

# PEOPLE'S POWER

in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau

Number 11



Story of the  
First Congress

## STRUCTURES OF POWER

in Mozambique

MPLA-Workers Party  
Guinea tackles crop failure  
Communal Villages of Gaza

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Number 11  
January - March 1978

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If you have any comments, criticisms or suggestions about PEOPLE'S POWER, please address them to:  
Jill Sheppard, MAGIC, 34 Percy Street, London W1P 9FG.

## Worst floods in living memory    MARCH 1978

At least 45 people have died and an estimated total of more than 200, 000 have lost their homes in the worst floods in living memory along the Zambezi valley in Mozambique. The floods have swept through three provinces - from Tete in the west, through Sofala and Zambezia.

The material damage is immense: thousands of hectares of crops have been washed away, large numbers of cattle drowned, road and railways churned up and ruined by the torrent.

Torrential rains upstream from the Cabora Bassa Dam in Tete filled the lake to an alarming level: all eight flood-gates had eventually to be opened. Now, over hundreds of miles of the river downstream from the dam the scene is one of tragedy and desolation. The cost of the damage has not yet been assessed, but in last year's major flood disaster in the Limpopo valley, in which 60 people died and 400, 000 were made homeless, the material damage was put at more than £18.5 million.

Again a massive rescue effort has been mounted and Party and Government leaders have flown to the devastated areas to persuade the homeless to move to higher ground. Workers and peasants all over Mozambique are sending in gifts in money and kind to help the victims.

Zambezi Valley flooded



Flood victims meet FRELIMO representatives to discuss the future.



## **New taxes introduced**

On 27 February, Mozambique's new fiscal policy was published, introducing a progressive income tax called the National Reconstruction Tax. It applies to all wage-earners between 18 and 60 and replaces all previous direct taxes. It will also apply to peasants, who may pay in kind. Peasants in co-operatives will pay collectively and at a lower rate than individual peasants.

The tax rates will be as follows: on gross income up to 2,500 escudos (about £50 a month), 25 escudos tax will be payable (50p). Additional income up to 10,000 escudos will be taxed at the rate of 6%. Income over 10,000 escudos will be taxed at 15% and there will be a surtax on higher incomes. There will also be a circulation tax on all state, private and co-operative concerns: 3% of the volume of sales of goods or services - this cannot be passed on to the consumer.

Purchase tax will continue on luxury items, including beer and tobacco, which will go up in price. The new tax system comes into force in March.

## **National Planning Conference 8-11 MARCH**

In his speech opening this conference, President Samora Machel summed up the aims of socialist planning: "We reject the stagnation of traditional society in which one produces only for subsistence, and we reject the alienation of capitalist production in which each person's task is limited to tightening the bolts or knowing how one machine works". The alternative, he said, was the conscious participation of the workers in the production plans of each factory, in the process of production and in understanding the purpose of each task. Socialist planning, he said, "is a project for organising the daily life of the masses in which they assume the active role".

Over the last year, thousands of workers have been involved in preparing this year's production plans in agricultural and industrial enterprises. The conference adopted a document - 'Contribution to the Creation of the National Planning Commission' - outlining the structure and functions of a National Planning Commission to be set up in the near future.

## **Compulsory Military Service**

On 22 March, the Permanent Commission of the People's Assembly approved a law introducing compulsory military service in Mozambique. The law applies to all Mozambicans over 18. Those who have completed military service will remain in the Reserves until the age of 45 for men, and 40 for women, and can be called up again for further training. The normal period of service will be two

years but the Ministry of National Defence will have a discretionary power to extend it for up to twelve months. Job security is guaranteed while on military service, and reserves called up for short periods will continue to receive their salaries. Those who have to leave rented accommodation will get priority for re-housing on completion of service. Students in secondary and higher education who have been studying for at least two years before can postpone their service, as can men with families dependent on their earnings. Total exemption will only be granted on medical grounds.

The law also requires preparatory training programmes to be organised for all school-age children in schools and workplaces. The programmes will be devised by the Ministry of National Defence and should not interfere with normal lessons or work timetables.

### IMPLEMENTING THE LAW

In the first stage of implementing this law, the administrative authorities in every Locality, Town, District and Province are to carry out a census and draw up a list of citizens of 'military age'. These lists will be passed to Recruitment Committees in each town or district who will organise medical examinations to classify those suited for military service, for work in auxiliary services and those exempt from service. The Recruitment Committees will be headed by the chief military officer in the district and will comprise the head of the local administration, a representative of the local Party, a representative of the local Police Corps and a doctor or qualified health worker. Finally, the classified lists will go to the Ministry of Defence which will decide who is to be called up and ensure that the citizens know when and where to enlist.

The lists will be drawn up between 1 May and 31 July this year and will include those aged between 17 and 30 in the first instance. Thereafter, registration will take place every year from 2 January to 2 March for all those who will be seventeen that year. Failure to register or to respond to the call-up will be punishable by up to two years' imprisonment. Feigning medical grounds or falsifying documents to avoid military service will incur prison sentences of up to eight years and suspension of political rights for up to twenty years.

Financing this expansion of the army will hit Mozambique hard. Defence and Security are considered the number one priority and are the biggest item in the 1978 budget - 29% of the total expenditure (i. e. about 113 million dollars). The OAU Committee of Ten, which is examining ways of supporting countries subjected to repeated military attacks by the Rhodesian regime, recently presented 500,000 dollars to Mozambique to help offset the effects of persistent Rhodesian aggression.

## 1978 Year of Agriculture

President Neto, in his new year message to the nation, announced the decision to designate 1978 as a Year of Agriculture, which is the main productive activity of Angola, involving 85% of the population. The emphasis will be on the organisation of state farms and various types of co-operatives designed to transform production methods and increase productivity. Military units are to aim at self-sufficiency in food through collective production. Youth and students will be encouraged to take part in activities during the holidays - in building animal pens, repairing houses and farm buildings. 'Parasitic bureaucrats' in the state administration will be urged to channel their efforts into managing state farms. It is also hoped to provide jobs for hundreds of unemployed in the state farms and enterprises. To speed up the development of the rural areas, the Ministries of Health, Education and Social Welfare are to give priority to solving the problems of the peasants.

## Worker-Judges in Luanda

From 22 December to 13 January, the first training course for People's 'assessors' or judges was held in Luanda. The participants were selected from Action Groups in factories and from Action Committees in the 'bairros'. The first part of the course was devoted to a study of bourgeois legality, followed in the second part by a study of revolutionary legality in a society in transition to socialism. One of the examples studied in the course was the trial of the British mercenaries in Luanda in 1976 in which criteria of revolutionary legality had been used - there being no crime of mercenarism in the Penal Code inherited from the Portuguese. The basic aim of the course was to train workers to implement the revolutionary laws now in force, in particular those relating to work and daily life in the 'bairros'. At the end of the course, the worker-judges went to work in seven tribunals in Luanda, dealing with civil law, labour law and criminal offences. Being workers themselves, and closer to the problems of workers, they will study the whole case and apply sanctions according to the law. This experimental project in Luanda will be followed up by similar courses and the setting up of tribunals in other regions, in towns and villages.

## Teachers needed

In January, the Ministry of Education put out a call to Angolan youth to apply for the intensive primary teacher training courses that are being organised in various towns. The number of primary pupils has doubled since independence: "At the moment, for almost a million new primary school pupils, there are 25,000 teachers - half of whom



have scarcely four years' schooling themselves'. By the end of January, 800 young people had come forward for training, but this is only the beginning - an estimated 25,000 are needed by 1980.

## State visit to Nigeria

From 14 to 19 January, President Neto made a state visit to Nigeria. The joint communique issued at the end of the visit stated that Angola and Nigeria would continue to consult regularly on matters of common concern. The communique stressed the need to ensure no recognition of bogus solutions for Zimbabwe that would deny the people their right to choose their own leaders. It called for solidarity with SWAPO and with the revolutionary movement in South Africa, and with the People of Western Sahara. It reiterated a commitment to non-alignment and condemnation of foreign interference in Africa on behalf of imperialist and neo-colonialist interests. President Neto's invitation to General Obasanjo to pay a return visit was accepted. At a press conference with the Nigerian press, President Neto replied to questions on Angola's present relations with Zaire: he felt that there had been a change of attitude and that both countries were favourable to a reconciliation.

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*Guinea-Bissau  
+ Cape Verde*  
DIARY

## Cape Verde fixes food prices

The drought has meant growing dependence on imported food. This has been accompanied by a resurgence of 'black market' traders (legal retailers have to be licensed by the Dept. of Trade). As the prices of food imports have increased, the higher prices have been passed on directly to the cost of living. To stop this, the Council of Ministers has fixed prices at which the state wholesale supplier, EMPA, will sell to retailers, and also specified the margin of profit retailers can take. The decree, published on 16 January, applies to maize, rice and sugar: for example, top-grade rice will be sold by EMPA at 25 escudos a kilo to the retailer who can sell it at 27 escudos; in the case of sugar, the profit margin will be slightly higher: EMPA price 23.60 escudos, retail price 26 escudos.

## National day of study

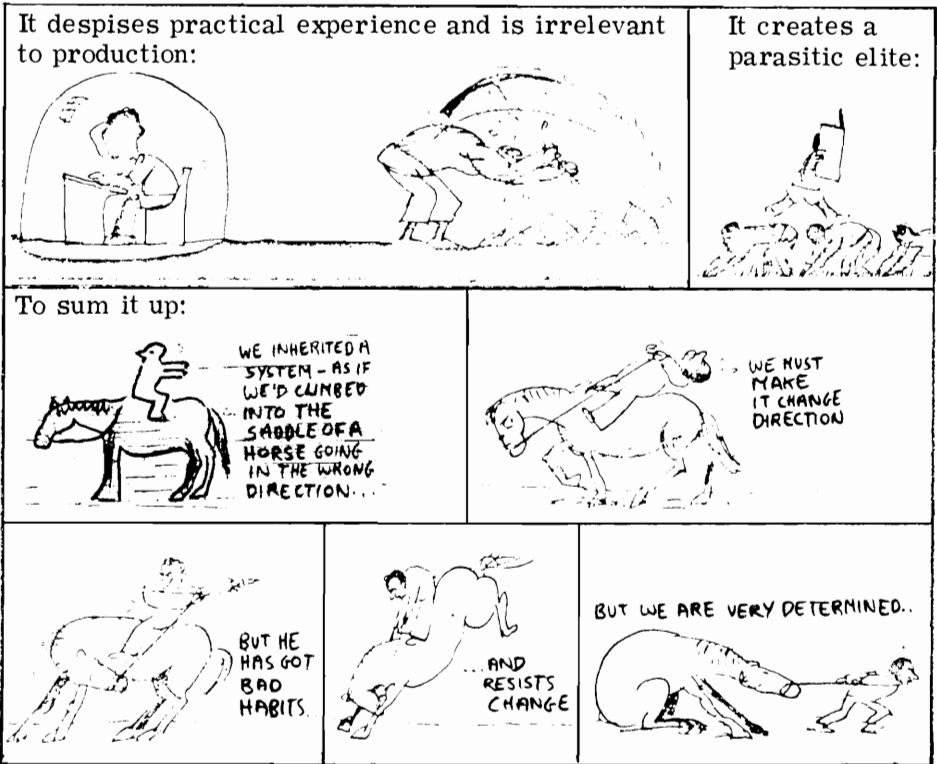
After the Congress of PAIGC in November 1977, a commission was set up to promote the study and explanation of the decisions of the Congress among party militants and the people in general. The Commission decided that the anniversary of the assassination of the movement's first leader, Amilcar Cabral, 20 January, should this



year be celebrated by a day of study. This national event marks the start of the campaign of explanation which will continue until the end of the year. It was followed up with the opening of a seminar in Bissau (to run from 19 February to 18 May) for party cadres and representatives of the mass organisations: every Sunday, a speaker will present a different aspect of the Congress material, to be followed up with discussions every Thursday afternoon. Those attending the seminar will then organise small regional seminars. The participants at these will be responsible for organising meetings throughout their region during the rest of the year.

