

LSM NEWS

Liberation Support Movement
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Homage to Don Barnett

INSIDE: Guinea-Bissau: Aspects of a Difficult Transition

• *Interview with MPLA*, • *Critical Remarks on Prairie Fire*

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*Cover Photo by LSM: Don Barnett with MPLA militants
in Eastern Angola, 1968.*

Don Barnett

Homage to DON BARNETT



R. Sterling/LSM

Don Barnett at LSM Seminar held in August 1974.

Dear Friends & Comrades

It is with both sorrow and profound regret that we inform you of the death of Don Barnett, founder and first Chairman of Liberation Support Movement. His death on 25 April 1975, caused by a heart attack at the early age of 45, is a tremendous loss for us and all who struggle for proletarian internationalism and socialism.

On 10 January 1930 Don was born into a poor Jewish family residing in Los Angeles. With his many abilities and abundant energy Don could have been "successful" in any number of professions. He completed university, changing his major twice - leaving political science because his professors found his questions too embarrassing (FBI agents attended classes to intimidate would-be radicals); leaving philosophy as it was too lofty and removed

from humanity's real problems; choosing finally social anthropology where he could deal with contemporary peoples actively engaged in struggles to change human society. He rejected an academic career, however, as well as the alternative of becoming a bourgeois "Marxist" intellectual, who writes one thing but lives another.

In documentary writings - both by Don and those he patiently and unselfishly trained - he actively placed the interests of the masses living under the domination of imperialism in the forefront. Through the life histories and in-depth interviews with revolutionaries he recorded and edited, he played a unique role in bringing the human dimension of Kenyan and southern African struggles home to thousands of people. Throughout this work his clearly stated aim has been to "give a voice" to the oppressed in order to increase popular understanding of, solidarity with and support for their struggles.

As a theoretician and strategist, he creatively applied Marxism-Leninism to modern-day imperialist society. In a series of articles and pamphlets he analyzed the major contradictions in the system and began to develop a strategy outlining the role North American revolutionaries can and should play in the international anti-imperialist struggle. He was an untiring opponent of all forms of chauvinism and exploitation who perceived and clearly articulated the need for genuine international solidarity and comradely, critical relations among the world's revolutionary forces. In his writings he frankly discussed obstacles to the development of a Marxist analysis and practice and of the urgent need to overcome both dogmatism and sectarianism.

But it was Don's practice which fully revealed his commitment to a living form of Marxism. Demonstrating great skill at motivating and organizing those around him, Don was a leader in the struggle against U.S. aggression in Vietnam during the period of its greatest escalation in the mid-sixties which led him to become one of the first university professors to be fired for political activity. He went on to form a number of organizations culminating in the founding of Liberation Support Movement in 1968. Over the past 7 years he has led LSM through thick and thin. Thanks in large part to his foresight and organizational skills, LSM is now a solid political organization which includes a major writing and publishing center in Vancouver and units on the East and West coasts engaged in active support - educational and material - for liberation movements in Africa and the Middle East. Choosing not to concentrate his political skills on writing at this time, he spent his energies instead training others in the need for discipline and self-sacrifice, respect for leadership and structure, and in the value of comradely, constructive criticism and self-criticism. In both his family life and in relations with organizational comrades he was an exemplary teacher of warmth and comradeliness as well as courage, frankness and principled political behavior.

Don's continuous, tireless efforts to create a proletarian internationalist organization put a great deal of strain on his nervous system. Molding North Americans into disciplined revolutionary cadre has proven to be no easy task, and there have been many betrayals, disappointments and frustrations along the way. Ironically, Don's death came just as he was planning to both receive special medical treatments for his heart condition and remove himself, somewhat, from day-to-day organizational pressures. Through Don's guidance, LSM had finally become strong enough to allow him to devote more energy to the analytical and theoretical work he loved and at which he, as evidenced by his earlier writings, was so adept and creative.

Don's death is a tremendous loss for his family, his comrades and many of you who grew to love and respect him. But his work and teachings will live forever wherever a revolutionary raises the banner of international solidarity. We in LSM, his family and comrades, are determined to overcome our tears and grief and carry on the work Don gave his life to begin.

Yours, in common struggle,

Liberation Support Movement
Information Center

Commemorations

Don's body was cremated without ceremony on May 1 in Vancouver. That night, in accordance with a Native Indian custom, family and comrades held a commemoration dinner to honor him, to signify the end of mourning and to help overcome our grief and begin the tasks that lie ahead.

LSM Units in the Bay Area and New York held similar commemorations. We all honored International Workingman's Day with our homage to Don and celebrated the recent victories in Indochina, as Don would have had he still been with us.

Following are excerpts from some of the comments we recorded that night:

From Native Comrades:

"Don had a tremendously profound impact on the lives of people in the Native Study Group in our early development and recently. I think it was international socialism that brought us close to Don and LSM.... Later on people will recognize Don and LSM for its work. We won't forget the life Don led and the things he struggled for."

"The first time I met Don I saw he was an exceptional man.... I had recognized Don's ability for a long time, but took it for granted until he died. This is very clear to me because during the time I knew Don my father died and just a week before Don died my brother died. I felt nothing about these deaths. I don't know why, but I didn't cry or get emotional. But when Don died...I realized that something was lost which I had been taking for granted and it was like a pall.... I was especially looking forward to a project Don had in mind: to do a class analysis of imperialism. Since his death I have resolved to struggle harder to develop this theory which he would have developed better than anyone else in North America or the privileged sector. It now falls on us to become scientific and not just be subjective or emotional in our propaganda and analysis."

"I work at the Native Information Center and see the internalized violence in the Indian community. I see our brothers and sisters just killing themselves every day. The most striking thing I felt about Don was his humanity - he had an aura that I've seen in no other person in North America."

From LSM Comrades:

"In some senses Don was ahead of his time in that there wasn't a mass base that could have fully utilized the skills and talents he had. But if we look at what was possible and what Don did, I think he will go down as a great man of this era.... Now the task and responsibility is with us to carry on the work and teachings of Don and study and learn from his example...to learn the courage, perceptiveness and clarity he had.

Don Barnett

Cool and penetrating in thought,
Warm in love and comradeship.

Courageous and daring in struggle,
Persevering against slander and attack.

Frank and honest in relations,
Stimulating and understanding with comrades.

Simple in life and goals,
Communist in practice.

Marxist, Internationalist, Revolutionary,
Sensitive and far-seeing.

All humanity his concern,
Don Barnett.

"I can only accept Don's death when I think of it in the context of people dying in struggle around the world. In Seattle when I told people who have strong disagreements with LSM's theory even they were saddened. They respected Don for the organization he had founded and because they felt the reality of what he had written."

"One thing we should always remember is Don's integrity. He consistently put the interests of the struggle ahead of his own personal interests. He isn't as well known as many Marxist intellectuals in North America but the difference is that Don put the interests of the revolution ahead of his own career. He may not have fame but in the long run people will come to recognize that this moral and political integrity is what it takes to make revolution."

From the Barnett Family:

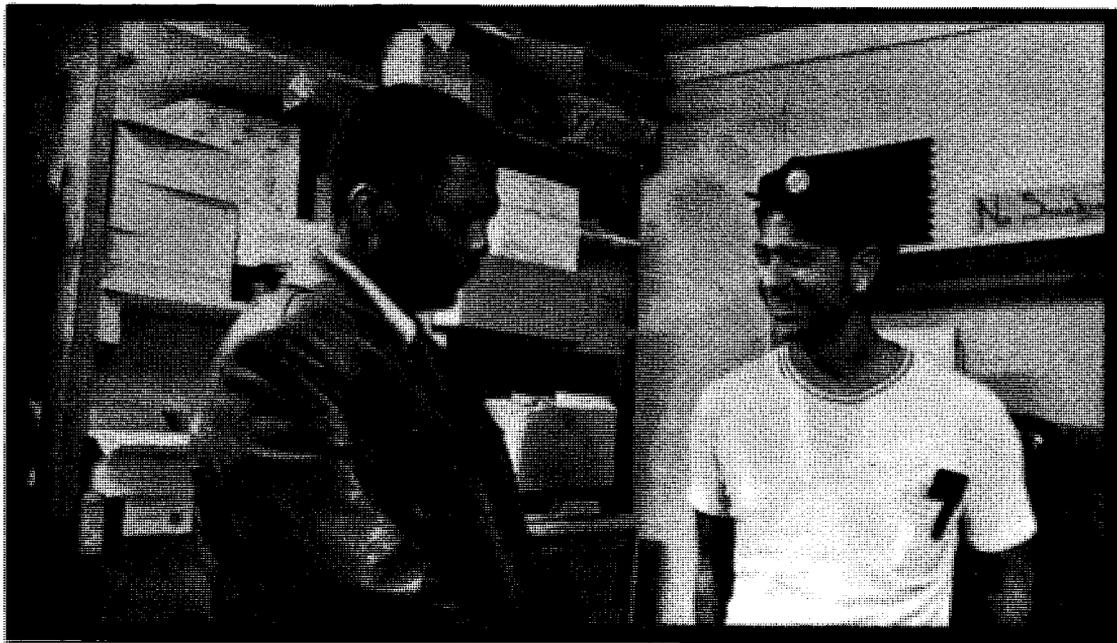
"Don always made us feel like comrades, not just kids. We always had fun together and that was important. In our talks, he explained to us how the world worked and the importance of playing a part in the struggle.... Don had a lot of integrity and tenacity to continue the struggle. He faced many hard times and struggles. The thing we have to learn is to continue when faced with these struggles and not let them get us down. Don was good at pointing out our illusions and struggling with people when they didn't face up to the reality of their contradictions or were being liberal and not strong enough politically."

"He was the warmest and most alive person in my whole life. He was always considerate and willing to listen to problems, always there with the right answer when you needed him. I think it was the most untimely death - he was just thinking of writing a novel when he could get away for a while and he was going to write more theoretical stuff and I wish he hadn't died!"

"Don was a man of practice. He didn't try to immortalize his thoughts in lots of books because he knew that action and people are what it takes. We are the people he left behind and I recall him saying before dying that if he did die he knew we would carry on. He left us a lot: a practice, a strong organization and most of all each other. We should remember that, and keep learning."

"Don was always anti-establishment; he saw that the system dehumanized people and he was always striving to change that, in both little and big ways. I feel fortunate to have shared 24 years with him and to have learned from his great powers of persuasion, logic and compassion.... Don was always organizing people around him to be active and change things. Through all the organizations and struggles we learned a lot about people: what you can and can't change. Through all this, along with study, he developed his theory."

Solidarity Messages



Steven Nkomo with Don Barnett during visit of ZAPU delegation to Vancouver last October.

We wish to thank the many organizations and individuals who have sent messages of solidarity and condolence upon receiving news of the tragic loss of our leader, Don Barnett. We quote from a few of them:

"Comrade Don Barnett's death is a loss to all those who are in the process of building international solidarity among all anti-imperialist forces.... Don's contribution to the struggles of the oppressed is seen through the zeal, honesty and love for people which he exhibited in his work in support of liberation movements in Africa, Asia, Latin America and North America.... May we all carry on his work."

(Afro-Asian-Latin American Peoples Solidarity Committee, Montreal)

"We feel that because of Don and your own unstinting efforts you have created a very powerful and effective instrument for informing and guiding people everywhere committed to the struggle against imperialism.... The quality of his work and the quality of achievement of LSM is full testament to the man, his abilities and commitment. We are most grieved to learn of his death and know that much of the success of the support in the American community for the national liberation of Mozambique and Angola and other embattled areas in Africa is due directly to the dedication of Don Barnett."

(R. Chrisman, for the staff of *Black Scholar*)

"His death is a terrible loss to...all those who knew Don's work.... As a Zimbabwean I can say with certainty that Zimbabwe will remember him particularly for his concrete work in support of our struggle at every turn. Through LSM he did a great deal to bring the voices of our oppressed to the ears of the Canadian and American people. His work helped to build anti-imperialist and other support groups for our struggle for independence. He will be sorely missed but his example will live on."

(Mtshana Ncube, Montreal)

"The passing of Don Barnett was a sad loss to LSM, no less than to other groups both here and in the international liberation movements. SAAC...appreciates the support which Don and LSM have given to the fight of colonized people everywhere for justice and freedom...."

(Southern Africa Action Coalition, Vancouver)

"I join in expressing grief at the untimely death of Don Barnett and in paying tribute to his splendid service to the cause of liberation...."

(Dennis Brutus, Texas)

"I had more respect for Don than I've had for any other person I've known. I don't think it is denigrating all you other comrades to say that he, more than anybody and anything else, kept me going and moving forward in the organization - this apart from getting me to join in the first place. His integrity and high standard of principles is what influenced me the most; the honesty and straightforwardness to say and do what he thought was correct even when it went against the popular current and then to go on to implement his thoughts. This was something almost new for me when I met Don and I guess it struck me so much because it exposed so clearly a weakness in myself; one that I knew about, but had never received much incentive from anybody to struggle against. LSM and Don in particular gave me that incentive. Along with this, his warmth and comradeship made me feel very close to him. Though he is gone, I will always carry within me these memories and I can only hope that our relationship left enough of a trace for me to carry out some of the things I learned from Don."

(Ole Gjerstad, LSM member on mission in Africa)

"What I admired a lot in Don...was his patience and the kindness he always showed me and everyone else. He was always inspiring and took an interest in us; just his presence was an inspiration. Let us hope that we can go on improving on the things he showed us and go on to make good use of our lives. He is gone, but I hope he left enough for us to continue where he stopped. His principles and ideology are still an inspiration, and it is now time for us to devote ourselves even more to our work."

(Chantal Sarrazin, LSM member on mission in Africa)

"While Don's contribution to LSM is exemplary, his influence has gone much further. I am thinking of the students that passed through his hands and the many that had contact with LSM for a period of time...it would be impossible to have any contact with Don and not in some way be changed.... Those we have known who fit into this category had a profound respect for him and to these people Don will long be remembered. To us, his death at this time is regrettable since he had a great deal to offer humanity...."

