against the FUR, they formed a new tendency, also bringing in part of the former 2nd tendency. The driving force behind this new tendency was Charles Michaloux, the USFI representative in Portugal. In October the LCI was paralysed by factionalism. In November the opposition tendency called for an extraordinary conference, and they produced a text on the United Front, the FUR etc. We asked for a delay of this extraordinary conference, but we did not get it. Consequently we felt it was impossible to organise a serious tendency for the 3rd Congress. But we did produce a balance sheet for the congress.

REYNOLDS: What was the role of the USFI?

ALBERTO: In the factional situation after the 2nd Congress there was an extraordinarily high level of intervention by the USFI. They sent militants here who pushed for the formation of tendencies. We think they were motivated by fear for the consequences at the 11th World Congress of having an oppositional group in the leadership of the Portuguese section. They made us scapegoats for all the LCI's errors and did a "Bolshevisation" of the LCI. They also tended to underestimate the 25th November, seeing it as simply a provocation by the bourgeoisie into which the centrist groups were trapped.

REYNOLDS : What political criticisms do you have of the USFI over Portugal?

ALBERTO: They underestimated the situation after the 25th April and lacked perspectives. They repeated correct generalities about social democracy without taking sufficient account of the differences between the Portuguese SP and Portuguese CP. They tended to a schematic position on the MFA. On Angola there is also a difference, the IMT stressing entrust work in the MPLA while we insist on the need for independent work as well .

REYNOLDS: In September 1975 an IMG comrade told me she had been discussing with LCI members who thought that the Portuguese CP was on the way to constructing a deformed workers' state as in Yugoslavia etc. Who had that position?

ALBERTO: No tendency supported that position, though we were accused of supporting it. What we did say was that the CP was being pushed further than it wanted to go and we needed a more concrete assessment than the USFI's of CP-SP relations. The CP was opposing the fundamental project of the bourgeoisie.

REYNOLDS: What are your chief criticisms of the new leadership of the LCI, elected at the 3rd Congress?

ALBERTO: They have no coherent position on the general political situation; for example on the significance of 25th November. They have made concessions to stalinism and social democracy, and have put them on the same level in a schematic way.

REYNOLDS: Do you have any differences with the LCI leadership on the slogan of "democratic congress of the trade unions:"? (*1)

ALBERTO: They don't stress the necessity of an anti-capitalist programme; they call for the dissolution of the Intersindical as a preliminary for this democratic

 *1) The LCI's 3 chief slogans for the Legislative Assembly elections were: No to the bourgeois pact; for a democr. congress of the TUs; for a W & P Government.

congress; and they have been uncritical of a congress of trade unionists called by the SP. They tend towards a propagandist conception on the United Front.

REYNOLDS: What position did you argue on the Legislative Assembly elections?

ALBERTO: Sergio also had criticisms of the LCI leadership on this; he argued for a CP-SP vote in all districts. We had different criticisms. We said the leadership made insufficient propaganda on the bourgeois nature of the elections and had focused too narrowly on the generals as the main enemy. We argued for voting CP-SP where there was a danger of a right-wing victory, and LCI elsewhere.

The LCI's agitation for a "Workers & Peasants Government" clearly confused the notions of an anti-capitalist workers and peasants government, and of calling on the CP and SP to take their responsibilities and form a government. We insisted on a clear distinction. They also posed the question of a workers & peasants government as depending on a democratic congress of trade unions. But we argued against making it depend on that one possible basis. We also criticised the LCIs lack of transitional slogans directed at a CP-SP government.

REYNOLDS: What were your criticisms of the LCI-PRT accords?

ALBERTO: They were part of the LCI-PRT rapprochement. We insisted on a political discussion as a preliminary to LCI-PRT fusion, on such questions as the PRT's attitude to social democracy, its reaction to 25th November, its call for the Legislative Assembly and Presidential elections to be under workers' control etc.

The accords (*2) made serious concessions to bourgeois democracy. The revolutionary candidature was presented only as a means of ensuring that the will of the majority in the Legislative Assembly elections was carried out. It tried to apply the United Front at the electoral level, leading to tailism towards the CP and the SP. The LCI said that all the SP votes were votes for a left alliance, which wasn't true. The accords omitted the question of the state, and the LCI conceded to the PRT's conception of a "SP government" (not a CP-SP government), putting forward no programme for this government.

These concessions to the PRT showed that the USFI was sacrificing our work to the organisational operation of the LCI-PRT fusion.

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VITO: We should discuss an international campaign of solidarity against the expulsions. How do you want to go about it? I draw to your attention the report of the latest (February 1976) IEC plenum. There is an item on the expulsions from the PRT (*1). Apparently the expelled comrades have had an unprincipled rapprochement with the SWP.

ALBERTO: I recently met the leading comrade of that expelled group. He is demoralised and inactive.

VITO: Not only the PRT expulsions, but Portugal more generally, had big repercussions at the International Executive Committee (IEC) plenum. There is a letter from Peng Tsu She on the Portuguese question, putting a position clearly different from the SWP's. The ground is prepared for a lot of noise about the LCI expulsions. What are you going to do?

ALBERTO: A campaign can start as soon as we make our public declaration of the split, probably this week. It will be intended to help the development of a revolutionary Marxist alternative on a world scale, therefore depends on clarification of our positions on the USFI, on the International Initiative, etc. The declaration of split should be distributed on a world scale. We also want to push forward revolutionary regroupment in Portugal.

*1) A manifesto for the Legislative Assembly elections issued by this group expelled from the PRT will be found in "Intercontinental Press" of 24 May, p. 824.

*2) The text of the accords in English will be found in "Intercontinental Press" of 31 May 1976, page 892.

PAOLO: Before our public declaration, everything we say is a personal opinion. We have said there was no factional work before our expulsion, except on the part of the LCI leadership. We must be cautious now so as not to give the LCI leadership ammunition. I personally will argue for an international campaign.

VITO: DO you or don't you want to protest against your expulsion?

ALBERTO: Yes, but the main thing is to publicise the split and to push forward efforts towards a revolutionary regroupment in Portugal.

VITO: That approach excludes an international campaign, which must be based on opposition to bureaucratism, not political agreement with the expelled/split comrades. You must demand either reinstatement in the LCI or recognition as a USFI sympathising section.

ALBERTO: Even if comrades internationally do not have precise political agreement with us, we can publicise the split, given the international interest in Portugal.

To demand reintegration in the LCI could compromise our position.

REYNOLDS: Are you against reinstatement in the LCI?

ALBERTO: No. But we might, for example, demand instead recognition as a sympathising section of the USFI.

REYNOLDS: You cannot credibly demand recognition as a sympathising section of the USFI without also demanding reinstatement in the LCI.

ALBERTO: We denounce the bureaucratic nature of the expulsions. But we think the LCI is going through an irreversible degeneration, therefore we don't demand reinstatement. Among those who have left LCI there is a variety of political ideas.

PAOLO: The dynamic of the expulsions has turned into a split dynamic. We can't now demand an international inquiry after the event. The split is largely linked with the LCI-PRT accords. MAYBE we can demand recognition as a sympathising section of the USFI.

