

NEWS ANALYSIS

Rocky Threatens Bloodbath

March 17 (IPS) — During the past 48 hours, Rockefeller media throughout the world have seized on the assumption of military dictatorship in Portugal by the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) as the pretext for the most violent explosion of Red-Scare hysteria since the McCarthy period. Their immediate goal is to set the stage for the bloody crushing of the working class in Portugal — to give a lesson to the Soviet Union and workers internationally that a new Chile is the only alternative to capitulation to Rockefeller fascist austerity.

In a coordinated assault directed by the U.S. State Department beginning Saturday, leading Rockefeller press organs, including the New York Times, the Frankfurter Allgemeine, and Die Welt, issued virtually identical editorials condemning the seizure of power by the MFA as the prelude to a Communist takeover of Portugal engineered by Moscow. In wildly alarmist tones not heard since the 1940's, the Times explicitly linked Portugal with Communist advances in Southeast Asia and with Soviet military assistance to Middle East countries, clearly suggesting that further growth of Communist influence in these areas could lead to direct U.S.-USSR confrontation.

With his dollar-based world financial empire on the brink of collapse, and with the price of oil inevitably falling, Rockefeller's survival depends on his ability to smash working class resistance to the most brutal austerity throughout the advanced sector. To make his message clear to the Communist Parties of Europe, Rockefeller has singled out for destruction the Portuguese Communist Party, which he had hoped to mould into the key element in his Reesian fascist Portuguese concentration camp. Instead, the PCP has resisted the demands of the MFA for worker sacrifice, and has now put itself in the first rank of European resistance to the depression gutting of the working class. With a

crushing blow against the PCP, Rockefeller hopes to force workers elsewhere to give up without a fight, passively accepting the imposition of NATO-policed fascist austerity rule of the type slated for Italy in the near future.

Although Rockefeller is keeping options open for armed intervention in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, the most immediate threat of bloody counter-revolution is aimed at Portugal. On Sunday, March 16, the U.S. Armed Forces Radio Service in West Germany began broadcasting a story that the new provisional Portuguese government had resigned, and that Communist participation in the cabinet would be reinforced.

The broadcast said that "pro-NATO" Mario Soares, the foreign minister, would be replaced by a pro-Communist. This story, soon picked up by the CIA's Associated Press, has no basis in fact, as IPS confirmed in a conversation with the Communications Director of the PCP in Lisbon. Instead, it represents an order telegraphed by Rockefeller to his agents in the Center Union Party to resign and provoke a cabinet crisis preparatory to a coup.

As coverage in today's New York Times makes clear, the Rockefeller media would then play up the growth in PCP influence as the prelude to a Communist takeover of the 1948 Prague types, thus providing the pretext for a military coup with or without direct NATO participation.

Unconfirmed press reports indicate that NATO ships, possibly the U.S. Sixth Fleet, are cruising in Portuguese waters, and that U.S. planes are flying over Portugal. CIA-inspired rumors claim that the Portuguese government is considering giving Soviet fishing trawlers access rights to the port of Madeira, with implications that war vessels may also be involved. In a speech in Naples, March 15, NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns issued a series of threats against European Communists, stating that NATO was watching events in Portugal "with extreme attention, anxiety, and preoccupation." Luns indicated that if Portugal left the Atlantic

Alliance, France and Italy would have to be "re-inforced."

The Portuguese Communist Party, mobilized on an emergency footing, has so far refused to back down before Rockefeller's onslaught. Yesterday PCP leader Alvaro Cunhal addressed thousands of workers in a mass rally in the First of May Stadium, organized under the slogans of support for the MFA and "death to the CIA." Although the PCP continues to support the NATO-dominated "leftist" military officers of the MFA, who assumed open military dictatorial powers over the country last week in the wake of an abortive coup which had been designed to force the PCP's capitulation, the Communists have not caved in to the austerity demands of the MFA program.

Instead, an interview published yesterday in *Diario de-Noticias*, Cunhal makes clear that the PCP is maintaining its pro-working class programmatic stance. Cunhal demands that all national resources be mobilized to stimulate the expansion of industrial and agricultural production to improve workers' standard of living while combating unemployment. In addition, he is calling for agrarian reform to pull Portuguese agriculture out of its centuries-old backwardness.

In the Middle East and Southeast Asia, the two other key theatres of possible U.S. military aggression, Rockefeller is presently reeling before the offensives of pro-working class forces. Rockefeller could combine or vary his Portuguese intervention script with military escalations along the Israeli Lebanese border, against Iraq, or in a last-ditch effort to blunt the advance of Communist forces in Southeast Asia.

In the Middle East, where the powerful organizing drive by the pro-socialist Ba'ath party of Iraq has all but neutralized the CIA bastions of Iran and Israel, and threatens to upset the CIA-backed regimes in Syria and Egypt, Rockefeller has two options for a military strike.

On the Iraq-Iran front, now relatively quiet after the March 6 truce signed in Algiers, Rockefeller is desperate to rekindle the CIA-instigated Kurdish rebellion in order to destabilize the Iraqi government. For days the CIA-controlled Anglo-American press has conducted a

full-scale slander attack against Iraq to convince workers that an Iranian "holy war" against Iraq is necessary to prevent a bloodbath in Kurdish areas of Iraq — a charge entirely refuted by Baghdad's offer of general amnesty to the tiny number of Kurdish rebels. The Shah of Iran, humiliated by Iraqi organizing, is severely weakened. ICLC intelligence is monitoring the possibility that the Shah might be dumped in favor of a CIA-backed nationalist colonels' junta which could try to revive the stalled anti-Iraq crusade.

Scattered reports this weekend indicate that the entire Israeli war machine has been placed on full alert. The March 15 Financial Times cites reports from Beirut of an Israeli troop buildup on the sensitive Lebanese and Syrian borders. Washington Post reporter Jim Hoaglund compares the situation in chaos-ridden Lebanon to the 1958 period — immediately before the intervention of a U.S. Naval task force. The tone of Hoaglund's article virtually invites the Israelis to invade Southern Lebanon.

The hysteria with which the Rockefeller-CIA forces view Iraq's ability for counter-offensive action in the Middle East is

revealed in a March 15 London Times editorial. Citing Iraq's stable eastern frontier, now that an accord has been forced on the weakened Shah, the Times raves: Iraq now has a free hand to encourage socialist revolutions."

Collapse of Thieu

With the fall of Phnom Penh reduced to a question of when by Khmer Rouge penetration of the defense perimeter of the airport which supplies the Cambodian capital, the defeat of Lon Nol has already spilled over into an accelerating rout of South Vietnamese forces loyal to Rockefeller's puppet Thieu. In the central highlands region, where the fighting is at present concentrated, Thieu has been reduced to two shaky footholds, Pleiku and Kontum. U.S. Air Force planes had to intervene to assist the flight of the Pleiku regional command to the coastal city of Nha Trang — the first time the headquarters of one of South Viet Nam's four military districts has been shifted. The thus-foreshadowed loss of Pleiku will split the country in two, leaving the central highlands firmly in North Vietnamese hands.