### Education in cartoons

From 15 to 21 February, Ministers of Education and educators from Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, S. Tome and Principe, and East Timor, met in Bissau to discuss their common inheritance in education and ways of mutual cooperation in changing the Portuguese system into one of 'education to serve the people'. To mark the event, the Guinean newspaper, *No Pintcha*, issued a cartoon supplement illustrating the nature of colonial education:



## Travelling cinema

On 1 February, the Council of Commissioners of State decided, among other things, to set up a National Cinema Institute under the National Cultural Commission. Priority will go to starting film production for educational and cultural purposes. The Institute will also work "to raise the political and cultural level of the masses". It is to organise a travelling cinema circuit for the regions without cinemas, and encourage the building of more cinemas, either as publicly-owned or as mixed companies using partially private capital.

## International Women's Day

The PAIGC Women's Commission celebrated this day with the opening of its new headquarters in Bissau. Meetings were held in the various districts of the capital, and, throughout the country, regional women's commissions organised days of voluntary work, dances and cultural evenings. A delegation also went to Cape Verde for a meeting with women from all the islands to discuss the setting up of a national women's organisation for Cape Verde. The need for this was agreed, but the formal decision to set it up must be taken by the Supreme Council of PAIGC.

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## Guinea-Bissau tackles crop failure

The West African drought has finally reached Guinea-Bissau. The rains have been gradually diminishing for many years, and since the late 1960s the rainy season has grown steadily shorter. In 1977, the rains failed: as a result, rice production in the south (where most of the country's rice is grown) dropped by 40%, while in the north and centre there was virtually no rice crop at all. Other crops showed a drop in production of between 20 and 35%, with the exception of cotton which withstood the dry conditions very well.

This was a bitter blow, since over the previous three years Guinea-Bissau had been sharply reducing its dependency on imports of rice. Rice imports dropped from 31,000 tons in 1974 to 14,000 in 1975 to only 10,000 tons in 1976. It seemed that the country was well set for achieving PAIGC's aim of self-sufficiency in rice. Now, however, the government has been forced for import large quantities of rice from countries as diverse as Burma and the U.S.A. The government has assessed Guinea-Bissau's total requirement in imports at 48,000 tons of rice (together with 14,000 tons of maize and 300 tons of tinned milk). The distribution of the imported rice is strictly controlled. In the bairros (districts) of Bissau, distribution of the

city's share of 5,000 tons of Burmese rice unloaded in March was handled by the bairro committees and rationed to 15 kilos per person: this quantity had to last for at least two months.

Not only natural causes

The crop failure was not entirely due to natural causes. Common practices such as the use of salt water to kill off weeds after the harvest and before a fresh sowing contributed to the damage. Under normal conditions, the rains are heavy enough to wash the salt out of the soil; in 1977 this could not happen so too much salt remained in the soil and stunted the growth of the rice. This method of killing weeds must be discouraged, and the State Commissariat of Agriculture is persuading peasants to adopt other methods of weed control. The practice of clearing land by burning the surface vegetation is also harmful to the soil and accelerates the process of 'desertification'.

The government believes that last year's lack of rain was abnormal but it drew attention to the possible long-term climatic changes in the region. Precautions are being taken to avert disaster: a department has been set up in the Agriculture Commissariat to promote the re-forestation of the country; studies are being done on how to use the river system to create new irrigation schemes so that agriculture no longer depends entirely on the rains. In 1977, less than 1% of the country's agriculture was irrigated. A new department may soon be opened to plan the management of the land of the best use of the soil. A new soil laboratory will start functioning this year. In areas where it is thought feasible (such as the Tombali region) farmers are being encouraged to produce two harvests of rice a year.

Guinea-Bissau has applied to join the Permanent Inter-State Committee for the Struggle against the Sahel Drought (whose other members are Upper Volta, Mali, Mauretania, Niger, Senegal, Gambia and Cape Verde). But unlike some of the states suffering from the Sahel drought, Guinea-Bissau intends to fight the threat of desertification by mobilising the people. This involves patient explanation to the peasants of what has happened to their crops, and persuading them to abandon harmful practices.

PAIGC has to break a vicious circle in some parts of the country: because their own food crops have failed, peasants are resorting to burning trees to produce charcoal which they sell for money to buy food. But this, in the words of Commissioner for Agriculture, Avito da Silva, "could have catastrophic results for the forests and for the conservation of our soil". A hard task lies ahead in eradicating ecologically harmful practices and shifting to an agriculture where the annual rains are not all-important.

## LETTER FROM MOZAMBIQUE

Many readers will already be aware that, since late 1975, the Mozambique, Angola and Guine Information Centre has been running a Recruitment Programme on behalf of the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique. Nearly a hundred 'cooperantes' are already hard at work, spread across every province of the country. Many have been there for some time now and are deeply involved in the concrete tasks of reconstruction in a variety of fields. So that their first-hand knowledge and experience can contribute to our understanding of the implications at grass-roots level of FRELIMO's revolutionary policies, we begin with this issue a series of articles written by 'cooperantes'. The first is by Malcolm Segall, a health planner, who has been there over a year. It describes his experiences while travelling with a team showing health education and political films to villagers in Gaza. (If you live in Britain and would like to know more about the Recruitment Programme, please write to the MAGIC office in London for details.)

# The Communal Villages of Gaza

by Malcolm Segall

"What would you like to be when you grow up?", the student asks. He is a member of a brigade of undergraduates, teachers and clerks from the university in Maputo living and working (as in each year for a month) in the villages of Mozambique. About a third of the twenty children he is speaking to seem to understand Portuguese. A FRELIMO soldier, who is our projectionist (we are with a special mobile brigade showing health education and political films) tries in the local language of Changana. We are in the province of Gaza.

"Maybe you would like to become a doctor, an engineer, the President?"

The replies from the children are still only giggles.

"Do you go to school?" He receives nods. "Where is your school?"

"There, there!", shout the children.

At present the village school consists of three 'classrooms' of desks arranged under large 'cannon-fruit' trees, with blackboards fixed to the

trunks. Building materials of bamboo, reed and thatch are stacked nearby for the villagers to construct the school itself. But meanwhile the classes have begun. Elsewhere there is also a provisional creche for the toddlers, where they have tree branches for seats.

"Do you learn poems?"

"Yes!", one boy rashly answers.

"Then come and tell us", the FRELIMO cadre smiles. The child is finally persuaded.

"Viva FRELIMO!", he starts, and we return his clenched-fist salute together with the standard reply, "Viva!".

Now the previously tongue-tied, six-year-old treats us to a dramatic rendering - arms gesticulating - of a eulogy of FRELIMO, how the Mozambican people were oppressed under colonialism and how they will now work together to build their country.

"Do you learn songs as well?" Warming to the situation, the children give us a revolutionary anthem in two voices.

"Will you do some work with us?"

"Yes! Yes!"

"OK, Let's all line up." We do. " You see all these branches and



leaves." We are in the central village clearing. "We are having an important meeting here tonight when we are going to show films. "Do you know what films are?" One or two claim to know. "Well, you'll find out tonight, but now let's clean up the ground for the meeting."

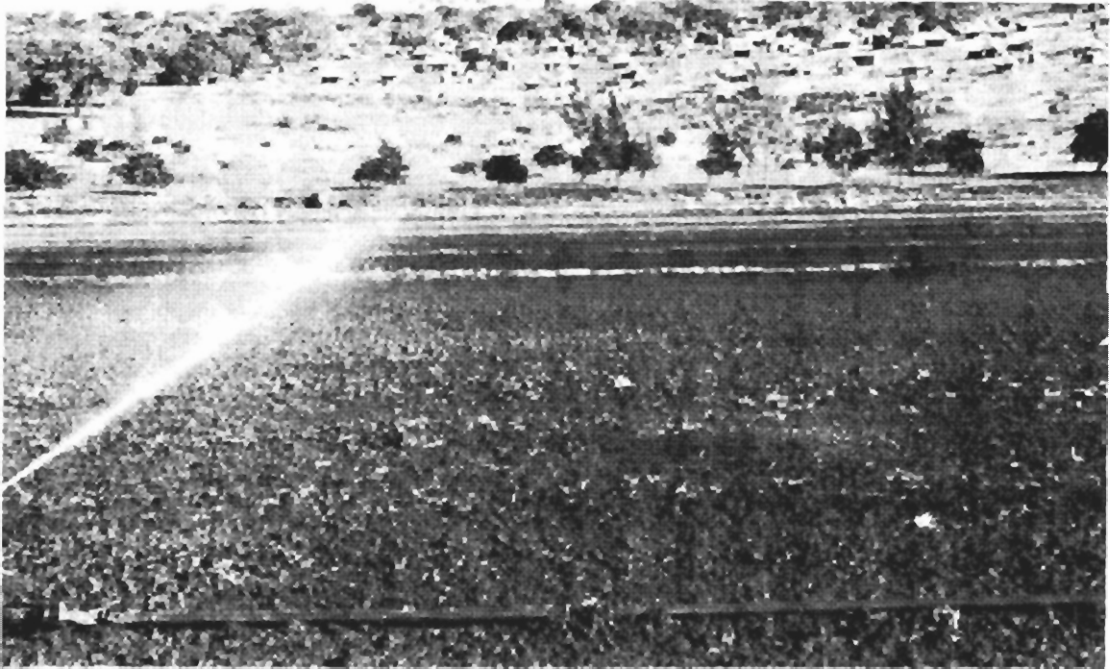
The children, shoeless, almost without clothes, many showing clear signs of undernutrition, respond immediately to this call for organised activity. In no time they have systematically and enthusiastically cleared up the meeting place.

## Rising above the floods

We are in the communal village "Third Congress", named after the meeting last February at which FRELIMO formally declared itself a Marxist-Leninist party. Like most of the communal villages in Gaza, it is only a few months old. Last year the valley of the Limpopo river suffered (for the second year running) very severe floods, the worst for 22 years. Tens of thousands of people lost everything: homes, farms, cattle. FRELIMO launched the watchwords: "Rebuild the province of Gaza" and, based on the area's rich fertility, "Turn the province into the Granary of the Nation". So began the present generation of communal villages on the safe high ground above the valley. In the space of a few months almost 50 new villages were formed, comprising some 200,000 people, almost a quarter of the province's population. The people, literally from nothing, are building themselves new lives.

"Third Congress" has over 700 families at present and, according to the general plan for communal villages, will grow to some 1,000 families in total. In physical size it is already relatively large and it takes 40 minutes to walk down the main earthen thoroughfare from one end to the other. Again according to the plan, it is laid out in four districts, which are themselves each divided by pathways into blocks of eight houses and gardens. Each family has a plot of 40 metres by 30 metres for their self-built house, pit latrine and wash house, together with a kitchen garden and space for small animals, like chickens, ducks or goats. As well as this household area, each family has its private plot of arable land in the valley, up to two hectares per family depending on its size. A few still have some cattle or pigs in the valley.

Mozambique has about as many people as London to occupy an area the size of Britain and France put together. The rural population (about 90% of the total) live mainly in scattered homesteads, and in many parts of the country the density of people is low even by the underpopulated standards of underdeveloped Africa. As a product of the colonial inheritance, these peasants often have poor land; they use rudimentary and unproductive farming methods, have difficulties in marketing their surplus produce at a profit, and lack the technical know-how and material means to improve their situation.



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Communal village "Third Congress" in the background with a capitalist farm in front.