(Don and Carmen McDonald, Vancouver)

"I was I am sure one of the many people who intersected with Don who had their lives changed irrevocably. One of my few cherished possessions is a copy of Don's Mau Mau book which he gave me with the inscription 'to one of my few liberal friends.' These days when I am regarded by many in the US left as an 'ultra-leftist,' I still find it an important reminder of my own origins.... It was after all my initial involvement with him at Iowa that led eventually to my own radicalization. Don will not be replaced...but I hope you will continue with strength and with love...."

(H. Ehrlich, Maryland)

One of the most moving tributes we received came from a public school teacher in New York City, who had not heard of Don's death but had recently read his pamphlet "Toward an International Strategy." On the basis of that he wrote: "I fully agree with your analysis. I trust that this money will be used to aid the fighters of Oman or elsewhere." He enclosed a money order for \$500.

"Don Barnett, the person and his ideology, will always be remembered. He was with the people, a fighter engaged in revolutionary struggle. He never abandoned the principles of revolution. Though he is dead his words and his life will be an inspiration to many."

(Doug Hurd, Portland)

To The Guardian "Radical Forum"

The following, LSM's contribution to the Guardian's Radical Forum, was a reply to the recent 3-part "Which Side Are You On?" series by Guardian staff writer Carl Davidson criticizing our political line. It was authored by two LSM members, Don Barnett and Dennis Mercer. Don Barnett died of a heart attack on April 25. This brief article is the last piece he ever wrote and was printed in the May 21 issue of the Guardian.

In replying to Carl Davidson's recent series of attacks on Liberation Support Movement (LSM), we shall try to remain within the prescribed guidelines and present "a strong point of view avoiding sectarianism and sloganeering." It is unfortunate that dogmatism is not also proscribed and that the *Guardian* did not impose these same restrictions on the author of "Which side are you on?" Davidson's quixotical "liquidation" of LSM theory by use of the odd fact, metaphor and cliché will hardly suffice to convince the *Guardian's* more serious readers. Nor will his many distortions of LSM theory and strategy escape the attention of those who have read our theoretical publications.

Obviously it is not possible to deal in depth with Davidson's "critique" of LSM in the short space of 2,000 words. Fortunately, the substantive points raised by Davidson have been dealt with at some length in the April 1975 issue of *LSM News*, especially in those sections entitled, "LSM & ZANU: Principled relations are worth struggling for," "On dogmatism and the proletariat," and "Types of proletariat." Should the *Guardian* choose, we invite them to reprint this article in full for their readers. Perhaps they could then better assess the correctness of Davidson's assertions and the underlying assumptions of his own (and apparently the *Guardian's*) position.

Here we will deal with but a few of Davidson's distortions and his rather strange view of a Marxist approach to "the realities of class struggle." What Davidson is obviously upset and obsessed with in all three of his articles on LSM is our position that the present working class in the U.S. is both non-revolutionary and "bourgeoisified." This is *not* to say that a revolutionary proletariat will *never* come into existence in the U.S., but simply that there has not been and does not now exist in that country a working class capable of embracing a revolutionary ideology and praxis. Though Davidson quotes from our *Toward an International Strategy*, his ahistorical and reified view of the proletariat prevents him from coming to terms with this idea. It is hardly a blanket "repudiation" of the revolutionary role of the U.S. proletariat when we say: "In the metropolitan center...the successful proletarian revolution cannot but *follow* a certain critical stage in the development of national liberation struggles in the neocolonies," or that "Viewed...as a *single revolution* within the multinational imperialist system, the revolutionary armed struggle can be seen as spreading from the more oppressed and impoverished peasants and workers in the neocolonies to the less but, as the struggle continues, increasingly exploited proletariat of the metropole."

How does Davidson respond to the following question he quotes from *LSM News*: "Why would U.S. workers risk their present standard of living in a show of revolutionary solidarity with superexploited Latin Americans or Asians when that standard is itself based on just such superexploitation?" First, he says "It is certainly an interesting

question." Then he goes on to "disprove" it by citing the fact that in 1974 "8,000 miners in Alabama...went on a one-day work stoppage...in solidarity with the struggle of black miners in South Africa and in defense of their own living standards." Now this is truly an "exceptional" fact, so exceptional that it confirms what it was intended to refute: that for the *vast majority* of U.S. workers the plight of superexploited workers in the Third World is of no concern unless it threatens their own standard of living.

And to "refute" our underlying assumption, and that of Lenin as well, that U.S. workers have been bribed and bought off out of superprofits derived by the U.S. ruling class and government from unpaid labor and resources of the Third World, Davidson offers us not contrary evidence but a metaphor by Ho Chi Minh about a two-headed leech which sucks blood from both colonized and oppressor-nation workers. Ho, of course, might not have agreed with Davidson's inference that both heads sucked with equal vigour or efficiency. But rather than quote from Ho or, as he does later, from Leontiev's primer on *Political Economy*, about the nature of the U.S. working class and its relation to other classes, Davidson - as with any good Marxist - must examine the concrete historical evidence. I can here only suggest that he read *But What About The Workers?* by Boggs and Hocker who, between them, have 50 years of experience within the working-class movement in the U.S. They argue convincingly that, "Workers in the U.S. are not a class seeking to change the system in order to advance the way of life of the entire society. If they are a class at all, it is only as an interest group seeking to advance its own members, to 'get ours'....The present direction of workers in the U.S. is not leading them towards becoming a progressive social force, let alone a revolutionary social force. All that it is leading them to is demoralization and reaction. Anyone serious about the potential of American workers must start with that fact." (1973, pp. 35-6)

A study of comparative wages paid abroad and at home by the U.S. global corporations would also be instructive data (see ILO and UN statistics and recent works such as *Imperialism in the 70's* by Jalée, *Unequal Exchange* by Emmanuel and *Global Reach* by Barnett & Muller). When Davidson talks about "proletarian internationalism" among U.S. workers, does he ask what these workers are doing to rectify a situation where, though employed by the same "boss" and possessed of the same skills, workers in Hong Kong, Mexico or Taiwan earn between 14¢ and 53¢ an hour while their counterparts in the U.S. earn from \$2.11 to \$3.36 an hour? And when he says it is slander to say that U.S. workers "see their own well-being as tied to 'national' interests and willingly throw themselves into the trenches in defense of bourgeois hegemony over the so-called 'third world'," does he recall that despite the belated GI Movement against the war, draft resisters, defections, etc., that well over a million workers fought *for* the U.S. in what was without question the most atrocious, genocidal war ever waged; that over 56,000 Americans were killed in that war and more than 100,000 seriously wounded - mostly workers; that it was U.S. workers who produced the deadly war materiel - napalm, fragmentation bombs, defoliants, etc. - used in that war; and that there was not a single major political strike waged by U.S. workers against this war. Is it not the case again that the very paucity of facts Davidson can bring to bear to support his claim regarding the proletarian internationalism of the U.S. working class proves the opposite to be the case? It seems that what he is offering us are "exceptions" which prove the rule and negate his own argument.

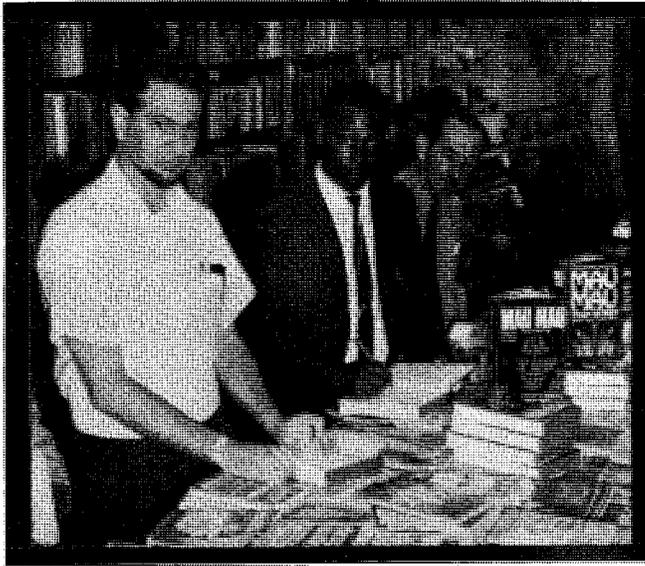
Davidson's statement that we "do away with even mentioning the contradiction between imperialism or social imperialism and the oppressed nations and peoples" is simply false. I need only quote a few passages from the pamphlet to which Davidson refers in order to prove this: "Clearly, the fundamental contradiction of our era is between the international systems of capitalism and socialism. The violent struggles to resolve this contradiction are being waged today primarily within the imperialist system, where liberation movements fight to achieve genuine political independence and rapid economic advance. That the struggles for national liberation and socialism are very closely related has been persuasively argued by Baran and Sweezy in *Monopoly Capital*...." (*Toward an International Strategy*, p. 6)

Again. "Over the past few centuries there has been a divergent development within imperialism between the *dominant* mercantile-industrial nations of Europe, North America

and Japan, and the *subordinate* industrially underdeveloped 'agrarian' nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America." (*Ibid.*, p. 3) And when we argue that the "fundamental contradiction within the modern empire is between the ruling class of the industrialized metropolis and the combined peasant and worker classes of the neocolonies," are we not, in fact, talking about the contradiction between "imperialism" and "the oppressed nations and peoples?" So when Davidson accuses us of viewing "all the main struggles...as simply class struggles, i.e., between respective sets of workers and peasants, on one hand, and capitalists, on the other" he is obviously being either fantastically slavish in his vocabulary (refusing to equate "subordinate" with "oppressed" nations) or he is intentionally distorting our position so that he can dispense with it without ever having dealt with it seriously. All he need do, or so he believes, is say that our "world view" has "a great deal in common with Trotskyism" (a sure-fire consignment to political purgatory!) and that "no successful Marxist-Leninist party in the world agrees" with us. I have rarely seen such a pathetic effort at sophistry - to say nothing of sectarianism and arrogance.

Finally, LSM's alleged "arrogance toward liberation movements." It is apparent that, for Davidson, any kind of criticism or questioning of a liberation movement is tantamount to arrogance. Fortunately, most of the liberation movements disagree. In a recent interview with a ZANU Supreme Council member, Kumbirai Kangai, we raised the issue of ZANU's unprincipled attack on us in last August's *Zimbabwe News*. The reply was as follows and will hopefully be instructive for Davidson. "Comrade, I think I understand now what you are saying. I wasn't really aware of how this article came out in the *Zimbabwe News*, as all we saw were the statements prepared by our publicity department before they went to press - before they were really completed for publication. I quite agree with the observations you have made. The information which our comrades had about LSM was incorrect and their criticism was unprincipled and inaccurate. Let me add, however, that as people struggling against imperialism in this world we do run into these things. It is unfortunate, but they happen. The most important thing, though, is that our major revolutionary objectives should bind us together. We should begin now to build a solid relationship and work to achieve our common end. Principled criticism is always welcome; that is how we learn and grow. If we stopped criticizing one another then our movement would die - we could not make improvement and develop. But I fully agree with you that the criticism has to be principled. We will surely schedule a meeting between LSM and the comrades responsible for *Zimbabwe News* the next time you are in Lusaka, and I'm sure we can straighten out this problem. As revolutionaries, we must not let such things distract us from our struggle against the real enemy." (*LSM News*, Spring/75, p. 33)

It would be good for the revolution if Davidson and the *Guardian* could adopt an equally self-critical view toward their own poorly researched and unprincipled criticism of LSM. None of us are certain we have THE answer. If you believe in the need for a vanguard party to lead a U.S. proletariat capable of revolutionary praxis, then get on with it and good luck. If you're right, we will join you. Right now, however, we have a different theory and strategy which we are trying to practice and test against the reality as we understand it. Perhaps history will prove us wrong, and we accept this as a real possibility. We believe that in the glaring absence of successfully implemented strategies, revolutionaries in North America should strive for an open Marxism devoid of dogmatism and ego-tripping self-righteousness. Sectarian struggles on the left can only deflect us from our respective efforts to destroy imperialism and build a socialist world.



Left: Near Angola border, 1970.

Right: Vancouver, 1972.

Bottom: Don Barnett & Karari Njama, autographing their book, MAU MAU FROM WITHIN: Autobiography & Analysis of Kenya's Peasant Revolt in a Nairobi bookstore, 1967. (credits: LSM)

Letters to the Editor

Dennis Mercer, Dear Comrade,

It is with sadness that I extend my warmest greetings. Marxists such as Don Barnett are precious beyond any criteria of his contribution to the Revolution.

I heard of you only through the articles in the *Guardian* (I subscribed for 25 years) which were so self-righteous and arrogant. But quite wrong. It is intriguing how an alleged Marxist like Carl Davidson claims to be is so painfully blind to his Super-American chauvinism. Carl cannot bear to even think that his "great" US proletariat is not the motive force for the Revolution.

I will be 62 on September 1; I have been a revolutionary worker for 45 years. Have worked in many basic industries, in both production; as a craftsman (electrician), steel, auto, electrical, foundries, chemical plants, machine fabrication, construction.

The American working class has never been a revolutionary force. The closest they came to that classification was in the great depression of the 30's. Oh yes they displayed some high levels of militancy; such as the taking over of the auto plants in Detroit in the fight to organize the UAW. That was the high point. When FDR turned the charm on in his famous fireside chats, they fell spellbound and went for him all the way.

I was a member of the CP for 20 years Only a dreamer with complete delusions can speak of the American working class as a revolutionary force today. I have been a fighter in many unions, organizing in whatever industry I worked in. I must confess with sadness and shame that many fellow workers betrayed me to management. The US worker is more pro-Capitalist than the Capitalists!

Please send me any periodicals you may have If I can I will organize a branch of LSM here.

For the Revolution, J.R., Sacramento

Friends,

For several years I've been noticing that despite the devastating effect of imperialism and monopoly capitalism on workers both in the US and elsewhere, there seems to be little will on the part of US workers to "fight back." I mention that their lot came to my attention only in recent years, for I am one of those workers who neglected and ignored my responsibility for some of these oppressions. And until I read LSM's reply in the May 21 *Guardian* I was unaware that there was a "progressive" (for lack of a better word) organization in North America that took into consideration what I consider to be an obvious observation of US revolutionary consciousness. There just ain't a hell of a lot of it!! And if there is it's well-hidden. Those workers who do realize the misery of our age generally end up in some left group's ideological quagmire criticizing others in the same bind. And then everybody forgets the one way out -- organizing.

