

Building Freedom:
MOZAMBIQUE'S FRELIMO



We never accepted.

We were as tall trees
bending when the strong wind blows
but who know
submission is just for a time

We stowed anxiety in our hearts
courage in our hands
bullets in our homes

Tenderness and hatred impelled us

Our sons measured their height
by the length of guns

The anguish of waiting weighed on us
like an endless yearning

.....
Happy those who live in our time
in freedom
building freedom

FRELIMO New Year's Greeting, 1970

BUILDING FREEDOM: MOZAMBIQUE'S FRELIMO

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PREFACE

This pamphlet presents the philosophy, purposes and programs of FRELIMO, the Mozambique Liberation Front. It is an in-depth study of one movement for national liberation; as such, it is only part of the Africa Research Group series on the situation in Southern Africa today. It is designed to complement the longer book, *Race to Power: the Struggle for Southern Africa*.

Race to Power focuses on who has power in Southern Africa today, how they got it, how they use it and how they hope to preserve it. It discusses African movements for national liberation only in the context of their opposition to the White governments and their Western supporters. In focusing on White power in Southern Africa, the book presents only half of the story. This pamphlet, and its counterparts in the series, tell the other half: the response by the African movements to continued White control.

There are movements for national liberation in all of the Southern African countries ruled by Whites. The movements in the Portuguese territories of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau are currently gaining control over large areas of land. Although the three territories are separated by many thousands of miles, the fact that all three are 'ruled' by Portugal has created the necessity for the liberation forces of each area to work closely together. In the early sixties, MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), FRELIMO (Mozambique Liberation Front) and PAIGC (Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) entered into a formal alliance called CONCP (Conference of the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies). Although each movement works out the strategy for its own territory separately, this alliance has become important in the political struggle in Southern Africa. Its main function is to publicize and win support for the Africans' struggle for independence. In addition, it often represents the movements to the United Nations and world opinion.

There are also highly organized nationalist movements in the White-ruled countries of South Africa, Namibia (South West Africa), and Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). There is a close alliance between these groups and those comprising CONCP. This alliance arises out of the need to confront the power network in Southern Africa.

In *Race to Power* we outlined how White minority rule 'regionalized' the conflict between Blacks and Whites in Southern Africa. We discussed several of the ways the White governments work together to ensure their continued control. In response the nationalist movements, and their supporters in independent Africa, have been forced to regionalize their opposition to White domination. By strengthening ties and creating an alliance between the liberation movements they have confronted the White government's strategy.

Every white-ruled country of Southern Africa has more than one nationalist organization. These movements vary greatly in efficacy and in the extent that they are supported by the African population. CONCP works with one movement from each of the non-Portuguese White-ruled countries: the ANC (African National Congress) of South Africa, ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union) of Zimbabwe, and SWAPO (The South West African People's Organization) of Namibia. Because of CONCP's importance to the independence struggles in Southern Africa, the movements it recognizes are included in this series. Together, they make up a network that puts independence for African peoples as the most important issue in Southern Africa today.

The story in this pamphlet will be told from the inside — by people actually engaged in the movements for national liberation. It will be told in their words, sometimes directly in English, sometimes translated from Portuguese. In either case, it is in the language of political commitment. In reading this pamphlet, it is important to bear in mind that the narration comes from the perspective of involvement. In many cases the story is written for supporters of the movement and the writer assumes this perspective is shared by the readers.





...FORGE SIMPLE WORDS

THAT EVEN THE CHILDREN CAN

UNDERSTAND

WORDS WHICH WILL ENTER

EVERY HOUSE

LIKE THE WIND

AND FALL,

LIKE RED HOT EMBERS

ON OUR PEOPLE'S SOULS.

JORGE REBELO
FRELIMO

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*Ten years ago a small group of Mozambicans organized a party whose goal was to free Mozambique from Portuguese rule. Today large areas of the country are controlled by the Mozambican people themselves. Their struggle is not so much a war against the Portuguese as it is a war for the right to control their own lives. For them, Portuguese colonialism has meant suffering in countless ways — political, economic, social and cultural. They have had enough of this suffering, and are trying now to build a new society where they can work together in their own land.**

"The purpose of our struggle is not only to destroy. It is first and foremost aimed at building a new Mozambique where there will be no hunger and where all men will be free and equal. We are fighting with arms in our hands because in order to build the Mozambique that we want we must first destroy the Portuguese colonial system. . . only after this will we be able to use for ourselves our labor and the wealth of our country."

(Message to the Mozambican people from The Central Committee; Sept. 25, 1967)

In this pamphlet Mozambicans will tell us about their struggle: How they organized a party, why they decided to use arms against the Portuguese, what war means for them today, and how they are building a new life. They will talk about the problems which face them and their hopes for a new Mozambique. They will tell us what it means to them to take their lives into their own hands and try to change them.

What do we want?

We want to free our country, Mozambique. We want to reconstruct our land, we are fighting in order to have a *free Nation*.

A free Nation means: to have no more slaves, to have schools for all, health services for all, work for all, land for all to cultivate and produce food.

FREE NATION is doing away with hunger;

FREE NATION is to end misery;

FREE NATION is to do away with illiteracy;

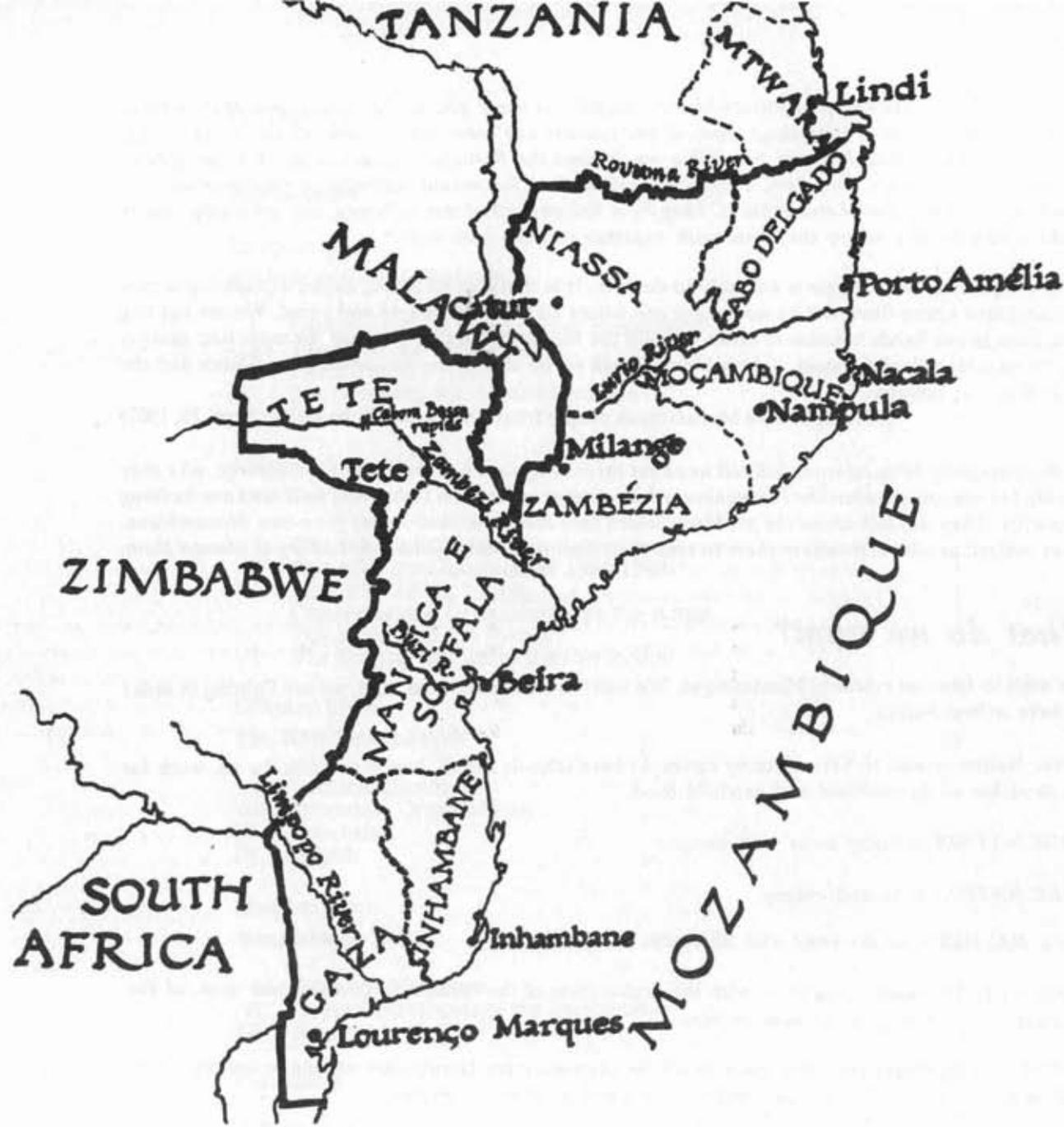
FREE NATION means doing away with the exploitation of the black man by the white man, of the national by the foreigner, of *man* by *man*;

FREE NATION means the elimination of all the concessionary monopolies dealing in cotton, sugar, sisal, tea, which benefit only one person or a small number of people;

FREE NATION means to have justice and respect for human beings.

(*Mozambique Revolution*, 1965)

* Italicized print indicates editorial comment; roman print indicates quotations from FRELIMO. Sources are noted at the end of the pamphlet.



CHAPTER ONE

PRELUDE TO ARMED STRUGGLE

If you want to know who I am
examine with careful eyes
that piece of black wood
which an unknown Maconde brother
with inspired hands
carved and worked
in distant lands to the North.

Ah, she is who I am:
empty eyes despairing of possessing life,
a mouth slashed with wounds of anguish,
enormous, flattened hands,
raised as though to implore and threaten,
body tattooed with visible and invisible scars
by the hand whips of slavery...
tortured and magnificent,
proud and mystical,
Africa from head to toe,
— ah, she is who I am!

If you want to understand me
come and bend over my African soul,
in the groans of the Negroes on the docks
in the frenzied dances of the Chopes
in the rebelliousness of the Shanganas
in the strange melancholy evaporating
from a native song, into the night...

And ask me nothing more
if you really wish to know me...
for I am no more than a lump of flesh
in which, its cry swollen with hope
the revolt of Africa has merged.

Noemia de Souza

Background to organization: Resistance

Resistance to foreign rule took several forms in the early decades of the century. In rural areas people tried to counter Portuguese exploitation by setting up cooperatives, but these new economic structures were soon crushed by colonial authorities. However, in the cities, where Africans had closer contact with the Portuguese the seeds of African nationalism began to grow. In 1920, urban Africans organized the African League. Its goals included national unity, unity between the peoples of different colonies, and unity of oppressed black people everywhere. Other nationalist organizations crystallized during the 1920's. However, when Salazar became dictator of Portugal in 1926, these organizations were outlawed and broken up.

By the late 1940's three groups of Africans were struggling against Portuguese colonialism through secret political organizing and actions.

The first of these groups was the intellectuals (especially those few who had been to Portugal), who had come to regard the Portuguese notion of "national unity" between Portugal and the colonies as hypocritical. Their political

consciousness took the form of cultural expression, since overt political organization was illegal. Through poetry and prose they played on three main themes: 1) reaffirmation of Africa as their mother country and cultural heritage; 2) the call to revolt of black people all over the world, and 3) the sufferings of ordinary black people throughout Portuguese Africa.