ALBERTO: We CAN demand an international inquiry, but that doesn't mean demanding reinstatement in the LCI. We have already demanded that our case be put before the USFI International Control Commission.

REYNOLDS: I can't take a dogmatic line, but my inclination is to say that you should demand reinstatement in the LCI anyway, in order to crystallise out the serious elements among those who have left the LCI from those who will drift out of revolutionary politics.

VITO: I give no advice. But consider our experience in Italy. When we were expelled from the USFI section, we quickly sent a letter to the USFI condemning the section majority as splitters. We never got a reply, but the letter is there for the record. The same thing in Austria. If the comrades don't apply for reinstatement it will show they have a different policy from the FMR. We can make no international campaign except according to what the Portuguese comrades ask for. Send us (and the LTF, the PST, etc.) a copy of the letter you send to the USFI leadership. But at the moment we have no reply to the LCI text on the expulsions (*1) which will already be circulating in all the USFI sections.

ALBERTO: The expulsions, plus the accords with the PRT, plus the asphyxiation of LCI internal life, mean a degeneration of the LCI. Getting a clear view of the USFI contradicts demanding reinstatement in the LCI. Does Vito want us to demand reinstatement?

VITO: Yes. As of now, all that USFI members will know is that "ultra-lefts who
 *1) This text, so the LCI leadership told us, is restricted to members & sympathisers of the LCI. They said, however, they would publish it when the split group appears in public.

supported the FUR and Otelo" have been expelled.

ALBERTO: Incidents like the withdrawal of Arlete will raise doubts.

REYNOLDS: No they won't. People will just think "the Portuguese comrades have been unfortunate".

VITO: USFI comrades in other countries have the same nationalism as you have here in Portugal.

ALBERTO: All our supposed "nationalism" is, is to continue a real intervention in the working class here.

VITO: If USFI militants don't know what's happening, it's YOUR fault. Why didn't you two publish a letter to whole international movement straight after your expulsion?

ALBERTO: We couldn't just do it ourselves; there were others to consult. The first thing is to consolidate the comrades who have split. Previously we had the experience of sending letters out internationally demanding the replacement of Michaloux as USFI representative in Portugal. We never got any response.

VITO: I want to tell you about the conferences initiated by Lutte Ouvriere. LO propose a permanent framework of discussion open to all avowedly Trotskyist groups. We think such discussion useful. At the second conference which has just taken place, it was agreed to set up such a framework before the end of the year. LO, Spark, CO, UATCI, Spartacusbund, IKL, FMR, and I-CL were present. We also discussed Spain, Portugal, Italy. We said we would invite you to subsequent conferences. The agenda for the next conference (31 October/1 November) is: framework of discussion/ crisis of the FI/ Italy/ Portugal.

ALBERTO: What do you think are the possibilities of this framework?

VITO: It is useful for discussion and confrontation of positions. We distinguish clearly, however, between this activity and the work of building a coherent international tendency.

ALBERTO: Can you tell us anything about the Vargaist current? (*1). We know nothing about them, but we have been accused of being like them.

VITO: It is difficult to take them seriously. They claim to have rebuilt the Fourth International at a conference a few months ago.

VITO: The International Initiative represents a project of constructing an international tendency, on strict programmatic and political bases. We put out the text, the start of this project, after some months of discussion. The I-CL presented some amendments to the International Initiative; we discussed them in the commission of the I.I. and then with the I-CL. We shall discuss further with the I-CL on analysis of the crisis of the FI. I put the text of the I.I. to you last time I was in Portugal. Then you could not participate for technical reasons, i.e. you were still in the LCI. But now political reasons - i.e. your position on the presidential elections - exclude you. And we shall not forget that position until you publicly criticise it.

Obviously, however, we are willing to continue discussing with you.

ALBERTO: OK.

*1) The current around Michel Varga (Balasz Nagy) was expelled from the Lambertists recently. A lot of its activity centres around a campaign against the Lambertists' accusations against Varga of CIR links.

VITO: For the I.I. we do not demand agreement on everything. But we do demand agreement on basic principled questions.

ALBERTO: Our position is not public, not official, not even a definite internal position. We are just having a discussion. We think your position is formal and shows a lack of understanding of the real situation. We think your mistake is tactical. Otelo is supported by the vanguard of the working class.

REYNOLDS: According to the PRP, he is also supported by workers who vote PPD and CDS.

ALBERTO: In the main it is vanguard workers who support him.

REYNOLDS: Your position replaces politics with arithmetic. One cannot work out a political position by calculating how many bourgeois are on such-and-such a side, and how many workers on such-and-such a side.

REYNOLDS: Our position on the Fourth International is briefly this. Since the '40s Trotskyism in all its currents has tended to degenerate into a combination of formal affirmations of principle and adaptations to a supposed 'objective revolutionary process'. The adaptationism is expressed most seriously on the question of political revolution, e.g. in Vietnam. In a way it represents a reversion to Second International Marxism, which also adapted to an 'objective process' (in that case, of reform, not 'Revolution'). We reject the concept of Pabloism as mythical since the "anti-Pabloites" also show this ... degeneration, only more crassly and coupled with confusionist slanders and scapegoating.

The participation in the FUR is an example of USFI adaptationism. The Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF) position on Portugal is in the same ideological mould, but supposing that the 'revolutionary process' must pass through social democracy). The criticisms of the USFI's more recent record which the comrades have raised reflect not so much the usual trend of the IMT as IMT attempts to conciliate the LTF (*1) and to prove themselves orthodox.

I think the comrades' position on Otelo reflects USFI-type adaptationism, looking for a leader of the 'revolutionary process' rather than formulating an independent proletarian-revolutionary intervention. Compare the ISFI/USFI attitude to Ben Bella, who was after all a far more serious figure than Otelo.

ALBERTO: We have taken positions on the FI only as individuals. Generally I agree with what Reynolds says. The 'Pabloist' period was only a particular aspect of the FI degeneration; perhaps the I-CL is correct to reject the use of the concept. We have no overall critique of the USFI yet. The LTF has been totally incapable of relating to the class struggle here. It has adapted to bourgeois democracy. It has tailed social democracy. We consider it much more degenerate than the IMT.

The IMT started off after 25th April with general affirmations, no concretisations, absence of independent revolutionary Marxist perspectives, tendencies to liquidationism. Reynolds' picture of schemas plus empirical adaptations seems justified. Perhaps we have not analysed sufficiently the IMT's attitude to the 25th November.

The IMT have taken formalist positions towards the MFA and the CP. Now they adapt more and more to social democracy. There is a combination of empiricism and a-priori formalism.

On the question of the united front, the IMT seem to have over-reacted after the criticisms of the "new mass vanguard" concepts, and now, by stressing that the united front must be oriented to the WHOLE of the class, they tend to tailism towards the reformist parties.

As regards other international currents, we have had some agreement with the FMR on their general political assessments and on their analysis of the FI, but we tend to find them formalistic and inadequate on tactical questions.

