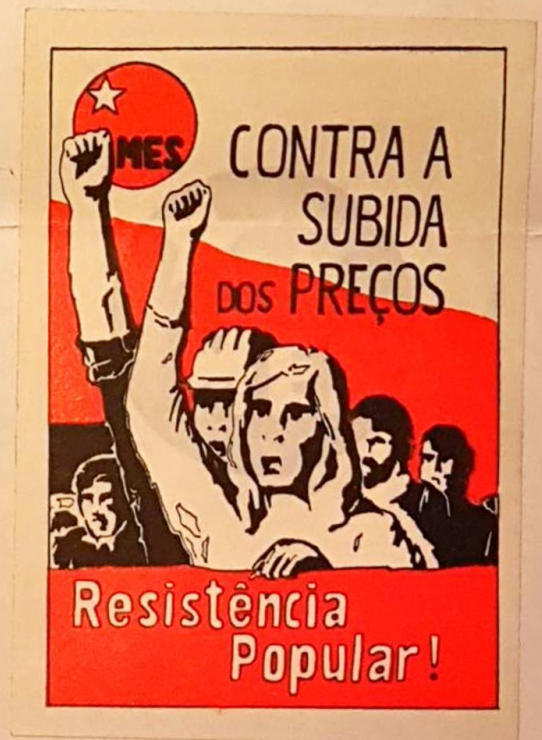


ADDRESS BY A MEMBER OF CENTRAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
OF M.E.S.-LEFT SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (PORTUGAL).
20th FEBRUARY 1976, AT AN INTERNATIONAL MEETING,
ORGANISED BY THE "CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM & FASCISM",
ASSEMBLY ROOMS, SURBITON, SURREY.



COMRADES,

on behalf of M E S, an organisation which has been in the vanguard of the struggle against the fascism and capitalism in my Country, I would like to start by greeting all the progressives and revolutionaries, the working class, and all english workers who in this Country fight against exploitation and misery and for peace and progress.

THE STRUGGLE IS THE SAME AND OUR WEAPON IS PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM.

M E S is a communist organisation with its origin on the anti-fascist fight before the 25th April 1974.

It is a result of the convergence of an anti-fascist fight that was at the same time against a colonial fascist regime, and against capitalism. In Portugal capitalism at the moment won't be able to survive without an authoritarian political regime, therefore M E S, before the 25th April, was already fighting in many points regardless of fascist repression.

M E S was present in schools, universities, factories, but mostly in textile and steel plants, in the anti-colonialist struggle.

We are, as a matter of fact, the movement that carried on the biggest rallies against the colonial war. There was the case of "Rato Chapel", where hundreds of our comrades spent three days on hunger strikes and meetings to discuss that war.

In the end, they were cruelly thrown out by the fascist police. Those responsible for the meeting were arrested and tortured.

After the 25th of April we were legalised, trying to be an alternative to Reformism, Social-democracy and the portuguese C.P... Hence, we have joined in almost all the fights, though we have never participated in any Government. We have been an organisation that from the start has always put the idea that there could only be two alternatives: either the

return to fascism or a SOCIALIST REVOLUTION.

We came out on the streets, side by side with the anti-fascists on the 28th of September, when Spínola tried his reactionary coup. The same happened on the 11th of March. We have always called for the nationalization of banks and insurance companies, natural resources and main industries, as well as land reform (Reforma Agraria) - where 1,400,000 hectares at this moment are already nationalised - and we agreed that it should be started by the big land owners of the south of Portugal. To confront the power of the bourgeoisie, we started talking about PEOPLE'S POWER. In other words, the need for all the workers to unite and organize, in factories, farms, plants, and at home, because these are the places where exploitation by the bourgeoisie is organized.

We have never supported the Armed Forces Movement as a whole, but only the progressive soldiers. The fact is that the M.F.A. (and the 25th of November proved it) had amongst them lots of reactionaries and right wing officers. Therefore the MFA could never be the vanguard of the revolutionary process, but would have to join the PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT. Therefore we supported, as a way-out of the crisis, the so-called document "alliance People-MFA". This would take us to a close relationship between Workers-Committees, Neighbour-Committees, and Village-Committees, together with the barracks, the latter were also democratically organized in the Assemblies of military unity. Barracks assemblies were the principal organs of soldiers committees.