The second group was composed of secondary school students who formed an organization called NESAM; they worked to build a sense of pride in their African heritage and Mozambican nationhood. NESAM was banned in 1964, but from it have come many of the nationalist leaders who are today fighting the Portuguese.

Workers from the towns and plantations formed the third of these groups. In 1947 and 1948 they conducted a series of strikes on Mozambican docks and plantations. Several hundred people were deported to a small island off the coast of West Africa in retaliation. In 1956 Portuguese police killed 49 striking African dock-workers.

By the late 1950's it became clear that sporadic local resistance would result only in repression and death. The Portuguese proved this over and over through incidents such as the massacre at Mueda on June 14, 1960. Here is an eyewitness report:

How did that happen? Well, some of these men had made contact with the authorities and asked for more liberty and more pay... After a while, when people were giving support to these leaders, the Portuguese sent police through the villages inviting people to a meeting at Mueda. Several thousand people came to hear what the Portuguese would say.

Then the governor invited our leaders into the administrator's office. When they came outside, the governor asked the crowd who wanted to speak. Many wanted to speak, and the governor told them all to stand on one side.

Then without another word he ordered the police to bind the hands of those who had stood on one side, and the police began beating them. When the people saw what was happening, they began to demonstrate against the Portuguese, and the Portuguese simply ordered the police trucks to come and collect these arrested persons. So there were more demonstrations against this. At that moment the troops were still hidden, and the people went up close to the police to stop the arrested persons from being taken away. So the governor called the troops, and when they appeared he told them to open fire. They killed about 600 people. Now the Portuguese say they have punished that governor, but of course they have only sent him somewhere else.



Enough of these massacres
I have suffered for five hundred years
I can bear it no longer
this forced labor

I suffered on the railways
in the fields of cotton
in the timber mills and on the sisal plantations
I can bear it no longer

I can bear it no longer
this was the cry of the people
of those who have suffered
since the first day of the invasion
The people say: Enough.

D.S. MAGUNI

The need for organization

After this massacre, things in the north could never return to normal. Throughout the region it had aroused the most bitter hatred against the Portuguese and showed once and for all that peaceful resistance was futile.

Thus, everywhere it was the very severity of repression that created the necessary conditions for the development of a strong militant nationalist movement. The tight police state drove all political action underground... the excesses of the regime destroyed all possibility of reforms which, by improving conditions a little, might have secured the main interests of colonial rule from a serious attack for some time to come.

The first attempts to create a nationwide... movement were made by Mozambicans working in neighboring countries, where they were beyond the immediate reach of PIDE, the (Portuguese) secret police. At first the old problem of inadequate communications led to the establishment of three separate movements...

The accession of many former colonies to independence in the late fifties and early sixties favored the formation of 'exile' movements and for Mozambique, Tanganyika's independence, gained in 1961, seemed to offer new scope. All three movements established separate headquarters in Dar es Salaam (the capital of Tanganyika) soon afterwards.

(Eduardo Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique*)



Tanganyika, today called Tanzania, is the Northern neighbor of Mozambique and a convenient base for liberation movement headquarters.

The birth of FRELIMO

In the early sixties, the need for unity of liberation movements became clear. Eduardo Mondlane, one of the forces behind the drive towards unity and the first president of the united movement, FRELIMO (the Mozambique liberation front), tells what led up to his political involvement:

I myself am from the Gaza district of southern Mozambique, and, like many of us, my involvement with resistance of one form or another goes back to my childhood. I began life, as most Mozambican children do, in a village, and until the age of ten I spent my days herding the family livestock with my brothers and absorbing the traditions of my tribe and family. That I went to school at all I owe to the far-sightedness of my mother, who was my father's third and last wife, and a woman of considerable character and intelligence. In trying to continue my education after primary school, I experienced all the frustrations and difficulties in store for an African child attempting to enter the Portuguese system. Eventually I managed to reach South Africa, and with the help of some of my teachers I continued studying on scholarships to college level. It was during this period that my work with NESAM, and so my serious troubles with the police, began. When I was offered a scholarship to America, the Portuguese authorities decided to send me to Lisbon instead. During my brief stay there, however, I was harassed so constantly by the police that it interfered with my studies, and I made efforts

to take up my scholarships in the United States. Succeeding, I studied sociology and anthropology at Oberlin and Northwestern Universities, and then worked for the United Nations as a research officer in the Trusteeship section.

Meanwhile I kept in touch as far as possible with developments in Mozambique, and I became increasingly convinced from what I saw and from my occasional contacts through the UN with the Portuguese diplomats that normal political pressure and agitation would not affect the Portuguese stand. In 1961 I was able to visit Mozambique on leave from the UN, and travelling widely saw for myself how conditions had changed, or not changed, since I had left. On my return I left the United Nations to engage openly in the liberation struggle, and took a job lecturing at Syracuse University which left me the time and opportunity to study the situation further. I had established contacts with all the separate liberation parties, but I had refused to join any of them separately, and was among those campaigning strongly for unity in 1961 and 1962.

(Mondlane, *Struggle*)

After September 1962, a single party was formed, but, Mondlane says. "It took two years of hard work, planning and learning from our mistakes and failures before we were able to set out confidently on an active path towards liberation."

At the first congress of FRELIMO, the aims of the party were defined. Some of these are:

- to further the unity of Mozambicans;
- to employ directly every effort to promote

the rapid access of Mozambique to independence;

—to promote by every method the social and cultural development of the Mozambican woman;

—to promote at once the literacy of the Mozambican people, creating schools wherever possible;

—to encourage and support the formation and consolidation of trade union, student, youth and women's organizations;

—to cooperate with the nationalist organizations of the other Portuguese colonies;

—to procure all requirements for self defense and resistance of the Mozambican people;

—to procure diplomatic, moral and material help for the cause of the Mozambican people from the African states and from all peace and freedom loving people.

(Mondlane, *Struggle*)

The necessity for armed struggle

It was only after the formation of FRELIMO that the decision was made to wage a military struggle against the Portuguese:

Although determined to do everything in our power to try to gain independence by peaceful means, we were already convinced... that a war would be necessary.

Despite all this, attempts were made to use persuasion, encouraged by the acceptance elsewhere of the principle of self-determination. But such efforts were never rewarded with any kind of 'dialogue.' The only reaction to them was prison, censorship, and the strengthening of the PIDE, the secret

police. The character of the PIDE is itself an important factor. For it has a strong tradition of violence — its officers were trained by the Gestapo — and it enjoys a considerable measure of autonomy, allowing it to act outside the control of the official law...

By 1961 two conclusions were obvious. First, Portugal would not admit the principle of self-determination and independence, or allow for any extension of democracy under her own rule, although by then it was clear that her own 'Portuguese' solutions to our oppressed condition, such as assimilation by multi-racial *colonatos*, multi-racial schools, local elections etc., had proved a meaningless fraud. Secondly, moderate political action such as strikes, demonstrations and petitions, would result only in the destruction of those who took part in them. We were, therefore, left with these alternatives: to continue indefinitely living under a repressive imperial rule, or to find a means of using force against Portugal which would be effective enough to hurt Portugal without resulting in our own ruin.

This was why, to FRELIMO leaders, armed action appeared to be the only method.

(Mondlane, *Struggle*)



The call to arms

To create conditions for a successful armed struggle we had, on the one hand, to prepare the population inside Mozambique; and, on the other, to recruit and train people for the responsibilities which such a struggle would impose.

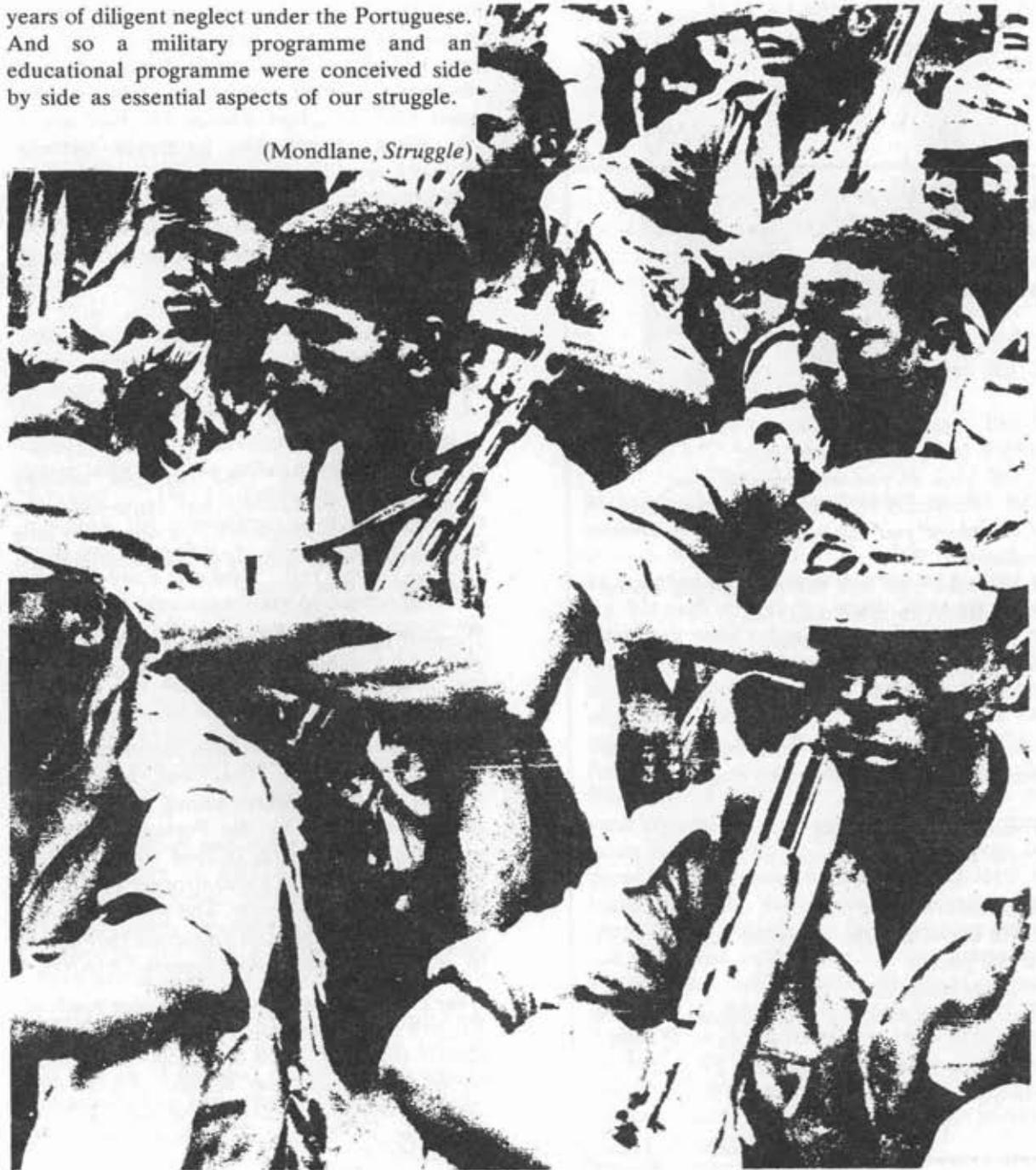
There already existed within Mozambique the makings of a structure through which the work of preparation could proceed. Almost all those who gathered in Dar es Salaam to form FRELIMO were part of underground forces inside Mozambique; the three parties which merged had members in various regions, and these, together with the NESAM network... formed the basis of an organization which then had to be consolidated and expanded. Through this, the aims of the party had to be explained to the population; the people had to be organized into cells, the general level of political consciousness raised, the activity of the cells co-ordinated...