*1) I was almost certainly wrong on this. The IMT is trying to conciliate, not the LTF/SWP, but the Argentine PST, which has been estranged from the SWP over the issue of Angola and over the split in the Liga Socialista of Mexico.

VITO: As a generalisation, I would agree with that criticism!

ALBERTO: As regards the I-CL's differences with the FMR on saying Pabloism is a myth and the USFI is the mainstream, I'm not sure.

We should use the Portuguese issue in relation to all sections of the USFI, and we can have an impact.

PAOLO: There is a problem with Reynolds citing the FUR as an example of USFI adaptationism. Since October 1974 we had said the USFI had objectivist tendencies, we had criticised the European Perspectives Document and the "new mass vanguard" conceptions. But it was us who supported the FUR, not the USFI.

ALBERTO: The USFI also supported it at first.

PAOLO: Yes, but there are problems posed. I think the FUR question was one of precise tactical calculation, not of principle. Anti-USFI groups have generally failed to move beyond general affirmations of principle. The USFI had hesitations on the FUR. Michaloux supported the FUR and the Copcon document, and Frank also wrote in support of the FUR - but then the USFI corrected itself under pressure of the SWP, the PRT, and pro-IMP people in the LCI who had leftist positions. In self-criticism, the USFI went over to the view that the united front is for the whole of the class, not for the vanguard. The FUR question is not yet sufficiently sorted out. We need a thorough review. Roberto Massari's book is a good start.

ALBERTO: The pro-IMP people in the LCI were not a leftist variant of the USFI position, they had opportunist tendencies. When we took the leadership of the LCI, we were armed with the ideas of the 3rd International tendency (*1). We did not do well in concretising them. The united front, for example, is a very good principle, but what do you do if you do not have a sufficient relation of forces? You can end up with tailism. We agree that the USFI is centrist "sui generis", that it is adaptationist, that it tends to "Kuomintangism". But they seem to have learnt something in the last period.

VITO: We don't deny that the USFI can make POSITIVE adaptations too. Where the USFI thought it could not hegemonise the centrist groups, it took a 'hard' position: e.g. in Italy - contrast Italy where the USFI thinks it can have a fusion with the centrist groups.

We can't have a proper discussion here and now on the crisis of the FI. But we should indicate the key starting points. First, that the Fourth International does not exist. This is a clear fact that any worker can see in daily struggle. It raises a whole series of questions: how to build a revolutionary Marxist international tendency; how to assess the existing tendencies; did the FI ever exist? (we say yes); when/how did it cease to exist? (we say it did not degenerate, it was destroyed). We must analyse all problems in the perspective of rebuilding the FI. The Portuguese comrades must align with an existing international tendency - or build another.

REYNOLDS: One of the most important points I-CL has registered in our discussions on the FI is that a programme is not just a list of principles. We reject the view we once had that the USFI has a basically revolutionary programme because it professes a list of revolutionary principles. We also reject the 'anti-Pabloite' view that the USFI's opportunism is to be countered by more strident or energetic proclamation of that list of principles. On the contrary, a painstaking process of ideological regeneration is needed to develop an international programme.

Within the framework of USFI adaptationism/formalism, a variety of political positions becomes possible, thus the divisions on the FUR. The comrades' error on that I would attribute to their education in the USFI.

I don't know whether I understood Vito's point correctly, that any worker can see in his/her daily struggle that the FI doesn't exist, but if so I think it

at the USFI 10th World Congress

*1) The 3rd International tendency/(called "Mezhrayonka", or "Kompas", after its German section, the largest) criticised the concept of the NMV and also analysis of social democracy and orientation in Latin America. The FMR was also part of it.

is nonsense. Workers in daily struggle do not pose themselves the question of the Fourth International.

VITO: What if you ask them?

ALBERTO/PAOLO: If you asked the same question in Trotsky's time, you would get a similar reply.

VITO: Yes, in 1938 the FI was not known to most workers - but if it had existed as an International should in 1940, then every worker would have known about it because of its stand on the war. The non-existence of the FI is something I can discuss with every worker I meet.

PAOLO: But to discuss the question of the existence of the FI you also have to discuss the whole range of programmatic questions.

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DISCUSSIONS WITH COMRADES OF THE LCI, Thursday 10-6-76

The discussion opened with Reynolds giving a brief account of what the I-CL is, its positions, its relation to the USFI etc.

REYNOLDS: You have withdrawn the LCI/PRT candidate for the presidential elections. What is your policy now?

LCI: The bourgeoisie is trying to re-gain what it lost in the Legislative Assembly elections. Its offensive is focused round Eanes, supported by the PPD and CDS. We argued for presenting a candidate who could be the unitary candidate of the workers' movement. We are not able to have a candidate ourselves; but we can't have an abstentionist position in these elections.

The LCI supports neither Otelo nor Pato, because their programmes are programmes of class collaboration. Otelo represents all the illusions in the MFA-People Alliance etc. We must vote against the bourgeoisie. But Otelo is an element alien to the workers' movement. Thus we don't call for voting Otelo, we call for voting Pato. Voting Pato can represent an objective drive for class independence, against the Stalinist leadership.

REYNOLDS: What is your policy on the formation of a government?

LCI: We call for a Cp-SP government, against the bonapartist project. We have no illusions in relation to the Legislative Assembly. The CP-SP government should base itself on their majority in the Assembly, but should be responsible to the democratic congress of the trade unions.

REYNOLDS: What class politics does Otelo represent?

LCI: Otelo is a petit-bourgeois personality. The sectors which support him are workers' parties, but a vote for Otelo is an incorrect and very dangerous vote. His programme is a populist programme. His positions are dangerous, but the vote for Otelo will be a workers' vote.

REYNOLDS: Surely the Otelo vote is a petit-bourgeois vote from the very fact of being a vote for a military hero?

LCI: Yes. But Pato's programme has the same aims as Otelo; however, the Pato vote is a class vote.

REYNOLDS: What do you think of the slogan of sovereignty of the Legislative Assembly, against the presidential system?

LCI: But it was the Constituent Assembly that voted for the Constitution.

REYNOLDS: It's part of a general approach of demanding the CP and SP break with their previous class-collaborationism.

LCI: We waged a campaign on the question of the Pact between the parties and the military. Only we and the PRT did this. We are clearly for the defence of the Legislative Assembly, but I don't know about a slogan centred on that defence.

REYNOLDS: What were the circumstances of the recent expulsions from the LCI?

LCI: There were some questions involved of security in the organisation, but the main question was that of factional work in the organisation against the LCI and against the Fourth International. The comrades involved had been elected to the leadership at the 2nd Congress, they were responsible for the participation in the FUR. Their activity went outside the limits of democratic centralism because they maintained contact with organisations outside the FI and introduced the positions of those organisations into the LCI under their own signatures. Two comrades were expelled and others left.

REYNOLDS: What disagreements did these comrades have?