Anyway, I liked what you've got to say and would like to learn more. . . .

Thanks, P.C., United Farm Workers, Brooklyn

Dear LSM,

Your reply to Carl Davidson in the *Guardian* was very well done. Maybe some day he'll take off his blinders and put himself in proper perspective with respect to the realities of the present world.

Please send more information on your organization and a sub to *LSM News*.

Thanks, Z.K., Baltimore

. . . I found your reply in the *Guardian's* "Radical Forum" very interesting and consistent with much of the thinking being done in the political study group to which I belong. I would appreciate it if you would send us any literature you may have published, and information about your group that is available. . . .

In struggle, Ms. E.J., Philadelphia

...Actions

Vietnamese Revolutionaries in Vancouver!

On May 17 in Vancouver a memorable meeting took place between representatives of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) and Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and progressive North Americans from a wide spectrum of organizations. Two representatives from the LSM Information Center attended the meeting, along with people from VVAW, Women Strike for Peace, United Farm Workers, American Indian Movement and many other groups.

The day-long gathering - organized by radicals from the SF-Bay Area with the local assistance of Spartacus Books Collective - included songs, speakers, questions and an informal reception. It was held in a union hall colorfully decorated with Vietnamese flags and dozens of posters and banners from the North American anti-war movement. The Vietnamese comrades emphasized the continuing economic struggle in Indochina and the terrible destruction inflicted upon the DRV and liberated south by the genocidal US "air war." Approximately 70% of all arable land was ruined and 500 hospitals, 285 schools and all significant factories or industrial enterprises were bombed or totally destroyed. The PRG representatives indicated it will take at least five or six months to minimally normalize the people's living conditions. In the meantime they face the immediate problem of feeding and clothing the population and welcome all assistance. While more complete material support projects will be prepared for the future, money is especially needed now. Since the PRG can purchase equipment and supplies in Asia more cheaply than we can here, it is more efficient to send cash than supplies at this time.

LSM hopes our readers will seriously consider these requests from the Vietnamese people. Many North Americans assume that the Indochinese peoples are receiving sufficient aid from socialist countries, but unfortunately this is not the case. Prior to the '75 offensive a leading North Vietnamese economist unofficially told Americans visiting the DRV: "It is true, we have received considerable aid, for which we are grateful, but it is obviously too low to meet our economic needs. *A nation which has suffered the atrocities we have has a right to receive more aid.*" (Vietnam Reconstructs, *Guardian* special supplement, Feb. 1975).

It is also important to recognize that the struggle in Indochina (as in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau) is not over. The desperate US Mayaguez aggression and recently-ordered trade embargo against Vietnam and Cambodia are proof that the imperialists will keep trying to stall or sabotage the revolutionary process. At this juncture the North American Left should continue and *expand* political and material support for our Indochinese comrades.

LSM/East Coast Unit (ECU)

Support for PLO and PFLO (Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman)

The ECU has stepped up its work in support of Middle East struggles. We collected an additional \$750 of medical supplies for PFLO, raising our total to \$2,700. We are now in the process of collecting the urgently needed funds to cover shipping expenses, and an appeal letter has been sent to supporters.

With the help of a Palestine Information Committee comrade in translating from Arabic to English, LSM interviewed a member of PFLO, Fatima Ahmed, who was briefly in New York for a UN conference on women. Comrade Ahmed talked at length about the difficult struggle in Oman, problems and achievements since the beginning of armed struggle ten years ago, daily life in the liberated areas and PFLO programs including health care and education.

The ECU also worked in a coalition initiated by the PIC which organized a May 15th Solidarity Day forum and a demonstration on May 18th. Some 650 people attended the demonstration, vigorously expressing their support for the Palestinian people's struggles.



LSM/ECU member, Allison Warner (right), marching in Washington D.C. demonstration.

Indochina Demonstrations

The ECU took part in several demonstrations in support of the Indochinese struggles. As the rotten Phnom Penh and Saigon regimes began to collapse we joined other New York anti-imperialist forces to demand "No Aid to Thieu and Lon Nol." On May 7 we marched to Times Square in celebration of heroic victories in Vietnam and Cambodia, and on May 11 attended a rally of 50,000 in Central Park to celebrate "The War is Over." Our banner, "Each Nation Liberated is a Step Toward Victory - Che," helped us raise the issue that the struggle against imperialism is not over. Four days after the "peace" festival it was clear that the war wasn't over and we were back in Times Square with 500 people, protesting continued warfare in Cambodia.

LSM/Bay Area Unit (BAU)

Support for PLO & PFLO (Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman)

As a member organization of the *Committee for National Liberation in the Middle East*, the BAU helped carry out a demonstration against Moshe Dayan on April 10th and a Middle East Cultural Night on the 11th. The demonstration also protested the former Israeli Defense Minister's speech at Marin College. It was enthusiastically attended by over 500 Americans and Arabs shouting such slogans as "Jews, Yes! Zionists, No!," "US - Hands Off the Middle East!" and "Vietnam to Palestine - One Struggle, Many Fronts!" The Cultural Night turned out a spirited audience of 450, largely from the Arab community, to see and hear skits, songs and speakers illuminating the role of US imperialism and its puppet dictators in the Middle East, living conditions of Palestinian refugees, and the courageous resistance and liberation struggles of the Palestinian, Omani and Iranian peoples.

In honor of May 15th - International Day of Solidarity with Palestine - the BAU helped organize a march through downtown San Francisco culminating in a rally outside the Federal Building. 250 demonstrators protested the US government's refusal to recognize the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, demanding a stop to all military aid to Israel.

Celebration of International Workers Day

The BAU joined the *May 4th Committee to Celebrate International Workers Day* in an effort to create an alternative to past May Day actions which were dominated by narrow, sectarian groups. 1800 people attended a picnic and program highlighted by multi-cultural music, skits and speakers. Politically, we hoped to begin the process of putting May Day in its proper place as an International Day of Solidarity with oppressed peoples throughout the world, to demonstrate solidarity and support for national liberation struggles and to educate people about the dangers of racism and national chauvinism in the US. The occasion was used in particular to celebrate the recent momentous victories in Indochina.

LSM/Vancouver Group (VG)

Indochina Program

In an expression of solidarity with the heroic peoples of Indochina, the VG sponsored a cultural-educational program on June 7th. An audience of 275 saw the film "Introduction to the Enemy" and heard speakers from LSM and the Movement of Nationalist Filipinos (KNP) address such themes as the continuing struggles in Indochina and the Philippines, socialist reconstruction and the imperialist role of Canadian government and corporations. Funds raised, totalling \$250, will be sent to the PRG for reconstruction.

Support for Native People's Friendship Delegation

Through funds raised at film/speaker programs on Native People's struggles for national self-determination, the VG contributed \$175 to the travel expenses of the Native People's Friendship Delegation to the People's Republic of China. "Our delegation is not a tourist group," they explained. "Our goals are to learn as much as possible about New Socialist China, to pass that information on to our people and to inform the peoples of China about our struggle for independence and Nationhood."

FRELIMO Independence Day - 25 June

LSM units, including the ECU, BAU, VG and Information Center, participated in FRELIMO Independence Day celebrations. Ole Gjerstad joined activities in Lourenco Marques and will be sending us pictures & reports from the Mozambican capital.

We sent the following cable: *LSM salutes heroic victory of Mozambican people led by FRELIMO. We pledge continued comradely support in your revolutionary struggle for socialism. Toward proletarian internationalism - A Luta Continua! LSM*

"Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel"

For those who wish to better understand what it is like to be Indian in North America, or why millions of Indians, Blacks and Chicanos wind up drunk in alleyways or strung out on "junk" in big city ghettos, or why political organizations aiming for national liberation and socialism are rising up among these internally colonized peoples, Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel is a revealing document. With the publication in June of the first volume of Bobbi Lee, LSM brings its "Life Histories from the Revolution" series to North America. We believe that the struggles of the internally colonized peoples of North America are destined to play a pivotal role in the process which both dismantles the imperialist system and builds socialism on its ruins. The story of Bobbi Lee is doubly important because of her attempts to climb from the demoralizing depths of oppression - national, social, economic and racial - to join the international struggle for liberation and socialism. Below are excerpts from Volume 1 which is just off the press and now available.

"She asked over and over, 'Why are we so poor when we work so hard?' She was just talking out loud, but I felt she was asking me and I didn't have an answer. I just wondered along with her how it was that no matter how hard we worked - my brothers caddyng or doing other odd jobs, me ironing, etc. - we never seemed to have anything to eat but the fruit and vegetables we canned. We almost never bought anything. I never wore a regular pair of shoes till I was ten - only runners - and we never had any heat in the house. I also began wondering why most people - white people - didn't like Indians and treated us badly, like we weren't as good as they were. And soon I began to wonder if, or how, we could change the situation we found ourselves in. We seemed to be caught in the same rut all the time...always runnin' around in the same miserable rut."

"When I was little I always wanted hair like hers, long and very blonde. Sometimes she teased me saying, 'Don't you wish you had long pretty hair like mine?' It made me very sad and angry. Then one day I was playing with her hair; she'd let me do it because it flattered her. We were in school. Then, as I braided the long blonde strands, I added some of dad's boat glue, which I kept in my desk. I worked it carefully into the braids and by recess they had become hard as a rock. When Gertrude jumped up to flaunt her pony-tail, it swung around and hit her like a stick right in the face. She screamed, then started crying. I was taken to the principal, who gave me a hard strapping."

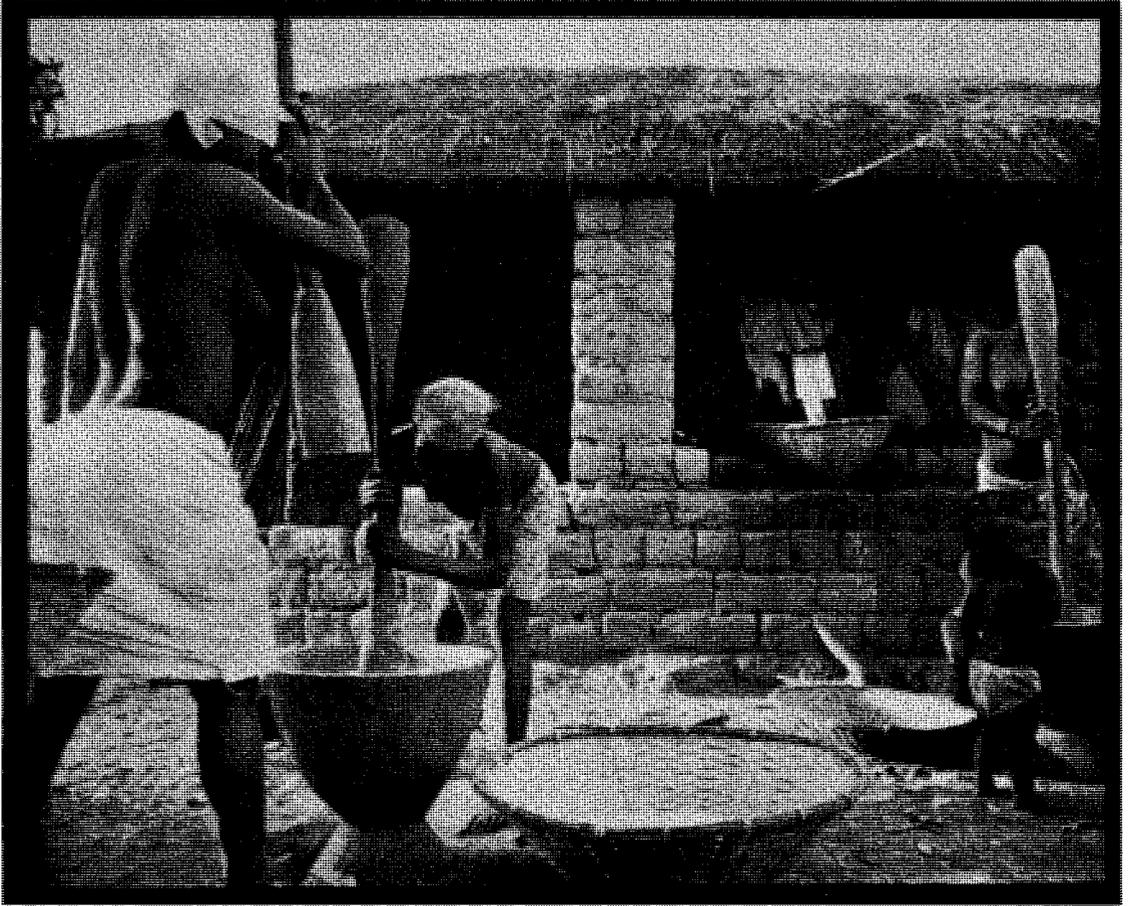
"I remember going to this girl's house - she was my first friend at school and very nice - and when her mother saw me she blew her stack. Right there in front of me she said: 'What do you think you're doing bringing this Indian into the Lynn residence? Don't you know we don't want Indians here!'"

"Vern was a big pusher and real sick...I mean with people. He was rich enough to support the habit for a few friends, who would become dependent on him - and he really liked that. There was this Bill Cody who wasn't making much money but was really wired to the stuff. He would come and beg Vern to give him a fix and Vern loved it.... He'd just go ape, crawling around and begging: 'Please Vern, please. I gotta have a fix! Please, please!'"

"...I didn't agree with Ray that the Canadian working class was going to lead the struggle - especially the Indian struggle. And it really got to me emotionally when he said that North American workers weren't racist, or that working-class solidarity against capitalism somehow prevented white workers from being affected by racism. This ran counter to all my experience and I got pretty wrought up. 'I've lived in working-class neighborhoods most of my life,' I said, 'and it was working-class kids who beat up on me all through school. They hated Indians; in fact they were the most racist of all.'"

GUINEA-BISSAU:

Aspects of a Difficult Transition



Women of Tchugué Village, Guinea Bissau.

by Ole Gjerstad & Chantal Sarrazin

Ole Gjerstad and Chantal Sarrazin recently completed their three month stay in rapidly changing Guinea-Bissau. Through numerous life histories, interviews and photos, they have documented some significant aspects of life under Portuguese rule, the role of the Party and the people in the liberation war and the problems PAIGC now faces in transforming a colonized Guinea-Bissau into a socialist country. Interviews with prominent PAIGC leaders on problems and developments in the economy, educational system, trade union movement, status of women, Party organization and popular justice will appear in forthcoming issues of LSM NEWS.