Favourable conditions already existed: the suffering caused by the colonial system; the desire to take action; the courage and determination that a war demands. All FRELIMO had to provide was the practical understanding and the organization...

The problem of training involved not only the military aspect. The deficiencies of the Portuguese educational system meant that our movement was desperately short of trained cadres in all fields. We could see that the success of future armed action would create the need for people with a variety of technical skills and a certain level of basic education... We had, and have, the task of making up for

years of diligent neglect under the Portuguese. And so a military programme and an educational programme were conceived side by side as essential aspects of our struggle.

(Mondlane, *Struggle*)



If you ask me
who I am,
with this face you see, you others,
branded with marks of evil
and with a sinister smile,

I will tell you nothing
I will tell you nothing

I will show you the scars of centuries
which furrow my black back
I will look at you with hateful eyes
red with blood spilled through the years
I will show you my grass hut
collapsed
I will take you into the plantations where
from dawn to after night-fall
I am bent over the ground
while the labor
tortures my body with red-hot pliers

I will lead you to the fields full of people
breathing misery hour after hour

I will tell you nothing
I will only show you this

And then
I will show you the sprawled bodies
of *my* people
treacherously shot
their huts burned by *your* people

I will say nothing to you
but you will know why I fight.

Armando Guebuza

CHAPTER TWO

THE WAR

The story of Chipande

On September 25, 1964 the first military operation of FRELIMO was launched. The story of Alberto-Joachim Chipande shows how the movement developed to this point through the eyes of one person:

I myself decided to join the struggle because every man should be free, or if he has to, should fight to be free...

I first heard about a certain organization for liberation in 1960. That was MANU ... Certain leaders worked among us. Some of them were taken by the Portuguese at the massacre at Mueda on 14 June 1960... After that experience I had a still stronger feeling for the need to get our liberty. And when everyone else considered what had happened they began to act as well, and they supported MANU.

And then in 1962, when FRELIMO was formed in Dar es Salaam, its leaders invited some delegates from inside Delgado to go and talk with them. People who had previously supported MANU began supporting FRELIMO...

After the formation of FRELIMO I became an organizer inside Delgado. This is how we worked. We had formed an agricultural cooperative at Mueda, and when FRELIMO's leaders knew of this they sent delegates inside Delgado to ask the leaders of our cooperative... to support FRELIMO. They... agreed that they would use the cooperative as long as possible as a means of political organization. We had only a few people in the first year, and then in the second year we cultivated cotton... And our cooperative developed. Many joined; and so the Portuguese company (in Mueda) got short of labour, and we began selling our cotton even to that company. We leaders worked hard and voluntarily; we took no percentage of the crop, we had no profit in money... Then that Portuguese company complained to the authorities that our cooperative was really an anti-Portuguese political organization. In 1959 the leader — Lazaro Kavandame — was arrested and sent to Porto Amelia. But we weren't demoralized; we continued. Then the massacre occurred and they banned our cooperative movement.

At the end of 1960, Lazaro came back, and we talked things over about how to find new ways of working. The authorities said they would allow no organization with many members in it — 30 was the most they would allow. We agreed to that and founded a cooperative with 25 members to grow rice. In the first year we produced a good harvest, we had money in the savings bank, enough to pay wages and we also bought a tractor... In 1962, after the formation of FRELIMO, people began giving active support. We had many contacts with Dar through secret messengers, and we began issuing membership cards. We started organizing people. Some of them were arrested, and again we came under Government suspicion.

This time it was different. Now the Portuguese wanted our groups to work for the destruction of FRELIMO. They said that we should send men to Dar to create confusion. We sent our vice-chairman, and the Portuguese gave him money for his journey. But we gave him a different task. We gave him a letter to the leaders in Dar to explain why he had the money, and this money we told him to give to FRELIMO and we found the necessary money, ourselves. So really this man went to Dar as a delegate to the First Congress of FRELIMO while pretending to the Portuguese to be their agent. He came back after the Congress and told the Portuguese that there were conflicts in Dar between the various groupings in FRELIMO...

Then he went again in September as our delegate. But this time it went wrong. The Portuguese weren't so simple as to accept what he said just like that. They sent our comrade again, but they also sent another man to spy on him... When our comrade came back, he went again to the Portuguese and told them

nothing had changed — the groups in Dar still couldn't agree with each other; but the real spy had meanwhile given the Portuguese a very different and real report. So after our comrade came back the second time, the Portuguese started arresting and interrogating our comrades — that was in January 1963. In February they arrested Lazaro, the chairman of FRELIMO in our region, and the next day they arrested our comrade who'd been the delegate...

After that there were many arrests, and PIDE agents were all over the place. Many died in prison; others came back with broken health. We had a comrade working in the administrator's office at Mueda. He warned us by letter about those who were going to be arrested... On 13 February, early in the morning, the administrator of Mueda came with armed police to the Catholic mission where I was a teacher... But we — Lourenco Raimundo, also a secretary of our cooperative, and I — had decided not to sleep there. We made off when we heard the noise of the trucks coming. We stayed all day in the bush, and when night fell we walked to Tanzania. We walked from the thirteenth to the eighteenth, and then that night we crossed the Rovuma into Tanzania.

We got to Lindi and there we were met by a representative of FRELIMO. We told him what had happened. Many refugees came too at that time, because of the Portuguese repression. We held a meeting and decided that some members of our cooperative should go back into Mozambique, because we knew it was our duty to mobilize the people, and that without us the people would not have leaders. We decided that the partly educated younger men should go to Dar for further training, while the older men should go back into



Alberto Joaquim Chipande

Mozambique and hide there to go on with mobilization...

In Dar the leaders asked us what we wanted to do. We said, to join the army. They asked us, didn't we want scholarships? No, we said, to fight. So our leaders made contacts with countries ready to help, and the first was Algeria. In June 1963 we went to Algeria and trained there until the spring of 1964. On 4 June we got orders, 24 of us, to meet the President of FRELIMO, and he told us we were chosen for a mission. Next day we went down to Mtwara. On 15 August we were ordered by the representative of FRELIMO to leave that night. We crossed the frontier, and there inside Delgado we found waiting for us the arms and equipments for my group, six French rifles, twelve pistols, five cases of hand grenades... We took these and started for the South, through the forest, but with orders not to begin till we had the word from our leaders... We were not to attack Portuguese civilians, not to maltreat prisoners, not to steal, to pay for what we ate...

My group had orders to go towards Porto Amelia... We found it hard, because the enemy was patrolling day and night along the roads and even the bush paths. At one point my group had to wait a couple of days before we could get past. We had good contacts, but because of the Portuguese patrols, it was arranged that at dangerous points only one man should receive us. We suffered from food shortage. And we had to take off our boots for fear of leaving tracks for the Portuguese to follow; we walked barefoot.

We advanced to Macomia. From there we couldn't get on to Porto Amelia, because the Portuguese had set up a blockade and they'd mobilized the people against the bandits... The bandits used to pillage Indian shops, and the Portuguese said we were like that. This held us back. The Indians informed the Portuguese of our tracks. We came to the conclusion that we should start the struggle. We were already fifteen days' walk from the frontier with Tanzania. So while there in Macomia, not able to get any further and wanting to start, we sent messengers to Dar to tell them the details of the situation and explain the dangers of delaying while the armed bandits were around...

On 16 September we got our orders from Dar to begin on 25 September; that was at a meeting of our group leaders. We decided that each should go to his own area and begin. Through organizers we planned that the people should rise at the same time — a real national insurrection. To defend the people after that, each group should form militias and explain things to the villagers, while also sabotaging the roads, and, of course, attacking the Portuguese soldiers and administration. That was the outline of the plan we made...

(Mondlane, *Struggle*)

THE MILITARY CHRONOLOGY: 1964-1969

September 25, 1964: the first military offensive — several administrative and military posts in Cabo Delgado attacked.

November, 1964: attacks extended to Niassa, Zambezia and Tete; Portuguese, unprepared, are unable to maintain defenses in four provinces at once. FRELIMO consolidates position in Cabo Delgado and Niassa.

1965-mid-1966: no FRELIMO major offensives: mining of roads, ambushes, strengthening and consolidation of military and political position, and training of new recruits by FRELIMO.

Mid-1966-mid-1967: over 30 Portuguese bases attacked.

Late 1967: fighting extended in all regions; control in Cabo Delgado to the river Lurio, surrounding Porto Amelio (the capital); control in Niassa to the Marrupa-Maua line; to the south, the Catur zone; to the west, conditions for reopening the struggle in Tete and Zambezia are created.

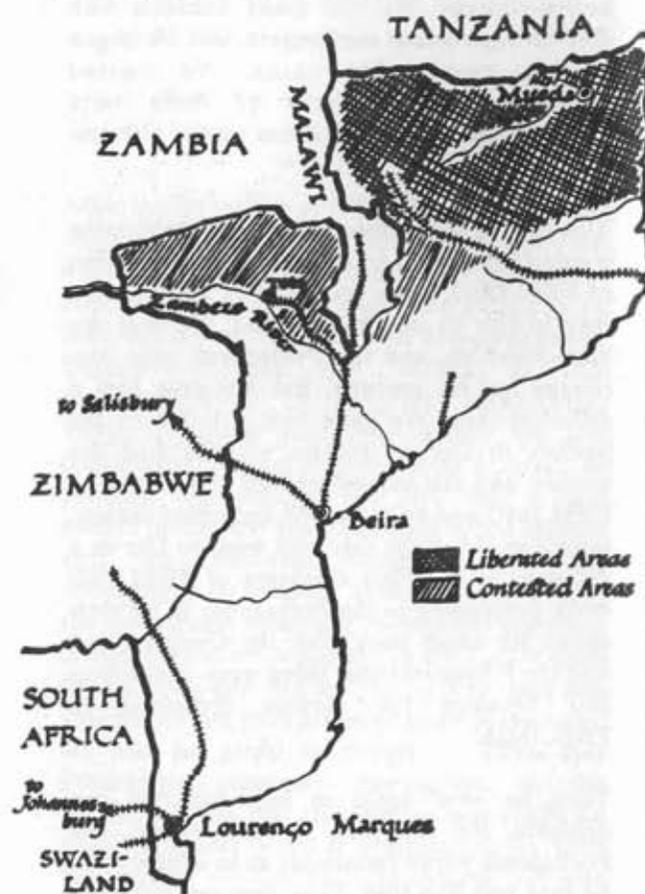
March, 1968: military operations begin in Tete Province.

How FRELIMO fights

Today over one fifth of Mozambique is completely freed from Portuguese control. Beyond these 'liberated' zones, another province, one of the most important economically and politically is contested. This is the Tete province, which contains considerable resources, is crossed by important lines of communication, and is the site of the

projected Cabora Bassa Dam. The dam, being built largely by South African interests, will be associated with a major development plan which will benefit mainly outside capitalist interests and Portuguese settlers. It is considered one of the major targets in the new phase of the war.