LCI: They conducted no consistent political struggle. They were an unprincipled faction, taking advantage of petty points. They represented the methods of work of a stage we have now passed. Over the Legislative Assembly, they advocated voting CP or SP as well as LCI. They opposed the electoral accords with the PRT, using the sectarian feeling/the LCI ranks against the PRT. They promised to make a self-criticism on the FUR but never did it. They never agreed to form a tendency. They call for voting 'Otelor Pato' in the presidential elections. They represent a concession to centrist pressures.

DISCUSSIONS WITH A COMRADE OF THE LCI: Friday 11-6-76

REYNOLDS: I believe you have issued a pamphlet on the expulsions, entitled 'A Necessary Explanation'.

LCI: Yes, but this pamphlet is not public, it is only for our militants and sympathisers. However, we reserve the right to make it public as soon as the people who have split declare themselves publicly against us.

REYNOLDS: Around the Legislative Assembly elections, the LCI put forward both the slogan "Workers and Peasants Government" and the slogan "CP-SP government", without making it clear whether these were the same or different. I think this was confusing.

LCI: Until the Legislative Assembly elections, we used "Workers and Peasants Government" as a general propagandist slogan, defined by its programme. Then we put the accent on the concretisation as "CP-SP government". But we do distinguish between the general propagandist slogan and the concrete slogan "CP-SP government".

REYNOLDS: Can you explain your slogan of "Democratic Congress of Trade Unions"?

LCI: Some trade unions have left the Intersindical. But we think a democratic congress of trade unions could un-freeze the situation since 25th November and open possibilities for fighting the bourgeoisie's offensive. Of course we have no illusions. We fight for a class struggle tendency in the trade unions.

REYNOLDS: Isn't there a contradiction in coupling the defensive slogan 'Democratic Congress of TUs' and the offensive slogan "Workers and Peasants Government" on

the same poster. I admit that we cannot make a schematic division between 'offensive' and 'defensive', but the slogan "democratic congress of TUs" corresponds to a situation of recomposing a workers' movement in downturn, while the slogan "workers and peasants government" corresponds to a situation of massive bourgeois disarray and offensive by the working class.

LCI: No, you are too schematic. The slogan of "democratic congress" serves to form the instruments of the working class.

REYNOLDS: What is your position on the use of the United Front tactic?

LCI: The classic position.

REYNOLDS: Can you explain more concretely?

LCI: We recognise certain points. The United Front is not a strategy, but a tactic. It is directed not at sections of the working class, but at the whole class. It needs a certain relation of forces. We fight for the united front on several levels: at the local level and right up to the governmental level (slogan of CP-SP government).

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DISCUSSIONS WITH A COMRADE OF THE PRT: Saturday 12-6-76

REYNOLDS: The PRT calls for, not a CP-SP government, but a SP government. How do you reconcile that with your propaganda for SP-CP united action in class struggle?

PRT: We have made an agreement with the LCI on the presidential elections that we argue for a government of workers' organisations without generals and capitalists. The LCI can interpret that as CP-SP government if they wish, and we interpret it as SP government.

Why do we call for a SP government with socialist policies? It is only a tactical formula. We have nothing in principle against a SP-CP government. The "Sp government" formula is better because we want to pose the question, who must govern. To pose the formula SP-CP government means in relation to most workers that you end up discussing the issue of SP-CP relations. We are not against CP ministers in the government, but the major question is the exclusion of generals and capitalists. We want to use the contradiction between SP workers and SP leaders. We went to the mass events of the election campaign, i.e. the SP events, and we had an impact. We also talk to CP workers and they understand our slogan. The "CP-SP government" position just means discussing whether SP-CP should ally in gov't.

REYNOLDS: Why is your main orientation to the SP, when the CP is historically the party more deeply rooted in the militant sectors of the working class?

PRT: The CP is not the main organised workers' party now, though it was straight after 25th April. The most important trade unions are controlled by the SP; most proletarian militants are in the SP; the SP can mobilise more in the workers' movement than the CP can. The SP rank and file is against the leadership and is more approachable than the CP rank and file. The SP now fights against strikes - but SP militants are leading those strikes. We do also give some attention to the CP; we fight for a CP-SP united front. Our collaboration with SP militants has been very positive in the trade unions and especially in the schools.

REYNOLDS: If you say the SP has overtaken the CP as the main workers' party, how did this happen?

PRT: The CP was strong on 25th April because of their monopoly, even though they were small (only 1,000-2,000 militants). The SP was only some groups of intellectuals. The CP and SP rapidly became mass parties. The CP acted against struggles, especially under the 5th government. The SP did not oppose struggles and weren't

as bureaucratic. The SP captured the allegiance of people vaguely wanting socialism and democracy. Anti-communism also helped the SP, but that's not the main thing. There was also the CP's bureaucratic policy vis-a-vis the peasants of the North, which didn't solve the peasants' problems. Thus the Right wing got support and the bourgeoisie were able to use it. The loss of CP support is shown by the election results. CP influence is localised in Lisbon, Porto, Alentejo.

REYNOLDS: What is your policy on the presidential elections?

PRT: We had a common platform with the LCI, but our candidate was withdrawn - we think a Stalinist provocation was involved. We proposed the candidate, but we didn't check up sufficiently. The CP made accusations against her, which turned out to be true. So we withdrew our support - it was a great defeat for us. What to do now? There are 3 military candidates plus a CP candidate who supports the military. So we call for a critical vote for Octavio Pato.

REYNOLDS: What criticisms and demands do you direct at Pato?

PRT: We demand Pato should not withdraw in favour of Eanes; that the CP breaks the Pact and fights for an independent government of the workers' parties....

REYNOLDS: That would be a CP-SP government, not a SP government?

PRT: ... We have made no concretisation. We call on the SP not to support Eanes, SP workers to vote Pato, SP to refuse to accept the authority of the Revolutionary Council.

REYNOLDS: What are your criticisms of the PRP/MES/UDP campaign for Otelo?

PRT: The PRP, UDP and MES are sectarian to the CP and SP workers, they organise separate demos - but they collaborate with the military hierarchy. They have no confidence in the workers; they want a revolution made by the radicalised workers in alliance with the military hierarchy. We want to educate the masses in the spirit of class independence.

REYNOLDS: What was your position on 25th November?

PRT: Our characterisation was that there was a double provocation. Some sectors of the military hierarchy were being pushed out by others; they wanted to change the composition of the Revolutionary Council to include more partisans of Otelo and of Goncalves. The soldiers involved didn't know what was going on. It was an adventure directed against the workers and against the workers' mobilisation; only 6 or 7 factories took part. It was not a defeat for the workers' movement, because the workers weren't involved. If the adventure had been victorious, the outcome could have been worse than what actually happened. The Otelo/Goncalves sectors wanted to impose their power against the SP and introduce a masked left dictatorship - and that was the worst thing that could happen. There was also a provocation by the military hierarchy - i.e. state of emergency, abolition of democratic freedoms, imprisonment of many people who had nothing to do with 25th November. The PRT clearly opposed the state of emergency and the imprisonments. But not to condemn the leftist adventure would have left us undistinguished from those with no faith in the mass movement.