Upon her return, one of Chantal's first tasks will be to work up the materials she has gathered for publication and prepare for an LSM audio-visual speaking tour. Ole remains in Africa covering events in Southern Africa and exploring the volatile and changing situation in Zimbabwe and Angola. After attending Mozambique Independence Day celebrations in Lourenço Marques and visiting rural Mozambique, he will be off to Zambia, Angola and possibly Namibia.

Impressions from a Liberated People

"Always keep in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children..." During three weeks of *tabanca* (village) life in the southern-most Tombali Region, the reality of Amílcar Cabral's simple but essential message was fully borne out as we talked to the villagers, recorded life histories, and observed entire new villages springing to life upon the ruins left behind by Portuguese bombers and commando units.

In Tombali the scars of war are everywhere. Since 1964 the Party effectively controlled most of the region, but Portuguese troops still occupied a number of posts from which they guided bombers to their targets and periodically launched raids to terrorize the population. Empty ammunition cases, rather than rocks or sandbags, are used as protection against rainy season floods. The forest undergrowth is only now curling its green leaves around the charred trunks where Fiat jets dropped their bestial loads of Canadian and American napalm just a few years ago. Guiledge, Guadamael, Bedanda: the battles fought here will no doubt get their space in Guinea's future history books.

Other than military installations and a few administrative structures the Portuguese left virtually nothing in the countryside that will be of use to the people of independent Guinea-Bissau. Ten miles of blacktop road connecting the Tombali administrative center, Catio, to the strategically important Cufar airstrip constitutes the most visible sign of advanced technology. The run-down airport buildings are now occupied by a PAIGC boarding school whose students are doing their best to fix it up. Plans for new classrooms and a rice husking factory in the empty hangar are being developed, but money and equipment have yet to be procured. In the meantime, the 170 students make do with what they have and concentrate, above all, on learning as much as possible. With the country beginning on a new course, their future responsibilities will be great. Catio itself is but a dilapidated church and a few former colonial buildings, four or five stores and the garrison. Judging from the look of things the neighboring *tabancas* might as well have been situated in the remotest forest of the country, as far as their access to modern technology goes. The Portuguese created a "strategic village" here early in the war, but many of the villagers have now moved back to their original *tabancas*.

Out here in the Tombali countryside the crude, super-exploitative nature of Portuguese colonialism stands out starkly. The merchants who bought rice, peanuts and palm oil, and the administrators and *eipaíes* (administrative police) who enforced terms of trade, collected taxes and rounded up "free" native labor when needed were its representatives. Later, the army arrived to help out. The many rivers provided transport so virtually no infrastructure was necessary and social services such as schools and hospitals were virtually absent. Spínola's "better Guinea" policy made no difference at all to the *tabancas* in the bush and across the rice fields of this large region.

Tchugué Village

Our base is Tchugué, a *tabanca* of about 500 Balantes on the Bolama River. We are well received by the regional Party leadership and, after travelling by jeep from Catio, arrive one scorching afternoon with our entourage of interpreters, political commissars and FARP (People's Armed Revolutionary Forces) militants. The first thing we see is a barbed wire fence and a sign with *Zona Minada* painted in red over a skull and crossbones background. We pass an observation post and two abandoned artillery positions before reaching the first huts.

"Our" political commissars have worked in the region since the political mobilization period 15 years ago and know the people well. After briefing the village committee they call a meeting of the whole population - a *comicio* - where we are introduced and the objectives of our visit explained. In the shade of a huge mango tree we talk about North America, LSM and the importance of internationalism. Our words are translated into Balante and, amidst the screaming of babies and general disorder of foraging pigs, goats, chickens and fighting dogs, we are worried the message may not be clear. But our worries are proven groundless. An old peasant, one of the *homen grandes* (village elders), gets up and limps over to our table to welcome us. "We are very glad and honored that you have come such a long way to work with the people in our *tabanca*, you who are friends of our Party and our people. Unity and friendship between our peoples are important for us and we will do all we can to cooperate in your work. Thank you." His words are borne out over the next couple of weeks as we receive gifts of pigs and chickens and experience the strong sense of community still binding the Balantes of Tchugué together.

At the tape recorder taking life histories, over cups of *kana* - the potent sugar cane brew - at the "people's bar" or by glowing fires in the clear, refreshing nights we relived the history of Tchugué and its people since the arrival of the Portuguese. It is a fascinating story filled with hardship, suffering and recently, all the cruelties of war; about a people who wanted to live in peace, but who finally saw no other option than taking up arms and risking their lives. Why? "We were so tired," was the common answer. "We worked hard but the Portuguese took all we had and treated us worse than animals. When the Party asked us to fight, we looked back and found we had nothing to lose."

Exploitation through trade, crushing tax burdens and forced labor - these life circumstances of the Tchugué people made revolution a feasible option. But the spark to ignite the fire had to be provided from without. Illiterate, parochial and firmly anchored in thousand-year traditions, the Guinean peasants were themselves unable to challenge a repressive system based on modern technology. PAIGC provided the option. When Nino arrived as the first Party mobilizer in 1960, his words fell on fertile soil and were soon echoed clandestinely throughout the region. "Mobilizing the Balantes was not so difficult," explains Kau Sanbu, the veteran commissar in one group. "They were the most exploited of all and once you found a friendly *homen grande*, he would work on the rest of the population."

The chiefless Balante social structure worked in PAIGC's favor. With the hierarchically structured tribes mobilization was far more difficult. "Among the Fulas," says Kau, "we would start with the poorest peasants. Once we had built up a solid basis, they would call their chief to a meeting and try to force him to cooperate." Those who were aligned with the Portuguese and did not accept, of course, became dangerous liabilities and some did not survive the mobilization period. Revolution, to paraphrase Mao, is no tea party. The colonialists' brutal response to the Party's efforts helped drive the population into PAIGC's camp. In Tchugué alone, about 15 people were killed on suspicion of working for the Party.

War in the Bush

Political success was followed by military victories. In late 1963, the Portuguese merchants and troops were driven from Tchugué with heavy losses, but not before they had managed to destroy much of the *tabanca*. What they left undone, the bombers later

finished. Life in liberated Tchuguê was by no means easy, but hope remained - a vision of what a free Guinea could be like. "After all," an old peasant told us, "with the Portuguese and all their taxes gone, we had enough rice and could get what other things we needed from the Party." A people's store where surplus rice was exchanged for cloth, soap or other essentials was established in the nearby bush. Embryonic medical care was provided by the local FARP units or at the Guerra Mendes bush hospital some four miles away. And through the elected *tabanca* committee the Tchuguê people, for the first time in generations, came to play an active role in shaping their own destiny.

While on the strategic defensive, Portuguese troops employed tactics of terrorism against the population in liberated areas. Tchuguê had more than its share of NATO bombs and napalm and, in 1968, the *tugas* (Portuguese) launched heliported commando raids in an effort to again destroy the village. "The first group landed over there and our militants engaged them to give the people time to get out." A FAL (Local Armed Forces) guerrilla recounts the attack while pointing out the various places of battle as we walk around the *tabanca*. "Then, as we were busy with the first group, a second load came in from over here and attacked us in the rear." When the troops retreated, five PAIGC soldiers lay dead and several *morangas** were destroyed.

This attack was led by Fuab na Digua, the former Portuguese-appointed "chief" of Tchuguê who became an officer of the "commandos africanos," the brutal task force used in Spínola's attempted "africanization." He had early on become the most disliked person in the region and his activities during the war added to the villagers' hatred of him. With whomever we talked, the subject of Fuab, the "exploiter," "traitor" and "murderer" invariably came up. He is now in the Catio jail, waiting to be brought back to Tchuguê to stand trial before the local Popular Tribunal.

Still the Portuguese were not through. In 1972 as a last desperate move to halt PAIGC's advances they implanted their forces in a number of Tombali villages, including Tchuguê. First came the paratroopers, then the helicopters and river craft. They dug trenches and underground shelters, lined the *tabanca* with mines, barbed wire and machine gun nests. They wrote their names in the fresh cement of their bunkers: Miguel Figureido, João da Costa, Paulo Lopes. Many were to leave Tchuguê only in coffins as several of their ground patrols were wiped out in the bush and hardly a week passed without an attack by the Party for the remainder of the war. The craters from mortar shells, the collapsed shelters and burnt out huts add a visual dimension to the stories of those villagers who stayed to look after their property.

A Confident People

Jose Kassem, the Lebanese merchant, remembers 25 April very well: "When I heard about the coup in Lisbon on the BBC 6 p.m. news, I grabbed a bottle of brandy and went over to see the Portuguese captain. We poured two solid drinks and I raised my glass: 'To your early return to Portugal.' He looked at me. 'Watch your mouth.' When I told him the news, he wouldn't believe me - it wasn't until the eight o'clock news that he could hear for himself. The whole camp was jubilant. From that moment on, the troops did nothing but sit around and drink beer. Our militants could walk openly right into the *tabancas*."

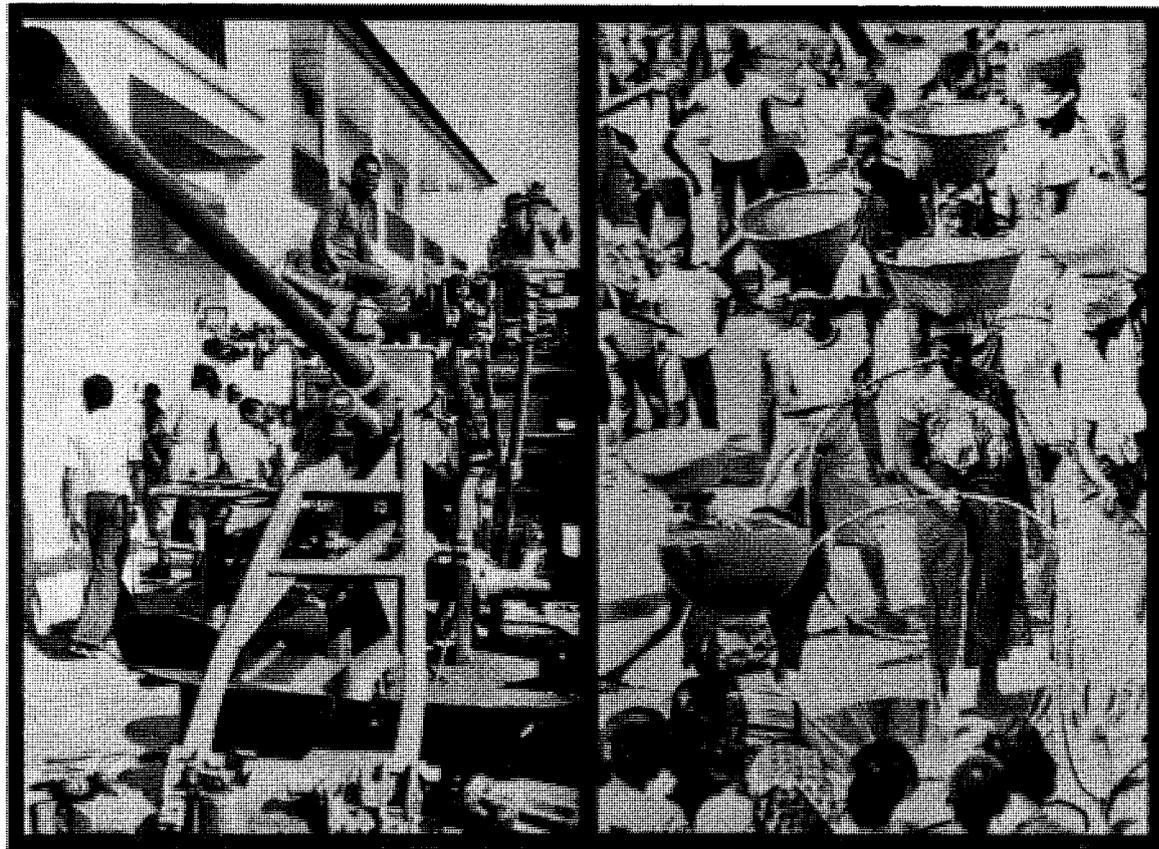
Now, one year later, the village has found a new pace. In September PAIGC cadre arrived to set up a primary school, medical post and a People's Store. With people returning from years in the bush, the *tabanca* committee has been working overtime to resolve disputes over field and cattle rights; only now is its work load tapering off. Every second night the youth practice the *n'gnae* (Balante dances) for hours to the traditional songs. But most of all we notice the construction activities. Every *moranga* is adding at least one hut for the next rainy season, which is due in about a month. Dry yellow straw, neatly cut and bundled, stands ready to make up the roofs. Once the rain starts falling, all efforts will be turned to the huge open rice fields almost encircling the *tabanca*. Even last year's crop yielded a surplus of more than one hundred tons which is being shipped to rice-hungry Bissau.

* A group of huts close together, normally housing one family.

The wounds of war are not yet closed. Live ammunition still makes it dangerous to burn the fields in the usual manner. Only two months ago a truck heading out from Catio hit a forgotten mine, killing Kau Sanbu's wife and three children. Maybe that is why he never talks about himself though he is by far the liveliest comrade on our team. But on the whole, people's eyes are on the future; on how to translate their hard won independence into concrete and material improvements. The government has exempted the hardest hit villages from taxes for the next three years; *morangas* must be rebuilt and herds restocked. Schools, medical posts and people's stores are constructed by collective effort. The essential difference from the past is in the incentive. "Now we know that we ourselves will benefit from what we do. That's why we work hard even if the war is over."

To us, the work that has to be done seems immense. The peasants of Tchuguê, who slaved and toiled for the colonialists, then fought and suffered through the armed struggle, have a different perspective. They are proud of their hard won freedom and optimistic about the future. "If you come back in two or three years, you won't recognize this place." Their optimism is rooted in the self-confidence and self-respect that the revolution has implanted among Guinea-Bissau's peasant masses. Self-respect and self-awareness: Men and women who fifteen years ago knew nothing of the world outside their own region, now receive us - Whites from 8,000 miles away, unable to speak or understand their language - as comrades in a common struggle. Before we leave, one of the FARP militants tells us: "Our revolution is against colonialism and imperialism. Your work is no less important than ours. To us, you are comrades in struggle against imperialism all over the world."