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## Capitalist farms continue

One of the earliest acts of the FRELIMO government after it came to power in June 1975 was the nationalisation of the land. The immediate effect of this was to abolish land rent, which was a measure of great importance for the peasants. Yet beyond this, mostly only abandoned farms have so far been taken over in practice, the larger of these being converted into state farms. The government's urgent economic task has been to resuscitate the economy, which went into decline from before independence with the mass departure of the trained Portuguese. Hence capitalist enterprises and farms (of either national or foreign ownership), which will work within the government's plan, are encouraged to continue. In the valley below "Third Congress", for example - and in stark contrast to the villagers' struggling plots - lies a flourishing capitalist farm, its large fields of wheat being watered by revolving mechanical sprinklers.

In fact the backbone of FRELIMO's agricultural and rural policy lies elsewhere. To harness the productive capacities of the peasant masses, as well as to be able to supply them with social services (sanitation, health and education), FRELIMO is encouraging the peasants to form farming co-operatives and communal villages. These will be the basic structures for the rural people's economic, social



and political development.

This process of communalisation is more advanced in the country's northern zones, which were liberated for some years during the war against the colonial forces. Here the people's political consciousness is more heightened and in these zones FRELIMO began this process of rural transformation even before independence on the national scale. The normal plan for communal villages is to encourage peasants to produce together, at least in part, to increase their marketable surplus, until the logic of this co-operation reaches a point when it becomes an obvious advantage to live together in the same organised village.

In Gaza, however, the order had to be reversed. Faced with the disaster of the floods, the people responded to FRELIMO's answer to their situation, which was to accelerate the process of social transformation: to pull themselves out of their plight by a massive collective effort. In the first instance this was to rebuild their homes in communal villages. The Limpopo valley was declared a disaster area, and in the first phase of the operation before the people had crops of their own, they received buld food (which they prepared in collective kitchens) from the World Food Programme.

## Clenched fist salute

Even now, some few months later, the optimistic and collective spirit that must have pulled these people through is striking. (Even some hard-bitten UN types have been known to describe the villages of Gaza as "fantastic".) The people help each other and construct together their collective facilities - school, store, co-operative shop, party headquarters, social centre. They greet you with the clenched fist salute that was developed during the national liberation struggle, especially surprisingly the elderly. They see you off with revolutionary songs and dances.

In the village "Javanhane" the people meet in the morning to discuss the organisation of the day's collective labour. They congregate under a massive mango tree, the women and men sitting separately, and under the direction of the village committee they divide the day's tasks. The system in this village is that three days are given over for private work on homes and family plots, and the fourth day is allocated for collective labour. The people from the whole village then go to work on one of the districts in rotation. Only when the major tasks of village construction are completed will they begin co-operative farming.

Other villages have started their production co-ops earlier, however. In the village "Chaimite", 20 families have begun with a field of tomatoes. They own a small pump which brings the water up from the Limpopo to their collective plot, which is beginning to produce fine-looking fruit. One of the legacies of the hasty siting of the villages at the time of the floods is that some of the housing

settlements are at considerable distances from the land available in the valley for cultivation. For example, the co-op of "Third Congress" is eight kilometres from the village, creating a transport problem that is as yet unresolved.

The co-operative of the village "First of May" is one of the most advanced in the area. This village is more than a year old, belonging to the smaller generation of Gaza villages which began after the floods of 1976. It is one of the few in the province which was preceded by collective production. The farm has an enormous field of dry rice, being cut on the day we visited by large combine-harvesters which had been hired by the co-op from a nearby state farm.

The financial system of the farming co-operatives is that 15% of the sale of the produce must be banked. This sum has been fixed by the government and it ensures a farm development fund, which can be used only with the joint agreement of the farmers and the local authorities. The rest of the money is shared amongst the co-op members according to the work performed.

## Digging for water

The different villages in Gaza present their own features. Village "Patrice Lumumba" has a co-operative shop where the people can buy soap, cloth, salt, rice, potatoes, etc. at controlled prices. In this village the people had to dig as far as 10 metres to find water; their well is now lined with concrete rings provided by the state, but the promised pump has not yet materialised and a bucket and rope system is in operation. By contrast, a problem of the people of "Chaimite" is that they encounter water only one metre deep, making the construction of latrines extremely difficult. Generally pit latrines are abundant in the villages, although their construction is rudimentary and there is some doubt about their regular use. Not all the villages have wells yet and in some areas the water-table is very deep. In communal village "Third of February" a mobile state unit had to bore over 70 metres to find water. In many places people still draw water from rivers or stagnant pools, which are used for bathing and washing clothes and by cattle.

Every single village has a functioning school (in different stages of physical development) and for the first time the children of this area receive education, in some villages up to Standard 3. Some villages with farming co-operatives are also forming creches, mainly for the children of the co-op members. Almost all the villages in this part of Mozambique are short of young men. Many still go to work in the mines of South Africa, and the characteristic mining overalls and helmets are seen frequently on the returnees in the villages.

"Third Congress" was quiet the day we arrived. The people were attending a public meeting in the nearby district town of Chibuto. It was the second anniversary of the 'Day of Nationalisations' when



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Every communal village has a functioning school, even before the building is constructed.

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President Samora announced the nationalisation of land and of the social services (health, education, legal practice and funerals). In the present district meeting the Health Minister was inaugurating the first training course for village health workers (the Mozambican equivalent of the Chinese 'barefoot doctors'). These are people who are selected from and by the communal villages. They must have reached at least Standard 4 of schooling and they will receive their six-months course in Chibuto. Their functions will be mainly in preventive health (communal and individual hygiene, nutrition, basic care for children and pregnant women, distribution of anti-malaria tablets etc.) but they will also give first-aid and some simple treatments for common diseases. They will be maintained from village communal resources, but they will also (at least in theory) have to do some farming at certain times of the year.

By now, the people of "Third Congress" are gathering to see the films. Whilst we wait for the darkness we sing FRELIMO songs and clap our hands to the rhythm. The health education film begins. It is a colour cartoon in Portuguese made by Walt Disney Productions for showing in Brasil and it bears the distribution mark of the United States Information Service - political ironies which do not, however, mar the film's educational impact. The reactions of understanding by the people are unmistakeable amidst the laughter of the children at the cartoons. A FRELIMO film follows about the organisation of the people's armed struggle against the colonialists. The President appears on the screen: the people gasp out, "It's Samora! Samora!", and they burst into cheering and applause.

# YOUTH ORGANISATION FORMED

Mozambique

Following the decision taken at the Third Congress of FRELIMO in February 1977, a Mozambican Youth Organisation was set up last year and held its first conference in Maputo from 29 November to 3 December. The OJM's aim is to provide a structure for involving young people in political activity, raising their political awareness and preparing the future militants of FRELIMO. The following is a summary of President Samora Machel's speech at the opening session of the conference.

Young people have been involved in the armed struggle since the beginning. Besides actual fighting, they helped in many other ways - by transporting goods, collective production, literacy campaigns and health education, in consolidating the achievements of the liberated zones.

On the other hand, the enemy made great efforts to work through young people, especially students, often using quite subtle methods. They exploited the influences of colonialism and capitalism and the political inexperience of young people.

In the early days of FRELIMO, many young people left Mozambique, some to fight colonialism, some to study. Some had already gone to Europe or North America on scholarships from religious organisations. Some of these students gave up everything to respond to the call of the war and are today honoured Mozambican leaders. But, on the other hand, there were those who set up UNEMO\*, completely independently of FRELIMO. Those involved in UNEMO were mostly theological students or sons of petty bourgeoisie origin - of minor civil servants or even of minor native rulers. Their attitude was "those who study become important". They were motivated by economic and social ambition, concerned only with their own prosperity. They wanted to replace the colonialists and avoided any involvement with FRELIMO and refused to participate in the war. Every pretext was used to stay outside Mozambique, in some developed country with the hope of a well-paid job. Yet their scholarships were the product of the people's sacrifices. Some of them said they were preparing for the second phase of the struggle when "brains would be needed to lead the country to independence": war was for the stupid and ignorant. These students even attacked FRELIMO and accused it of being in the service of imperialism - while they were "serving the revolution" from the United States of America!

The enemy used these students to foment disunity among all Mozambicans studying abroad, including those in the Mozambique Institute in Dar-es-Salaam (the FRELIMO secondary school). Reactionary teachers like Simango and Gwenjere encouraged elitist ideas and contempt

\*UNEMO: literally - National Union of Mozambican Students.

for the masses, and incited the students against FRELIMO policies. Things reached a point where lessons at the Institute were given in English, supposedly because 'Portuguese is a colonial language', but really because the students wanted to prepare themselves for jobs in Tanzania and other English-speaking countries, and to avoid going to join the war. A racist campaign against white teachers and doctors was started which led to the closure of the Institute and the FRELIMO clinic which was a major set-back - it had been expected that the Institute would provide future cadres for the Movement inside the country.

In 1968, another organisation, which called itself the FRELIMO Youth League, was organised from abroad. It tried to set up its headquarters at Mtwara and raise a youth army separate from the FPLM. Once again, reactionary forces were trying to use young people to undermine revolutionary unity. In the areas controlled by the colonialists, young Mozambicans were recruited into the Portuguese commando regiments: they were inculcated with the most reactionary and fascistic ideas and tortured and killed thousands of Mozambican patriots.

President Samora then addressed himself to the present situation and to the efforts of the bourgeoisie to divide the youth from the working class. Some bourgeois theoreticians, he said, had produced pseudo-scientific theories about the vanguard role of youth, whom they call the most advanced 'class' in contemporary society. They say that youth is 'truly revolutionary' whereas the working class is just 'reformist'. At the same time, the capitalist system is attempting to corrupt young people: it is not accidental that drugs, pornography and mysticism flourish at a time when young people cannot be bought off by good jobs because of massive unemployment in the capitalist world. Theories of the vanguard role of youth are dangerous because they isolate young people from the working class and make them more susceptible to reactionary influences. Youth in itself is neither revolutionary nor reactionary: it is only revolutionary if it joins in the class struggle.

The role of FRELIMO is to unite and organise the youth and lead them according to FRELIMO policies. In Mozambique, young people still suffer from the negative ideology of the old society: inertia, lack of initiative, tribalism and superstition still characterise the youth in the rural areas. Traditional customs like initiation rites, premature marriage, are psychologically damaging and perpetuate reactionary values.

In the urban areas, many young people are anxious to imitate the dress, habits and language of so-called 'Western Christian society'. Their 'mental colonisation' has made them strangers in their own country. It is among these people that ideas of liberalism, ultra-democracy or absolute egalitarianism flourish in the name of a false conception of democracy which really amounts to the anarchy of the privileged. A section of Mozambican youth still lives on the margin of society, spending their days drinking, taking drugs, spreading pornography and prostitution. What all these people have in common

is that they are completely cut off from social practice, from the masses and their problems, and from the revolutionary process. They are a fertile field for recruitment by the enemy.

Summing up, President Samora concluded that: "historical experience demonstrates that youth is a section of society with enormous potential. However, it is also a sector which, in the current transitional phase, could be won over by the bourgeoisie who are increasing their efforts to win their allegiance. For these reasons, the Third Congress of FRELIMO ratified the decision of the Central Committee to set up the youth organisation which was created on 29 November 1977".

## DUTIES OF MEMBERS

OJM is a mass democratic organisation guided by the political line of FRELIMO. All Mozambicans aged between 14 and 30 can be members regardless of race, sex, ethnic origin, educational level, social position, civil status or religion. Admission is granted by the local organisation of OJM upon personal application.