REYNOLDS: I disagree. Your analysis of 25th November makes it impossible to explain how it was a defeat. The soldiers (and some workers - 6 or 7 factories is not negligible, considering the lack of leadership) were protesting against an attempted self-assertion by the right in the military hierarchy. We need not endorse demands for better positions for military "lefts" but we should back the movement against the right. Take some historical analogies. The Spartacusbund joined the protests against the dismissal of Eichhorn as police chief of Berlin, in 1919, without saying they thought Eichhorn should be police chief. The Bulgarian CP should have joined the fight against the right-wing attack on the Stambulisky gov't in 1923, without saying Stambulisky should be prime minister.

PRT: There was no defeat for the workers' movement on 25th November. Only the soldiers were defeated. The workers have seen no real setback since 25th November. Even in the Armed Forces the defeat was not total. The workers were not defeated because they were not involved. Dual power in the armed forces was liquidated but the pre-revolutionary situation still exists. Inside the armed forces there are 2 sides - the military hierarchy, versus the soldiers and some officers. We don't confuse the rank and file soldiers with the sector of the military hierarchy trying to use them, who led 25th November's uprising. We don't say 25th November was made directly against the workers - but objectively the role of the provocation was against the workers, because its objectives were bourgeois objectives. The provocation was also directed against the Constituent Assembly, which had the support of the majority of the workers, and was the only elected bourgeois democratic body in Portugal.

REYNOLDS: What do you think are the possible developments in the coming months assuming Eanes is elected?

PRT: The situation could change very fast. But we characterise it as pre-revolutionary. There is a favourable relation of forces for the workers today. The bourgeoisie can recuperate by the presidential elections what they lost by the Legislative Assembly elections. There will be a new offensive for strong government after the Presidential elections. But nothing is decided yet.

REYNOLDS: What are your relations with the LCI?

PRT: We have been trying to start discussions with the LCI. But they broke the agreement on the Legislative Assembly elections. We still try to approach the LCI. The two organisations are coming to very similar political lines. When the SWP said, six or nine months ago, that we should unify with the LCI, we disagreed then in view of the very big differences we had at that time.

REYNOLDS: "Intercontinental Press" (24 May 1976) has published a document of a group expelled from the PRT. What were the circumstances of the expulsions?

PRT: That group exists more in the pages of Intercontinental Press than in Portugal. It was half a dozen people who factionalised without any clear political line. They had relations with people outside the PRT; we don't know their relations with people in the FI. They have had meeting with the FMR and other groups. A Control Commission was set up and there was a thorough investigation; the expulsions were ratified by a meeting of all our Lisbon militants. The leading militant of the expelled group also had secret relations with the Central Committee of the Liga Comunista in Spain (*1), with the minority of the IMG, and may have gone to the USA. However, it was not a group supporting the line of the SWP; they sometimes argued a different line. The group was supported by the SWP in political, economic, and human terms because of the SWP's factionalism against the PST of Argentina. It is a petty-bourgeois/lumpen group.

The other expulsion since that group has been of three young militants (15 years old) who got mixed up in the PRP's military operations.

REYNOLDS: What are your criticisms of the SWP's policy on Portugal?

PRT: Since the split in Mexico, The SWP has been campaigning against the PST and all the groups agreeing with the PST (e.g. PRT, Bloque Socialists in Colombia(*2), Liga Socialista in Mexico). The SWP criticise our former illusions in the AFM; but we have criticised that mistake, too, and publicly. The ICP's approach can only be called calumny. We are surprised by the SWP's precipitancy in such acts as promoting the split in Mexico. But we are unsure about the SWP's positions in general. In relation to Portugal the SWP has had an abstract democratic programme - no transitional slogans - defence of democracy in the abstract - rejection of building

*2) Either I heard wrong, or the PRT cd. made a mistake: the pro-PST group in Colombia is called the GMI & the SWP criticises for its policy towards the Bloque Soc.
 *1) The group affiliated to the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction. (ICP, 26 Apr.)

soviets - tending to ignore workers' mobilisations. I remember when I discussed with the Central Committee of the SWP they insisted that the concessions showed "not the workers strong, but the bourgeois government weak". The SWP has a reformist position - all fights have to be defensive. Until autumn they maintained there was a strong Bonapartist military dictatorship in Portugal - after that they began to say it was weak. Often we have more differences with the SWP than with the LCI. The SWP's approach is often very schematic. E.g. they said that the AFM represented the bourgeoisie as an entire class. But that doesn't fit the reality of the concessions made by the AFM to the mass movement.

REYNOLDS: What about the SWP's policy on Angola?

PRT: They have no analysis of reality, they don't see the national liberation struggle against imperialism. Their position of neutrality between MPLA, FNLA and Unita was very opportunist. MPLA was the only real anti-imperialist movement, albeit with a petty-bourgeois leadership. The SWP's argument about Gulf Oil and Diamang supporting the MPLA are irrelevant. Imperialism actually supported the FNLA and Unita. Also the SWP falsify the history of the FNLA and Unita, ignoring their collaboration with imperialism.

After the military victory of the MPLA, our attention turned to defence of militants against MPLA repression.

REYNOLDS: What is your assessment of workers' struggles since the 25th November?

PRT: (The comrade gave a long list of strikes, and continued:) Student struggles are also important. There has been a general strike in the Coimbra high schools. A national students' union is being built.

Workers' commissions are also beginning to centralise - e.g. metalworkers, merchant marine, textile, CUF. There is also the struggle for workers' control of the welfare services. In the trade unions, there is a process of democratisation. CP leaderships are being ousted by SP/MRPP/PRT (though we struggle against the MRPP) - there is a move to recognition of tendency rights in the TUs.

Finally, Reynolds gave a brief account of the I-CL's history, politics, and attitudes to the various currents in the USFI.

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DISCUSSIONS WITH COMRADES OF THE UDP: Tuesday 15th June. (*1)

RICE: What is your policy on the presidential elections?

UDP: Since last year the UDP has grown a lot. We think Otelo is the only candidate to unite the left and unite the country. Eanes is the right wing candidate but he has a lot of popular support. Pato is a reformist candidate. Most CP militants want Otelo because he represents the spirit of 25th April. The CP were going to support Costa Gomes, but he refused to stand. The CP would not take part in CLARP (*2) - they opposed unity. The CP presented Pato because of Otelo's candidature - but Pato typifies the CP.

RICE: What are your criticisms of the Otelo campaign?

UDP: There are three groups involved, MDS, PRP and UDP. Portugal is a very poor country and mainly Catholic; we must relate to that. We do not support the MPLA in Angola because of the existence of 3 different parties there. In Portugal the alternatives are fascism and revolution. Otelo's slogans are weak, but we have to be cautious. The right, the revisionists, and the reformists slander Otelo. We need to face the real problems of the people in the spirit of last year, to get popular unity, not to push too advanced policies. The majority of the people in Portugal live in the North. The south, and the factories, are easier places for

*2) CLARP: a united front for the release of those arrested after 25th November.