At the end of the dusty road, on the edge of the rice paddies lining the winding Bolama River, these words convince us that the revolution in Guinea-Bissau is a real step forward for the whole of mankind.



May Day celebrations in Bissau, 1975. (C. Sarrazin/LSM)

"We Don't Accept Being Treated Like Animals"

Caby na Iuk is a Tchuguē homen grande (elder) who worked with us to collect information on his people and the armed struggle in the Tombali region.

I was born here in Tchuguē more than 70 years ago and have lived here all my life. As a small boy I looked after the animals and when I got a little older, my father taught me to work in the fields. All the work was done in groups; together we cultivated the plots of each *moranga* in turn. After work we boys gathered for the *n'grae*, the old Balante dances, like our ancestors had done before us. It was only when the war began that these traditions started to disappear.

My father was the one who told me how to live like a Balante. He said that a man must learn to work hard early in his life, he must never steal from the other villagers or insult anybody. He taught me how to fight with sticks to defend myself, but told me never to use knives or other dangerous weapons. "This is how my people always lived and this is how you shall live too," he said.

When my father was a boy, there were no Whites in Tchuguē. His father had told him about a white tribe living somewhere in Guinea but it was only when my father was older that the Portuguese arrived in our *tabanca*. They had many weapons. In other villages where our people resisted, the Whites brought in Fulas and Mandingas with guns and since we Balantes had nothing but sticks and swords, there was little we could do.

We continued to work hard but never got rich. How could we when the Portuguese never paid us the value of our work? For a huge basket of rice we were paid only 15 escudos (about 60 cents). This is why we grew up to hate the merchants: we never saw the fruits of our labor.

Later, the Portuguese started forcing us to work on the roads. They came and gathered all the men and took us far away. We worked hard from sun-up to sun-down and weren't even allowed to stop for a drink of water. When the food we had brought was finished, we had to find things to eat in the bush at night. So for many days we ate almost nothing. And they would beat us for the smallest thing, with sticks, whips or the *palmatoria*.*

We paid all kinds of taxes: on people, huts, animals and even bicycles. At my father's death I slaughtered ten cows in his homage. When the Portuguese found out, they demanded 1,000 escudos in taxes, 100 for each cow. I tell you, they took everything we had!

The *tugas* appointed a Balante "chief" in our village, Fuab na Digna. This Fuab made us all suffer. Whenever someone built up a small herd of cattle, he would confiscate it or have the person pay extra taxes to him personally. He made people work in his fields for no pay and took rice from the plots of others. When we complained to the Portuguese administrator, he told us to shut up and go home. Fuab was also the only one in Tchuguē who had a rifle for hunting in the forest.

We all got very tired of this Portuguese colonialism. Our god put us here on earth so we could at least have something, to live together in friendship and cooperation. But how can we tolerate somebody who treats us as the colonialists did? We don't accept being treated like animals, beaten and killed for nothing. That is why we united in the Party to put an end to colonialism.

One night Nino came to my *moranga* and told me about a party which was preparing a war to chase the Portuguese from Guinea. He said there was no place in our country where the people could live in peace and prosperity and that we had to save our children from this system. I knew he was right, that we had to resist. The life of

*A wooden paddle with conical holes drilled in it. When hit with a *palmatoria*, skin and tissue are drawn up into the narrowing holes, if hit hard and often enough, and the skin will break.

one person is nothing for the freedom of a whole people. I was the first one in our region to know and I only told a few trusted people about it. In other *tabancas* the Portuguese got to know and killed many people.

My people suffered much in the war. When the Party attacked Tchuguê, the *tugas* destroyed everything before they left. Later, the planes and helicopters killed and destroyed even more. But when the *tugas* later returned with many troops and installed themselves, I refused to flee. I said to myself: "They may kill me, but I will stay and look after my things. I'm too old to start again with nothing." Life became very difficult with the Portuguese back. For example, one day they took my best cow and when I went to get it back, they killed it right before my eyes and insulted me before they let me go home. I hope I will never again have to go through things like that.

Now the time has finally arrived when we can live in peace and enjoy the products of our work. In my *moranga* we are building new huts to house all my children and grandchildren. Later we will join with the others in reconstructing the whole village to make it a good place for the young people to grow up.

Whoever comes to my people as a friend is received as one. The Portuguese took advantage of our friendship to exploit us, so we had to chase them back to Portugal. For a long time we believed that they were the only white tribe in the world. Colonialism closed our eyes to the world around us. But now the Party has changed this and when we meet people like you - from a faraway country and who work with our Party - we shall do all we can to help you in your work. It is a pleasure for me to tell you about my life and the war in our village. And I will gladly do the same for any other friend from abroad who comes with the same mission.



(C. Sarrazin/ISM)

Caby na Iuk

Contradictions of a Lagging City

With the AK (submachine gun) at the ready, friendly but alert, they guard all public buildings and strategically important spots in town. Their uniforms still represent an odd selection of Portuguese left-overs and donations from various countries. We have no reason to doubt their effectiveness, however; out in the bush their determination and discipline proved far superior to that of the well-dressed Portuguese commandos we encountered in Lisbon two months ago. Most of these peasant PAIGC fighters first set eyes on Bissau eight months ago when they arrived with the liberation forces. A strange experience, perhaps, since not only does the city with its street lighting and tree-lined avenues provide a striking contrast to the traditional *tabanca*, but the mentality of its population is also vastly different. In most ways Bissau was the Portuguese stronghold in this small and overwhelmingly rural country.

Still, it was here that the small group of nationalists who founded the PAIGC in 1956 took the first steps toward building the liberation movement. Among the wage workers and those whom Amilcar Cabral later identified as the "revolutionary petty bourgeoisie," the Party recruited many of the men and women who carried out crucial tasks during the armed struggle: Nino, Chico Mendes, Osvaldo and Carmen Peireira. But in the city the colonialists were strong and the movement was isolated from the masses of Guinea's population. The Pidjiguiti massacre and waves of arrests forced a reconsideration of strategy upon Cabral and his comrades: the main terrain of battle had to be the countryside.

With the progress of the armed struggle, conditions in Bissau became increasingly difficult. As in Vietnam, masses of refugees descended on the capital to escape the acts of war that destroyed villages and took the lives of many civilians. But escape to what? With its population swelling from 25,000 to perhaps double that figure during the course of the war, Bissau had little to offer but a miserable life of poverty and destitution in the crowded *bairros*, African quarters built in distinct separation from the Portuguese part of town. Housing and food were scarce, and the black market featured exorbitant prices. The price of a chicken, for instance, went up ten-fold in the course of five years, and agricultural products such as rice and corn became difficult to obtain as increasingly larger areas of the countryside fell under PAIGC's control and were cut off from the towns. In this climate it is no wonder that violent crime, theft, prostitution, alcoholism and drug abuse flourished.

The Occupied City

Throughout the war a network of clandestine PAIGC cadre worked in the city, spreading Party propaganda and mobilizing people to join the struggle. The work was dangerous; hundreds of militants suffered torture and death at the hands of PIDE criminals who had operated in Guinea since 1957. And given the existing conditions, the colonialists found plenty of Africans to serve their cause as quislings working against their own compatriots. In this way Guinea-Bissau proved itself no different from other countries facing similar circumstances; occupying powers have always found elements ready to collaborate.

The colonialists used all means at their disposal to try to turn Bissau's inhabitants from the liberation movement. People were forced to attend political meetings and the radio became a full-time propaganda tool. The Africans most susceptible to this political offensive were naturally those who depended directly on the Portuguese for their living. And with the impossible job situation, the most miserable elements could be bought off for a few hundred escudos. "For \$10 a month apiece, even Portuguese sergeants could afford two or three African servants," a Party organizer told us with a sad smile. "And the Africans, often peasants just arrived from the interior and not used to having cash, thought they were getting a good deal."

In fact, the question of jobs was an important one, since without proof of valid employment, Africans were forcibly enrolled into the colonial forces. Volunteers were

indeed very few until Spínola, as part of his "better Guinea" scheme, started to grant rank and higher pay to Blacks in an effort to "africanize" the war. He conceived of his plan as a double-edged sword, intended to at once split the Africans and take some of the pressure off the white troops in the field. Toward the end of the war these *commandos africanos* were usually to be found in the front lines during major confrontations.

More numerous, however, than those who actively worked against the Party, were those who just continued to work in the service of the colonial status quo and their own material interests. They included virtually the entire small community of white merchants and craftsmen - the civil servants usually being engaged by virtue of their employment - and the non-revolutionary sectors of the African petty bourgeoisie, mainly functionaries and government employees. Among the latter, in particular, many came to adopt the habits and values of their colonizers, moving into the "civilized" part of town, substituting scotch and martinis for *kana* and palm wine and taking in every third rate western or karate movie shown in Bissau's only theater.

Problems of Transition

This, in brief, was the situation when the PAIGC and its government arrived in the capital last September. From the revolutionary countryside to the politically lagging city, from tents and straw shelters to villas and multi-storied office buildings; the problems of transition are bound to be many. Immediate measures have included an all-out campaign against drug abuse, both by way of educational programs over the radio and the introduction of stiff sentences for users and pushers alike. In fact, the People's National Assembly last May approved the introduction of capital punishment for trafficking. As for prostitution, most of it seemed to disappear with the Portuguese forces. Many of the women had been brought here from the Cape Verde Islands and had already returned before the official installation of the PAIGC government, while the locals appear to have given up their *métiers* before special decrees became necessary. By the end of the year monuments to old colonizers were also torn down, and street names changed: General Arnaldo Schulz Avenue became United Africa Avenue and the former Rua Padre Lopes is now named after Guerra Mendes, one of the guerrilla commanders who fell in battle.

An ingenious combination of legal and political measures has been employed to deal with theft. For example, the weekly "Wake Up!" radio program was used to interview arrested thieves and fully broadcast their names and addresses. The embarrassment this brought upon the culprits helped cut the number of thefts by two-thirds over the last six months.

Other campaigns are just getting underway. Colonialism has so distorted the economy of this potentially rich agricultural country that in Bissau all foods except rice, fish and some fruits and vegetables are still imported from abroad and available at prices only the wealthy can afford. French cheese is \$3.50 a pound, green beans 80 cents for a 12 oz. can and there is no fresh milk, only evaporated, sweetened stuff from Holland, again prohibitively priced. Though self-sufficiency in foods is a priority with the government, a few seasons will obviously be needed just to return the dislocated economy to its pre-war level. In the meantime all food prices have been frozen and marketing control of rice, an essential staple, was instituted as a first measure against the horde of greedy speculators - Whites and Africans alike - who have taken advantage of the change in government to fill their own pockets, while blaming the liberation movement. Economic sabotage in the most direct sense!

Traitors Still at Large

While such problems can easily be identified and dealt with as part of the "transition complex," other potentially more explosive contradictions with far deeper roots still require much struggle to resolve. Again, they go back to the influence of colonialism; its divide-and-rule tactics are still effective with certain elements of



C. Sarrazin/LSM

A time for revolutionary vigilance in Guinea Bissau.

the population. After the failure of Spínola's putsch in Portugal 11 March, a plot was uncovered here aiming at "the physical elimination of the Party leaders and the seizure of power by a small group of traitors," according to a government statement. This group was made up of "elements directly in contact with Spínola; left behind by him in the hope of one day restoring colonialism and defending imperialist interests." This statement followed a week of 9 p.m. - 6 a.m. curfew during which the military was put on alert and all guards reinforced in Bissau, as in the rest of the country.

Did the plot come as a surprise to the PAIGC? The struggle against reactionary elements has certainly been fought in the open, both in the *bairros* and the city core. After the war, only those proven directly responsible for crimes against the population were arrested, leaving at large a great number of collaborators openly hostile to the liberation movement and responsible for the circulation of reactionary propaganda.

The list of those arrested in March is dominated by ex-officers of the *commandos africanos*, but also includes former PIDE agents and one well-known businessman who faithfully served the colonialist cause. Closely linked with foreign interests, particularly intent upon eliminating the revolutionary PAIGC on the strategically important Cape Verde Islands, they still represent a threat to the new regime.

The "Chameleons"

Next to eliminating these reactionary elements, the Party's main task here remains the politicization of the city population. This is no small task, since even if general support was widespread in the *bairros* all through the war, it was not until the last year that the PAIGC could start to openly counter the many effects of colonial rule and a decade of near total military occupation. A network of Party *bairro* committees has been set up in the various parts of town - Bandun, Contum, Santa Luzia - to make the PAIGC known among the inhabitants and take up local problems. Years of slander and Portuguese propaganda will have to be overcome. It's difficult work and, here as in the countryside, ideas alone don't work miracles; to be effective, political education must be paralleled by concrete improvements in housing, transport, sanitary conditions and food supply, to mention but a few. Trade unions and the national youth organization, *Juventude Africana Amílcar Cabral* (JAAC), are now organizing to reinforce the urban presence of the Party.

The educated and "civilized" petty bourgeoisie, whose present position is as ambivalent as ever, remain isolated from the *bairros*. Their major concern, of course, is to retain their privileged positions and because the government still depends on them to run the administrative machinery they still have a strong hand, at least for the time being. In the long run, however, their class position is in danger. As functionaries without advanced skills or much economic power, most run the risk of becoming dispensable as a new generation of highly trained PAIGC cadre matures to set Guinea-Bissau on the road of independent economic development. Already, hundreds of youth are studying at universities and high schools abroad and a rapid expansion of the national educational system will soon make secondary schooling far less of a privilege than only a few years back. To remain, this class must therefore prove its loyalty to the revolution and the new regime. Displaying classic opportunism, some elements have gone all the way to display their sudden change of faith. Those who until 25 April were most directly aligned with colonial rule now show up plastered with Party symbols and enveloped in quasi-revolutionary rhetoric, often posing as "critics on the left" sounding off alarmist cries about the need to force the revolutionary process. They are the "chameleons," the "bourgeois opportunists" that responsible PAIGC cadre have seen fit to openly denounce. To advance their own interests they in effect sabotage the revolutionary transition that the Party is working for.