MOZAMBIQUE: General Situation 1970

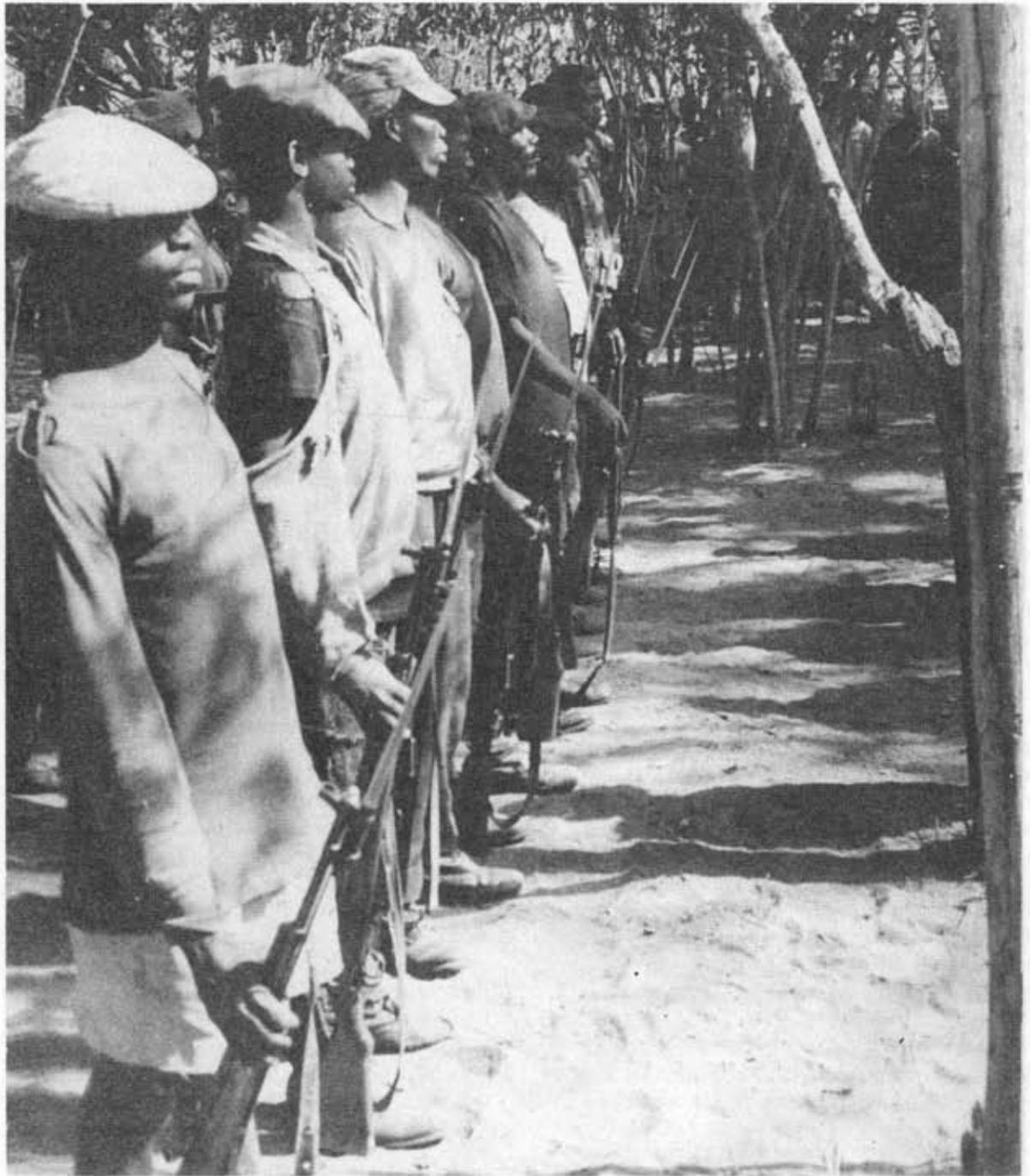


FRELIMO successes do not come because of advanced know-how. FRELIMO has no aircraft; it uses arms retrieved from the enemy or supplied by friendly foreign nations. Guns are scarce. FRELIMO success is based on a combination of good organization, knowledge of the land, support by the general population, and determination. This section will examine some of these factors that contribute to FRELIMO success.

Character and organization of the army

The army is representative of the population at large, in that the vast majority of the guerrillas are peasants initially uneducated, illiterate and often unable to speak any Portuguese; but there is also a scattering of those who have had some education within the Portuguese system. The majority naturally come from the areas at present affected by the fighting, because it is there that widespread campaigns of political education and training programmes are possible. There is, however, a continual stream of people from further south, from all over Mozambique, who escape in order to join the struggle; and at the beginning, many people from refugee camps, who had fled from every district of Mozambique to escape repression, joined in as soon as a structure to contain them had been created. In the army, people from different areas accordingly mingle, so that each unit contains representatives from different tribes and different areas fighting together. In this way, tribalism is being effectively combated within the forces, and an example is being set to the rest of the population.

This is not the only way in which the army leads the way to social change. By accepting women into its ranks, it has revolutionized their social position. Women now play a very



active part in running popular militias, and there are also many guerrilla units composed of women. Through the army, women have started to take responsibility in many areas; they have learned to stand up and speak at public meetings, to take an active part in politics... When a women's unit first visits a village which is not yet sufficiently involved with FRELIMO, the sight of armed women who get up and talk in front of a large audience causes great amusement, even incredulity; when the villagers are convinced that the soldiers in front of them really are women, the effect on the astonished men is often so forceful that the rush on recruits is very much greater than the army can cope with or than the area can afford to lose.

The army is helping to raise the standard of education as well as of general political consciousness. Recruits are taught wherever possible to read and write, and to speak Portuguese, and even where an organized teaching programme cannot be arranged, they are encouraged to help each other to learn these basic skills. Indeed, the Portuguese authorities are increasingly suspicious of ordinary peasants who speak Portuguese, because they know that these are more likely to have learned it in the FRELIMO army than in a Portuguese school. The army also organizes various specific training programmes such as radio work, accounting, typing, as well as in subjects more narrowly orientated to the war...

It is clear from these comments that the role of the army goes far beyond simply fighting the Portuguese. Like the party, it is a nation-making force. It prepares not just soldiers but future citizens, who pass on what they learn to the people among whom they work.

Leadership is not based on rank but on the concept of responsibility; the leader of a certain body is referred to as the man 'responsible' for it. There were some leaders who had had a little schooling; but very few of these, even among those in the most important positions today, had gone beyond primary school...

After fighting began, the army was enlarged dramatically with new recruits from the areas of action; and in order to use this growing force efficiently, the organization had to be rapidly improved. The army itself was organized into battalions subdivided into detachments, companies and units. This has meant that, while small-scale operations can still be carried on over a very wide area of country, we also have available much larger forces for more important actions, such as attacks on Portuguese bases or against the Mueda air-base...

In addition to the guerrillas, the people's militias help carry out the war:

..While there is fighting in an area, they (the militias) coordinate their activities with the guerrillas, reinforce them when necessary, and supply them with information about the particular locality. When the guerrilla forces have liberated an area, the militia can then take over the organization of defence, of production and supply, leaving the main forces free to move on to a new fighting area. In regions where there is not yet an active armed struggle, militias are formed in secret whose task is to prepare the ground for guerrilla fighting; to mobilize the people; to observe the Portuguese forces; to arrange supplies and assistance for the guerrillas as they move into the region.

In a sense, these people's militias are the backbone of the armed struggle. The guerrillas carry the main offensive and do most of the direct fighting, but it is the work of the militias which makes it possible for them to operate...

Miguel Ambrosio, company commander from Cabo Delgado: I have fought in Zambezia and Niassa, far from my own region and my own tribe. I have fought in the country of the Chuabos and the Lomes... The Chuabos, the Nyanjas and the Lomes received me even more warmly than if I had been from their own region. In Western Niassa, for example, I came across Comrade Panguene, and although he is from the south, you couldn't distinguish him from the people of the region: he is like a son of the region. The people understand that we are all Mozambicans... The people are united and help us. Otherwise, for instance, we couldn't go into enemy areas; it is the people who give us all our information about the movements of the enemy, their strength and their position. Also, when we start working in an area where we have no food, because we have not yet had the opportunity to grow any, the people supply us and feed us. We also help the people. Until militias have been formed in a region, we protect the people in their fields against the action and reprisals of the colonialists; we organize new villages when we have to evacuate the people from a zone because of the war; we protect them against the enemy.

(Mondlane, *Struggle*)

The army and the people

The people are a constant source of information and supply for FRELIMO, while they are a further source of danger to the Portuguese. FRELIMO's forces live for the most part off what they produce in the fighting areas, and what has to be transported is taken on foot through the bush between the small centres which have been established. As a result, FRELIMO has no vulnerable supply lines, no military or economic strategic positions to defend. The loss of a single small base or area of crops is not very serious; it has no significance beyond the immediate loss of resources.

(Mondlane, *Struggle*)

Visitors to Mozambique described the relationship as follows:

We saw many examples of the complete unison between the army and the civilian peasant farmers. At one of their meetings, for instance, an army commander asked the Youth League to assign some of its members for a patrol, as the army was occupied elsewhere. This they did — and the group included both boys and girls. On another occasion, in one of the camps, the peasants arrested two soldiers who had left the camp without permission. Civilians actually *arrested* the military. Their subsequent treatment was extremely interesting. For they were not punished, but given an ideological lecture before the whole camp, including reprimands by the local people. The commander invited general opinion and everyone was allowed to speak. Some months earlier three Portuguese deserters had been found wandering in the bush by some peasants who immediately brought them to the army.

(*Mozambique Revolution*, 1967)



The role of women

It was in October, 1966, in a meeting of the Central Committee, that FRELIMO decided that the Mozambican woman should take a more active part in the struggle for national liberation, at all levels. It was decided that she should receive political and military training in order to make her more capable of fulfilling whatever tasks the revolution might demand of her. Thus, a few months later, in the beginning of 1967, the first group of women from Cabo Delgado and Niassa began their training. At first this was merely an experiment to discover just what contribution women could make to the revolution — how they would use their initiative, whether they were in fact capable of fulfilling certain tasks. The “experiment” proved highly successful and this first group of women became the founder members of the women’s detachment, and were scattered throughout the interior each with her specific assignment. It was soon discovered that they could play a very important role both in the military and political fields, but especially in the latter.

One of the prime functions of a women’s army is, quite naturally, just like the men’s army, participation in combat. In Mozambique the women’s military activities are usually concentrated in the defence of the liberated areas, thus freeing the men for the offensive actions in the zones of advance. However, many of the women prefer the more active combats in the advance zones, and choose to fight alongside the men in ambushes, and mining operations, where they have proved themselves as capable and courageous as any of their male comrades. As another aspect of this function, we have also women working in the Department of Security constantly on the look-out for enemy infiltration.



Josina Machel, a political commissar in the women’s detachment of FRELIMO, head of the section of social affairs and a fighter on the front line, died on April 7, 1971 from illness. She was 25 years old.

Although highly effective in the field of combat, their contribution has been less noticeable (just because of their relatively small numbers compared with the men) than their activities in the political field, where their impact has been far out of proportion to their numbers. Since 1967 the women have demonstrated that they have a key role in the mobilization and political education of both the people and the soldiers themselves. In this work we explain to the people the need to fight, what kind of struggle we are waging, with whom we fight, and against whom, what are the reasons for our struggle, what are our aims, and why we chose an armed struggle, what are our aims, and why we chose an armed struggle as the only means to independence. We explain the work we are doing and the results we have achieved so far. We explain how we are dependent to a certain extent on foreign aid and which countries and organizations are helping us, and that, despite this help, we must be as self-reliant as possible.

