

Portugal Faces Coup Threat

In a strongly worded statement April 21, the Portuguese Council of the Revolution threw its unanimous support behind President Ramalho Eanes and condemned both the "verbal and political terrorism" aimed at overthrowing the regime by "means of a constitutional coup." The Council, a military body which oversees the implementation of that country's Constitution, instated in 1976, concluded by calling a public alert to the "dangerous escalation of forces involved in the destruction of democracy."

PORTUGAL

The Council's extraordinary statement, the first in two years, was issued on the heels of escalated terrorism in the Portuguese Azores Islands and recent attacks on President Eanes by the Council on Foreign Relations' henchman in Portugal, neofascist Francisco Sa Carneiro, leader of the Social Democratic Party (PPD).

The government mobilization has hit the Sa Carneiro forces like a cold shower. Provoking a military crisis earlier this month, Sa Carneiro and his allies attempted to weaken Eanes — the main stabilizing factor within the military — and create the conditions for a full coup d'état. Publicly denounced and discredited by the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) and a broad layer of democratic forces, Sa Carneiro and his cronies have been forced to tone the "verbal violence" down, but have instead stepped up terrorism in the Azores while simultaneously organizing a national civil war. In the wings sits the International Monetary Fund, which has so far failed to blunt the organizing drive of the anti-IMF Portuguese Communist Party, but is depending on Sa Carneiro to rip the country apart.

The Azorian Separatist Front (FLA), a terrorist movement with known ties to Sa Carneiro, has bombed several buildings, injured a government official, and fomented clashes with the riot police over the last two weeks. The Azores' local administration is run by Sa Carneiro party members who support the "liberation" movement.

At the same time, the Azorian flash point is being heated up, the Latin-American and Portuguese press report that two former Portuguese army officials are touring Great Britain, France, Italy, and West Germany to recruit mercenaries for a "foreseen civil war in the country."

Portuguese Solidarity

These moves by Sa Carneiro on behalf of his British masters are desperate attempts to counter the growing

influence of the Portuguese Communist Party and the strong determination by President Eanes and the military to defend the Constitution and the democratic institutions. Delivering a speech two weeks ago, Eanes established

the May 28, 1926 putsch which imposed the Salazar dictatorship, concluding that "the Armed Forces will know how to give an adequate response to those who dream of a new May 28—the Revolution of April 25, 1974 had as its aim the restoration of a democratic regime — and I am committed to ensure that their ambitions fail."

The unprecedented statement by the Council of the Revolution was delivered just four days before the celebration of the 4th Anniversary of the Revolution. The PCP held mass rallies today throughout the country, and thousands of people began gathering in front of the party's offices in Lisbon since early morning to listen to the Communist leaders' speeches, attend the military parades, and cheer President Eanes's address to the nation.

Sa Carneiro, reportedly, made an emergency trip to London to try to figure out what has gone wrong.

Council of the Revolution Warns Against Coup

The following are excerpts from the Portuguese Council of the Revolution Statement of April 21, entitled "The Construction of Democracy and the Current Political Situation." The statement was published in the Portuguese daily O Diario on April 22.

Recent developments in the Portuguese internal situation, characterized in general by increasing signs of the worsening of a crisis which threatens democracy, forces the Council of the Revolution to make a public statement about certain aspects of the current political situation, as is its authority as the sovereign body with the constitutional task of "guaranteeing the regular functioning of the democratic institutions, the implementation of the Constitution and fidelity to the spirit of April 25, 1974."

... The disturbing effects, politically and socially, of the economic measures already imposed and to be announced must not be ignored. The austerity policy hits hard at very broad layers of the working class, reduces the standard of living of many social sectors, and raises the specter of unemployment . . . The conditions are thus created which facilitate the orchestrated campaigns and attacks against the constitutional order itself. This is what we have been seeing over the last days and weeks — the seriousness of which cannot be hidden any longer.

Under the pretext of the "disillusionment," "resentment," and "difficulties" genuinely felt by the social