Only the first small steps have been taken to implant the revolution in the city of Bissau. It is a difficult and slow process, but one from which North American activists like ourselves can learn a lot. Can we organize people for a revolution that is not always in their direct material interest? How do we overcome the heavy weight of a decadent capitalist culture? How can we neutralize the "chameleons" that appear in one disguise or another in every revolutionary movement? These are problems that are by no means unique to the PAIGC, and the Party's experience in tackling them must be shared by revolutionaries elsewhere.

Among the Portuguese who have stayed behind there is a definite *fin de siècle* atmosphere as they eat their dessert banana with knife and fork and reminisce about what used to be. Though none have suffered confiscation or nationalization of their businesses and property, they view the future with uncertainty and refuse to openly speculate on the times ahead. Other foreigners who are here for purposes of "cooperation" of one sort or another appear genuinely disappointed over the lack of night clubs and "fun" life. "In Bissau," one overpaid American UN official said with resignation, "you either work your arse off or get out." Maybe that's not such a bad thing, after all.

...Since Pidjiguiti We Never Looked Back."

João Emilio Costa now works for the Bissau Port Administration. In 1959 he was part of the Bissau dockworkers' strike that ended in a bloody massacre at the small Pidjiguiti pier where 50 workers were killed and over a hundred wounded.

When I started working at the docks in 1949, conditions in Guinea were difficult. Many people were without work and food was always short. Our wages were almost nothing and the work hard, but we were glad not to be starving and accepted it, more or less.

This began to change after several years. More and more Africans became aware of what colonialism was doing to our country and tried to improve the situation. At the dock we formed a club to collect money and send youngsters to study in Portugal. But the Portuguese didn't like it and one administrator, Augusto Lima, tried to stop our activities. There was also an African worker by the name of João Vaz who always spoke against what we were doing. Some people in the club weren't dockers; Rafael Barbosa, for instance, was a construction worker and José Francisco, a sugar cane worker. They were both active in the Party and so were Caesare Fernandes, José de Pina and Paulo Fernandes who worked with me. But this was something very few people knew at the time.

Most of us worked for the big Casa Gouvêa company,* either on the dock or on boats taking goods to and from company shops all over the country. But with our low wages, life was becoming more and more difficult. The basic wage was only 10 escudos (approximately forty cents) a day. In 1959, after much discussion in the club and at work, we finally decided to ask for higher wages.

The manager was Antonio Carreira who had just left his post as colonial administrator to work with Gouvêa. Well, he refused even to listen. Of course this was the first time in Guinea's history that workers united to confront their bosses. So, Barbosa and Augusto Laserde said that we had to go on strike and show them we were serious.

On 3 August we all gathered at Pidjiguiti, about five hundred men. Nobody worked, neither on the dock nor on the boats. Carreira came down and shouted and swore, but we just looked at him without moving. At about 4:30 in the afternoon several trucks of armed police arrived. First they sealed off the gate to the street, then they ordered us back to work. When no one obeyed, they began moving slowly down the pier, now packed with striking workers.

This old captain friend of mine, Ocante Atobo, was leaning against the wall of the office shed. When the line of police reached the spot where he was, an officer suddenly raised his gun and shot him point blank in the chest. Ocante collapsed in a pool of blood. For a split second everyone froze - it was as if time stood still. Then hell broke loose. The police moved down the pier, shooting like crazy into the crowd. Men were screaming and running in all directions. I was over by my cousin Augusto Fernandes' boat, the "Alio Sulemane." Augusto, who was standing next to me, had his chest shot wide open; it was like his whole inside was coming out. He was crying: "Oh God: Joao kill me, please." But it wasn't necessary; when I lifted his head from the ground, he was already dead.

Now the men were running for the end of the pier. The tide was out so all the boats and *pirogues* (African canoes) were resting on the beach. To hide there, however, was impossible since the police, standing high up on the dock, were shooting right into them. One officer was kneeling on the edge, firing at those trying to get away in the water. All around me people were shouting, "Run, run!" but I stayed beside my dead cousin. "No, if they want to kill me, let them do it right here."

* Part of the giant Compania União Fabril's empire.

I don't know how long this had lasted when a PIDE inspector named Emmanuel Correia arrived and ordered the firing to stop. The last one to die was a boatman hiding in the mud under his *piroque*, out of sight of the police. A Portuguese merchant, however, spotted him from his apartment window and shot him in the back with his hunting rifle just after Correia had arrived. One Portuguese, Romeo Martins, always a friend of the Africans, had been trying to keep the police from shooting, but all by himself he couldn't do much.

When the massacre finally ended I saw dead and wounded men all over: on the dock, on the beach, in the boats, in the water - everywhere. Among the dead were Caesare Fernandes and José de Pina who had worked for the Party. Afterwards we were taken to the police for interrogation. For three straight days I had to report to the administrator, Guerra Ribeiro, who wanted to know who had organized the strike. My answer was always the same: "We all organized it; our wages are so bad we had no choice." Later, when Ribeiro had finished his inquiry, the wage went up to 14 escudos a day.

Soon after the massacre a message from Amilcar Cabral was secretly/circulated among us. It said that 3 August would never be forgotten and that we now had to organize to win our independence from Portuguese colonialism. Since then we never looked back. Many other workers and I joined the Party and started the difficult work of political mobilization here in Bissau. With the experience of Pidjiguiti behind us, we knew that we had to accept the risks and sacrifices of an armed revolution to win freedom for our people.



Ole Gjerstad with Costa at Pidjiguiti dock, discussing the August 1959 massacre.
(Chantal Sarrazin/LSM)

Angola: The Struggle Continues

Interview with Paulo Jorge, MPLA

Paulo Jorge is currently a member of the Central Committee and External Affairs Coordinating Committee of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). LSM's Ole Gjerstad conducted this interview in Bissau on May 6th to learn about recent developments in Angola and the contradictions behind recent MPLA-FNLA-UNITA conflicts. While readers of past issues of LSM News are aware that certain problems exist in the MPLA-LSM relationship, it has also been clear that we continue to support MPLA as the only progressive and revolutionary force in Angola. In a formal meeting with MPLA comrades, Jose Eduardo, Paulo Jorge and Pedro Alves, a firm desire to re-establish fraternal relations was expressed.

MPLA -- PAIGC -- FRELIMO

COMRADE JORGE, PERHAPS YOU COULD EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF MPLA'S CURRENT VISIT TO GUINEA-BISSAU?

The MPLA delegation came here to inform our PAIGC comrades of the situation in Angola, to learn of new developments in Guinea-Bissau and to exchange opinions on international problems. This is normal because, as you know, MPLA and PAIGC fought against a common enemy for many years and we have grown to be close comrades. We are also here to celebrate May 1st. For the first time May 1st is being openly commemorated in Guinea-Bissau and we enjoy being together with our PAIGC comrades on this particular date - International Workers Day.

DURING THE WAR YOU HAD CLOSE CONTACT WITH PAIGC AND FRELIMO THROUGH CONCP (CONFERENCE OF NATIONALIST ORGANIZATIONS IN THE PORTUGUESE COLONIES). ARE THERE ANY CONCRETE PLANS TO CONTINUE THIS COOPERATION IN LIGHT OF GUINEA-BISSAU'S RECENT AND MOZAMBIQUE'S FORTHCOMING INDEPENDENCE?

The links developed during the armed struggle will, we hope, be maintained. Perhaps we will establish a special form of cooperation between the three countries and governments. MPLA would like to see the spirit of CONCP continue to grow in the future, and we are sure PAIGC and FRELIMO are thinking in the same vein.

Problems of Angolan Independence

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR PROBLEMS FACING MPLA AT THIS STAGE IN THE PROCESS LEADING TO ANGOLAN INDEPENDENCE?

We have had a transitional government in Angola since January, composed of three nationalist organizations - MPLA, FNLA (Angolan National Liberation Front) and UNITA

(National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) - plus representatives of the Portuguese government. Within this transitional government some problems and difficulties have developed. The major problem is what I would call the struggle of the progressive revolutionary force, that is MPLA, against the Angolan and Portuguese reactionary forces. One of the other nationalist organizations - FNLA - is causing serious conflicts by using aggression and provocation against the militants and population of Angola. Because they have no political support, they are trying to seize control by force.

When they began this, MPLA responded only defensively, because we wished to avoid the possibility of civil war. Some people thought this was a weakness of MPLA because we didn't immediately reply in kind to the provocations and aggressions perpetrated by FNLA. However, as FNLA attacks increased, the Major Staff of MPLA's armed forces decided to respond in kind, to prove that MPLA is indeed both a political and military force, and to stop all forms of aggression against our people.

The third organization, UNITA, collaborates in creating these conflicts. UNITA is pretending to a neutralist position, but in fact we have seen UNITA join forces with FNLA several times, particularly over political questions within the transitional government. This collaboration has been the basis of many serious incidents in which hundreds of people have lost their lives.

MPLA's position is to respect the Alvore Agreement (between Portugal, MPLA, FNLA and UNITA) because we consider this a fundamental document that could lead our organizations and our people to independence in November. If other Angolan organizations were to respect the Alvore Agreement, we are sure we could reach independence day peacefully. But at this time, taking into consideration the attitudes of reactionary forces in Angola, we in MPLA are sometimes forced to use military action in order to maintain a minimal level of peace and security.

SO FAR THERE HAVE BEEN DEFINITE SIGNS THAT FNLA, AT LEAST, IS NOT PREPARED TO ACCEPT OR LIVE BY THE AGREEMENT. COULD YOU RECOUNT SOME OF THE GRAVE CONFRONTATIONS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE PAST MONTH?

There are many; they have occurred in several regions of the country, but the most serious have been in Luanda. For example in April about 65 young MPLA militants were shot down in cold blood by FNLA. These young people were on their way to a CIR school (Center for Revolutionary Instruction) near the capital. They were intercepted by FNLA members and shot down. This genocidal attack was clear proof that FNLA was trying to liquidate our cadre, and the people retaliated quickly and strongly.

Particularly in the *muceques* (urban shantytowns), FNLA constantly attempts to kidnap our people and terrorize the civilian population who clearly support MPLA and are against FNLA's criminal activities. In these areas we have organized "action committees" to carry out the legitimate desires of the Angolan people, in particular the workers and peasants. People's power is an essential part of building a revolutionary country; FNLA and UNITA are against the people's power and react against popular support for it and MPLA.

Also, FNLA people sometimes attack MPLA bases where our freedom fighters and leaders are located, trying to provoke serious incidents. MPLA is now responding. Indeed FNLA has not succeeded in capturing a single base or military position. We are prepared to meet all such challenges in order to defend our revolution and the supreme interests of the Angolan people.

UNTIL JANUARY 1976 THE PORTUGUESE ARMY IS SUPPOSED TO BE A PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN ANGOLA AND THEY STILL HAVE A LOT OF PERSONNEL, PERHAPS AS MANY AS 40 TO 60 THOUSAND SOLDIERS. WHAT IS THE POSITION OF THE PORTUGUESE ARMY?

The actual position of the Portuguese forces is passivity toward the situation in Angola. We can understand this, because we know that the Portuguese soldiers do not want more fighting. But on the other hand, we think that until November the Portuguese armed forces and authorities have certain responsibilities in maintaining peace and order in Angola. Unfortunately, inside the Portuguese forces based in Angola there are some reactionary elements who are not fulfilling the program of the Armed Forces Movement. This

foot-dragging by some reactionary officers complicates the situation in Angola because they do not try to prevent clashes.

PERHAPS YOU COULD EXPLAIN THE SITUATION IN CABINDA, AND YOUR VIEW OF THE SO-CALLED CABINDA LIBERATION MOVEMENT, FLEC (LIBERATION FRONT FOR THE ENCLAVE OF CABINDA).

Cabinda is an integral part of Angola, very rich in oil and other natural resources. **Only** the MPLA fought in Cabinda and we controlled most of its land. FLEC is an organization that was formed after April 25th by some people who now claim that Cabinda is a separate entity and it's population is separate and distinct from the rest of Angola. In fact, we think these maneuvers stem from foreign interest in our oil.

MPLA's position is to defend our territorial integrity. All African countries, even after independence, have retained the borders defined by the Berlin Conference of 1885. No country's borders have been changed after independence, this principle is recognized by the OAU (Organization of African Unity). As well, the Portuguese government and the Secretary-General of the United Nations signed a declaration affirming that they will respect the territorial integrity of former Portuguese colonies. Even in the Alvoré Agreement it is clearly stated that Cabinda is an integral part of Angola. MPLA will defend this integrity and use armed force if foreign interests oblige us to do so.

WHERE DOES FLEC HAVE ITS ROOTS? WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE CABINDAN PEOPLE?

FLEC was formed by some people born in Cabinda who were living in Zaire or the People's Republic of Congo. But we don't think this organization is a creation of these countries. In our opinion foreign powers from the United States and France are pursuing their oil interests through this intervention. Through groups like FLEC, imperialist powers are trying to split the district of Cabinda from the rest of Angola. But we don't think FLEC itself can cause us problems, they have no force to fight against MPLA.

MPLA was the only liberation movement which fought to liberate Cabinda and the people there fully support MPLA. We could see this clearly during President Neto's visit to Cabinda in February of 1975. The people came en masse into the streets and to the airport to greet our President.

MPLA HAS STATED THAT IN ANGOLA THE OLD COLONIALIST SECRET POLICE "PIDE" (LATER RENAMED "DGS") HAS BEEN DISMANTLED TO A MUCH LESSER EXTENT THAN IN GUINEA-BISSAU, MOZAMBIQUE OR EVEN IN PORTUGAL. COULD YOU COMMENT ON THIS?

PIDE was very strong in Angola and PIDE agents are still operating in our country. Frankly, this makes us wonder if they are not still operating in Portugal to some extent. We have asked the Portuguese authorities to smash this organization, arrest all PIDE agents in Angola and send them back to Portugal for imprisonment or whatever.