In this connection, it is stressed that the success of the revolution depends on the combined efforts of everyone such that no one can be omitted, and thus the traditional rather “passive” role of women must be changed so that their abilities are used to the full. Women are encouraged to give their opinions in meetings, to participate in the various committees, etc. Here we have the rather difficult task of fighting old prejudices that women’s functions should be confined to cooking, rearing children, etc. It has been proved that we women can perform this task of mobilization and education better than the men for two reasons. Firstly, it is easier for us to approach other women, and secondly, the men are more easily convinced of the important role of women when confronted with the unusual sight of confident and capable

female militants who are themselves the best examples of what they are propounding..

In addition to its political work, the women's detachment also has extensive duties in the field of social welfare. We assist and give comfort to families who have lost relatives in the war. This is extremely delicate work requiring a great deal of patience. We also run the FRELIMO orphanage, which not only cares for orphans, but also children separated from their parents due to the war. Some of our women are trained in first aid so that they can help the medical assistants in the health centres. Many of our women are also working in the Department of Education in their literacy campaigns and in the primary schools. Here again we have to overcome the outdated prejudices of fathers and husbands regarding the idea of education for women. But we are gradually winning the battle for they realize that a literate and educated woman makes far more constructive contribution to the revolution than an ignorant one.

Thus, apart from its strictly military functions the women's detachment has important political duties on two levels. At one level it is charged with the mobilization and education of the people, to increase the effectiveness of their participation by developing their political understanding of the war. This we do for everyone, irrespective of sex, although we have a unique opportunity to reach our own sex that is denied to our male comrades. Once this has been achieved, we work at the next level of encouraging even more active participation by inviting people to follow our example, to leave their homes and train as fighters, nurses, teachers, etc. In this way the size of the women's detachment has increased considerably since that first experimental group.

(Josina Machel, "The role of women in the Revolution," *Mozambique Revolution*, 1970.)



A guerrilla woman of the women's detachment with a captured rifle.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NEW MOZAMBIQUE

A mango does not become a great tree in its first day, but like a growing mango tree, we are deeply rooted in the soil that is our people, and the masses are now tasting the first fruits.

(Samora Machel, September 25, 1970)

Black mother
cradles her child
and forgets
that the grains of maize are withering in the earth
that the store of groundnuts vanished yesterday
She dreams of wonderful worlds
Where her child will go to school
The school where The Men go to learn.

....
Where her child will run and play in the street,
In the street where The Men walk.

....
wonderful worlds
where her child will be able to live

Marcelino dos Santos

The relationship between armed struggle and nation-building

*The task of creating a new life is integrally part
of the process of gaining freedom.*

One of the chief lessons to be drawn from nearly four years of war in Mozambique is that liberation does not consist merely of driving out the Portuguese authority, but also of constructing a new country; and that this construction must be undertaken even while the colonial state is in the process of being

destroyed. We realized this in principle before we began fighting, but it is only in the development of the struggle that we have learned quite how rapid and comprehensive civil reconstruction must be. There is no question of making a few provisional arrangements and waiting until we control our whole country before deciding how to govern it. We are having now to evolve structures and make decisions which will set the pattern for the future national government.

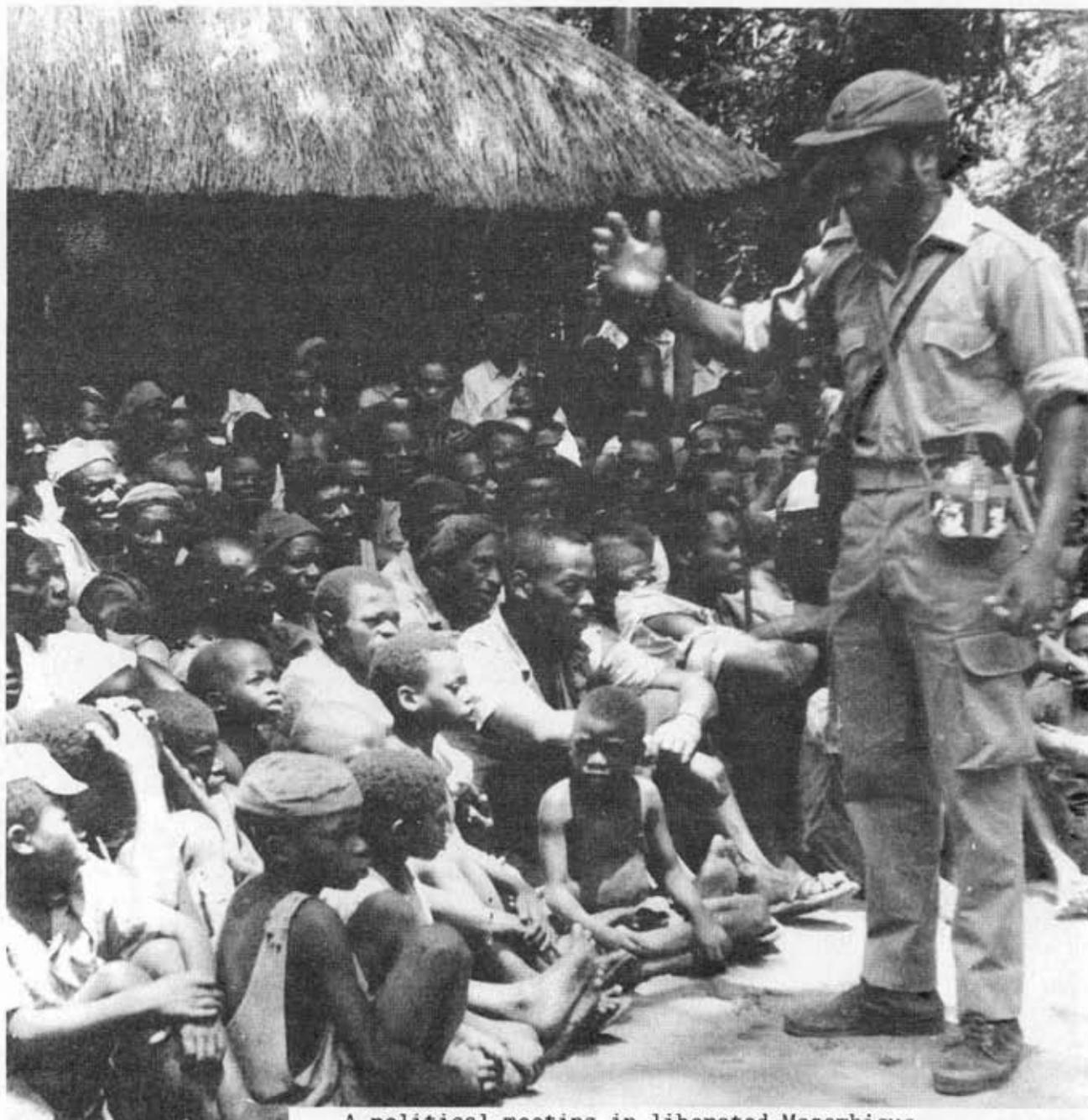
(Mondlane, *Struggle*)

Political Structure

In the liberated areas, the political structure is the party. In the villages, people's militias are created which are dependent on the local party organization and on the military leadership of the zone; their power rests on the nationalist and revolutionary forces. Besides this, economic life is organized so that the producers work in cooperatives under the direction of the local party; this takes away from the chief his traditional role as organizer of the economic life and at the same time puts an end to the exploitation of the peasant by any privileged group. It should also be stressed that this process is not a 'dictatorship of the party'; the party is an open organization, and its members are drawn from the whole population, with the majority being, as is the majority of the population, peasants; its role is to provide a political framework above the local level. There is no deep distinction between party and population: *the party is the population engaged in political action.*

Public meetings, held through the local party, are an important part of life in the liberated areas. At these, non-party members can hear more about FRELIMO and about the struggle, can voice their opinions, ask questions and enter into discussion. At the present time the administrative life of villages is being reorganized on the basis of people's committees elected by the whole population, and the way is being prepared for the extension of this system to the district level.

The void left by the destruction of the colonial state posed a practical problem which had not been clearly envisaged by the leadership; a series of services disappeared along with Portuguese rule, particularly services of a



A political meeting in liberated Mozambique

commercial nature, while the people continued to exist and to require such services. The inadequacy of the colonial administration meant that there were also many social needs that had never been met but which were nevertheless strongly felt by the population. Thus, from the time of the first victories in the war, a great variety of administrative responsibilities fell on FRELIMO. A population of some 800,000 had to be served. First and foremost, their material needs had to be satisfied, an adequate food supply assured, and other important articles such as clothes, soap or matches provided; then medical and educational services had to be established, and administrative and judicial systems organized.

For a time the problem was acute. We had been unprepared for the extent of the work before us, and we lacked experience in most of the fields where we needed it. In some areas, shortages were very serious; and where the peasants did not understand the reasons, they were withdrawing their support from the struggle and in some instances leaving the region altogether. During the two years after the struggle began, the battle to build up services was at least as important as the military one. By 1966 the crisis was past. The worst shortages had been overcome, and embryonic structures had been formed for commerce, administration, health and education. The New Mozambique was beginning to take shape.

(Mondlane, *Struggle*.)

Economic organization

Production is of extreme and immediate importance, since it is necessary for the survival of the population, of the army and of any civilian services. In this context, food is obviously the first need.

With the overthrow of the colonial system, the companies which had imposed the production of cash crops either through plantation or the system of forced cultivation, withdrew. The people were free to organize agriculture as they wished and to concentrate on their own needs. As a result, after the war liberated a region, there was a return to the production of such basic food crops as maize, cassava, millet, beans, and groundnuts. But the war imposed additional demands on food producers. Although the military grow their own food wherever possible, there are inevitably large sections of the army which cannot be self-sufficient; also, to avoid reprisals from the Portuguese, it has been necessary in many areas to evacuate peasants and install them in new villages, where they need to be supplied with food until the first harvest from their new fields; in some areas a part of the crops is regularly destroyed by Portuguese action.

The people are constantly encouraged to clear more land for cultivation and to grow more food, and this campaign has been so successful that, despite the hazards and upheavals of the war, more land is actually under cultivation today than there was during the colonial administration. Even after the first year of war, more food was being produced than before. Now in some areas, as at Ngazela, 80 per cent of the land cultivated had not previously been productive.

The greatest impetus to production has clearly come from the abolition of the companies, and from the fact that the people now themselves profit from their work...