The duties of members involve:

- educating oneself and others in the fight against erroneous ideas from the old society, such as regionalism, tribalism, racism, obscurantism, superstition, initiation rites, premature marriage, bride-price, banditry, corruption, immorality, alcoholism and drug-taking, male chauvinism, liberalism, ultra-democracy, individualism, elitism, ambition and a 'know-it-all attitude';
- promoting political and ideological education of self and others, mobilising people to carry out national reconstruction, implementing Party and State policies and promoting the worker-peasant alliance;
- being vigilant against enemies of the State;
- stimulating young people to improve their cultural, scientific and technical knowledge, mobilising them to improve production and to take part in voluntary work; studying and working in an exemplary and collective manner;
- maintaining high ethical standards, promoting beneficial leisure activities, taking part in physical education and sport;
- educating oneself and others in international solidarity;
- recruiting new members to OJM and paying dues regularly;

OJM functions according to the principles of democratic centralism. This means that all committees are elected democratically and are accountable to those above and below; lower levels must subordinate themselves to decisions taken at a higher level and the minority must accept the decisions of the majority.

# STRUCTURES OF POWER

## in Mozambique

With the holding of elections at the end of 1977 (as described in People's Power no:10) Mozambique is entering a new phase in the process of setting up a true People's Democracy. The bourgeois model of the state, based on a 'separation of powers' with a civil service and judiciary acting independently of elected political bodies, is firmly rejected; Samora Machel described it as "nothing more than a division of tasks between servants of the same class, a camouflage for the class rule of the bourgeoisie".

The First Session of the Elected National Assembly which began on 23 December 1977 approved the Report of the National Election Committee, ratified the law governing the operation of the Locality Assemblies, and also approved the 'General Guidelines for the Organisation of the People's Democratic State'. The last two are of particular significance since, through them, the last vestiges of the colonial bureaucracy will be dismantled.

In a two-part series beginning in this issue, we will take a closer look at the newly-elected People's Assemblies and their relationship to the state administrative machinery, with the aim of building up an overall picture of the STRUCTURES OF POWER in Mozambique. This first part contains a summary of the report on the elections, and a description of the way in which the new Locality Assemblies function and what they are supposed to do.

## 1. Election results

The first general elections ever held in Mozambique based on universal adult suffrage started on 25 September 1977. Instead of direct election of Deputies to a central assembly or house of representatives, ordinary people voted to form locality assemblies, which in some ways are similar to borough or town councils in Britain, with the important difference that members may be recalled at any time by the electorate if they fail to 'serve the people's interests'. By 13 November the first round of voting was over and delegates elected to serve on the



## COMPOSITION OF THE ASSEMBLIES

The class composition of the Assemblies reflects that of the society as a whole. At every level of Assembly, peasants and workers predominate. The sexual composition of the Assemblies is also a reflection of the social transformation which Mozambique is undergoing, with significant numbers of women being elected at every level.

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Locality Assemblies (22, 230 depts)      District Assemblies (3, 390 depts)

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Men	15, 939 (71. 7%)	Men	2, 583 (76. 19%)
Women	6, 291 (28. 3%)	Women	807 (23. 81%)
		Workers	878 (20%)
		Peasants	1, 288 (37. 99%)
		FPLM *	581 (17. 14%)
		Civil Servants *	541 (15. 96%)
		Others	302 ( 8. 91%)

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City Assemblies (460 deputies)      Provincial Assemblies (734 depts)

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Men	364 (79. 13%)	Men	626 (85. 3%)
Women	96 (20. 87%)	Women	108 (14. 7%)
Workers	179 (38. 91%)	Workers	193 (26. 3%)
Peasants	49 (10. 65%)	Peasants	163 (22. 2%)
FPLM*	71 (15. 43%)	FPLM*	121 (16. 49%)
Civil Servants*	114 (24. 78%)	Civil Servants*	192 (26. 16%)
Others	47 (10. 23%)	Others	65 (8. 85%)

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People's National Assembly (226 deputies)

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Men	198 (87. 61%)	Civil Servants*	25 (11. 06%)
Women	28 (12. 39%)	Representatives of	
Workers	71 (31. 42%)	democratic mass	
Peasants	65 (28. 76%)	organisations	13 (5. 75%)
FPLM*	35 (15. 49%)	Others	17 (7. 52%)

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\*FPLM - People's Forces for the Liberation of Mozambique.

\*Civil servants - in Mozambique this category includes anyone working for the state or municipality, from directors of banks to window-cleaners, building workers, drivers etc. In other words, its social composition is much wider than that of the civil service in Britain.

local assemblies chose delegates from amongst their members to take part in a District Electoral Conference. These conferences discussed and voted on the candidates put forward to serve on the District Assemblies. By 27 November, the District Assemblies had been elected. During the same period, deputies for the ten City Assemblies were chosen in a similar way. on 3 December, elections for the Provincial Assemblies took place: delegates chosen by the District and City Assemblies formed the Provincial Electoral Conferences which elected the deputies to the Provincial Assemblies. Finally, on 4 December 1977, in a secret ballot, the Provincial Assemblies, in their first session, elected deputies for the People's National Assembly, the supreme organ of the People's Democratic state, from a list of candidates proposed by the Central Committee of FRELIMO.

#### Numbers of Assemblies and Deputies

	People's National Assembly	226 deputies	
10	Provincial Assemblies	734	"
10	City Assemblies (in provincial capitals)	460	"
112	District Assemblies	3, 390	"
894	Locality Assemblies	22, 230	"

Through a direct line of ascent, deputies elected by the people at the locality level represent their interests at the highest level, in the National Assembly. At each level, the corresponding Assembly (Locality, City and District, Provincial and National) is supreme, and state administrative structures are subordinate to it. Thus, through their democratically elected representatives, the people have direct control over the state machinery.

### Sabotage and infiltration

The National Commission for Elections gave a report to the first session of the National Assembly on the conduct of the elections, the problems that had arisen, and made an overall assessment of the process.

The problems encountered during the months of preparation for the elections and the various phases of voting were of two general types. Firstly, the relentless aggression of the forces of the Rhodesian racist regime: although it caused material damage and some dislocation of time-schedules, it did not impede the process significantly in the three provinces most affected (Gaza, Manica and Tete). Even the most violent attack yet seen in Mozambique on the Chimoio refugee camp in Manica Province on 23 November, did not prevent delegates assembling in various parts of the Province to form the District Electoral Conferences. In Tete and Gaza too, the elections went ahead despite attacks by Rhodesian forces - even in the Chicualacuala region which has been attacked more than fifty times and whose people live in an almost

permanent state of war.

Secondly, there were various attempts to disrupt the election process, ranging from forms of economic sabotage, such as hoarding of essential goods by middle-men and traders in order to create shortages and divert people's attention from the elections, to isolated cases of theft from stores of communally produced goods, and attempts to burn down houses and other buildings in communal villages. Other efforts to sabotage the elections included spreading false rumours, making slanderous statements about the militants involved in mobilising the people for the elections, and attempts to discourage people from attending the meetings. This was particularly the case in Quelimane, where the most privileged members of the petty-bourgeoisie, the bank employees, actively dissociated themselves from the process and walked out of meetings. Problems of a similar type also arose in the border areas of Zambezia. The First Provincial Secretary of Zambezia, Bonifacio Gruveta, remarked on this:

"We found problems of infiltration especially in the interior of the province and in regions such as Milange which borders on a country with a political orientation very different from ours and which we all know is our enemy (Malawi). There they created problems for us. People came forward who interpreted all our orientations in the completely opposite way, trying to confuse the people and make them follow them on election day. But during the meetings we managed to show that they were infiltrators; the people understood, controlled them, and then we were able to resume the conduct of the meeting and proceed to the voting."

The National Election Commission reported that in no area had these attempts to disrupt the elections been anything more than isolated incidents. Often the type of people who joined in these attempts were those most closely involved in the repressive machinery of the colonial regime: former Portuguese-nominated 'chiefs' and 'headmen', colonial policemen, members of the para-military organisations. Large numbers of such people tried to infiltrate by standing as candidates and were rejected by the people. For example, in the Locality elections, 836 candidates were rejected for having belonged to the PIDE and similar organisations, or for having been part of the puppet movements set up by the colonial regime. Another 700 were rejected for having been chiefs and headmen and village policemen: these were people who collaborated in raising forced labour for the colonial regime and for private capital for which they received money and privileges. The third type of candidate most commonly rejected were those whose behaviour showed a lack of reliability, of commitment to the people, and an inability to serve the people whole-heartedly. This category included known opportunists, men who showed a lack of respect for women or who continued to exploit them, and alcoholics: "he who drinks to excess is not capable of thinking about the problems of other

people and is ripe for corruption", was one commonly stated reason for rejection.

## Practical problems

There were also some practical problems in the conduct of the elections: individuals issuing statements which they were not authorised to make; omissions or errors in the electoral registers of some localities because those responsible for keeping the registers were not sufficiently qualified to do so, and some problems in the organisation of the District and City Electoral Conferences. However, the Commission affirmed that these problems had been sporadic and isolated and had not affected the process as a whole. In summary, the report stated:

"In tens of thousands of meetings, Mozambicans -men, women, young and old, exercised their right to vote, analysing and criticising the behaviour, qualities, positive and negative aspects of the deputies proposed by FRELIMO. The meetings were carried out in an orderly and disciplined fashion. The analyses made demonstrate the profound political maturity of the participants. . . . The enthusiasm of the people was amply demonstrated by the long distances the electors sometimes had to walk - two or three-day journeys in some cases - to reach the election meetings, or to represent the people of their area at the Electoral Conferences. The people have, with firmness and great courage, faced the risk of organising elections in frontier areas and in war zones where the gathering of large crowds could constitute, and did constitute, targets for enemy attacks."

On 4 December, the culminating point of the election process when the deputies to the National Assembly were elected, a 'Festival of the People' was celebrated throughout the country with cultural and sports events, meetings, music, singing and dancing.

## 2. The Locality Assemblies

Two principles will be seen to operate at every level of the state structure, from the localities to the national bodies; these are:

- a) that state bodies function under the leadership of FRELIMO, and are guided by the political orientation of the Party;
- b) that democratic centralism applies in the state structures as well as within the Party: this means that lower bodies carry out the decisions of higher ones and the the decisions, for example, of a locality assembly can be overruled by a district assembly.

Local affairs have until now been dealt with by a Local Administrator (appointed by the government) supported by the local 'dynamising group'

and, in some places, by a FRELIMO Committee.

The Local Administrators will continue to exist: they represent the Council of Ministers at local level. These administrators were appointed immediately after independence and were selected for their political reliability. They see that the programmes of the various Ministries - Health, Education, Public Works etc. - are carried out in the locality.

## Principles and tasks

894 Locality Assemblies now exist in communal villages, population centres and administrative localities. In broad outline, the aims of these Assemblies are:

- to consolidate people's power;
- to struggle to increase production and productivity;
- to promote improvements in the people's living conditions;
- to organise a new life in the suburbs, circles, villages and new population centres, developing the creative initiative of the masses in solving their own problems;
- to develop new and higher standards in state farms, collective and individual farms, co-operatives, factories, as well as in suburbs, circles and villages;

Their fundamental task is to overcome the problems of hunger, lack of clothing, ignorance and disease.

The Locality Assembly will meet once a month and its meetings will be chaired by the local administrator (or, in his absence, by the secretary of the FRELIMO Committee or of the local dynamising group). At these meetings, the assembly will decide what tasks to undertake, how to carry them out, and will set deadlines for their completion.

To supervise the work between meetings, the assembly will appoint an Executive Council, made up of the local administrator and two deputies from the assembly. This council will carry out the assembly's decisions, taking day-to-day responsibility for the tasks in hand. It will also carry out instructions from higher state bodies (e. g. from the District or Provincial Assembly).