There is another paramilitary organization in Angola that has not yet been destroyed. This organization was formed in order to defend the interests of the settlers and big plantation owners. The Portuguese authorities are now trying to liquidate this reactionary organization, but its members are still at large and do all they can to oppose real independence in Angola.

WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS FOR THE ELECTIONS THAT ARE SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER? WILL IT BE POSSIBLE TO HOLD THEM?

The process of this election is very difficult and complicated. First, we must know the population of our country precisely. Starting with so little, it is very difficult to record the names and birthplaces of all the people in a country. Second, our people have never before participated in elections, so we have no experience in the electoral process. Then, of course, there are the objective conditions under which we are living. We are confident that MPLA would win a genuine election, but we are very wary of how the other organizations would react to this, particularly FNLA. We believe that if we hold this election, we will see more serious clashes. We in MPLA are preparing for the elections - but so far we are not sure if they will or should be held.

AS A SUMMARY PERHAPS YOU COULD IDENTIFY THE MAIN ELEMENTS WHICH THREATEN THE COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE OF ANGOLA.

In our opinion the main problem is lack of respect for our transitional government. If all Angolan forces, in cooperation with the Portuguese authorities, respect the Alvore Agreement we think we can reach independence by peaceful means. But many incidents demonstrate that the other organizations do not respect the Alvore Agreement. And the imperialist powers are meddling in the internal affairs of our country. This is at the root of our conflicts.

MPLA has fought for fourteen years with arms in hand and we are prepared to counter any provocation or external aggression. If the imperialist powers or reactionary Angolan forces try to block our revolutionary process, we are determined to continue the armed struggle. There is no other alternative.

People's Power

YOU MENTIONED EARLIER THAT MPLA IS ESTABLISHING "PEOPLE'S POWER." COULD YOU DESCRIBE THIS MORE AND HOW YOU ARE CONCRETELY IMPLEMENTING IT?

By people's power we mean that the Angolan masses must have their say in our revolutionary process and must participate fully in the activities and decisions in all spheres: economic, social and cultural. As you know, during the struggle we organized the people into "action committees." Now, we are organizing the people on a much broader scale into this kind of structure - with committees and popular assemblies - so that the higher institutions of the government and the party can respond to the wishes and needs of our people. For us, it is essential that the Angolan people be active participants in the political development of our country.

HOW ARE YOU IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROGRAMS IN THE URBAN AREAS, WHERE MPLA COULD ONLY OPERATE UNDERGROUND DURING THE WAR? HAVE YOU, FOR EXAMPLE, ESTABLISHED CENTERS FOR REVOLUTIONARY INSTRUCTION IN THE *MUCEQUES*?

During the war urban political activity was clandestine and we were only able to have meetings with small numbers of people and to spread MPLA's political line through watchwords and slogans. After April 25th we started legal political activity and were able to openly mobilize and politicize large numbers of people. This political activity has greatly increased since November 1974, when a big MPLA delegation arrived in Luanda.

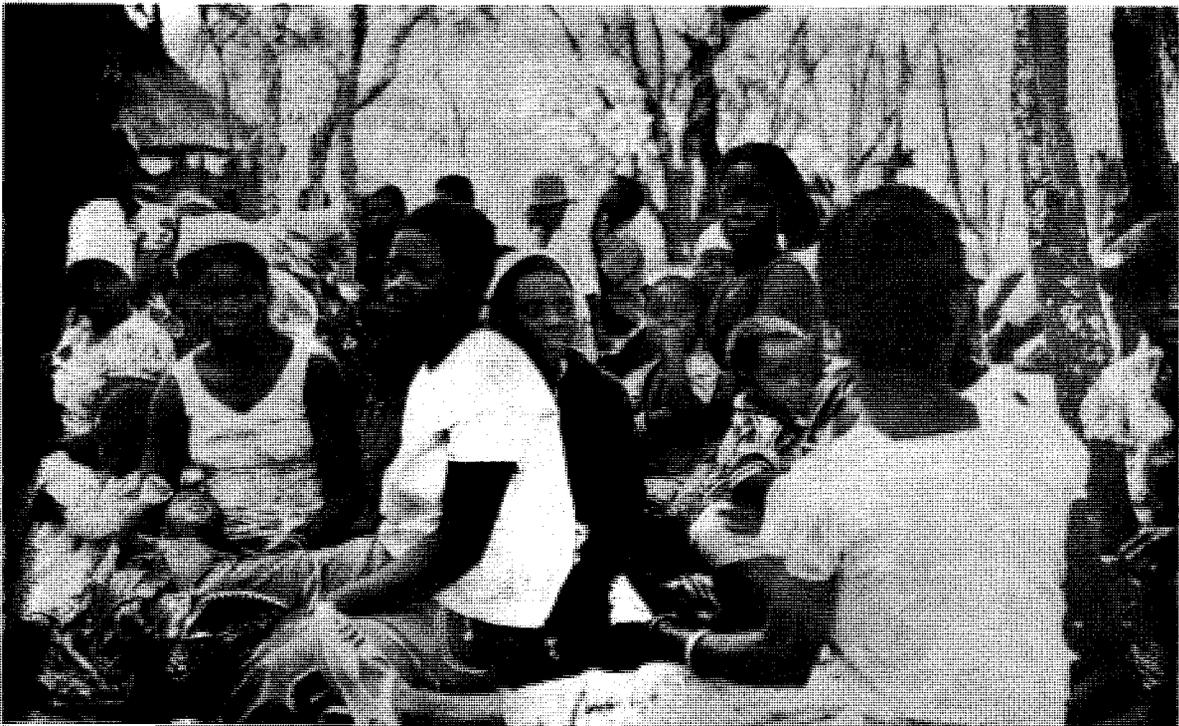
We have received great support from the people, and have opened several CIR schools in order to prepare the militants who are supporting MPLA. The majority of people coming to these centers are young men and women - students, workers and peasants. They learn military tactics and strategy, guerrilla warfare. In the political sphere the militants are taught the political line and program of MPLA - what we intend to build in independent Angola, the dangers presented by imperialist forces, the meaning of independence and democracy, etc.

In addition, we have organized medical training schools and dispensaries. We are mobilizing the people into self-defence units, and organize frequent meetings among the people to explain the position of MPLA and discuss different problems we face.

DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH EXPERIENCED CADRES TO CARRY OUT YOUR PROGRAMS? OR DO YOU ALSO RELY ON PEOPLE WHO HAVE COME INTO THE STRUGGLE MORE RECENTLY, SINCE APRIL 25th?

We have many experienced cadres, but not enough for the work we intend and need to do. We are combining the cadres who have been in MPLA for many years and accumulated much political and military experience, with those who have less experience but worked underground in the towns. Thus we are successfully combining old and new militants and sending them to different places to teach our people.

FROM WHAT GROUPS - IN TERMS OF CLASSES AND REGIONS - DO YOU RECEIVE THE MOST SUPPORT?



Angola Medical Committee

Angolan women gather for political meeting.

MPLA has the support of more or less the entire people of Angola. But we receive the strongest support from workers, peasants, students and revolutionary intellectuals - especially young people. From different regions and different tribes people are coming to join MPLA. This is the reality in our country.

AT MPLA'S LAST CONFERENCE, HELD IN THE EASTERN REGION, YOU REVIEWED YOUR INTERNAL STRUCTURE. PERHAPS YOU COULD DISCUSS WHAT CHANGES WERE MADE?

During our conference last September we analyzed the situation in Angola and reviewed the program and structure of MPLA. We decided to transform MPLA's armed forces into a regular army, the FAPLA - People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola. We did this so as to begin constituting a real national army. FAPLA is led by our Major Staff, a group of commanders and political commissars. Within FAPLA there are 100-150 people in a squadron, with three squadrons in each column.

In the political sphere, we now have a Central Committee which includes all people who are leading the movement, and a Political Bureau which serves as an executive of the Central Committee and handles the day-to-day leadership.

Toward an Independent Angola

WHAT ARE MPLA'S GOALS FOR ANGOLA AFTER INDEPENDENCE?

We intend to build a free country and establish political, diplomatic and economic relations with all peoples in the world. We intend to maintain a non-aligned policy, and to develop our natural resources to serve the needs of the Angolan people and not foreign interests. This is the major aim of our activities.

WOULD THIS INCLUDE NATIONALIZATION OF RESOURCES?

Nationalization is an integral part of the program and political line of MPLA. But we don't intend to nationalize the monopolies all at once or immediately. First we will meet with them to revise the concessions and agreements they established with the Portuguese government. An independent Angolan government cannot be bound to the past colonial agreements. During discussions with the monopolies we will try to establish agreements which are mutually beneficial. We will also discuss how to develop our country according to the new laws and principles that will be established in a free and independent Angola.

DOES THIS REPRESENT A DEPARTURE FROM EARLIER MPLA POLICIES?

No. What seems new is merely the way we implement our program, not the principles. Our present program is a tactical but not a strategic change.

WHAT IS MPLA'S POSITION ON THE SETTLERS AND WHITE ANGOLANS?

MPLA has a very clear position, based on the principles we have had since the founding of our organization in 1956. First, we never fought against the Portuguese people, we fought against the fascist and colonial regime. Second, we never fought against the white man merely because he was white; we fought those exploiting our people. Revolution is not a matter of color. Third, we contend that all people born in Angola are Angolans. For us the important thing is whether or not a person identifies him/herself with the revolutionary principles of MPLA to liberate the Angolan people from exploitation, colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism - whether or not they identify with the legitimate interests of the exploited classes.

We have no intention of expelling anyone with these principles from the country. Some white Angolans will decide to leave, but all those who wish to contribute to the development of our country are welcome to stay. Our only requirement is that they accept and obey the new laws and institutions we will build in an independent Angola.

Criminals who have committed crimes against the population are known to our people and will be judged by tribunals. But we are careful to avoid any spontaneous "justice" or vengeance, because it could provoke more problems inside the country.

International Solidarity

HOW DO YOU SEE THE WORK OF POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO WISH TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING MPLA?

During our armed struggle many national and international solidarity organizations - such as your organization, Liberation Support Movement - gave us very important support. Though we are nearing independence, we think these organizations have an important role to play by maintaining this solidarity. Our needs are different now so it is necessary to discuss the ways they can best help us according to their means and resources. Information is very important and groups like LSM can do valuable work informing the world of the real situation in Angola. We must succeed in mobilizing international opinion for the support of our movement and genuine independence.

THIS IS A VERY CRITICAL TIME NOW FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA. HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR SITUATION RELATING TO THAT OF YOUR COMRADES IN NAMIBIA, ZIMBABWE AND SOUTH AFRICA?

With the independence of Angola and Mozambique, the situation in southern Africa will change. We feel that after the independence of these two countries it will be easier to express our solidarity with the liberation movements of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa in concrete ways. During our armed struggle close relations developed among the liberation movements of southern Africa. Precisely what kind of support we can give will depend on the needs of those movements. We think that we will best be able to help by providing facilities to our comrades in arms from those countries. Sooner or later, we are certain they too will achieve their independence.

Critical Remarks on "Prairie Fire"

by Carroll Ishee

As Marxist-Leninists attempting to maximize our contribution to the struggle for international socialism, we in LSM have found *Prairie Fire: Political Statement of the Weather Underground* an interesting and challenging political document. We have a great deal to learn from the experiences and observations of the Weather Underground, just as we respect the consistent political practice and commitment reflected in *Prairie Fire*. Although we strongly put forward our own hypotheses regarding the nature of modern imperialism and how to most effectively combat it, we try to avoid assuming our views are above question and strive to remain open to the possibility we are mistaken. We believe a self-critical attitude is of key importance in avoiding the pitfalls of dogmatism and sectarianism which so afflict the metropolitan left. Thus, in our efforts to advance the revolution, as opposed to "proving" our views are the correct ones, we welcome principled, comradely criticism. We also think other groups and organizations can benefit from honest criticism, and it is in this spirit we hope these comments will be interpreted by the Weather Underground.

Ample evidence* has been brought forward to indicate that modern capitalism is international in character, that the rapid growth and tremendous concentration of capital and productive forces within the advanced, industrialized countries have resulted from the ruling classes of these countries systematically plundering the resources of Third World peoples and that this "development" has significantly altered class relations within imperialist society. In light of such overwhelming data, it is surprising how few North American socialists actually account for this in the analyses their strategies are presumably based on. In this respect the internationalism of the Weather Underground is most refreshing. As the U. S. is but part of a larger socio-economic system, we certainly agree with the W. U. that "Class analysis should not use the borders of the U. S. like blinders on a horse" if it is to have any predictive value. Our analysis of class forces within imperialist society has also led us to agree that "the central revolutionary force of our time is the oppressed nations and peoples of the world leading the liberation struggle against imperialism" and that failure to provide principled support to these front-line struggles leads to national chauvinism. On the basis of such internationalism, we see that the W. U. and LSM have much common ground. However, we feel there are inadequacies in their analysis which it would be useful to bring forward and discuss.