The approval of this document in August 1975 by the Revolutionary Council burst the big right wing offensive, headed by Mario Soares' Socialist Party. Soares acted then as a defender of capitalism, and of a type of European democracy which is banned in Portugal.

For him, the danger was not the recuperation on the bourgeoisie but the revolutionary process. The threat was to freedom and democracy. And all this when everyone could see that Portugal was, without doubt, the country with most freedom in Europe. The international campaigns made by the S.P. leader gave rise to a yet bigger economic boycott, which affected our economic structure.

At internal level it provoked the split in the M.F.A. and caused the down fall of General Vasco Goncalves.

This S.P. campaign came together with attacks on the branches of left wing parties, mainly in the North of Portugal.

Therefore the P.C.P., the M.D.P. and M E S, saw their regional branches being burned and their militants had their lives put at risk. Some of them were expelled from those areas and came in exile to Lisbon or the south. As an example, I can say that today in Azores, at a North East region, they live underground.

We can see now the start of new reactionary actions like the one which happened in Rio Maior, where barricades were put up to cut all the traffic to Lisbon. By its amplitude and organization we could see here the influence of the C I A. The struggle for power up to the 25th of November was tenacious. On one side were the progressive army officers, sergeants and soldiers and the basic organizations of workers with the support of the political progressives and revolutionaries, (the soldiers formed SUV-United Soldiers Will Overcome) On the other side were the fascists, the reactionaries, the big national and international capitalists, the reactionary army officers, the C I A and all the reactionaries parties like P.P.D. and C.D.S., with an ever increasing fascist position. To this Holy -Alliance, came the maoist organizations,

the P.C.P.-ml and M.R.R.P.. As their leader came Mario Soares' Socialist Party, and at military level the so called "Nine", headed by Melo Antunes (actual Foreign Minister).

The people on the streets showed clearly on which side they were!!

The left wing parties, though with strong military and civil support, never intended a coup, despite the accusations.

The 25th of November was solely a reactionary coup which had been under preparation for a long time. The speed and efficiency with which the coup was carried out, make us affirm that had been prepared with big international support.

TODAY WE HAVE FACTS THAT CONFIRM C I A's MAIN ROLE IN THIS COUP !

The right wing were only waiting for the right moment to attack. The just struggle of the paratroops against the Head of the Air Force, done in an adventurist way, was the excuse! Before the conciliatory attitude and hesitation of the C.P., and going beyond the military and civil social-democrats, the fascists progressed and took their place in the army, where they are a majority. Thus, once again the specter of fascism hangs over the heads of portuguese people.

Most of the media is controlled by the right wing parties. Fascists newspapers come to light again. There are, in Lisbon alone, 12 daily newspapers—all of them are in the hands of social-democracy or the fascists.

They could only have achieved this with the reactionary coup of 25th November 1975!

The main conquests of the working class are today under attack. The new government is taking measures against land reform, one of the biggest achievements of the working class after the 25th April. The same applies to the basic organizations of the working classe, like the workers and neighbours committees.

The bourgeoisie is determined that it will be the people who will pay for the economic crisis, for which bourgeoisie is completely responsible!

Even the military forces of the social-democrats are warning the people of the danger of right wing fascism.

Therefore, we the revolutionaries, believe that is our duty to alert all the progressives of the world to the danger of fascism which is again possible in Portugal.

WORLD WIDE OPINION IS IMPORTANT IN THIS STRUGGLE AGAINST
FASCISM !

We feel, now more than ever, the need for the solidarity of all militants, all progressives, and revolutionaries of Europe.

All that has been going on and will happen in Portugal concerns all Europeans!

That is why we appeal for the support of all english democrats
progressives and revolutionaries.

WE COUNT ON YOU!

At this moment we are trying to organize a people's resistance in a spirit of unity.

Today a united organization, the C L A R P-Committee for Release of Imprisoned Revolutionaries and Anti-Fascists, is promoting a huge demonstration in Lisbon demanding the immediate and unconditional release of Gen. Otelo and all the soldiers and revolutionary militants still behind the bars. To us, their liberation is a MUST, especially at a time when all the worst criminals of fascism, the former political police PIDE, have regained their freedom.

All this under our slogans:

UNITE TO RESIST STRUGGLE TO WIN !

THE STRUGGLE WILL GO ON. VICTORY IS SURE !

LONG LIVE PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM !

Issued by:

LONDON NUCLEUS OF M E S

March 1976