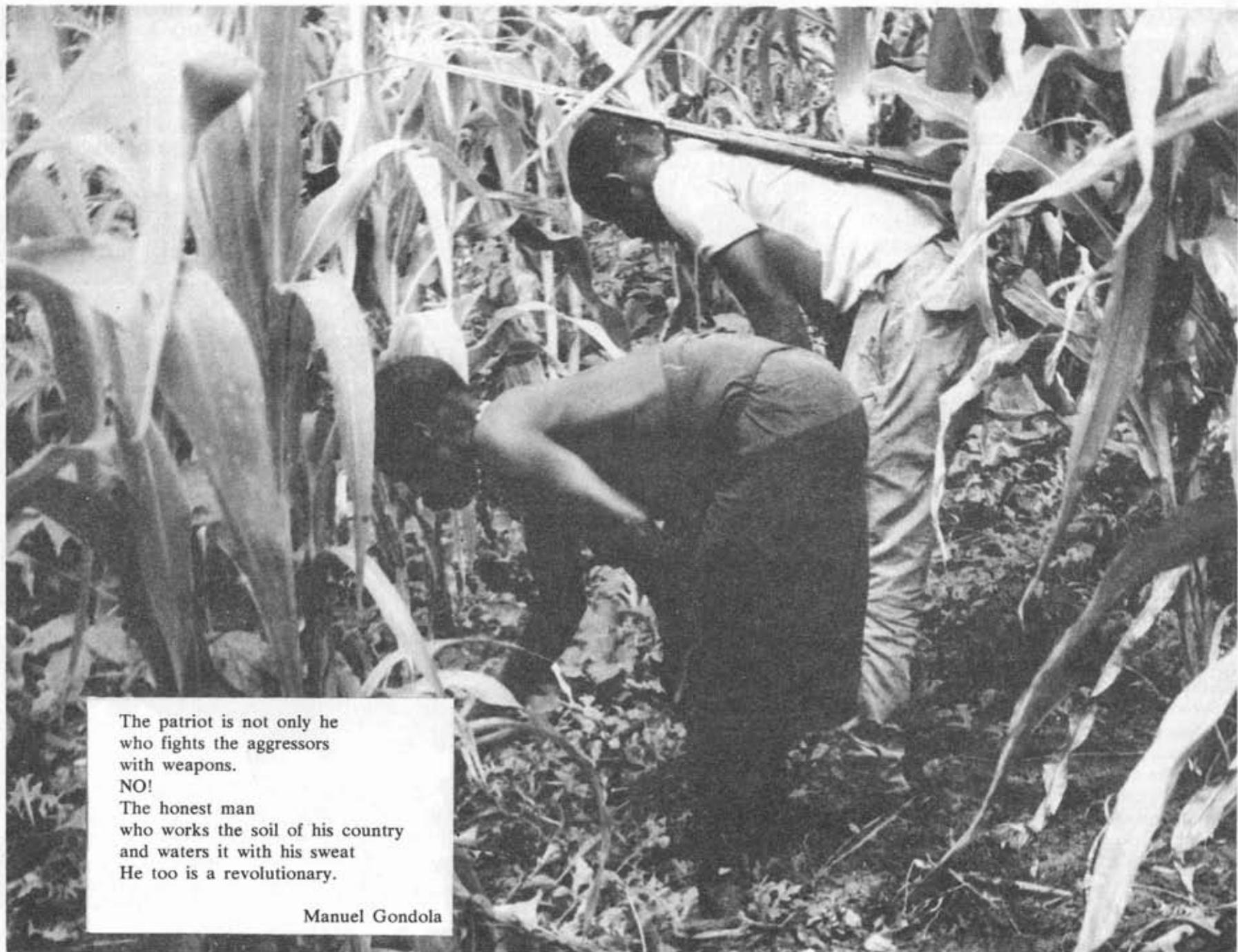
FRELIMO is at present studying various ways of developing agriculture, to improve yields, promote variety and develop the production of crops for export. The high plateau of Niassa is ideally suited for market gardening, and we are hoping to introduce the diet of the population and eventually provide a source of income for them.

(Mondlane, *Struggle*)

As soon as the armed struggle begins in any area commercial activities are reduced to the very minimum. The Portuguese colonial army cannot tolerate the possibility of any commercial activities taking place between freedom fighters and any Portuguese or Asian traders. Consequently whenever the armed struggle starts in any province or district in Mozambique the Portuguese authorities order the closure of commercial establishments except for those which directly serve the Portuguese army.

Since our people must continue to live as much of a normal life as possible despite the war, we have had to establish our own shops in as many districts as possible. Using the proceeds from the exports of agricultural surplus we import essentials, including salt, oils, textiles and some household equipment, which are then sold, through our shops, to the local population. In the liberated areas now there are 47 traveling traders organized by FRELIMO to provide such basic commercial services.

(*Mozambique Revolution*, 1967)



The patriot is not only he
who fights the aggressors
with weapons.

NO!

The honest man
who works the soil of his country
and waters it with his sweat
He too is a revolutionary.

Manuel Gondola

Education

When the Portuguese withdrew educational facilities in those areas affected by the armed struggle, from the point of view of the African population, there was little enough to withdraw: under Portuguese administration Africans are normally excluded altogether from secondary education; primary education is so scarce that no more than a 5 per cent literacy rate had been achieved over the whole country; there were no African graduates. What education was provided was heavily orientated towards supporting the colonial regime; it consisted mostly of Portuguese language, Portuguese history and religious instruction. Thus, in setting up education services in the liberated zones FRELIMO has had to start from scratch, with little trained personnel, without textbooks and without a syllabus.

FRELIMO has set up the framework to organize educational services. Already in the liberated areas 100 schools have been started which provide primary education for about 10,000 children. The student-teacher ratio varies from 250:1 to 25:1 and there is a superintendent of schools in the district. Some textbooks have been written and more are in preparation. The education department of FRELIMO is in the process of working out a syllabus which will be relevant to the needs of the people and the liberation struggle. Owing to the lack of one predominant national language, the children still have to begin their schooling by learning Portuguese. However, other subjects taught are: the history of the Mozambican people, geography of Mozambique, arithmetic, basic health and hygiene, and civics. Civics lessons explain the reasons and purposes of the national liberation struggle, so giving the student the basis of an understanding which will enable him to take a

more active and advanced role in the struggle. There is also a programme of manual work designed to counter the general aversion to work caused by the Portuguese system of forced labour.

It is not only the children who are anxious to learn. When school is over, in many districts, the teacher still has a good part of his work in front of him, running an adult literacy class. However the organization of adult education is still at an embryonic stage and data still has to be collected about numbers, aptitude and methods.

The lack of materials and staff is a major problem. FRELIMO is importing various school equipment to the bush schools but many of them have to make do with very rudimentary materials. The teachers themselves have often only received primary education and had no special instruction in teaching.

This last problem should gradually be alleviated by the work of the more advanced educational programmes run from Tanzania.

(Mozambique Revolution, 1967)



A class in liberated Mozambique

Health

In the liberated areas the people are in great need of all kinds of social services, including medicine. Once the Portuguese army was forced to retreat from these areas, the official health services, were withdrawn along with the administration, the schools, where there were any, and those missionary institutions which depended on the favours they enjoyed from the Portuguese colonialist government. Immediately after the beginning of the armed struggle in some of these areas the Portuguese administrative centres and the mission stations were turned into military garrisons for the Portuguese army, and where any medical services continued they were reserved for the treatment of wounded soldiers.

This situation forced the Mozambique Liberation Front to provide some alternative services for those Mozambicans who chose freedom and were lucky enough to find themselves in the midst of areas controlled by the liberation forces. We therefore had no alternative but to accept the responsibility of giving as much assistance as possible to all the people living in liberated and semi-liberated areas.

In order to make this possible we established a medical structure capable of planning, organizing and directing such medical services as we could afford to maintain.

Inside Mozambique, FRELIMO established several health centres in each liberated area. These centres are of various kinds and different types of medical assistance are given to the sick members of the civilian population as well as to those who are from time to time wounded by the Portuguese terrorists. The medical centres vary from one district to another, depending on the kind of equipment that we are able to provide.

(Mozambique Revolution, 1967)

"At night in the liberated areas the people of the villages gather by the fire and sing and dance in complete freedom, as in the time before the arrival of the Portuguese. The old people tell the children about the crimes the Portuguese practised against the people, when they occupied that

territory. They tell them about episodes in the liberation struggle, the courage of our guerrillas. The Portuguese oppression in these regions appears now as a shadow that has passed."

But what we have done is still very little. It is very little compared with what still needs to be done. We have destroyed the colonial machine in certain areas — but we have to destroy it completely, everywhere. We have liberated some regions of Mozambique but we must liberate the whole territory of Mozambique. About 800,000 Mozambicans are now free, but we must free all the seven million which constitute our people. We are giving education to some thousands of young Mozambicans — but we must create conditions under which all Mozambicans will have the opportunity to study. We have liquidated some of the companies which exploit our labour and our wealth — but we must liquidate all the companies which exploit us, all the thieves of our land.

(Message from the Central Committee to the Mozambican People, Sept. 25, 1967)

"When millet sprouts up in our fields, it is because we had previously prepared the ground and watered the seed with the sweat of our own work. The future is always built on the every day work of our hands and minds."

(1963 New Years message to FRELIMO militants from the Central Committee)



No
Seek me not.
I am not lost.

I live
Strong and determined
Following the path
Cut by Freedom
Through the fangs and claws of oppression

I live
In my people
Firing my guns and bazookas
Along the road to peace.

I live
In the body of my mother-earth
Using the strength that is mine

...
I live
One with the masses
With a protection
That shelters me,
With hatred for the enemy,
Complete and unreserved.

And if it is my shots which are heard
And I who still fight on,
It is because I shall never retreat.
Never, never, never,
Until my people prevail.

Bebe, 1967

CHAPTER FOUR

MOZAMBIQUE TODAY

Eduardo Mondlane

Eduardo Mondlane was the founder and first president of FRELIMO. On February 3, 1969 he was killed by a bomb sent to him through the mail in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. This day marks the end of an important chapter in the history of FRELIMO. Today Samora Machel is the president of FRELIMO and Marcelino Dos Santos is the vice-president. One year after the assassination, FRELIMO published this testament to the role Mondlane played in FRELIMO:

A great sadness enveloped our people. Confused, they wondered how it could have happened; disconcerted, they remembered the lesson learned in battle — look for the cause of defeats in our own weakness — and wondered if the organization itself might have some weak points. The militants understood that suddenly a heavier load had fallen on their shoulders; the people demanded explanations and clarification. For a few weeks the military offensive slowed down, the militia stopped cultivating and the people stopped transporting material. Each of us asked ourselves

about the future of the organization and of our struggle. And there were many among us who thought that with Mondlane a whole heritage of possibilities had been lost.

His presence was the guarantee and the symbol of our efforts: the efforts to determine the nature of our struggle; the efforts to define the nature of the enemy, not by the color of his skin but by his activities against the interests of the people; the effort to give FRELIMO a base solid enough to ensure that the Organization could survive and the revolution continue without depending on the physical presence of one individual; the effort to make FRELIMO independent in its relations with other countries, accepting only aid which was given with absolute respect for our struggle and our people.

In all of these efforts he was at the forefront. In particular, he was the first and most enthusiastic in the effort to educate, to prepare politically, to give to the largest number of people the weapon of knowledge, even when

they showed doubt or indifference. His death appeared to us (and this was the intention of our enemies) as a threat to all of that. And, in fact, it did unleash dangers, hatred and other minor upsets. We had always been conscious of how such an event could be used as a weapon against the Front. Mistrust and suspicion set in around us.

And nevertheless, during this period, discipline was maintained. The militants showed calm and strength and exhorted the people not to despair. They reminded the people of the causes and the aims of our struggle, why Mondlane had died, and why he had lived. They recalled his teachings — that for Mozambicans the choice was not between living and dying, but between living freely and living in slavery. The people and the soldiers understood that this was a bigger political test, harder than a battle against armed Portuguese, demanding more courage than resisting daily bombings, being a part of the effort towards self-efficiency. In this way they confronted this new challenge and pledged that this heritage would be saved by all means.

Today, one year after the death of Mondlane, we can say that this pledge has been kept. We have achieved a greater unity. We have opened new schools for our children, and new medical centers for the wounded and sick. We have increased production so that most of the regions are self-sufficient in food. We have learned much — we learn every day. The heritage was not only saved but developed even more.

