

A SPANISH COURT DECIDES TO RETURN A PORTUGUESE DESERTER TO THE FASCIST
GOVERNMENT OF LISBON

Eduardo Cruzeiro, graduate of the Lisbon School of Fine Art, did his military service in Guine-Bissau. He was corporal in charge of the Commando Instruction Centre and took advantage of his leave to desert. In agreement with the principles of the portuguese anti-fascist and anti-colonialist organisations, Eduardo Cruzeiro deserted in order not to take part in the war of repression and extermination of the people of the so-called "Portuguese" Guine.

Lead to Spain by his militant activity, Eduardo Cruzeiro was arrested and imprisoned by Franco's police on August 19th 1968. Tried by the fascist spanish courts, he was condemned to 18 months in closed prison, for using a false identity and carrying arms illegally.

In December 1968 the Portuguese Government presented a plea for extradition to the Spanish Government on the grounds that Eduardo Cruzeiro was a military deserter. On the 9th April 1969 the Madrid High Court accepted to deliver Eduardo Cruzeiro to the fascist Portuguese authorities. According to the existing fascist laws in Portugal Eduardo Cruzeiro risks the DEATH PENALTY for desertion.

This is not only a matter of concession to a demand for extradition of a political militant. It is also a decision by which Franco's Gov., which was unwillingly forced to recognise the right of so-called "Spanish" Guine to independance and which has just signed a treaty with Morroco concerning the decolonisation of Ifni territory, once more gives its support to the colonial war in Guine-Bissau, lead as in Angola and Mozambique by Marcello Caetano's fascist government, worthy succesor to Salazar. In effect it is amatter of returning to the Portuguese authorities a deserter from the Portuguese army, an army which is continuing a colonial war which has already been condemned several times by the Security Council of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The decision of the Madrid High Court constitutes a grave precedent; if such decisions were taken by other European Governments, it would put the life of thousands of young portuguese in danger. It must not be forgotten that in the course of the single year 1967, 1400 young portuguese did not present themselves to the draft board.

The assassins of General Humberto Delgado and student Daniel Teixeira must not be able to exercise their vengeance and their violence on the person of Eduardo Cruzeiro. Daniel Teixeira was already, in last October the forth victim of the "new" Portuguese regime. Liberalisation follows its course.....