The Republic of Guinea-Bissau was declared an independent and sovereign state by PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) on September 24, 1973, marking another crushing defeat for Portuguese colonialism and western imperialism in Africa. The declaration came during the first meeting of the National People's Assembly, and follows a decade of armed struggle led by PAIGC. Portugal remains an "occupying foreign power" in the capital city of Bissau, the town of Bafata, and the Cape Verde Islands.

The 120-person National Assembly, elected in 1972 by popular vote in the liberated areas of Guinea, met September 23-25 in Medina Boe, one of the first Portuguese bases captured by PAIGC. The Assembly adopted a constitution and established a Council of State. The new president is Luis Cabral, brother of the late Amilcar Cabral. Chairman of the Council of State is Francisco Mendes; Joao Bernado Viera will preside over the National Assembly. Aristides Pereira remains as Secretary General of PAIGC, which is named in the new constitution as the nation's ruling party.

The new Republic was immediately recognized by twenty nations and fifty more have since done the same. Within the next few weeks Guinea-Bissau is expected to apply for membership in the United Nations; already a resolution has been passed by the U.N. condemning Portugal's illegal occupation of the "sovereign state of Guinea-Bissau." A majority of the members of the U.N. have recognized the new Republic.

Guinea's statehood is not only a blow to Portugal's claims in Africa, but gives added impetus to the national struggles of FRELIMO in Mozambique and MPLA in Angola. While Guinea-Bissau is of relatively minor economic importance to Portugal in comparison to mineral rich Angola and Mozambique, an independent Guinea, recognized by the world community, seriously challenges Portugal's claims to its other African colonies. This will have a significant influence on future developments in Southern Africa, particularly on the racist regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa.

The declaration is also a blow against Portugal's imperialist allies. The U.S. and other NATO countries strongly support Portugal with military equipment; its officers are trained by U.S. "advisors" in counter-insurgency techniques developed in Vietnam. The best air equipment produced in the U.S. is at Portugal's disposal. In 1971, Nixon provided Portugal's flagging economy with a shot in the arm with a $436.5 million aid package. While continuing to mouth "self-determination" to the African territories, the U.S. continues to vote with Portugal and South Africa in the U.N.

The people of Guinea-Bissau have again shown that their will and determination to liberate themselves is stronger than modern military technology and more powerful than all the imperialist economic loans. As in Vietnam, the liberation movement has been confined to ground actions, using only small out of date equipment, usually transporting everything on foot over rough terrain. In the last six months, the Guineans have shot down no less than fourteen Portuguese airplanes. But the fighting is not yet over. Portugal continues to occupy certain strategic areas. The first goal of the new nation is the total liberation of the mainland and the Cape Verde Islands.

We urge your support for the newly proclaimed Republic of Guinea-Bissau. While this is truly a People's Victory, the Struggle Continues!

Concretely: (1) Write letters to the U.S. Mission to the U.N., to Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to Nixon, your senators -- calling for recognition of Guinea-Bissau. (2) Send a letter or telegram of congratulations to PAIGC, B.P. 298, Conakry, Republic of Guinea. (3) Make a donation to the liberation struggle -- send a check directly to PAIGC (above add.)

* Leaflet written by CCLAMG for recent program on the Independence of Guinea-Bissau.
** Written on the basis of first reports of the structure of the new government and not fully correct. See the new constitution for a more exact account of the new governmental structures.