Although recognizing that "a by-product of the huge profits reaped from the Third World is the [imperialist] strategy (and ability) to create labor peace domestically by buying off a privileged strata of the U. S. working people, reaching even into large sectors of the industrial proletariat" and that "it is difficult to synthesize militant anti-imperialism with a mass base among oppressor nation people because of the whole fabric of relative social/material white-skin privilege" the W. U. still concludes that "the position in society of the [U. S.] working class is in fundamental conflict with the role and function and activities of the U. S. imperialists." If only this were the case! U. S. wage earners are indeed exploited by the ruling class in the sense that surplus value is derived from

*e.g. H. Magdoff, *The Age of Imperialism*, P. Sweezy and P. Baran, *Monopoly Capital*, A. G. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, Arghiri Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange*, Pierre Jalée, *Imperialism in the 70's*, etc.

their labor, but there is reason to believe as we do, that this fact alone is not enough to indicate a class has revolutionary potential.* Let's follow the W. U.'s example gauging revolutionary potential in the U. S. according to how each sector of the population reacted to the Vietnam war. When we make this "concrete analysis of concrete conditions," we find not a working class in "fundamental conflict with the imperialists" but a working class collaborating with the bourgeoisie in an imperialist war against the Vietnamese Revolution. Throughout the entire war there was not a single major show of solidarity with Vietnamese workers and peasants on the part of U. S. wage workers! This indicates to us that this "fundamental conflict" is not antagonistic, but in fact represents a secondary contradiction of modern capitalism in oppressor nations. It suggests further that the general contradiction of people selling their labor power does not produce revolutionary potential in all sets of concrete conditions. Revolutionary potential among North American workers is largely absent because the urgency of resolving the fundamental conflict is muted by that "fabric of . . . privilege."**

Through the repeated references to white privilege and class collaboration in *Prairie Fire*, it appears the W. U. is well aware that the labor aristocracy is no longer composed merely of a few trade union bureaucrats and that the benefits of empire accrue to the entire population of the oppressor nation. Here, in our responses to the reality of widespread class collaboration, is perhaps the major divergence between the practice of LSM and that of the W. U. Statements such as: "We have to elicit the class consciousness and struggle out from beneath layers of false consciousness We cannot allow the maintenance of a pacified sector of workers here; rather we can find ways to identify our interests with the interests of all oppressed people everywhere and sharpen the class struggle," and "We believe that carrying out the armed struggle will affect the people's consciousness of the nature of the struggle against the state " reveal a belief not only that U. S. workers *presently* have revolutionary potential, but also that what is needed to realize it is armed struggle. That is, "By beginning the armed struggle the awareness of its necessity will be furthered." We see behind these assertions idealist assumptions about human subjective conditions, mainly that consciousness is highly malleable, regardless of material life circumstances. Of course, subjective factors play a key role in any revolutionary process; the realization of revolutionary potential depends in large measure on the ability of revolutionaries to unite and lead the revolutionary forces to victory. But revolution, to quote Le Duan, "cannot break out at any time at one's will." It is our view that material conditions impose definite limitations on the ideology a social class will accept and that a revolutionary ideology and practice will be grasped by those classes whose immediate material interests are thereby served. In our view there will be no basis for attempting to mobilize mass revolutionary movements within the metropolitan countries until the imperialists are incapable of sustaining large labor aristocracies and "welfare" states. During an historical period when the establishment of international socialism would adversely affect their comfortable living standards and individualistic petty-bourgeois life-styles, the bourgeois ideology of U.S. workers is hardly "false consciousness." The racism and national chauvinism of U.S. workers stems not simply from bourgeois ideas but from a social practice which convincingly enough confirms such ideas. This is but a specific instance of the law discovered by Marx that "the mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is . . . social existence that determines consciousness."***

* See "On Dogmatism and the Proletariat" and "Types of Proletariat," by Don Barnett, *LSM News*, Volume 2, Number 1, Spring 1975, pp. 35-43.

** We should of course recognize and advance those instances of revolutionary internationalism among progressive workers, especially among the more exploited national minorities, while struggling against the racism and chauvinism so prominent among most American workers.

*** *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1970; pp. 20-21.

Marxists hold that man's social practice alone is the criterion of the truth of his knowledge of the external world. What actually happens is that man's knowledge is verified only when he achieves the anticipated results in the process of social practice.

- Mao Tse-tung

If, as Marxists, the Weather Underground accepts social practice as the ultimate test of the correctness of their theory, we suggest they would find that their armed activities since 1970 have not in fact generated revolutionary consciousness among large sectors of the U.S. population. We also suggest that, given the opportunity, the vast majority of U.S. citizens would willfully turn our W. U. comrades over to the police. While the hostility to armed revolutionary activity (as well as to other forms of political work) among oppressor nation people is, to a certain extent, due to the bourgeois media, we emphasize again, this receptivity is primarily conditioned by the material conditions of life in the oppressor nation: privilege. The fact is, most "Americans" have a vested interest in preserving the status quo.

We are not suggesting that the metropolitan left should merely sit back and wait until revolutionary conditions develop in the U.S. and other oppressor nations. Rather we are raising the important strategic question: how can we best accelerate this development? There are presently forces in motion - the national liberation movements - which are undermining the very foundations of imperialism, thereby destroying the material basis for privilege and class collaboration in the metropolitan countries. If the metropolitan left is to play a significant role in this process, it is of fundamental importance to realize in practice that proletarian revolution in the metropole must follow a certain stage of the struggles in the colonies and neo-colonies. Therefore, there is much metropolitan leftists can and should do to provide meaningful support to the vanguard forces of the revolution - not as a contribution to some "foreign" cause, however deserving; but as a strategically necessary step in destroying capitalism "at home"; not as a substitute for political education, struggle and organization among progressive North Americans, but as a vital component of such important "domestic" work.

Nor are we suggesting, as do many on the left, that armed actions, prior to the development of a mass revolutionary movement in North America, are necessarily adventurist or ultra-left. Although the armed actions of the Weather Underground have not created mass revolutionary consciousness, actions such as bombing the Pentagon - May 1972, ITT - September 1973, Gulf Oil - June 1974 and recently the Agency for International Development and the Department of Defense, have had the positive effect of serving to harass the ruling class and to focus some attention on struggles in the Third World. The important thing to remember here is that armed activity, as with other forms of political activity, must relate positively to the struggles of imperialism's revolutionary masses if it is to be effective. The sabotage and other actions carried out by revolutionary Portuguese organizations such as the Revolutionary Brigades and Armed Revolutionary Action (ARA)* against Portugal's fascist ruling class and military establishment during the colonial wars in Africa are good examples of armed militants in the metropole coordinating their actions with national liberation movements. In retrospect, one wonders, could practice of this nature have been carried out by revolutionary U.S. groups during the Korean and Vietnamese Wars? And, of greater consequence, could it be carried out in the event of U.S. aggression in other parts of the world? By all means the successes of the W. U. in establishing and sustaining even a low level of clandestine guerrilla activity have raised this possibility.

At this point we might add that in LSM we have found our non-revolutionary, petty-bourgeois class backgrounds a serious impediment to developing the capacity to place the needs of the revolution in the forefront. It has been essential in our work to constantly combat our class tendencies toward self-indulgent individualism. One aspect of this struggle has been the need to realize that, presently, the North American left does not center stage of the revolution; that in fact, we should be humble in the fact of the

*A unit of the Revolutionary Brigades, in an April 1973 attack on the Portuguese army's map office in Lisbon, captured important military maps which were handed over to the MPLA, PAIGC and FRELIMO. *Facts & Reports*, Volume 3, Number 7, p. 3; 1973.

much greater hardships, sacrifices and risks being borne by our comrades in the colonies and neo-colonies. The W. U. has undoubtedly proceeded further along the road of proletarian internationalism than most of the North American left - and with far less arrogance than many of the self-appointed vanguards of the U.S. working class. However, it appears to us that a degree of petty-bourgeois egotism is at the root of the tendency to overestimate the role of subjective factors in creating a revolutionary situation; that the desire to *lead* a revolution in the U.S. prevents the W. U. from objectively appraising its role in the revolutionary process, thereby also preventing them from maximizing their contribution to the struggle. We must recognize that white North American revolutionaries are at the periphery, not the center, of revolution today. This position is one of political not moral weakness. Only by grasping the limits imposed by our position can we transform this weakness into strength. If the process whereby oppressed classes and peoples in the "countryside" of imperialism are struggling arms in hand to liberate themselves from imperialist control is the major force leading to the development of a revolutionary situation in the metropolitan countries, would not a strategy that led metropolitan revolutionaries to participate in and accelerate this process be more effective than attempting to mobilize a bourgeoisified U.S. working class to overthrow the imperialist state? Would not the W. U. bring its practice into closer harmony with the revolutionary processes at work in the world today if it sought to more effectively coordinate its strategy with the "central revolutionary force of our time," playing a *rearguard* role in relation to the *vanguard* forces in the Third World? We would answer these questions affirmatively and hope the W. U. will give them serious consideration. As we see it, at this stage of the struggle, the role of the North American left is in many ways analogous to the key, but nonetheless secondary, role played by urban revolutionaries in Havana during the Cuban Revolution; a role defined primarily in relation to and in support of rural forces.

What is required is a creative fashioning of internationalist links and productive relationships with imperialism's masses in armed revolutionary struggle: a difficult but nonetheless extremely important and not impossible task. And one firmly planted in the rich internationalist revolutionary tradition of the Paris Commune, Simon Bolivar, the International Brigades, Norman Bethune and Che Guevara.

- Don Barnett

In closing we wish to emphasize our identification with many of the aims and objectives expressed in *Prairie Fire*. We have a great deal of respect for the Weather Underground's commitment, dedication and willingness to burn bridges and take risks. It is because we consider the W. U. to be comrades in a common struggle that we have made these comradely and hopefully constructive criticisms.

New Releases!

Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel Struggles of a Native Canadian Woman, Volume 1, just published. 136 pages, 12 pages of photos, \$1.95. Edited by Don Barnett.

But What About the Workers? by James Boggs & James Hocker, two veteran workers discuss and analyze their experience with North American workers, 43 pages, 75¢.

Oman: A Class Analysis by PFLO (People's Front for the Liberation of Oman), a basic document of the Omani revolution describing the social structure and imperialist penetration, 30¢.

The Oman War: 1957-59 by PFLO, background and analysis of key struggle in Oman, 30¢.

LP/Through Arawak Eyes written and sung by David Campbell, songs of oppression and Native struggle in Canada, the Caribbean and Latin America by a son of the Arawak tribe, \$5.50.

Recent Publications

Mozambique: Revolution or Reaction? Two Speeches by Samora Machel, President of FRELIMO, Machel discusses the road ahead - problems and dangers, 32 pages, 50¢.

Guinea-Bissau: Toward Final Victory - Selected Speeches and Documents from PAIGC, LSM's compilation of speeches by the late PAIGC leader Amilcar Cabral and others, 98 pages, \$1.25.

Strategic Problems in South Africa's Liberation Struggle: A Critical Analysis by Ben Turok, member of African National Congress and Sechaba editorial board discusses the historical background behind the key questions facing the South African struggle, 70 pages, \$1.25.

Breaking Contract, Story of Vinnia Ndadi, Life Histories from the Revolution, Namibia/SWAPO #1, story of a former peasant and contract laborer who joins the revolution in South West Africa and rises to a leadership position, 116 pages, illustrated, \$1.95.

From Shantytown to Forest, Story of Norman Duka, Life Histories from the Revolution, South Africa/ANC #1, story of urban worker who joins military wing of African National Congress, goes abroad for training and returns to fight, 108 pages, illustrated, \$1.95.

The Organizer, Story of Temba Moyo, Life Histories from the Revolution, Zimbabwe/ZAPU #1, story of a young teacher blocked from advancement by white racist rule who joins the struggle to liberate Zimbabwe, 88 pages, illustrated, \$1.95.

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US GOVERNMENT STEPS UP POLITICAL REPRESSION

As we are completing this issue of *LSM NEWS* we have received word from our friends in Eugene, Oregon, about the outcome of another of the US Government's frame-up cases aimed at intimidating the radical left. Two long-standing Eugene Coalition LSM* political activists, Eva Kutas and Ray Eaglin, have been convicted of conspiracy and aiding and abetting an escaped prisoner.

In this frame-up, as with the Giese-Cronin case in Portland, Oregon, (reported in earlier issues of *LSM NEWS*), the prosecution relied entirely on a self-confessed perjurer who was manipulated by the prosecutor and promised favors in return for the "right" testimony. Prosecution also played on the deep-rooted racism of an all-white middle-aged jury, describing Ray as "big, Black and dangerous." Motions for acquittal and a new trial have been denied. Eva has been sentenced to four years and Ray to two years in prison.

These trials have generated considerable solidarity and unity among defendants and community. From this unity is developing a deeper and broader commitment to the anti-imperialist struggle. Defendants in both the Eugene case and the Giese-Cronin case need all the support they can get, and since neither has reached major national news media they especially need a maximum of local coverage nationwide. Send your donations and inquiries to:

Eugene Third World Coalition, 2465 Roosevelt St., Eugene, Oregon 97204 USA
Giese-Cronin Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1186, Portland, Oregon 97207 USA

*The Eugene Coalition Liberation Support Movement is a fraternal organization with whom we have had relations since 1970; they are not, however, structurally connected with us.

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To Our Readers

After reading this issue of *LSM News* you have some idea of the scope and purpose of our work. LSM's only source of funding is through individual contributions and literature sales. To date, this has not been sufficient. Several of our full-time members also work at outside jobs in order to meet subsistence needs. It is thus becoming increasingly difficult for us to sustain the ever-growing demands of our political and publishing work. . . especially in the face of constantly rising costs of living and supplies. Each year since 1969 we have doubled or trebled our distribution of literature -- one of our primary objectives. But in order to do this, we have had to put in more hours and find a larger shop.

The fact that we are now behind schedule with some of our publications is the result of a contradiction between (1) the growing inadequacy of available LSM labor power and (2) the need for our members to hold outside jobs in order to subsist. We will continue to do our best, but *you too can help*. LSM members work for a subsistence "wage" within the Information Center of \$1.00 an hour. Your contributions can help sustain these full-time political workers! Your monthly pledges can help us resolve the above contradiction, enabling LSM to concentrate its full energies on the important and expanding work which lies ahead in 1975. The struggles for national liberation and socialism are reaching a critical juncture in southern Africa. Popular awareness and consciousness, the pressure of an informed and concerned world public opinion, have an important role to play in this process.

While the "mass" (read: "ruling class") media frantically works to falsify and distort contemporary history, sowing confusion and false consciousness among the people, it is of particular importance for Marxists to seek out and analyse the concrete historical facts and situation. While the ruling class tries to neo-colonize southern Africa under the banner of support for "national self-determination" and "majority rule," we must seek clarity and a critical understanding of this process, supporting those revolutionary national liberation forces and movements which are struggling to move beyond "independence" to socialism, and exposing those elements which seek a self-enriching accomodation with international capital at the expense of continued oppression and exploitation of the African masses. To help accomplish this task we are sending two LSM cadre to various parts of Africa during 1975. We hope in this way to provide *LSM News* readers with critical analyses of the developing situations in Mozambique, Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), Angola, Namibia and South Africa. By 1976 we plan to send members to the Middle East (and perhaps South East Asia) as well.

Your contributions will enable us to expand the scope of our work and more rapidly achieve these important objectives within the struggle for international socialism!

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