All work should be done with the participation of the local people and their opinions should be taken into account. The deputies should mobilise and organise the residents in all the suburbs and villages to take part in economic and social projects.

## The Nine Tasks

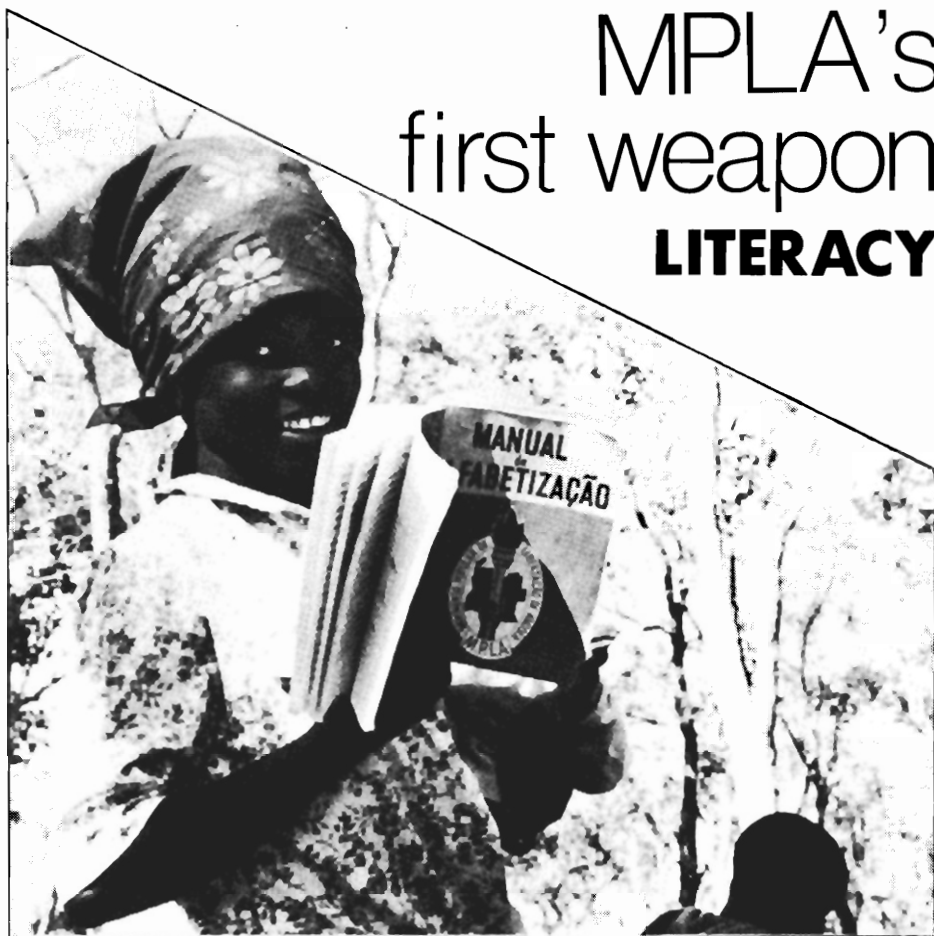
The law on Locality Assemblies does not only state the aims and objectives of the assemblies in a general way. It defines in detail the 'nine tasks' to which they must immediately apply themselves. In this first period, they should:

1. mobilise the masses to weed their cashew trees, harvest the fruit and organise storage and outlets for the product;
2. mobilise the people to increase the areas under cultivation, set up collective fields and rear small animals; establish rules for the better organisation of fairs and markets and a better economic organisation of life in the villages and circles; inform people about the dangers of burning off bush and withered crops from fields, and mobilise them to fight these fires which damage the soil;
3. promote the cultivation of vegetables to allow greater sales and a more regular supply to the population centres;
4. encourage the cultivation of cotton in suitable areas: 'Cotton, which was a source of wealth for the exploiters must become a means of improving our people's lives by providing them with adequate clothes';
5. take measures to improve the hygiene and sanitary conditions in villages and circles, mobilising the people to dig wells and latrines and to improve the designs and construction of their houses;
6. organise help and social assistance to the sick and elderly;
7. support young people, and their organisation, through improved work in the schools and the delegation of tasks and responsibilities to young people;
8. support the defence of the country, the maintenance of public order and the struggle against crime; increase popular vigilance and combat anti-social behaviour; encourage young people to join the FPLM and militias and other defence and security forces;
9. watch over the ways in which local state departments operate and support the residents of the localities when they have problems which must be dealt with by state departments, and help resolve those problems.

The nine tasks of the locality assemblies are practical and concrete and are of fundamental importance to improving the living standards of the people. Without patient hours of listening and explaining by the most conscious members of the population at the grass-roots level, trying to change people's deep-seated prejudices and practices, socialist reconstruction, which depends entirely on the will and efforts of the people themselves, could not take place.

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# MPLA's first weapon **LITERACY**



On 22 January 1976, Angola launched its 'Battle for Literacy', a nationwide voluntary campaign which will continue until every Angolan can read and write. To mark the end of the first year of this campaign, the National Literacy Commission issued a report of the progress, and the failures, so far. The following is a summary of their report.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Battle for Literacy really began from the moment of MPLA's foundation in 1956. Literacy was the MPLA's first weapon against the colonialists: long before the armed struggle was launched, MPLA militants were organising clandestine literacy classes in several towns and, through them, seeking to raise the political consciousness of workers and militants. Later on, schools were created in the liberated zones and the literacy effort was continued among the peasants.



Following the tradition of the struggle, literacy is seen as politically fundamental. The text-book used in the bush during the war: 'Vitoria e Certa' (Victory is Certain) is still the basis of the manual being used today in factories, army units, on farms and in villages. The book itself is a call to Independence, to National Unity and for the building of socialism. Thus, an intrinsic part of the literacy campaign is the raising of political awareness.

It is logical, therefore, that politics would determine the campaign's priorities. The priority sectors of society to receive literacy training were decided at the Third Plenary of MPLA Central Committee in October 1976: they are the leading sections for the building of socialism - factory workers, organised peasants working in co-operatives or on state farms, and members of the FAPLA (armed forces). With the illiteracy rate calculated at 85% in 1976, it will inevitably be a long time before the whole population can be reached by the campaign.

The responsibility for organising this work was given to a National Literacy Commission (headed by the Minister of Education, with representatives from various MPLA departments, state and mass organisations). A National Literacy Centre was opened in Luanda with a national co-ordinator, and Literacy Commissions and Centres were, at the same time, established in all of Angola's sixteen provinces.

The year was to be divided into two terms: 11 November 1976 to 14 April 1977, and 14 June to 11 November 1977. The months of May and December were to be spent assessing the results, strengthening the organising structures and training more literacy teachers. In the second term, a post-literacy course was planned for those who were already literate but who had 'got rusty'.

## Massive response

Having no statistics to go on, the Commission's plans were based on 50,000 people starting to learn in the first term, of whom it was hoped 20,000 would become fully literate. As it turned out, these were gross underestimates with 300,000 people coming forward to join the programme, of whom 46,000 could be said to be literate at the end of the first term.

In the second term the targets were increased to 500,000 and 100,000 respectively, and the final figures for the year were 573,068 in classes and 102,780 people reaching the required standard for the 'literacy certificate'. The post-literacy courses did not start, however, because text-books could not be printed in time.

While these figures are impressive, they do not tell the whole story. There were some very positive aspects arising from the political character of the whole effort to mobilise both teachers and pupils. Thousands of people responded to the MPLA's call to "teach literacy as a revolutionary duty". Hundreds of short training seminars - usually only lasting about four days - were organised, with people coming

forward from all social strata. On the other hand, this meant that a large proportion of them had no prior experience - their only qualification being that they were literate themselves.

Then there was the huge problem of the shortage of text-books and teachers' manuals. This was partly due to the greater numbers enrolling than expected, and partly to limited production capacity. The material was all produced centrally in Luanda and problems of distribution to the provinces inevitably arose. Altogether 600,000 text-books were produced, 100,000 teachers' manuals and 140,000 leaflets and posters to advertise the campaign.

## Sabotage

The political impact of the campaign throughout the country was not lost on the factionalists within MPLA. As part of their strategy of sabotaging and discrediting the government and MPLA leadership, in preparation for the attempted coup in Luanda in May 1977, followers of Nito Alves' faction damaged the literacy effort in several ways.

Provincial Commissars appointed by Nito Alves while he was Minister for Home Affairs, used their position on the Provincial Literacy Commissions to introduce bureaucratic obstacles and other tactics to impede the process of starting classes. Many enthusiasts, feeling frustrated by the lack of encouragement from the official structures, formed groups unofficially and got on with the work without any supervision or assistance.

Factionalists inside the MPLA youth section (JMPLA) reduced the impact of the campaign by limiting it to a 'holiday activity'. This meant that students would start teaching and then suddenly abandon their classes to return to their own studies. Members of JMPLA were also accused of deliberately holding back stocks of badly-needed text-books and materials.

The same problem held back the work in the FAPLA where the responsibility lay with the FAPLA National Political Commission which was infiltrated by factionalists until May. Even after the coup was defeated, the literacy campaign continued to suffer because of the disruption caused by the factionalists and the need to restructure many departments of the Movement and the mass organisations completely. The trade union organisation, UNTA, which was expected to play a major role in getting literacy classes started in factories, had to be re-organised after May (see People's Power no:10) with the result that although hundreds of workers came forward to join classes, only a few dozen were literate by the end of the year. The women's organisation, OMA, was relatively unaffected by the faction and was congratulated on the substantial part it had played in drawing women into the campaign.

## Low cost literacy

The total expenditure for the whole campaign was nearly 25 million

kwanzas; that is less than £1 a person attending classes and under £5 for each person becoming fully literate. This very low cost is partly due to the fact that the teachers were willing to work without pay, and partly because full-time workers for the literacy centres and commissions were only appointed in the last three months.

The basic organising structures are now in place for continuing and extending the campaign in 1978. Five national departments have been set up, 16 provincial centres, 80 provincial departments, and 150 municipal literacy centres servicing more than 21,000 classrooms and a million illiterate.

To improve the planning of the work, tests are to be organised during the first term of 1978 among the workers, in FAPLA and among the peasants in co-operatives and state farms to find out how many are illiterate. A study will also be done on the use of national languages for literacy teaching. So far, only Portuguese has been used, but the manuals are to be translated into national languages for use in the second term in some parts of the country.

The reproduction of texts and manuals is to be decentralised and presses in Benguela, Lunda and Huila will begin publishing literacy material this year. Finally, the campaign has been granted an allocation of motor vehicles and bicycles to facilitate its task in the rural areas.

## What next for the literate ?

The literacy campaign is not an end in itself. According to the thesis on Education in Angola, approved at the MPLA's First Congress, in addition to the 'regular' education system for children, there will be a parallel system for adults. In four terms (two years) adults will reach the standard equivalent to four years of basic education for children. After a further four terms, they will be at the level of eighth class and will be eligible to enter higher education. The first term of adult education is literacy, so many of those who obtained literacy certificates this year will be able to continue their education within the normal state system.

### **The Real Life of Domingos Xavier**

This novel, set in the Angola of 1960, is about the clandestine activity of MPLA in the period prior to the armed struggle, and the brutal repression of the colonial forces. Its author, Jose Luandino Vieira, was imprisoned shortly after completing the book and spent the years 1961-72 in Portuguese jails. He helped found the Union of Angolan Authors, and is currently director of MPLA's Revolutionary Orientation Department. This is the first of his works to appear in English; translated by Michael Wolfers, it is published in the Heinemann African Writers Series. Available from MAGIC, 34 Percy St. London W1. Price 95p + 10p postage.

