

APRIL 1974

Information is ammunition for your struggle. A fighter without ammunition is not a fighter. And for you, a fighter without information cannot speak.

Samora M. Machel, President of FRELIMO to CFM delegation, Dar es Salaam, 8/71.

STRIKING GAINS IN MOZAMBIQUE; PROFOUND UPHEAVAL IN PORTUGAL

Startling developments have taken place in Mozambique and Portugal in recent months, the most notable being FRELIMO's striking military penetration into southern Mozambique, and in Portugal, the events surrounding the publication of General Antonio de Spínola's book, Portugal and the Future, and the unsuccessful action against the government attempted by several hundred dissident troops in Portugal on March 16.

In Mozambique itself FRELIMO has in recent months struck forcefully for the first time into the "white heartland" of southern Mozambique, not only dealing a serious blow to the morale of the colonialists, but causing serious damage to the white economy of Mozambique and (potentially) Rhodesia as well. FRELIMO is now firmly astride and able to harass the road and rail links connecting the port of Beira with Malawi, Tete province of Mozambique (where the Cabora Bassa hydroelectric scheme is under construction), Rhodesia, and the white farming area in Mozambique near the towns of Vila Pery and Vila de Manica. FRELIMO has made numerous attacks on white farms in the latter area, causing settlers for the first time to have serious concerns about their security. While settlers in the more southerly areas had for years regarded the war as something that would remain confined to the north of the colony, they are now calling for firmer action against FRELIMO guerrillas. In January 1974 white mobs rioted in Beira, calling for the resignation of the Portuguese Chief of Staff, General Francisco Costa Gomes and his newly appointed deputy General Spínola, who both before and after publication of his book has been associated with the view that the wars in the African colonies cannot be won militarily. An increasing exodus of white settlers is reported, as well as fortification of farms in the more remote areas by those who do remain. The Star Weekly, a South African

publication sympathetic to Portugal, reported on February 23, 1974, that FRELIMO's advances have led responsible Portuguese for the first time to give serious thought to the prospect of war throughout Mozambique and ultimate Portuguese defeat.

As to Portugal itself, attention has focused on the publication on February 22 of General Spínola's book, on the anti-government action taken by dissident troops on March 16, and on the apparent ultra-right-wing takeover following thereafter. General Spínola, for some time regarded as an advocate of solution of Portugal's colonial problems by non-military means, including granting of greater autonomy to the colonies, with more African participation in their government, returned to Portugal in September 1973 after several years' service as Portugal's Governor-General and military commander in Guinea-Bissau. At that time, he was officially regarded as a war hero, was awarded Portugal's highest decoration, and was appointed to the position, newly created for him, of Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army. He was becoming the subject of speculation as a possible successor to Portugal's aged Head of State, Admiral Americo Thomaz, or to Premier Marcelo Caetano.

Spínola's rising star was associated with speculation that Caetano's government might be moving in the direction of greater autonomy for the colonies and increased African participation in their government. After the Portuguese "elections" of October 1973, Caetano removed Antonio Rapazote, Minister of the Interior, and Joaquim da Silva Cunha, Minister of Overseas Provinces, both regarded as hard-line right-wingers. The new Overseas Minister, Balthazar Leite Rebelo de Sousa, was expected to bring about "liberalization."

A more striking event was a press conference held in Lisbon in January 1974 by Johanna Simiao, a Mozambican woman formerly associated with COREMO, a small and now apparently defunct group which had at one time claimed to be a political organization representing the aspirations of the Mozambicans to independence. In her press conference Ms. Simiao made a statement to the effect that Mozambique was for the Mozambicans, who should govern their own country, and called for an internal front consisting of blacks, whites, Asians, and persons of mixed ancestry as the "true voice" of Mozambique. What was significant was that the Portuguese government would allow such a press conference to take place. Ms. Simiao is now apparently affiliated with "GUM," the "Grupo Unido de Mocambique," a new group within Mozambique which was thought might come out openly for independence. Premier Caetano was said to be giving discreet support to GUM as an officially tolerated opposition organization which might become a "third force" between the colonialists and FRELIMO.

The Guardian (London) reported in an article published February 14, 1974, that despite opposition from the right, steps toward an "African solution" were being prompted by Portugal's deteriorating military situation in Mozambique, the violence of the backlash among the whites there, and the support among the middle ranks of the army for General Spínola and his ideas. The Guardian noted that "one of the most intelligent and influential Portuguese figures in Mozambique," Jorge Jardim, a Beira entrepreneur, had recently travelled to Lisbon to tell Premier Caetano personally that Mozambique would disintegrate unless solid African political institutions were created. Jardim is said to have close contacts not only with Caetano, but with Presidents Banda and Kaunda of Malawi and Zambia as well, and the Guardian noted in this connection that President Kaunda, one of the staunchest supporters of African liberation movements, had said in December 1973 that Portugal should be given time to resolve its problems in Mozambique.