*1) The UDP appear to be the nearest thing to a Maoist equivalent of the 'Militant'. All our questions were answered with long didactic lectures - only partly minuted.

revolutionaries to work. But we go out to the peasants in the North and get a good response, including among illiterates. We think structures to link the people are important.

RICE: How do you go about creating links between town and country?

UDP: It is very difficult because the big landowners try to go round the cooperatives. We work to keep the people informed.

RICE: Can you explain your slogan "Struggle for an Anti-Fascist and Patriotic Government"?

UDP: Fascism did not disappear on the 25th April, it has just been covered up. The fascists are there within the PFD, CDS, etc. Also the structures of the old regime continue. Now you can see police on the streets with guns. The PIDEs have been released. There was no real purging, and that's become obvious since the 25th November. Spinolists have returned to the country. All the governments so far have been bourgeois governments. The 6th government is very right-wing, but the 5th government (CP-dominated) did much the same in fact. We have no faith in such governments. Thus we call for an Anti-Fascist government built by elements on the side of the people, like Otelo (who hasn't sold out either to fascism or to the social-fascists of the CP, as you can see from the Copcon document), and other individuals who will emerge in the course of time.

By a Patriotic government we mean one that will get out of NATO and free Portugal from the US stranglehold. There is a danger of NATO interference. We also see economic sabotage, trying to create a return to fascism like in Chile. There is a flight of capital. A Patriotic government would establish equal relations with all other countries.

The Anti-Fascist and Patriotic government is an intermediate step, creating the conditions for a struggle for socialism at a later stage.

RICE: Why do you think it is that UDP has grown in the last period?

UDP: Members have left the CP because of the CP's divisionist policy. We have been helped by the work of our representative in the Constituent Assembly. We have a clear and simple and coherent political line which people can understand. We were also helped by the fusion of numerous Maoist groups.

As for the other left groups: LUAR and PRP were armed groups before 25th April. LUAR followed a spontaneist line after 25th April, and has disintegrated. PRP is incoherent, but rather like LUAR. Bourgeois elements in the army were attracted to PRP and LUAR. They also had a bad position on the Legislative Assembly. They have not done enough work in the workers' and neighbourhood commissions. The FSP was made up of SP dissidents, now it has no political life in it. MES is a special case. Again it was made up of SP dissidents, intellectuals with little mass implantation. But they have done some mass work and have some Marxist-Leninist tendencies. The PRP has sabotaged the Otelo campaign to a certain extent, e.g. they want the GDUPs not to be prolonged after the election campaign. UDP has to do all the work and PRP makes carping criticism.

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DISCUSSIONS WITH SPARTACUSBUND COMRADES Benno and Joao, Porto Tuesday 15-6-76

(Before the minuted discussion, we had an informal discussion with Benno on the presidential elections. He argued the position of "vote Otelo or Pato", but said that the ex-LCI people in Porto, as far as he knew, inclined to a "vote Otelo" position.)

1. REYNOLDS reported on the LO fete and conference.
2. BENNO reported on his discussions with the ex-LCI people. I was sent to Lisbon by the International Initiative to get someone for the LO fete. On arrival I had difficulty contacting the comrades, but eventually I discussed with Paolo. They

were then preparing a public declaration for Monday or Tuesday (7 or 8 June). I said it was very important to have a document for the LO fete. They said the split wasn't public. But the LCI had already distributed their document on the split in Porto. I said they should go to Paris even without the declaration, stressing the question of internationalism. Paolo stressed the heterogeneity of their group, and the likelihood of further comrades splitting as the LCI approached the PRT. On Sunday (6th June) there was a meeting of their national coordinating commission; Paolo put forward my proposals but they were rejected for tactical reasons (they didn't want to have international contacts before the public declaration for tactical reasons vis-a-vis the USFI and vis-a-vis their own comrades). I said they would face intervention from other international tendencies which would fragment their group unless they took a clear stand. Paolo agreed and said that leading members of the national coordinating commission agreed. I said as soon as the public declaration was out, the International Initiative would make a public approach. Joao could be the resident representative of the I.I. in Portugal. I phoned Paris to suggest an I.I. delegation be sent to Portugal.

We also discussed with the NCC representative in Porto. We had some discussion on the presidential elections. The ex-LCI comrade had a "vote Otelo" position, but in the course of the discussion he moved towards a "Otelo or Pato" position.

3. REYNOLDS reported on the Lisbon discussions.

BENNO: How do you assess the ex-LCI tendency?

REYNOLDS/RICE: They lack clarity and self-confidence. They hope to keep together all those who have come out of the LCI by caution and not taking sharp positions too soon. This hope is utopian. They will fragment but some healthy elements may come out of that fragmentation.

BENNO: What about divergent elements in them, e.g. people who still think the FUR was a good idea?

REYNOLDS: They have some association with the Sergio group in Porto which seems to have had a pro-FUR line. Paolo said he thought the FUR question was one of precise tactical calculation and not principle; perhaps that is an accommodation to the Sergio group.

BENNO: How do we deal with them? There are international ramifications since the LCI split derives from the LCI-PRT rapprochement which in turn derives from the IMI-PST rapprochement. The LCR-ETA6 in Spain is moving towards the Liga Comunista.

REYNOLDS: Discuss with them. We haven't discussed the international implications since we didn't know about Spain.

BENNO: The Liga Comunista has a PST position on Angola and the LCR-ETA6 is making a right turn - fusion may be possible - and there is apparently left opposition in the LCR-ETA6.

JOAO: The most important factor on the international level is the LCI-PRT rapprochement and the reaction to it. There are anti-IMI people still in the LCI (I think they were the minority of 7 on the LCI CC who voted for abstention in the presidential election, against the 8 who said 'vote Pato'.) Those anti-IMI people don't want to be identified with Alberto & Paolo. We must recognise: (i) Alberto and Paolo are right on the LCI/PRT fusion; (ii) their tendency is not coherent.

BENNO: The frozen confrontation of blocs in the USFI over recent years is now breaking up. This presents historic opportunities. We must intervene.

REYNOLDS: At least I agree we should intervene.

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LETTERS TO THE EX-LCI TENDENCY

Lisbon, 13-6-76

Dear comrades,

We are writing to ask for formal relations of discussion with your tendency. We know that the LCI has expelled you bureaucratically, and that you have broad political agreement with the positions expressed in the International Initiative, with which we are also in agreement. At present we are discussing with the comrades of the International Initiative on certain differences on the question of the crisis of the Fourth International.

It appears that we have very serious differences with your tendency on the question of voting for Otelo in the presidential elections. But we believe that the great questions of revolutionary politics can only be resolved through broad international discussion. For that reason, comrades, we propose formal relations of discussion.

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I-CL Could you give us your general assessment of the situation following 25 Nov.?