"THE DECISIONS OF A CONGRESS WHICH DOES NOT COUNT ON THE PARTICIPATION OF EVERYONE, WHICH DOES NOT ROUSE AND ENTHUSE THE PEOPLE, HOWEVER FINE AND REVOLUTIONARY THEY MAY BE ON PAPER, CAN HAVE NO PRACTICAL RELEVANCE.."

# MPLA THE STORY OF THE FIRST CONGRESS



For reasons linked to the concrete conditions of the liberation struggle, the MPLA could not hold a Congress every four years as laid down in its Statutes. However, throughout the 20 years of its existence, the MPLA held meetings, assemblies of militants, and conferences of cadres which, in practice, fulfilled the role of congresses in that they clarified the political line of the Movement in each phase of the struggle.

As soon as the last South Africans had been driven out of the country, however, the holding of a fully representative congress became urgent. The MPLA Central Committee Meeting in October 1976 decided to convoke the congress in the following year. An Organising Commission

was to be set up to plan a timetable for the preparation of the congress, rules for the election of delegates, and the agenda.

The preparatory work was considered as crucial as the congress itself. The second war of liberation had wrought great and sudden changes inside MPLA. Within a matter of months, the guerrilla army had found itself waging a direct and 'traditional' war; thousands of new militants were drawn into the struggle, while on the other hand, many old and seasoned cadres were killed in action or massacred by retreating UNITA and FNLA forces. Many cadres from the south had been forced to flee to Luanda and had remained cut off from their own area for several months.

All this meant considerable disruption inside the organisation. In the all-out effort to defend the new State, little attention could be spared for careful membership procedures, strengthening the structures of the Movement or political education of the militants. In addition, political work among the people had been quite impossible in some areas, and patchy in others.

In view of this situation, the Central Committee made the following recommendations to ensure that the congress would be truly representative:

1. that in the period leading up to the Congress, a broad nationwide campaign be launched with the creation of Action Groups and Committees at every level in order to achieve effective representation;
2. that a count immediately be made of all MPLA members who should be provided with membership cards, and that all those who do not fulfill the established selection criteria should be removed from membership;
3. that in the period leading up to the Congress there should be a huge campaign of explanation and mobilisation around the Congress, explaining to all militants the objectives we are trying to achieve;
4. that a campaign should begin at once to spread Marxist-Leninist theory to all MPLA militants, through MPLA's organs of information, through attendance at the Party School which is to be set up, and through the organisation of seminars."

Thus, the restructuring of the Movement at the base was to be an essential feature of the preparatory campaign, but it also had a broader aim: the political mobilisation of the whole country. The Programme of the First Congress summed up the approach in this way:

"All we do in connection with the Congress should be designed

to enable everyone to participate in this great assembly. The MPLA does not see the Congress as a formal and bureaucratic meeting. The decisions of a Congress which does not count on the participation of everyone, which does not rouse and enthuse the people, however fine and revolutionary they may be on paper, can have no practical relevance and are likely to end up as dead documents. For us, militants of MPLA, the Congress is the sum total of all those events - political, cultural, organisational, economic and sporting - in which we all take part and which make us feel and understand the importance and significance of the Congress for the reconstruction of the country and carrying forward the revolution."

## Setback

The National Preparatory Commission was duly established and began work at once. It was not long, however, before a setback occurred: the attempted coup launched in Luanda by the Nito Alves faction (see People's Power 7 & 8). Factional activity had permeated sections of the Movement and the mass organisations, particularly in Malanje, Benguela, Huila and Mocamedes Provinces. The purging of factionalists clearly complicated the work of re-organising the Movement. Despite this, the Preparatory Commission, meeting for the third time shortly after the coup attempt, launched the Congress campaign with the slogan 'Produce more and better in support of the MPLA First Congress'. It also decided to start a radio programme called MPLA First Congress and to issue a regular bulletin about the preparatory campaign.

By this time, Provincial Preparatory Commissions were active all over the country, promoting activities in support of the Congress. Days of voluntary work were organised: in Moxico province, the youth were mobilised to build hostels for the refugees fleeing from Zaire; in various provinces voluntary brigades were raised to bring in the coffee harvest, and in villages up and down the country, the people were mobilised by MPLA Action Groups to build schools and buildings for local committees.

The expenses of the Congress were to be met by a special fund: thousands of workers gave one day's salary to the fund; peasants made contributions in kind. As the Congress drew near, the daily paper Jornal de Angola carried reports each day of the gifts pouring in: sweet potatoes, manioc, bananas, coconuts, cane sugar, maize, calves, chickens etc. . . . a 150-litre and a 75-litre water carrier from workers at Angolan Aluminium Manufactures. . . . six lorry loads of cattle from peasants in Malanje. . .

## A flowering of culture

The campaign brought a great upsurge in cultural activity. The National Cultural Council organised National Competitions of craftwork,

traditional dancing, music and singing. Groups of dancers and musicians from various parts of the country met for the first time to choose the best among them. The aim was the strengthening of national unity, the promotion of national cultural values and the raising of standards for the future.

Each day the newspaper announced that registration of participants in these cultural contests had begun in another place, calling on people to go along and giving details of when and where to register. (During the week of Congress itself, the final rounds of the competitions were held and exhibitions of entries in the craft and art sections were on display in Luanda).

Meanwhile, the National Commission for 'Festas' (celebrations) organised big events in several parts of the country. Groups were specially invited from several countries, including Cuba, Guine, Cape Verde etc, to tour the country, as well as Angolan groups.

Sport was also something in which everyone could participate and tournaments were organised in basketball, football - and the favourite Angolan sport in town: hockey on roller-skates. Perhaps the biggest event was the Interprovincial Football Tournament to salute the First Congress. The semi-finals in Luanda drew crowds of thousands, and the final match between Luanda and Benguela took place at a huge sports festival the day after the Congress ended. The Congress delegates were guests of honour at the match, and President Neto presented the cups - one each for the victorious Luanda team and the Benguela team.





Under the banner of the Congress Campaign a great variety of initiative flourished. One example of this was the 'cleaning up' of the provincial capitals - in Uige, this was organised by OMA (Organisation of Angolan Women), and, on the eve of Congress, hundreds took part in the task of 'dressing up Luanda'.

The culmination of the campaign started with the Day of the Young Pioneers, 1 December: eight thousand children marched in Luanda and similar marches took place in every major town (membership of OPA is open to all children and has increased dramatically over the past year, with 16,000 members in Luanda province alone). This was the first of hundreds of demonstrations of support during the Congress week, building up to a massive rally in Luanda on the last day, coinciding with the 21st Anniversary of the founding of MPLA.

### At the end of the day . . .

Through this many-sided campaign, every Angolan, in one way or another, will at the very least have been aware that the Congress was happening, and that to support the Congress was to reaffirm support for MPLA and for its constitution into a Party of the working class. In a country the size of Angola, with a largely illiterate and widely dispersed population, that in itself is an achievement.

Through the meetings and discussion of the Congress documents and theses, many will - perhaps for the first time - have grasped the implications of the 'socialist option', and for them, MPLA's familiar slogans and watchwords will have taken on new meaning.

As well as the general meetings, seminars were also held for detailed study of the theses by those immediately concerned. The thesis on the role of the FAPLA was discussed in all army units; education workers studied the thesis on Education in Angola, and information workers discussed the one on the mass media.

As for the Movement itself, MPLA Action Groups held meetings to discuss the theses at workplaces and in rural districts; delegates were sent to provincial level Assemblies of Militants where the Congress delegates were elected. 87 delegates were elected from the 16 Provincial Assemblies, 95 from the FAPLA and 68 from among MPLA members in the mass organisations (OMA, UNTA etc), making a total of 250 elected delegates. Of these, 41% had participated directly in the armed struggle on the Northern and Eastern fronts - some for 20 years, 20% were involved in the clandestine struggle in Luanda and other towns in MPLA cells; 30% had been imprisoned by the colonialists for their commitment to MPLA, some for 10-12 years.

The process of electing delegates and holding discussion meetings involved a big organisational effort at every level, pulling the Movement back into shape at the base and laying the groundwork for a qualitative leap forward: the foundation of MPLA-Workers' Party!

# THE CONSTITUTION OF MPLA INTO A PARTY OF THE WORKING CLASS



Why is a new Party necessary?  
What will it mean in practice?  
What will be its relationship to the Movement?

## Introduction

If the formation of the Party was not to lead to a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding, with the risk of undermining the cohesion of the Movement and alienating the people, it was crucial to spell out as clearly as possible the answers to such questions as these. The decision to form the Party had to be taken consciously by the militants, in full realisation of its significance, not just out of traditional loyalty to the Central Committee and trust in its leadership.

There is no doubt that for many militants, the new Party was a mere slogan; at a Seminar of Political Activists in Luanda in mid-November, Lucio Lara (Secretary of the MPLA Political Bureau) attacked some of the negative attitudes being taken by MPLA members. Among these, he highlighted a growth of 'routine' - many members of MPLA Action Groups had long since ceased to be active and merely 'carried the card', he said, "they talk cynically of the 'fever of the Congress' and stand on the sidelines waiting to see how this thing is going to turn out". Others were showing signs of elitism, asking "why all this insistence on the working class, the peasants? How is a bunch of illiterates like them going to run the country?". Then there were always the opportunists: "we must be sure to get in on this so we can be director of this and that, and be in charge of such and such... ", and the sectarians: "that one's religious so he can't be a true Marxist-Leninist - out he goes!", and finally the factionalists, presenting petty-bourgeois ideas as 'ultra-revolutionary' and undermining the Movement from within. With all these controversies arising about the Party, he said "the Congress has already begun!".

The document on 'The Constitution of MPLA into a Working Class Party' was published and widely discussed in advance of the Congress, where it was approved along with the Party's new Programme and

Statutes. The document seeks primarily to explain the need for the organisation to be constantly evolving so as to reflect the principal contradiction at any given moment in the struggle. The membership and strategy of the organisation must depend on the definition of the main enemy, since its essential role is to unite and lead all classes and social forces who, despite differences among themselves, share a common opposition to that enemy. In Angola, as the character of the enemy changes from primitive colonialism based on the slave trade, to colonial capitalism, to imperialism, so does the character of the opposition, throwing up new organisational forms.

As well as showing how the liberation movement developed, and must continue to develop, in response to concrete Angolan conditions, the document also clarifies the relationship between internal Angolan factors and the growth of progressive forces internationally: developments in the international scene play a crucial role in determining the potential for advance of the liberation forces inside Angola.

Finally, the document tackles some of the misunderstandings that have arisen about the Party, with concrete explanations of points which have given rise to confusion.

Through the following extracts, we aim to show the development of the argument on the historical inevitability of the Party. The linking commentary summarises the omitted sections. We regret that space does not permit the publication in full of this fascinating document.

## The onset of colonialism and the impact of the October Revolution

The opening section deals with the pre-colonial societies - mainly tribally based - making up the Angolan nation in the fifteenth century. These were almost all organised states engaged in commerce, agriculture and craftwork.

"The development of these societies was violently interrupted by the arrival of the Portuguese, aggravated by the introduction of the slave trade which did not die out completely until the beginning of this century and which brought the destruction of the organised states and the paralysis of all economic and social development as a consequence of the criminal exportation to other continents of millions of worthy men and women.

The 'scramble for Africa' at the Berlin Conference, entailing "administrative and military occupation" was the point of departure for the slow introduction into Angola of the capitalist mode of production which would inevitably create conditions for a greater development of productive forces. . . .

In the face of the colonial presence, the development of class contradictions in Angolan society was slow and was only perceptible in class

position led to collaboration with the foreign oppressive classes. Itself dependent on other imperialist powers, Portuguese colonialism was late in promoting its own development which would speed up the development of productive forces in Angola. The eruption of fascism in Portugal was reflected in Angola where fascist colonialism interrupted the evolution of an active nascent bourgeoisie which had already begun to emerge at the end of the nineteenth century.