If Caetano was indeed moving towards an "African solution," he must have been moved in that direction by the situation in metropolitan Portugal and in the Portuguese army, as well as that in Mozambique. There has been considerable political unrest in Portugal during the past year. Portugal, known for decades for monetary stability, suf-

ferred inflation of 8.4% in 1972, the highest in Western Europe. In 1973 the rate spurted to 21%. Salaries, however, have been frozen. Clandestine emigration has taken perhaps 1,500,000 Portuguese (one-tenth of the population) to countries such as France, and continues. Agitation has increased among small businessmen and workers. In a country where strikes are forbidden by law, a number of wildcat strikes have taken place. Opinion against the colonial wars has spread among all sectors of the population, and though the willingness of the masses to act on their opinion is highly questionable, students of all social strata have been causing disorder inside and outside the universities, demonstrating, leafleting, paralyzing entire faculties for months. Catholic elements, including several bishops, have come out against the wars, especially in connection with the massacres of hundreds of African villagers (eclipsing the MyLai incident in Vietnam in size and scope) which have been brought to light during the past year, and the imprisonment of certain church figures who earlier had tried to report these atrocities. Repression of Church and other dissident groups by the DSG, the secret police, continues. Bombings have taken place frequently throughout Portugal, carried out by various underground groups. Many of the bombs have showered political leaflets about when going off. There have been numerous incidents of sabotage of military facilities. The Rand Daily Mail of Johannesburg reported as long ago as June 1973 that the wealthy in Portugal were buying private airplanes, keeping them ready for quick escape abroad.

Most significant, perhaps, is the dissent within the army. 100,000 Portuguese deserters of various ranks (proportionally equivalent to 1 1/2 million U.S. servicemen!) are estimated to have sought refuge elsewhere in Europe. Numerous incidents have been reported of mass refusals of draftees to be sworn in, and mass refusals of soldiers to board planes or ships for Africa or to swear allegiance. Restiveness among the key middle ranks has been especially evident. What is called "the captains' movement" began to coalesce about a year ago, at first as an informal expression of discontent over such matters as promotion, pay, and living conditions. At one point last year 1300 captains and majors, a very substantial proportion of these ranks, signed an anti-government petition on pay and conditions. The movement then gradually became more organized and more concerned with political questions. A meeting of 200 officers in Alentejo province of Portugal in October 1973 is said to have discussed how to end the colonial war and the political future of Portugal.

The politicization of the "captains' movement" was more evident by early 1974. Political meetings among officers became more frequent. An article in Le Monde (Paris) on March 16, 1974, reported that the movement was coming to recognize in themes attributed to General Spinoza (a non-military solution, more autonomy or even independence for the colonies) a large part of its own concerns. The officers began to recognize their power, reinforcing their cohesion. While the original demands as to pay, promotion, etc., were not dropped, they were now overshadowed. A paper entitled "The Armed Forces and the Nation," drafted in early March 1974, distributed discreetly and said to have been signed by over 200 officers, referring to the 21% inflation, the 100,000 deserters, and the 1,500,000 emigrants abroad, stated that neither pay raises nor social advantages or privileges, nor repressive measures designed to silence discordant voices in the armed forces, would be enough. The paper called for radical political change, a political solution in the "overseas provinces," which would not only safeguard the national honor and the legitimate interests of the Portuguese settled in Africa, but would also take account of the "indisputable reality" of the deep aspirations of the African people for self-government. The paper criticized the ideas attributed to Spinoza as "Gaullist" and therefore outdated, but noted that if they were put into effect they would release a "dynamism" leading inevitably to independence for the colonies and a weakening of the dictatorship at home.

Against this background Spinoza's book was published on February 22, hitting

Portugal "like a bomb." Within twelve hours after publication, the entire first edition of 50,000 copies had sold out - this in a country where sales of 3,000 copies make a book a best-seller.

We have not had the opportunity to read Spínola's book, but following is a summary of its contents as reported in the press: "Portugal is living today, without doubt, one of the gravest hours, if not the most grave, of her history," Spínola says. A military solution is impossible in Africa. As the guerrillas benefit from porous borders and massive international aid, the Portuguese army can neither annihilate them nor cut off their supplies. Essentially, he says, the war cannot be won. Portugal's search for a military victory results in a mere holding action, bleeding Portugal of men and resources and isolating her in the world. Spínola questions the orthodox idea that Portugal is fighting in the interests of the West; if that is so, why are her allies so reluctant to support her? He speaks out against Rhodesian-style "white revolution" by European settlers, but states that Portugal cannot abandon Africa, as all by herself she would either be swallowed up by Spain or count for very little in Europe.