PRP 25 November undoubtedly a set-back to workers movement for 2 main reasons:
1. The possibility of restructuring the army where there have been drastic changes. All so-called progressive officers and sergeants have been either sent home or moved to other positions. We have seen the disbandment of regiments such as RALIS and the dismantling of COPCON whose refusal to repress workers and assist occupations acted as a deterrent to RW units. All soldiers committees and units are finished and there has been a revival of discipline and respect allowing no open political activity and no representative bodies. There has also been the implementation of a plan in the army for the reduction of conscript soldiers, to increase professionalisation and to create elite units. The Military police and commandos of Amadora tried to recruit mercenaries but were not very successful. The commandos are now very well equipped. All the equipment and weapons taken from RALIS went to commandos. There are plans to reduce the marines and to double the size of the PSP and GNR to 20,000. In the case of the GNR however, they have had to suspend recruitment for the moment and they now number 12,000. Each man in the GNR has 5 weapons. In the police they were more successful attracting the returnees from Angola. They are trying to form an intelligence centre with advice from the States, using the GNR for information and former PIDE agents - almost all have now been released. Also infiltrating the working class movement which is relatively easy.

I-CL Has there been any evidence of this infiltration?

PRP I dont know of any cases

The second reason is that the RW has acquired a new confidence and now expresses itself openly. There are 7 new extreme RW papers which could be called fascist. Before 25 November the extreme right was disguised as 'social democracy'.

The workers movement has obviously been affected by these changes. It has been a psychological set-back, but they have not been physically affected. There has been a feeling of disorientation and lack of initiative. There have been some direct attacks on these organisations - particularly occupied houses where landlords have taken people to court etc. Also in the case of occupied land. The results have varied, but effects have been worse inside the neighbourhood committees. The bases of these organisation always varied, and the ones with a real base survived.

I would like to say something about the background to 25 November. It started on 8 August when a clandestine network began to be built inside the army. There was a mass movement based on the spontaneity of the masses. The 4th and 5th Prov. governments (communists and Goncalvists) were in crisis and the CP in beaurocratic terms were in command. The Group of 9 document was an attempt to come out against the CP. Another group published the COPCON document. The 3 September was the last assembly of the MFA. 119 members from the airforce were not allowed to participate. The entire navy delegation refused to take part. Most of the army participated. These purges continued to 25 November.

The mass movements of workers were, in some cases, pushed by the far left, and in other the CP. However in cases like the building workers the strike was started by the CP. The trade unions and CP got scared and completely lost control on the big demonstration.

The dispute continued in the military and they wanted to sack Otelo and disband the paras and military police. Then came the crunch. On 23 November the paras sent a letter of support for Otelo. Roads into Lisbon were being blocked and cars stopped by armed men - many belonging to the PS. We know of a plan to control the military through a document written by Melo Antunes. The PPD and SP were demanding that heavy arms and many military leaders be moved to Oport. Then the paras moved. They took over all air bases with the exception of one. A number of officers linked to the CP were commanding the operation. PRP and MES published and distributed a leaflet explaining the paras demands. PRP was organised into groups of 5 militants and tried to compensate for the lack of resources at a military level. We set up networks for alternative information and even set up a radio transmitter in Setubal which maintained transmission for 4 days. We helped communications between barracks and called for a mass demo to demobilise the attackers and give a psychological boost to the defenders. PRP was the only group that technically tried to do anything - but we failed miserably.

I-CL Can you say something about the major workers struggles going on at the moment. It appears that different sections of workers are coming out than those before 25 November - ie the public sector. Also - whether the workers committees have begun to centralise themselves.

PRP The textile industry is in big trouble. It is the major employer with $\frac{1}{2}$ million workers and accounts for 30% of all exports. It is probably the best organised trade union and the only union which has not lost touch with its rank and file. The building industry is also in a state of crises. This is similar in size to textiles and is at the moment affected by huge unemployment. Also in shipbuilding and fishermen.

The PRP anticipated all these crisis and held meetings with the workers in these industries. Sadly only building workers came out and there was a clear attempt by the CP to break the struggle. A secretariat from Lisbon, Setubal, Braga and Beja has been set up which is not CP controlled. Committees of struggle exist throughout the country called CLARC. In September 5 PRP members were purged from the leadership. These are the main areas of struggle, there are also localised struggle against the return of the bossed and redundancy. Also in the services - traditionally less militant - teachers, public employees, and civil service. Many for wages and holidays.

I-CL Have the struggles against the bosses returning been successful.?

PRP Very few have been able to return. There is a lack of planning in nationalised industry and sabotage by the banks. There is a clear policy on the part of the government to allow public sector to collapse. There are also many cases where the government has tried to reinstate men who were purged in nationalised firms.

I-CL And redundancies?

PRP In textiles the struggle have been very successful. Most cases are still undecided. In state owned companies no sacking has taken place. Most have been in multinational and the biggest defeat was TIMEX where workers finally accepted for a 2 month trial a three day week. There have been one or 2 cases of voluntary redundancies but the workers have always chosen who goes.

I-CL What are GDUPs and are they connected to CLARP

PRP Support committees for Otelos candidature. There is no connection. They were formed as follows: Otel was approached by some political groups to stand as a candidate. He refused to stand as a party candidate and said he would only accept if it could be proved that working class organisations supported him. When this was proven support committees were organised. The PRP set up CACOs (support committees for Otelos candidature) and argued that these had nothing to do with neighbourhood committees and workers committees who could give their support separately. The UDP organised committees of popular unity where the two were mixed. PRP argued that it was necessary to distinguish. The GDUPs were formed as a compromise. They have a provisional structure linked to a general strategy. PRP sees these as an opportunity to develop and coordinate the peoples organisations. The UDP wants a broad anti-fascist front without mention of socialism.

I-CL What are the agreements on slogans?

PRP This varies depending how the committees are formed.

I-CL What are the main slogans

PRP The central slogan is working people unite for socialism

I-CL We have rather serious reservations about the Otelo campaign. It is obviously very good for mass-mobilisation etc., but isn't it likely to work against the development of self reliance in the working class rather than for it? Obviously it is a good thing to rebuild the lost confidence of 25 November but

PRP Firstly you must realize that it is attracting not only the most militant sectors. In Oporto, 100,000 people came out who were not recognised as the most militant sectors, in fact, a majority were PS voters. But the campaign is also bringing together sectors of the working class vanguard. I can understand the problem you put forward but it is based on distorted information. For instance, Otelo spent $\frac{1}{3}$ of his time yesterday (Grandola) saying the MFA doesn't exist. It is not possible to say that of Pato, and I find it difficult to understand the position of the LCI. The CP is trying to revive the people/MFA image.

I-CL What about his programme?

PRP If you read the programme it is not the kind you are expecting. It is more advanced. Most of the problems are of the organisations which support it. For instance you

cannot find a UDP member in the international section of GDUPs or as bodyguards for Otelo because they can't make political capital out of it. No group contributes apart from PRP. When the problem of using the word socialism came up - UDP refused. Most of the limitations are those of the revolutionary left in Portugal. But there is obviously no way except to put forward our own candidate.

On the question of self reliance. What will happen is the opposite of what you suggest. We are hoping and working against this. But we can never be sure what will happen. Otelo said yesterday 'If I am elected, none of your problems are solved. I will try to open as much room as possible for you, that is all I can do'.