The eruption of the October Revolution occurred at the moment when the states making up Angola were locked in the occupation wars launched by the Portuguese. While in some regions nationalist forces were already appearing, the Portuguese wanted to take full advantage of the territory which had fallen to them at the Berlin partition.

The repercussions of the October revolution were not felt immediately in Angola, but the fact that it had been victorious, that it meant the realisation of the theses of the Communist Manifesto on the assumption of power by the proletariat and on the liquidation of colonial situations, launched new bases for the movement for national liberation which would come to spread more and more widely in all continents. . . .

By stating correctly the national question, by facilitating alliances of exploited peoples on an international scale, by permitting the growth of Communist Parties in the colonialist and imperialist countries, enlarging the ambit of the movement for national liberation - all this bringing with it a general crisis for capitalism - the Great October Revolution paved the way for the alliance which was to come about between the proletarian revolution and the struggle of the oppressed peoples for their liberation. Lenin fought for this alliance by establishing tasks for Marxist parties in the oppressor countries in relation to the oppressed colonies and countries and by drawing up the tactical principles of revolutionary parties in the oppressed countries.

In one of the conditions for entry to the Third International, it was stipulated that any party which was a candidate for entry had 'the duty to be implacable in unmasking the crimes of 'their own' imperialists in the colonies; of supporting in practice and not merely in words the whole movement for colonial freedom; of demanding that the imperialists of their nation should be expelled from the colonies; of creating in the hearts of workers a feeling of sincere fraternity for the working people of the colonies and oppressed nations; of developing systematic agitation among the troops of the colonising power against the aggression waged on the colonial peoples. "

\* \* \* \* \*

"In the period between the October revolution and the end of the Second World War, the peoples making up Angolan society had to fight the ferocious 'occupation campaigns' launched by colonial hordes and later to fight against the development of mercantile capitalism based on the institution of the most degrading forced labour, the real lever of

capitalism. All the wealth extracted in the colonies through forced labour, to which the population was violently subjected, was taken to the 'metropolis' where it came to function as accumulated capital.

As the MPLA Manifesto states: 'The massive export of capital to the colonies and the dependent countries with the aim of greater exploitation of raw materials, the widening of 'spheres of influence' and of colonial dominion to monopolise the world, the transformation of capitalism into a world-wide system of colonial oppression and financial enslavement of the huge majority of the world population by imperialist countries, were events which divided the world into two camps: the small camp of a handful of imperialist, exploiting and oppressing countries and the immense camp of the colonies and dependent countries who became obliged to struggle to free themselves from the imperialist yoke.

The end of the second world war gave a new impulse to the liberation movement of the African peoples. Many Africans had taken part in the victorious war against fascism, which made them feel more intensely the dimension of oppression and gave them an awareness of the need to fight to put an end to the abhorrent colonial system.

Portuguese fascist-colonialism, surviving the second world war, intensified its exploitation of the Angolan people, spreading it to new areas of stolen land, forcing the peasants into mono-culture to the detriment of their own subsistence agriculture, and installing a policy of white settlement which would relegate the Angolan workers to mere producers of surplus value.

In the face of a movement of challenge from the Angolan people against the weight of colonial exploitation, Portuguese colonialism opened the doors to financial capital from the European and North American monopolies and trusts."

## The beginnings of organised opposition

"At the start of the 1940s, Angolan patriots tried feverishly to find an organisational model which would allow them to resist the already alerted colonial administration which brutally repressed the patriots' first attempt at organisation in Luanda, Huambo, Benguela and Bie.

With the use of varied agitational methods over national problems, by organisations like the African National League, the Association of the Angolan Born, the Association of those born in Southern Angola and other cultural and recreational fellowships, along with campaigns for literacy or health, a favourable climate was being created for the birth in 1953 of the United Struggle Party of Angola, and later an ephemeral Angolan Communist Party.

Throughout Africa, ideas of independence were bubbling. The

Bandung Conference in April 1954 marked one of the most important stages in the liberation struggle of colonised peoples. For the first time in history, the peoples of Africa and Asia took the initiative of meeting to define a new strategy of common struggle against imperialism, for national independence and peace.

It is in this context that on 10 December 1956, the MPLA was founded, with a Manifesto which took as its starting point a scientific, anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist analysis of the situation in Angola and of its people. It proclaimed: 'Portuguese colonialism will not fall without a struggle'. Consequently, there was only one way for the Angolan people to free themselves: by revolutionary struggle. This struggle, however, would only triumph through a single front of all the anti-imperialist forces of Angola, regardless of political shades, the social position of individuals, their religious beliefs or philosophical views - that is, through the broadest **PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA**. . . . .

The appearance of MPLA marked a decisive turning point in the history of the Angolan people's struggle for emancipation. For the first time, they were to fight colonialist oppression and exploitation guided by a scientific doctrine which put aside all tribal, regional, racial or religious prejudices which might impede unity; one which set at nought the myths of the superiority and invincibility of the colonialists, asserted national consciousness and situated the liberation movement in terms of class struggle. . . .

At this moment the principal contradiction developed between the colonial bourgeoisie, and its related social groups, and the different classes making up the Angolan people - all of them subjected to the most vile exploitation. . . .

## The birth of the Angolan proletariat

Capitalist penetration, once slavery was abolished, introduced currency and sought to obtain mainly agricultural products (rubber, wax, castor oil, cocoa, palm nut) in exchange for manufactured goods. The development of this barter led capitalism to invest in roads, ports, railways, and even in some minor industrialisation (oils, pottery, saw-mills, joinery) which did not create competition with industry in the metropolis and assured maximum profits. . . .

In the cities and in the countryside, in ever-growing numbers, the first groups of wage-earners appeared, the proletariat in embryo, living exclusively from the sale of their labour-power.

The peasant origin of the majority of workers did not favour the ripening of their class consciousness, but, by the same token, facilitated an alliance with the peasantry. This fact, and the migration of peasants

to swell the growing proletariat, had an influence on the unification of the proletariat and on the breaking down of some tribal reflexes.

The colonial-fascist factor put a brake on the development of an Angolan bourgeoisie, while allowing the more rapid growth of a proletariat linked directly to the growth of enterprises backed by foreign capital.

## The roles of other classes

The Angolan peasantry which includes the great majority of the population is based on small family holdings, mostly engaged in quasi-subsistence production, while others are linked to the capitalist economy in cultivating export crops.

The retrograde character of Portuguese colonialism was based on unbridled exploitation of the peasants, whose land it usurped and whom it subjected to humiliating forced labour.

This factor contributed to a situation where the Angolan peasantry would play a role of decisive importance in the armed national liberation struggle, through the large numbers coming forward as fighters in the various regions, and where the Angolan peasant would show himself very receptive to revolutionary ideas and to the principles of collectivisation of land.

The development of Portuguese colonial capitalism did not give rise to a significant comprador bourgeoisie, allowing only the skeleton of a vacillating national bourgeoisie, lacking enterprise, made up of some middling proprietors, whose interests always clashed with those of the coloniser, being jealous of his prerogatives.

In the context of the weakness of the embryonic national bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeoisie took on greater importance. It mainly comprised intellectuals, students, members of the liberal professions, small traders, civil servants, artisans and agricultural small-holders.

Benefitting from greater access to schools and the privileges that followed from this, the Angolan petty-bourgeoisie, heir to the movement of challenge of the first Angolan intellectuals, and author of the first city and countryside revolts of the first decades of the twentieth century, acquired a spirit of initiative which constituted an important factor in the liberation struggle.

But from its origin and composition as a vacillating class, its members frequently fell in to opportunism, personal ambition, the race for privileges, tribalism, racism, alienation and demagoguery, becoming a medium in which counter-revolution could easily recruit its agents.

The centuries of oppression and exploitation unleashed by Portuguese colonialism relegated to a secondary place the contradiction between the various Angolan classes, sharpening antagonism between colonised and

colonisers, well shielded by an increasingly dynamic colonial bourgeoisie."

## The armed struggle

(The efforts of the Angolan patriots to organise peaceful opposition to the colonialists were met with increasing violence, massacres and arrests, tending contrarily to speed up the revolutionary process. The MPLA was beginning to build strong relations of friendship and collaboration with progressive countries and organisations. This was a natural step in the light of MPLA's statutes and programme which, in 1956, already asserted the principles of democratic centralism and proletarian internationalism. The launching of the armed struggle on 4 February 1961 and the response of the colonialists and their allies, led to a gradual radicalisation of MPLA's methods and organisation in the course of the struggle.)

"In the years 1968-70, the noteworthy development of the armed struggle, with the enlargement of the liberated areas and the adherence to the movement of many workers, mainly peasants and students, on a massive scale, the growth of Centres for Revolutionary Instruction and the international prestige the MPLA won in progressive circles, are factors which contributed to a considerable raising of the ideological level of the mass of the people and of the combatants. It is in this period that the question of forming a Vanguard Party and holding a Congress arises with great urgency. In the discussions held in February 1968 in Regional Assemblies of the First and Second Regions (where the establishment of People's Power in regions and areas where it was not yet implanted was also debated) it was felt that the creation of a Vanguard Party was premature, and instead the strengthening of the party structure of the Movement was proposed, since the development of a broad national front policy had still to be pursued."

(Later on, in September 1971, concern was again mounting for the Programme and Statutes to be revised. A Congress Preparatory Commission was set up but, as in the past, the concrete difficulties of distance and liaison under war conditions coupled with a big new enemy offensive, made the holding of the Congress impossible.)

"The situation created by a great enemy offensive, with the use of defoliants, provoked a crisis of starvation and led to the emergence of tribal groups, which were not free from enemy infiltration.

To overcome this crisis, the Readjustment Movement arose, first in the Eastern Front (August 1972) and later in the Northern Front (December 1973). The Readjustment Movement was basically founded on two principles: the adoption of a 'theory of revolution' and the



consideration that 'the masses are the point of departure and arrival of the whole structure and all the actions of the organisation'.

The application of these principles had the immediate effect of producing a broad and healthy movement of criticism and self-criticism and the adaptation of the structures and working methods to the demands of the political moment which was being lived, the development of the qualities of the militants and the raising of their political and ideological level.

In the course of the Readjustment of the Eastern Front, the phenomenon known as the 'Chipenda Revolt' occurred and towards the end of the Readjustment of the Northern Front, the self-styled 'Active Revolt' manoeuvre - both subtle instruments of imperialism which, in collusion with the colonialists, launched a vigorous offensive of a new kind against MPLA, on a military level and through the infiltration of agents into our midst. Both the 'revolts' appeared as a result of the ideological clarification which came about with the Readjustment Movement. The two 'revolts' confirmed our prediction in the readjustment Movement that 'imperialism, our principal enemy, tends increasingly to become the direct enemy'."

(The MPLA was strongly pressured to take part in a pseudo-Congress in Lusaka, with the Chipenda revolt and Active revolt factions, but broke from this and decided to hold a genuine Congress inside Angola. In the event, a Congress was again impossible and instead an Inter-Regional Conference of Militants was held. President Neto opened the Conference which, he said, was taking place at a crossroads in history "when the progressive forces are trying to overcome the epoch of colonial enslavement and enter a new life of dignity and freedom, while at the same time the reactionaries are trying to maintain domination through neo-colonial formulae". He went on to say that the main ideological concern of the Conference was how "to achieve the necessary unity at this stage and at the same time trace a path that will not allow this unity to be diluted by formulae fatal to the revolutionary teachings that have always guided the MPLA." The Programme of Action approved by the Conference explained that:)

"The MPLA is a movement and not a Party or a Front. Not being a party, the MPLA is fairly broad and includes Angolans of all classes and ethnic groups who are in agreement with its programme and prepared to obey its statutes. Not being a front, the MPLA, while it allows trends within it, cannot allow the forming of factions, that is of organised trends."