Spínola calls for a political solution, namely a federation of four equal states: Portugal, Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea. Each state would have its own parliament and elected governor, which would however be answerable in some degree to the central government. The central government would control finance, defense, and foreign affairs and would coordinate state efforts in certain other areas, as well as having a veto over state budgets. Spínola recognizes his program might not work, but states that it represents the only possible way for Portugal to retain its influence in Africa. Inflexibility would lead only to defeat and amputation, one by one, of the African territories. Spínola also predicts change in a more liberal direction in Portugal itself.

Why Spínola's book caused such a storm is not altogether clear. While it might be ascribed to the expression of feelings on the war long repressed by Portuguese censorship, the views expressed came as no surprise. The book received considerable advance publicity; Spínola's views have been known for some time; he is said to have felt as early as 1968 that a military solution was impossible. Oscar Monteiro, FRELIMO's Assistant Secretary for Foreign Affairs, stated in an interview published in the Tribune de Geneve (Switzerland), "Spínola reveals an elementary truth about ^{which} I have not been excited: The war cannot be won. The ordinary man in any country could have made the same statement. What is astonishing is that such a statement, so obvious, makes any stir at all." Still, the book is an expression of ideas which up to now have been forbidden, for which people have been denounced as traitors, imprisoned and tortured. This is made all the more striking in that it comes from a source whose patriotism cannot be questioned.

In any event, publication of Spínola's book has catalyzed an internal crisis of unprecedented dimensions in Portugal, the ultimate resolution of which remains to be seen. Initially the book provoked demands from the ultra-right, personified by Head of State Admiral Thomaz, for dismissal of Spínola as Deputy Chief of Staff and of General Costa Gomes, the Chief of Staff. For whatever reasons, Premier Caetano did not immediately accede; to dismiss someone so lately honored as a war hero could discredit the government in the eyes of the public, and moreover would alienate that large contingent of the officer corps which saw in Spínola's book the first public and possibly semi-official expression of views with which it had sympathy. Yet soon thereafter, Caetano went before the National Assembly and denounced Spínola's ideas (though without mentioning him by name). In the same speech, however, while stating that colonial policy would not be changed, he did leave the door open to options, even suggesting that more rapid change might be worth considering. These actions are illustrative of Caetano's effort throughout the current crisis to keep himself covered on both sides.

In the meantime meetings continued among the dissident officers, now supporters of Spínola. On March 8 certain of these officers became aware of a plan by the Minister of the Army, General Andrade e Silva, to post four leaders of the officers' movement to widely dispersed points. A meeting of dissident officers was held, as a result of which the four movement leaders in question were "kidnapped" to prevent their removal, and dissident officers at various installations approached their superiors and advised them that they were aware of and opposed to the Army Minister's plan to transfer their spokesmen.

In the wee hours of the morning of March 9, the Ministers of the Navy and Army became aware of what was happening, and ordered an alert, in order to confine all troops to barracks and to stop the officers from holding meetings. A number of officers, including at least two of the "kidnapped" movement leaders, were arrested. About 200 officers, including a general, were put under virtual house arrest. The Army Minister was reported determined to discipline all officers who had expressed opposition to his plan to transfer the dissident leaders.

Dissident activities continued. The Daily Telegraph (London) reported that as of March 11 officers were threatening to turn in their combat decorations and to resign en masse. It was reported that the dissident officers at this time were calling for the dismissal of the Army Minister Andrade e Silva, as well as the right-wing Minister of Defense, Silva Cunha, and for Caetano himself to assume the Defense Ministry and to appoint either Spínola or Costa Gomes as Army Minister. On March 11 a delegation of pro-Spínola officers called on General Costa Gomes, and were advised that the Army command would not be changed.

On March 12, the alert of forces was lifted. On March 14, apparently at the insistence of Admiral Thomaz, a gathering of some 100 of the top generals and admirals was held before the National Assembly, at which all were required to pledge support for the government. This may well have been a pretext to set Costa Gomes and Spínola up for dismissal, for as was known in advance, both Generals refused to attend this event, feeling it would imply approval of the government's colonial policy, which they would not do in face of the deep split between the high command and the middle ranks in the armed forces. For their refusal to attend, Spínola and Costa Gomes were both dismissed immediately. Costa Gomes was replaced as Chief of Staff by General Luz da Cunha, a hard-line former military commander in Angola.