(Frelimo Information, 1970)



Eduardo Mondlane and Samora Machel at the Second Congress of FRELIMO, 1968

Today the war goes on. In 1970 the principal areas of action were the Tete province and Cabo Delgado province. The following two excerpts from FRELIMO reports show how the shape of the war is changing — what the Portuguese are doing in the face of continued FRELIMO successes and how the Mozambicans are confronting new Portuguese tactics.

The first excerpt examines overall strategies for the war; the second looks at particular developments in 1970.

Overall Strategies of the Portuguese

Facing the development of our activities, how has the enemy reacted?

On the one hand, by strengthening its repression, on the other by utilizing a psychological approach borrowed from the tradition of French colonial repression in Algeria and America in Vietnam, trying to sow trouble and dissatisfaction among the people by encouraging tribal and racist feelings. But above all the enemy has resorted to increased cooperation with the white powers which are entrenched in the south of Africa, namely South Africa and Rhodesia. The Southern African alliance, particularly where Mozambique is concerned, can only be completely understood after a consideration of the close links which unite on economic, political and — in the broad sense of the word — cultural levels, the settler minorities which are now in South Africa, Rhodesia and Mozambique. Established for the sole profit of the colonialists, cooperation in this southern horn of Africa can only strengthen, making the area a bridgehead for the recolonization of the

African continent. Its effect can already be dangerously felt through the alternative threats and attempts at seduction practised on the African countries of the region.

The third element in the Portuguese tactics is the compromising of international capital in the exploitation of the colonies so that, as Portugal's Foreign Minister said, they will become "more committed to the defense of our Overseas Provinces." (Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau). A prize example is the Cabora Bassa construction project, which represents at the same time the two objectives of colonial policy in Mozambique: the strengthening of economic integration of the white powers in Southern Africa and the complicity of international capital in maintaining her colonial presence in Africa.

This dam, on the river Zambezi in the Mozambican province of Tete, is an essential part of the economic integration of the alliance; it will supply cheap electric power to South Africa, Rhodesia, Mozambique, Malawi, and eventually to the other countries of the area. The construction and finance, estimated at \$360 million, have been left to an international consortium comprising South African, French, West German and other interests.

However, the most serious political consequences relate to the scheme for importing a further one million white settlers, which would be made possible by the acquisition of 2,500 hectares of newly-cultivable land. No one can doubt that this number of settlers would constitute in effect a human dam opposed to the liberation of the African people, not only in Mozambique but throughout the region. The strategic implications are obvious — the South African Prime Minister Vorster has said that "the frontier of South Africa is now at the

Zambezi" — but apart from that it is through this project that the true nature of investments made under the Portuguese flag is totally exposed in its hostility to our people.

Results that can already be seen on the ground are the participation of South African troops in ground and air operations in the province of Tete.

Armando Guebuza
*Report on the Liberation
Struggle in Mozambique*
(presented, Rome, 1970)

Report from the Front 1970

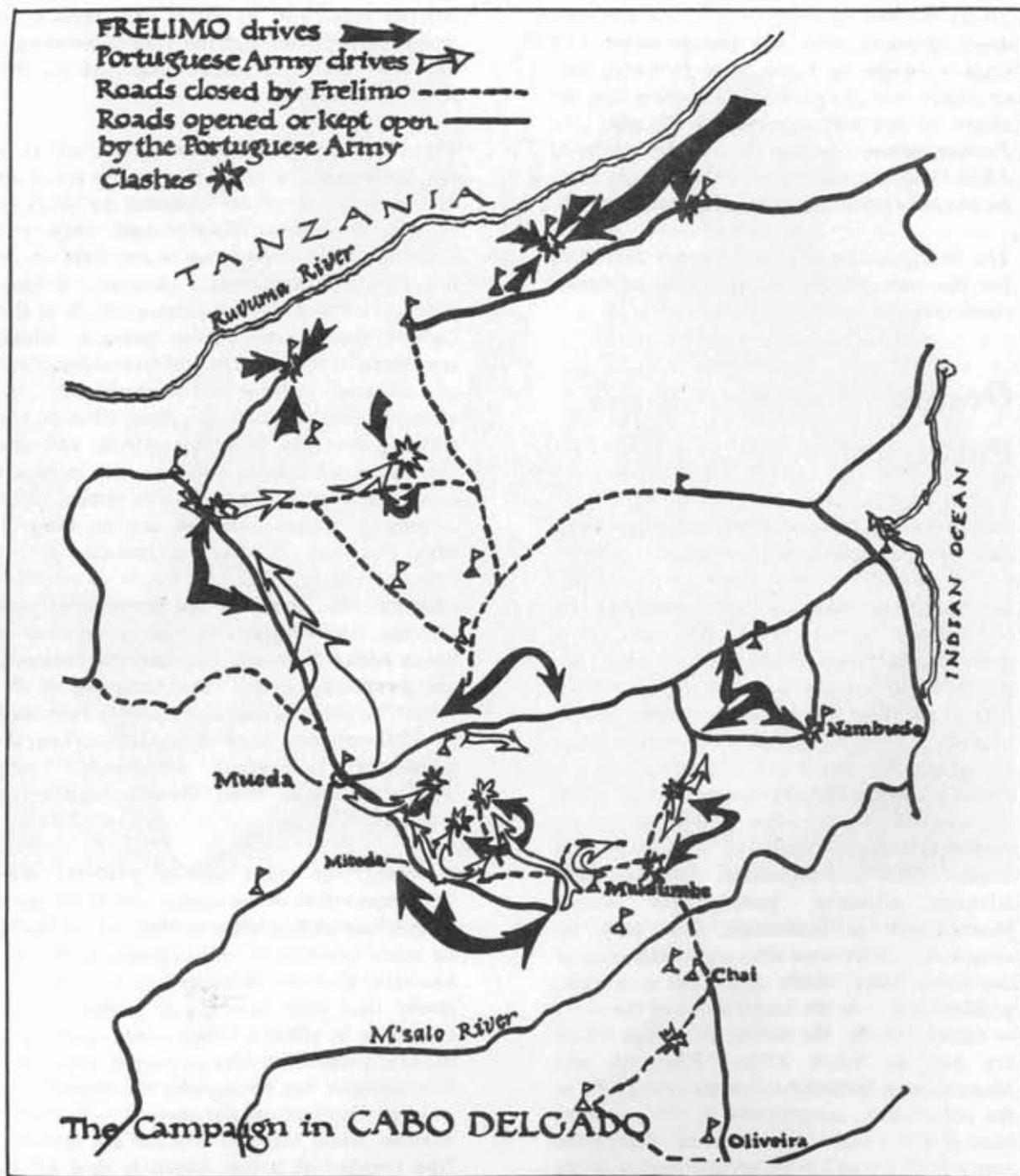
The Portuguese appear to have some difficulty in deciding on a consistent approach to their problems in Mozambique. Only a little over 18 months ago the Governor General told the Legislative Assembly that in Cabo Delgado and Niassa districts guerrilla infiltration had been "progressively eliminated." Later at the opening session of the Governing Council he said that the situation in Cabo Delgado and Tete was "gradually returning to normal." Yet only a year later that felt compelled to launch the largest offensive they have ever undertaken since the start of the war six years ago. It seems that they try to compensate for what they cannot achieve militarily by interminable propaganda about the end of the war being in sight.

In fact, however, our military reports indicate exactly the opposite. A comparison between our activities in the twelve month period July 1968-June 1969 and the following year July 1969-June 1970 is surely overwhelming proof that our forces are progressing from strength to strength.

Apart from this increase in the scale of our operations, there have been no spectacular changes in our strategy or programmes. The last military review a year ago traced the gradual evolution of the struggle through the early days of isolated mines and sabotage, then more and more ambushes and regular attacks against fortified posts culminating in highly organized offensives using all these tactics to their best advantage. This we continue to do.

Our fighters are concentrating on intensifying their activities in the areas where they are currently operating and firmly consolidating their position. The enemy continues to hold out in isolated encampments with their land communications severed. Our people characterize our military situation and define our strategy by referring to the African saying: "To kill a snake in a hole, don't put your hand inside it; pour in hot water and the snake will come out — then kill it." The Portuguese are isolated in their posts, their "holes." We create conditions that force them out — by cutting their communications and hence their supplies and by constant harassment. Once they are out, more vulnerable, then we attack.

To go back just twelve months, in May 1969 four lorries heading for Mueda hit our mines and were blown up, putting 16 enemy soldiers out of action. The following January we blew up more convoys, on the 7th and 22nd, and in February the post of Miteda itself was bombarded. In May the enemy made a concerted effort to reopen the road, but our mines again destroyed two vehicles, one on the 2nd and another on the 18th, killing seven soldiers. Three days later they tried again — this time with a tractor in front — but again it was destroyed together with a lorry and they were forced to return to Mueda yet again. One June 1st they sent out yet another convoy, this time preceded by a group on foot to detect our



mines. But when they found one and started to defuse it, it exploded killing three of them. The remainder of the squad refused to continue and everyone returned to Mueda. Three days later our fighters ambushed a group of Portuguese soldiers near Miteda, killing six, and two days after that a further convoy that tried to get through was ambushed. Two vehicles were damaged, a number of soldiers killed, and the others forced to retreat. It is a similar story on other main roads — Muidumbe-Nangololo eleven times, Mueda-Sagal fourteen times, both in a little over twelve months; Diaca-Sagal fifteen times in six months.

The isolation, both in terms of the physical aspects of the war terrain and of the freedom of movement, coupled with the insecurity of never knowing when or from where the next attack will take place, has very adverse effects on the morale of the Portuguese troops, particularly the conscripted men who form the vast majority. Our forces have always been aware of this fact, both from their conversations with prisoners and deserters and from their observation of the enemy in action...

This marked escalation in our activities over the last 12 to 18 months, despite many problems, could not have been achieved without the full participation of the civilian population... Previously, the major participation of the populations in the struggle was limited to the defense of their zones, the transportation of material, the supply of food to the military bases and the provision of information on the movements of the enemy. Today the people also participate actively in the offensive activities, with militias fighting side by side guerrillas. All the problems of the development of the struggle are discussed together by both groups and at the same time the guerrillas participate actively in the tasks of

national reconstruction. The distinction between civilian and military becomes less and less discernible...

And the enemy is well aware of this. It was already mentioned in our last report how the Portuguese were now acknowledging that "control of the people" was the crucial factor in the battle, and had begun various measures of "psychological warfare" to win over the local population by inculcating in them an appreciation of Portuguese values and way of life. The Portuguese are now seeking to increasingly involve the African populations in both defense and development — by attempting to establish garrisons of locally recruited troops and by speeding up various development programmes, of which their various settlement schemes are an integral part.

Following the American and British examples of using "strategic villages" to better control the activities of the local population, Portugal has been spending vast sums of money (reportedly \$2.5 million in 1968) on the establishment of these "strategic villages" (aldeamentos). During October 1969 the "Noticias" of Lourenco Marques published a series of articles on the new aldeamentos. It described one, Marere in Cabo Delgado, as being under 24-hour vigil from all sides, with sentinels posted openly or in trenches and defended by the army, the militia, the Public Security Police (PSP) and the Fiscal Guard. It is a significant indication of life in these settlements that more and more people are fleeing from them into the liberated zones.

The reason for this seems to be that the Portuguese are caught in an insoluble dilemma. They have observed from the experienced of FRELIMO that with the support of the people anything can be achieved, even

against overwhelming odds. They therefore try to seduce the populations with their "development programmes," not realizing that this will achieve nothing as they will not give the one thing the people really want — their freedom. Moreover, any positive effects that these measures might have are far outweighed by the necessity to resort to more and more repressive actions in order to stay in control.