I-CL Why didnt you put your own candidate up?

PRP Several reasons.

1. We think it essential to relaunch the mass movement and to coordinate it. We didnt think a party candidate could do it.
2. The hold of the reformist parties in some areas needs to be broken. If not, we are walking towards defeat. Otelo can do it.
3. It is important to slow down the restructuring of the repressive state apparatus and to revitalise the soldiers organisations. Otelo can contribute.

But more important - If we were in a relatively stable period it would be more important to put forward a coherent and principled programme as part of long term work.

But we think this is not the case. The LCI and PRP refuse to participate in any activities. We think the bourgeoisie is going to take a number of measures which can do terrible things. We want to build a barrier. We dont think it is possible to be negative.

Finally, Otelos campaign is not PRPs campaign. All groups are only giving critical support. I think you will find the programme better than you thought, but I must say it could have been better if it were not for UDP.

Copcon and Otelo did more for the workers movement than anything the CP did. The LCI say that Pato is more part of the workers movement. When people criticize Otelo for his mistakes I dont reject them. But in the end, he didnt solve the problems through a coup. That is the issue. The Portuguese people have never felt in their daily life that he betrayed that ever, they have experience of CP betrayal many times. Pato is a CP leader who has maintained least contact with workers. He is a leader of the communist youth (RW). For Portuguese workers Pato is part of the bourgeoisie. Otelo is not seen as a worker, but seen by workers as someone on the side of workers - and someone who can win elections.

I-CL From a revolutionary point of view you must educate the working class to organise itself collectively. That is what self-reliance means. It is obviously true that in Portugal the majority of workers are not members of any party, but...

PRP OK. You see people here voting for parties for the first time over the last two years and it is a more intense experience. If you take regard of the shifts

I-CL But the shifts are small

PRP No. They are large. Take Lisnave where PRP won over CP.

I-CL Yes OK, shifts - but you want to organise workers - and they do identify. One of the things you said is to break reformism.

I accept that there are large numbers of SP and CP votes for Otelo, but you can't beat reformism on an anti-party basis...

PRP I read a criticism of LCI on PRP from last summer over the organising of a separate demo, (which I was personally against as it happens) and arguing for working with the masses. They havent done a bloody thing - and they will loose large numbers of members

What are your criticism of the Otelo programme?

I-CL We are sure about the positive aspects. But is a sharp situation as in Portugal at the moment, the question of self-reliance is crucial. When Otelo says he can do nothing with the people.....)interrupted

PRP An incredible number of publications are going to come out. Not abstract. We are a political party. Otelo can do little more than make speeches. I think his

campaign. Meetings are being organised at factory and local level to discuss the programme. It is not ideal. Not a PRP programme, but it raises all the important problems for discussion. Secondly, there will be problems in local organisations and factories and I expect PRP to take advantage of this.

I-CL Obviously if you have a popular figure you get big audiences. But the posters...

PRP It is not a popular figure. It is a popular figure who says something.

I-CL Most people will see the posters 'A friend in the President' etc.

PRP When you say posters are what most people will see it is not true. There are rallies meetings TV radio. The real campaign has not begun. If what you fear happens it is our fault. Otelo is not responsible. This is not where the emphasis is in the Campaign.

I-CL OK What does the programme say about the government, unemployment, inflation.

PRP It says the presidential system and government is not a system that interests the working class. And that there can only be socialism which favours the interests of the working class when they take power.. It is a programme of basic principles

I-CL So, we have a figure with a not very good record ie the tour with Fabiao, the failure to act on 25 November and allowing himself to come under orders of the president. In the meantime the government and state remain the same. As the posters say .. a friend in the president...

PRP But there are other posters.

I-CL He talks of popular power. But so does everybody else. How do you explain the lack of resistance on 25 November. There is fantastic level of strength in the Portuguese working class.

PRP The main question seems to be that of the level of organisation that exists. I would like to take you to a meeting - but it might not convince you. I am afraid of only one thing - that the UDP can slow down the campaign.

I-CL It is not exactly a problem of whether or not organisation takes place, but a discussion of how socialism is organised. I am not in favour of a project which talks about the working class taking power, ^{in an empty way} particularly on the question of who and what the government should be, the programme must be clear.

PRP But it states clearly what the government must do. I am not prepared to defend a General in a bourgeois army in a capitalist society. But, since 25 November Otelo has slowly changed his position, not overnight, More than once he was about to leave COPCON. I was present in a discussion with him on 29 September when he said 'No more compromises - I am going to the streets. To hell with COPCON' We persuaded him not to.

I-CL But if you say that then tell him to distribute arms from COPCON to the people

PRP He did. Some.

I-CL It is different working underground

PRP Going about things as you would, the workers movement would have been smashed!

I-CL Contradictory to run candidate in the Presidential elections and at the same time to denounce as bourgeois the legislative assembly elections'.

PRP We stated openly that our refusal to participate in the legislative elections was not principled. When we denounced as bourgeois we also denounced the presidential elections. We announced that we would participate as a front. Failure was as a result of failure in negotiations with MES and UDP. I can't see a contradiction.

I-CL People have said that the SP have gained some influence in unions over the CP

PRP True, but not in blue collar unions. There it is only PRP and UDP. But in some white collar unions it has happened. There is most evidence in ones with a bureaucratic hold by the CP and a lot of anti-CP feeling. Also in the services. It is not by chance that the SP has taken these over, with an image far left of the SP line ie teachers. They haven't yet gained control on their own, only with the help of some Maoists and Trotskyists.

ICL Is it also true that the UDP have grown?

PRP 2 groups have grown since 25 November. UDP and PRP. UDP benefitted from the members of FEC and PUP. Last year they had 89,000 votes - this year 92,000. UDP making ground in Alcaccer do Sul, Lisbon, and Setubal. But this does not reflect

I-CL What is PRPs attitude to the womens movement?

PRP We dont yet have a national or local womens organisations, although there is a group operating on the South bank. We have taken concrete steps to establish contacts with groups of women workers but we have no clear policy yet. We are not proud of it.

I-CL What about the situation of the peasantry and agrarian reform?

PRP We have some disagreements with other organisations in Portugal. We put stress on rural workers initiative in doing things. Pushing and defending occupation, and to defend the CP where they are defending occupations of uncultivated land. PRP defend that cultivated land should also be occupied. To occupy uncultivated land at certain times of the year could frive workers to desparate situations. We have been stressing the importance of agrarian reform and the destruction of capitalist cahnnels of distribution. Oporto is an examply where a number of links have been established and popular markers in the localitys. Local shopkeepers began to complain - assisted by UDP. What has happened in the south must be extended. But it is a different problem in the north. In terms of organisations, there are very few coops.. It is also our idea to increase links between agrarian workers in Alentejo and rural peasants.

This year, due to the agrarian reform, we will se the biggest ever harvest of cereal. Links have been established between areas of high production and low production. Also between factories and fural workers. A number of transport firms which have been nationalised cooperate with us in providing transport and repairs free. The hold of the right wing on the peasants is loosening.