Subsequent to the events of March 14, captains in the major installations decided to send a delegation to their superiors to advise them that the participation of most generals in the "loyalty" meeting of March 14 was "not representative of majority sentiment in the army." In the light of Spínola's dismissal, the officers' mood had become far more rebellious. Officers gave both Spínola and Costa Gomes a warm welcome at a ceremony at the National Military Academy on March 15, at which the two dismissed Generals were awarded gold medals and elected to important posts in the Academy's alumni association. Then late in the night of the same day, an officers meeting, apparently political, was held at the Military Academy. For reasons unclear, the government had the Academy surrounded by troops of the National Guard.

Early in the morning of March 16, 200 officers and men left a military installation at Caldas da Rainha, north of Lisbon, and drove in convoy to the city. A later government communique described this action as a mutiny. Officers at Caldas da Rainha had telephoned units elsewhere and apparently received promises that the other units would advance on Lisbon at the same time. This support, however, never materialized; the Caldas da Rainha unit acted alone. The telephone calls to the other units had been

tapped and the government was prepared. Admiral Thomaz, Premier Caetano, and other senior government officials retreated to a bunker outside Lisbon. Tanks manned by loyal troops surrounded the airport, north of the city, and blocked the road. At 5 a. m. the Caldas da Rainha unit arrived, and there was a bloodless confrontation. The dissident unit turned around and returned to its base, where it was later that day surrounded by an overwhelming force and compelled to surrender.

Another state of alert was declared, confining all troops to barracks. A purge of suspected disloyal officers, said to have begun even before the events of March 16, continued. Hundreds were said to be detained. Several hundred others were said to be under investigation. The Commandant of the Military Academy was dismissed for allowing the officers' meeting the night of March 15. An admiral serving as naval secretary of the armed forces was dismissed, apparently for support of Spinola. A lieutenant colonel friendly with Spinola was arrested. Many officers were reported transferred to remote garrisons. The entire contingent of 200 from Caldas da Rainha was removed to an undisclosed location. On Sunday, March 17, the newspaper of the ruling National Popular Action party published an article reflecting a considerable hardening of official attitude. And contrary to expectations of a news blackout, the "mutiny" of the Caldas da Rainha garrison received extensive press coverage in Portugal, perhaps with the idea of impressing the lesson of its suppression on others who might be similarly inclined.

It thus appears the ultra-right has taken command in Portugal. Since the publication of Spinola's book, there has been speculation that Caetano will be replaced as Premier, as the right has long been suspicious of the apparent harbingers of change in colonial policy associated with Caetano. An axis running between Admiral Thomaz and General Luz da Cunha, the new Chief of Staff, is believed in control. Others said to have considerable influence are Alberto Franco Nogueira (Foreign Minister under Salazar), considered a possible replacement for Caetano, General Kaulza da Arriaga (former Commander in Mozambique), General Silvino Silverio Marques (former Governor-General of Angola), and Adriano Moreira (Overseas Minister under Salazar). Indeed this is the very group said to have been behind an attempted coup from the right rumored to have been made in late December 1973, though the rumors were subsequently denied by all implicated, and no known arrests were made.

The right's control, however, is probably quite unstable. If all dissident officers are purged, for example, the army will be deprived of a very substantial proportion of those capable of leading soldiers in the field, and will probably have to extend tours of duty for remaining officers. This will spread further discontent, as could the sympathy many less outspoken officers may have for their purged colleagues. It should be noted that neither Spinola nor Costa Gomes has been arrested, as far as we know, reflecting the right's appreciation of limitations on its power. It is expected that in the army there will remain a force for change, even if it must for the time lie still. In any event the army, insofar as it has been a major support for the regime, has been severely damaged.

Questions remain as to an interpretation of what has transpired. What, for example, did the Caldas da Rainha unit have in mind in advancing on Lisbon? Was this in fact a coup attempt, albeit poorly organized, or merely some sort of demonstration? Why did support not materialize?

And why did the government, among the most prone on earth to censorship, allow Spinola's book to be published? Perhaps Caetano approved of it, and even encouraged its publication. Or perhaps he approved of it in part, while feeling it went too far, but thought he could use it to draw fire from the right, and then attempt to open the way to more moderate changes in colonial policy. In either case publication could test the

political expediency of accelerated change in Africa. Or conceivably Caetano has been acting for the right, "letting a hundred flowers bloom" to draw the liberals into the open where they could be picked off. While Caetano throughout has seemed to walk a tightrope between the ultra-right and the more liberal elements, his own true position has remained obscure. He is known as an astute politician. And the right, seemingly in control, has not removed him yet (as of this writing).