A recent UN report based on studies by an Ad Hoc Working Group of experts established by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights states that:

"Evidence as a whole revealed that with the intensification of guerrilla activities, the Portuguese military and police are indiscriminate in their methods of capture and more often than not of innocent men, women and children who are herded into concentration camps there to suffer beatings and humiliations. A witness likened the treatment of African prisoners to 'tortures reminiscent of Nazi heydays.' "



Portuguese tortures

"Portuguese reprisals, in the form of taking hostages, following a scorched earth policy, massive and continuous aerial bombardments and indiscriminate killing, are a normal feature of the war in the three Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau)."

"The general pattern of evidence reveals severe conditions of torture by the use of such instruments as 'palmatoria' — a flail or paddle which inflicts severe pain on hands and feet — electric shock appliances and outright beatings. Inflicting torture is one of the most common features in the Portuguese territories applied by police, prison and military authorities."

There has been marked increase in the activities of the dreaded PSP and PIDE (now renamed Directorate General of Security) in Mozambique. In December 1963 the Director-General of PIDE visited the territory and in the same month the number of PIDE personnel was increased by almost 40 per cent from 475 to 662. A more recent indication of this trend is the 1969 military budget which increased the PIDE allocation by 20 per cent and that of public security by 24 per cent. There was also a 24 per cent increase for prisons; the prison population in Mozambique exceeds 250,000. Official Portuguese figures for 1968 show that a total of 13,549 Africans were arrested by the PSP during the year, 5,715 of them for "crimes against public peace and order." 182 were handed over to PIDE. According to a report in "Le Monde" in November 1969, some 3,000 Africans are being detained without court action in the prisons of Machava and Mabalane for having refused to denounce members of FRELIMO...

By far the most important means of control and repression in the colonies is the armed forces themselves, who now number more than

60,000 in Mozambique. Over the past 18 months there has been considerable reorganization of the military to cope with the deteriorating position overseas. The Portuguese Ministries of the Army and Defense were merged in order to effect closer integration of military and logistic operations. Parallel measures in the colonies were intended to deal more efficiently with "subversion" by bringing about a closer collaboration between military commanders and administrative authorities. Changes in regulations governing military service have become a regular feature of the Portuguese scene as the manpower demands of the wars continue to rise. Latest amendments in September 1969 and February 1970 concerned compulsory extensions of certain officers in the reserve and certain classes of demobilized troops, provision for the recall of officers of certain classes, and the annual training of reserves.

All these measures hardly conform with official statements about guerrillas being "progressively eliminated," but then neither does the latest huge offensive mounted by the Portuguese in Mozambique.

Operation Gordian Knot: Beginning in May 1970, the Portuguese began a huge offensive against FRELIMO forces, designed to "put an end to the war once and for all." Events in the previous few months had led it to be expected. In January the arrival of two ships in the same month with a total of 3,000 new troops was an early sign that a major effort was about to take place. In addition, the civilian Governor-General was replaced by a military man, major-engineer Arantes e Oliveira, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces was replaced by Portugal's "top expert" in guerrilla warfare, General Kaulza de Arriaga. He was previously one of the advisers of the Por-

tuguese Military General Staff and was one of the founders of the colonial regime. Soon after his appointment, the General paid a visit to the USA where he had lengthy talks with General Westmoreland on the American tactics used in South Vietnam. He then arrived in Mozambique to put into practice his new-found knowledge, announcing that "in a few weeks FRELIMO forces will have been liquidated."

According to the communique issued by the Portuguese High Command, they deployed in this offensive 35,000 troops supplied with 15,000 tons of military equipment. In addition to the regular troops they used a special corps rather like the marines, called "special hunters" (cacadores especiais) and also comandos. Much new war material was brought in — such as jets (which were being used in Tete and Niassa but which appeared for the first time in Cabo Dalgado on 29th May 1970), and increased numbers of bombers and helicopters, armoured cars and anti-mine cars. For the two weeks following May 20th, the Portuguese carried out daily bombing raids with squadrons of 164-20 planes, including jets, bombers, reconnaissance planes, propaganda planes (equipped with loudspeakers) and helicopters. They then attempted to attack three of our bases with air-lifted and artillery forces, but all they succeeded in doing was to burn a few huts — the bases had already been moved elsewhere some time previously: the nature of our war determines that we do not have fixed bases. Yet despite this they issued almost daily communiqués about the destruction of "dozens" of FRELIMO bases, the capture of "many tons" of equipment, death of "hundreds of terrorists." In fact they did not cause us any serious losses, either in men or material, nor did the offensive in any way affect our control over the area...

This offensive was extremely important to FRELIMO, but not in the way the Portuguese anticipated. It was important because it constituted the first real test for us, and we were able to face up to that test. It revealed the level of development of our struggle, how solid our organization is, how high is the fighting spirit of our fighters and our people. The fact that we were able to confront victoriously, in one operation, 35,000 Portuguese soldiers (more than half the Portuguese army in Mozambique) equipped with the most modern weapons and with the constant support of a strong air force, demonstrates... that our people are absolutely determined to defend at all costs our revolutionary achievements and march on to new fronts. What was wrong with the Portuguese "show of force" was that it completely ignored the determination of our people, our determination to be free.

(Mozambique Revolution 1970)

BULLETIN: As this pamphlet goes to press, we have received word that Portuguese troops in the Cabo Delgado province have been forced to withdraw from five strategic posts over the last four months. FRELIMO operations from May 9 to June 18 in various areas resulted in 73 Portuguese soldiers being killed and 16 vehicles being destroyed. One total of 17 prisoners were freed and one bridge was destroyed by guerrillas.

"Our life is the war. If we sleep two or three days without hearing of the war it seems that we have no life. Food, clothes, etc., do not matter to us... We know how to distinguish the whizzing of the weapons of the enemy. Where there is a fight we are able to tell: 'Now that was our fighters who fired. Now it was the enemy who fired.' When our weapons sing, our hearts become filled with joy, because that means that the enemy is feeling our force, our children are teaching them that our country wants to be free and *will* be free."

(Kapingo Namumbi, Chairman of a local FRELIMO branch)

It is beautiful to see an ideal cherished intensively for a long time take shape and be converted into reality. Especially when that ideal means freedom, peace, progress — in short, happiness — for a whole people. Moreover, when the realization of that ideal is not accidental, does not come haphazardly but is the fruit of a common work, of the conscious efforts of thousands and thousands of men, women and children, who accept suffering sacrifices, animated by a firm will to see that dream, that they have dreamed for a long time, become concrete. It is beautiful to see the liberation of our country, Mozambique, take shape.

Life in the liberated areas is a simple life, marked and inspired by the Revolution. The morning starts at about 5 a.m. The people go out for their work — to the shambas, to carry water, to pound maize, to peel off the cassava, to build storehouses, to cut wood, to chop timber to build houses, etc. The guerrillas and the militias go to patrol work. The children go to schools.

The conscience of the Revolution is present in all the work, and manifests itself in the force put into all activities by the people. There is an immense number of cultivated fields in the liberated areas. In some areas, as in Namachude (Cabo Delgado) and Ngazelo (Niassa) about 80 per cent of the land is cultivated. In some other areas production is less, due mainly to the lack of rains and to the monkeys, which devastate the fields, as for example in Cuero. But the people work with intensity, with perseverance. We know we are producing for ourselves, and not for the Portuguese colonialist "boss." And this gives us a new spirit.

There is, it is true, the problem of air-bombings. The Portuguese, unable to conquer our guerrilla forces, take revenge on the civilian population, bombing all the villages they can spot. However, the harm caused by those air-bombings is now less than at the beginning of the war, because the people know how to build anti-aircraft shelters and to camouflage themselves. The crops were destroyed by air-bombings in some areas. Our people accept this situation with a revolutionary spirit and optimism. One peasant told how last year an aircraft dropped one bomb in his field, drying up the earth in an area twenty meters in diameter. "That place where the bomb fell was the one which produced the most," he said.

In the field of education, there are more than 20,000 students in Mozambique in the FRELIMO schools. There are only primary schools as yet, many of them in the open air. There is lack of teachers — in many zones, for example in Namkaba-Chinde, there is only one teacher for more than 120 students. Material for teaching is almost non-existent; the students have to write on a blackboard with dry cassava as chalk. Instead of paper or slates they use a piece of wood, which they later scrape with a knife to erase what they wrote. Many of the students have to walk several miles to the nearest school. On the way they often have to hide themselves from aircraft. However, the number of students increases, in spite of all difficulties, and the progress they make is considerable.

In every Province, District, Locality and Circle, there are committees entrusted with the administration of that zone, responsible for the maintenance of order, the supervision of production, organization of the schools, direction of the militias, etc.

Every day the guerrillas make reconnaissance, to prevent surprise attacks. When they locate the enemy, the guerrillas take the necessary steps; to assure the protection of the population in hide-outs or to prepare defenses; to inform the military base in order to prepare the intervention of a stronger guerrilla force if necessary. Other guerrillas watch the movements of the enemy. And at the right moment, the ambush takes place.

This is the reality that is today liberated Mozambique. We have reason to be satisfied with the results we have already achieved in the struggle for the liberation of our country. Of course we shall not sleep over our successes. On the contrary, these successes encourage us to continue the struggle with even greater determination. Because they prove that, in spite of all difficulties — and they are many — the final victory is certain. Our country, our people want to be free and *will be free*.

Editorial, *Mozambique Revolution*

How can we tell you the size of our Dream?!

During centuries
we waited
that a Messiah might free us...

Until we understood.

Today
our Revolution
is a great flower
to which each day
new petals are added.

The petals are the land
reconquered,
the people freed,
the fields cultivated,
schools and hospitals.

Our Dream has the size
of Freedom.

FRELIMO, 1969

A note on sources:

Mozambique Revolution is the official English language journal published by FRELIMO. It appears several times a year, and can be obtained from FRELIMO headquarters in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. (FRELIMO, Box 15274, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania)

The Struggle for Mozambique is a Penguin book written by Eduardo Mondlane, FRELIMO's first President, shortly before his assassination. It is the single best description and analysis of Portuguese colonialism and the struggle for freedom in Mozambique.

FRELIMO Information is the official French language journal published by FRELIMO in Algiers.

FRELIMO communiqués and interviews have also been used, as indicated in the body of this book.

For other sources of information, see the companion volume to this book, *Race to Power: the Struggle for Southern Africa*, available from the Africa Research Group, P.O. Box 213, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 02138.

Building Freedom: Mozambique's FRELIMO was edited by:

Carol Bengelsdorf, who has worked extensively in East Africa and in Latin America and has written several articles on problems of education in these areas. She has taught at Harvard University and at M.I.T.

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Cover by Coby Everdell Lettering and maps by Mike Prokosch

Photographs courtesy of FRELIMO

This pamphlet is part of the Africa Research Group series on Southern Africa. It is designed to be read in conjunction with *Race to Power: the Struggle for Southern Africa*, a book which analyzes the white power structure in Southern Africa, and its bases of support among the Western powers. Pamphlets on the other nationalist movements in Southern Africa will be available in October, 1971.

Africa Research Group is an independent, non-profit research and educational organization based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It prepares materials on Africa, especially on African-American relations, for distribution in the United States and Africa. The Group contributes regularly to newspapers and magazines in the United States and Africa, and offers a range of publications on issues relating to the development of Africa. A complete literature list is available on request.

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