(The emphasis on developing the political education of members of MPLA over the next two years led to an increasingly clear line of demarcation between the activities of the MPLA militants and the puppet movement, emerging openly as agents of international capital during the transitional period in 1975.)

# The Second War of Liberation

(After the departure of the colonialists with the formal proclamation of independence in November 1975, the anti-imperialist nature of the struggle became clear.)

"The Movement now shows itself as a 'broad front' which includes all the patriotic forces committed to the anti-imperialist struggle. This front, as the legitimate representative of the Angolan people, takes on the social, economic and political leadership of the Nation.

In an independent country, with more than half its territory occupied by Zairean and South African troops supported by puppets and mercenaries, the antagonistic contradiction between the Angolan people and imperialism reached its highest point, speeding up the awakening consciousness of the working classes, strengthening their revolutionary ideology already tied to Marxism-Leninism, and relegating to a secondary plane their contradiction with other patriotic and anti-imperialist social groups."

(The Proclamation of Independence itself defined the position of the Movement in relation to the newly-won state power:)

"The force of the people's will, the long armed struggle and the defence of the interests of the most exploited strata, confirm the MPLA as the sole representative of the Angolan people and the leading force in the People's Republic of Angola.

The State organs of the People's Republic of Angola will be guided by the highest directives of the MPLA and the primacy of the Movement's structures over those of the State will be ensured. . . .

And the Movement itself can never be a petrified body. Endowed with great vitality, the dynamics of the revolution will profoundly change it qualitatively and quantitatively until the great leap which will transform it into a party within a broad revolutionary front."

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(After the expulsion of the South African invaders in March 1976, new problems confronted the Movement; firstly, the class struggle took on a new dimension with the interests of some sections of the petty-bourgeoisie (anxious to seize the opportunities created by the departure of the colonial elite) diverging sharply from those of the workers and peasants.

The unity of the Movement was being undermined by an upsurge of individualism and factionalism, as diverse interests sought to assert themselves as soon as the immediate military threat was removed.

Secondly, despite their clear defeat in the 1975-6 war, imperialist

interests continued to seek the overthrow of the MPLA government and were clearly on the alert to take advantage of any internal disunity.

MPLA had, therefore, to preserve the broadest possible national unity in the face of imperialist aggression, and at the same time to consolidate the worker-peasant alliance as the vanguard force in the context of sharpening class contradictions within the country.

The Programme of Action approved at the Third Plenary of MPLA Central Committee in October 1976 contained a strategy for tackling this dual task. Considering that the stage of socialist construction could not start until a first phase of national reconstruction had been completed, the Programme stated:)

"Our principal obligation at the present hour is to act energetically to cure the wounds of war: to put into operation the paralysed sectors of the economy; to redeem for our people the abandoned goods and enterprises. . . to guarantee the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation and the security of the State. . . .

The social forces of Angolan society whose interests are identified or essentially coincide with the aims of national reconstruction are grouped in MPLA and comprise the working class, the peasantry, the petty-bourgeoisie and the revolutionary intellectuals. "

(The widest sectors of Angolan society were thus drawn into the reconstruction effort, opposed only by some sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, anxious to preserve their privileges or who maintained links with the puppet groups seeking to sabotage the MPLA government.

The process of recovery, involving bringing important parts of the economy under state control, met with growing opposition, under various guises, from these internal reactionary forces, and called for a more precise definition of the revolutionary movement.)

"The historical inevitability of a Vanguard Party therefore arose with greatest sharpness when the Angolan people, launched with determination on the tasks of national reconstruction, proposed the realisation of their socialist option within the framework of the sharpening of the internal class struggle and the permanent external threat. Only a party which expresses the interests of the working class and of all the working people can lead the masses in the struggle for the realisation of a socialist-oriented programme, capable of overcoming the contradictions of a society still divided by class and tribal differences. . . . "

## What becomes of MPLA (Movement)?

"The constitution of MPLA into a Vanguard Party is, then, the step forward that had still to be taken. Other formulae were examined for this step forward:

1. Maintaining MPLA as a front for all patriotic forces while creating a Vanguard Party with the best militants was an attractive formula which appeared to ensure the ideological purity of the Party while preserving the strength of MPLA in attracting and mobilising the people, as a nursery for cadres who would join the Party once they were hardened in the struggle and had gained the consciousness of good militants.

Such a formula presented a series of disadvantages:

- a) Fascism had not allowed the Angolan people any political life which would enable them to arrive at independence with an experience of organisation: this is obvious from the difficulty MPLA now faces in creating its structure. With two organisations of different character this task would be still more difficult;
- b) A large section of the working masses would have difficulty in understanding the purpose of two organisations since they are already used to seeing MPLA as the revolutionary vanguard struggling for People's Democracy and Socialism;
- c) If the Movement and the Party both existed, the structuring of both in the armed forces would be highly confusing, and even more complicated if we take into account the Party Youth within the armed forces.
- d) Many members of MPLA would not understand why they could belong to MPLA and not belong to the Party;
- e) With the complexity of the tasks of national reconstruction, it would be difficult to allocate cadres to ensure the functioning of two organisations as well as that of the State;
- f) There would be a danger of confusion of the respective missions and competencies of the two organisations, giving rise to misunderstanding which could lead to a breach of unity between the militants and leaders of each organisation;
- g) Many other problems of adaptation might arise, with unforeseeable consequences.

2. A formula whereby MPLA was simply abolished to give way to the Party - given that not all members of the defunct MPLA could be admitted to the Party - would bring problems of demobilisation among those who were not chosen for the Party, and the final result would also be division within the MPLA.

3. 'To transform the MPLA into a Party' is a formulation which does not exactly correspond to the solution now proposed that 'the MPLA should constitute itself into a Party'. As has been explained at length, the transformation of MPLA began long ago and has been continuing systematically since its foundation. It would not be at this moment that MPLA would transform itself into a Party, as if it was an immediate process. After all, it may be said that its transformation into a Party has been taking place since its foundation and is now reaching its term.

4. To create a Party, call it MPLA, and put an end to MPLA(Movement)

would not facilitate the task of explaining the historical inevitability of the Party, the reasons for the disappearance of the MPLA or the method of incorporating the membership.

SO THE MPLA CONSTITUTES ITSELF INTO A VANGUARD PARTY, preserving all the rich experience gained in twenty-one years of struggle as the revolutionary vanguard of the people.

## What happens to MPLA's present members?

The thousands of MPLA members have not had an equal opportunity of contact with historical materialism and dialectical materialism. Their adherence to scientific socialism is empirical and relies much on the trust they place in the MPLA and in the guidance of Comrade President Agostinho Neto.

On the other hand, capacity for training political cadres is still inadequate, with the result that there are still not enough activists to cover all the important centres of workers and peasants, to encourage their militant activity and to raise their political and ideological understanding.

There is a trend which demands that anyone who is admitted to the MPLA-Party should already be a convinced Marxist-Leninist. To be a convinced Marxist-Leninist one must know a minimum about the scientific theory of the proletariat. But we cannot be so demanding, we cannot be so sectarian. Just as it is the duty of the militant or aspirant to study Marxism-Leninism, so it is the duty of the MPLA-Party to provide the opportunity for this study.

For this reason, the militants and adherents of MPLA(Movement) will become respectively militants and aspirants of MPLA-Party. The sympathisers will be given the opportunity of joining one of the mass organisations, like UNTA or OMA, where questions of ideological order do not decide the category of member.

Sympathisers may apply to join the Party. All candidates must pass through the category of Aspirant, unless they have already proved themselves in the Party Youth, which recommends their direct entry in the category of militant.

A decisive factor in the assessment of a militant or aspirant will be his attitude to productive work: he should be an exemplary worker in carrying out work schedules and helping to solve problems at his workplace. "

(The final section deals with new organisational norms, the Party Youth and Young Pioneers, support for the mass organisations and the role of the Party press in spreading the principles of Marxism-Leninism.)



The cook house  
at Doroi

## Zimbabwean refugees in Mozambique

In Mozambique, there are four main refugee camps, with about 45,000 people in them and another 14,500 in five transit camps. They are all the responsibility of the Mozambique Government. The numbers are rising rapidly. In Doroi camp in the middle of last year there were 17,500 compared with 10,000 at the beginning of 1977. Kees Maxey visited Doroi early this year and this was his impression:

"I was impressed by the organisation and good order of the camp. The people are divided into seven units for sleeping, eating and so on. The children of school age (there are over 4,000 of them) are fed in a central area where they have built their own classrooms. They have over 100 teachers (themselves refugees) but almost no books. The well built classrooms are open to let the light in, and each has a beautifully constructed hard mud and charcoal blackboard. In the middle is a model of Zimbabwe. In the school's central office, I saw the extent of the teaching problem - a desperate lack of books, paper, pens. What little they had (which seemed mainly to consist of maths books.) was very carefully protected from the elements. I was told later that writing materials and books were being bought from Tanzania. In the camp as a whole, there was a great shortage of books, newspapers, magazines and there were hardly any radios, so keeping in touch with the outside world is difficult.

The man in charge of the medical area was a trained medical assistant and the camp is visited once a week by a Mozambican doctor. There are 98 medical staff, many of whom have themselves been trained in Doroi. I was particularly impressed by the dispensary. It was a hut built with poles, mud and thatch, but it was clean and in immaculate order. The people have also built a sixty-bed hospital. They were short of drugs - with less than a month's supply. They have to deal with about 2,000 patients a month; the main diseases are gastric enteritis, pneumonia, malaria, and a few cases of Tuberculosis.

We visited the food store - a large but almost empty building. There were about 75 sacks of rice - enough for the next day's meal, but no

more; 30 sacks of salt and two large tins of dried milk. All had been provided via the United Nations. They are growing some of their own food - but they estimated that they could only provide enough for about two months. They hoped to get some animals (they showed me some empty pens they built last year in unfulfilled hope).

The people have many immediate needs - for antibiotics, anti-malaria and anti-diarrhoea drugs, analgesics, bandages and powder for tropical ulcers. They need books, magazines (up to a year out of date), and battery radios; hoes, axes, and other simple farming tools. They need blankets. They need food. But their greatest need is to be able to go back to a free Zimbabwe where they can live without fear.

My overall impression was of a remarkably well organised, well disciplined people. All they could do for themselves, they were doing. They deserve our help."

## MOZAMBIQUE SOLIDARITY ACTION

This year's floods have further aggravated the difficulties the people of Mozambique face in rebuilding their country. As the previous article shows, the growing numbers of Zimbabwean refugees are suffering from shortages of many basic necessities. Donations to help meet these needs will be forwarded to the Solidarity Bank account in Maputo.

Cheques should be made payable to 'Mozambique Solidarity Action' and sent to 34 Percy Street, London W1P 9FG.

Donations may be 'earmarked' on the back of the cheque for:

- |                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| a) Zimbabwean refugees | c) Mozambique reconstruction |
| b) Zimbabwean fighters | d) Campaign work in Britain  |

£1,750 was sent to the Solidarity Bank from Britain in February this year and a further £1,000 is to be sent shortly.

The Mozambique Solidarity Action campaign can provide information and speakers, short films, exhibition panels (no hire fees but carriage payable) and the following material:

Mozambique-Zimbabwe: one struggle

28-page pamphlet, 20p each or 15p for ten or more;

Poster: green/black/white, 25p each or 20 for ten or more;

Leaflets: no charge, but donations to cost welcomed.



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# THE WHORES OF WAR

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**50p**

Published by the Mozambique, Angola and Guine Information Centre, 34 Percy Street, London W1P 9FG. (Tel: 01 636 7108).