What has been made clear by the events of the past months is the profound split in the Portuguese ruling class in face of the deteriorating situation in Africa. An article by Bruno Crimi in Jeune Afrique (Tunis) of December 15, 1973, points out that many of the main business interests in Portugal seek "Europeanization," to facilitate the tying-in of their interests with those of multinational capital. In this connection they wish to bring Portugal into the Common Market. A good case for the need of Portugal to enter the Market is made in the Portuguese and Colonial Bulletin (U.K.) of April 1973, pointing out that Portugal and Britain have been closely tied economically for centuries. A recent expression of this connection has been membership of both countries in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), which for many years served as an alternative grouping to the Common Market. When Britain entered the Market, EFTA, in which Britain represented over half the population and economic power, became unviable. Portugal has thus been forced to try to follow her senior partner by commencing negotiations to enter the Market herself.

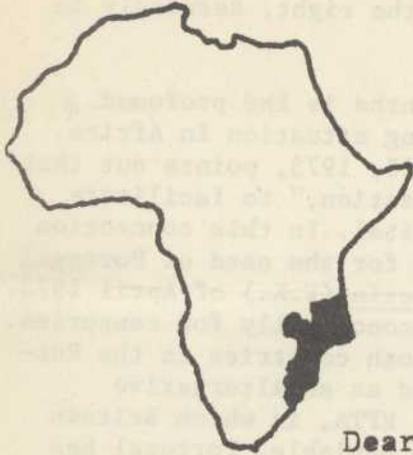
According to Bruno Crimi's article mentioned above, the Europeanizing elements of the Portuguese ruling class recognize that entry into the Common Market and greater tie-ins with international capital will not come about unless Portugal abandons the wars in Africa and dictatorship at home. Crimi's estimation of this perception appears convincing; not only do the wars and dictatorship render Portuguese membership unpalatable to a large body of public opinion in the Common Market countries, the economic drain of the wars hinders the kind of economic development that could bring Portugal, still a largely underdeveloped country, to anywhere near a par with the present Common Market members. Thus Spinoza's ideas are said to have considerable support in the business community, especially among its younger elements.

The events of the last few months can thus be seen as an expression of the conflict between the "progressive," "Europeanizing" elements of the ruling class and the more traditional elements, more exclusively national, colonial and mercantilist in orientation, represented by Admiral Thomaz and the other old pillars of the Salazar regime now reappearing.

It is furthermore most important to note that even as "more progressive" views on the colonial situation have been expressed, they have yet to call clearly for full political and economic independence for the peoples of Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau. Spinoza seems to call merely for increased autonomy and greater African participation in government, admitting his purpose is to maintain Portuguese influence. Insofar as any opinion suggestive of possible independence has been allowed expression from any source, nothing has been put forward which would unequivocally go beyond a neocolonial solution.

Meanwhile, Portugal's deteriorating military position, her poor economic situation and social unrest, the widespread anti-war sentiment, the continued sabotage and bombing in Portugal itself (a troopship was bombed April 9 in Lisbon), the feelings among the officer corps, and the perception by a significant portion of the ruling class of its own best interest, add up to a situation which FRELIMO and the allied liberation movements in Guinea-Bissau and Angola should be able to exploit to considerable advantage.

committee for a FREE MOZAMBIQUE



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April 10, 1974

Dear Friends of Mozambique,

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and Pledgers**

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Mary McNally
William & Ruth Minter
Tim Smith
Jay & Karen Spaulding
Jim & Lynne Weikart

(partial list)

This spring has been a busy one for the New York Working Committee. We have met often with Comrade Sharfudine Khan, who is in New York to attend a series of United Nations sessions and to testify before the Committee on Decolonization.

We're also busy putting the finishing touches on two new educational tools to help us inform others about FRELIMO and the dramatic progress they've made, such as that reported in this issue of News and Notes. One is an update of our first pamphlet, "Our Dream has the Size of Freedom", and the other is a filmstrip of the same name which should be available for sale or rental by September.

April 7 was the anniversary of the death of Josina Machel, the woman fighter and cadre who contributed so much to the liberation of her people. CFM has already raised \$1,000 for the FRELIMO orphanage which bears her name, and we hope to double that amount with your help.

May will be a month of many United States support actions for the African Liberation Movements, including a United Nations-declared Week of Solidarity and African Liberation Day. Check to find out how you can participate in your community.

A luta continua,

The Committee for a Free Mozambique

P.S. Recent increases in postal rates and paper costs mean that it costs us about \$3.00 /year to send you News and Notes. Please help if you can.