



OUR DREAM HAS THE SIZE OF FREEDOM

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION
IN MOZAMBIQUE

OUR DREAM HAS THE SIZE OF FREEDOM

The land where we were born
goes back
like time

(Marcelino dos Santos)

How can we tell you the size
of our dream?

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

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

Our dream has the size
of Freedom.
(unknown)

But what matter?
They have stolen Joao from us
but Joao is us all . . .
For Joao is us all, we are a multitude . . .
who can carry off the multitude
and lock it in a cage?
(Noemia de Sousa)

Unburied voices of Xinavana
Unburied voices of Mueda
Rouse us from our slumbers.

The cannons with throats of fire
Spew out symbols of freedom
The deadly bullets write FREEDOM in letters of blood.
in letters of blood.
Freedom will come from the barrels of red-hot rifles.
of red-hot rifles.

When the cashew trees of freedom flower again . . .
flower again . . .
Then from the ashes of the past a new Mozambique
Shall arise
Free.
(Craveirinha mpfumo)

Mozambicans are a poetic people and their words paint a vivid picture of the past and future of their country. Today, about 20,000 armed men and women of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) together with more than one million Mozambicans liberated from Portuguese domination add new petals to the flower of the Revolution. Having seized about one-third of their country, fighting against more than 75,000 Portuguese soldiers, Mozambican people now live as they never have before: they attend school, go to health clinics, participate in local democratic government councils, fight with the militia, grow new crops. They face tremendous handicaps, the colonial legacy as well as daily napalm bombings, but their vision is one ultimate total victory, not only against the immediate Portuguese colonial enemy, but against all forms of oppression.

Mozambique, the most populous of Portugal's African colonies with more than seven million people, is a wedge to the rest of Southern Africa. Its long coast line provides strategic access to the rest of Eastern Africa, the Indian Ocean and Malagasy. Its land mass borders on the two most powerful white-ruled countries in Southern Africa, South Africa and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). For those reasons the battle for Mozambique is the battle for Southern Africa. The enemy knows it: Rhodesian and South African white soldiers have been killed on Mozambique's soil by FRELIMO forces. Portugal, through NATO links, finds weapons and is trying to widen the commitment of the West to defend Portugal's interests in Africa. Companies of the West, including those of South Africa and the United States, carve up Mozambique's mineral wealth into concessions reminiscent of the 19th century. Yet FRELIMO carries on. In 1970, the movement overcame a gigantic Portuguese military offensive, and managed to push south of the strategic rivers into the central belly of the country.

The people of FRELIMO, be they in cities yet unliberated or in the free zones to the north, do not see their struggle in isolation. They see the enemy as many things: as forced labor, exploitative taxes, a local company, planned ignorance, colonialism, imperialism, French and American helicopters, napalm bombs, South African soldiers, American money. Their fight is tied to others in Portuguese Africa, to movements struggling in Zimbabwe, Namibia (South West Africa), South Africa. It is tied to African states such as Tanzania, which have fully supported the Mozambican struggle, and ultimately bound to the world struggle for liberation. A conference in Rome in 1970 of progressive groups from throughout

the West indicated growing support for the people of Portuguese-ruled Africa.

The American government is part of the enemy. It was a major Portuguese ally when the first bomb was dropped and the first gun fired. Although occasionally slapping Portugal on the wrist for too overt atrocities, the U.S. and NATO countries condone growing economic investment in the colonies, a policy helpful to Portugal. The U.S. and Portugal are allies in empire—the U.S. devising new ways to keep its more recent one, Portugal struggling to maintain its older one. These facts make us part of the battle. The hidden wars in Africa, ignored or distorted by the U.S. press, have become our wars.

THE COLONIAL BACKGROUND

To understand the need for armed struggle in Mozambique, one must know something about the nature of Portuguese colonialism. Portugal did not actually control the area now called Mozambique until after World War I—the claim of “500 years of Portuguese rule” is a myth. In the early years the Portuguese used Mozambican coastal towns as provisioning stations on the route to India, but they barely penetrated the interior. From the 16th to the end of the 18th century, Portugal vied with coastal rulers in Mozambique for control of the lucrative gold trade flowing from the mines of Monomotapa. In those areas penetrated by the Portuguese, white and Goan settlers were given complete control of whole districts, including the African populations living within them.

In the middle of the 19th century, the Portuguese began their conquest of the Mozambican interior. They met with fierce armed resistance from the African

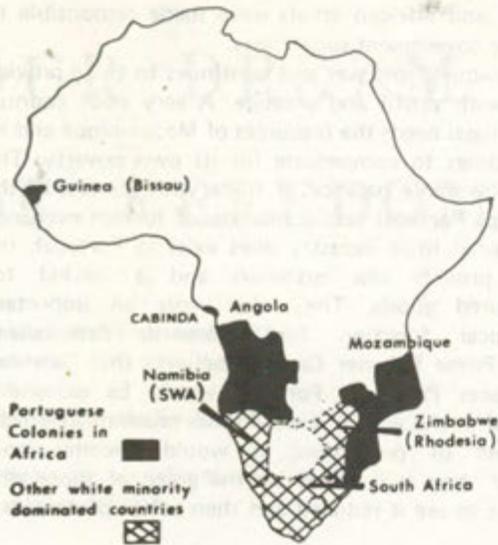
population, which they could not entirely crush until the 1920's. Once Portuguese control was established, traditional chiefdoms were divided into small, easily-ruled territories and African chiefs were made responsible to Portuguese government supervisors.

Mozambique's role was and continues to be to provide Portugal with profit and prestige. A very poor country itself, Portugal needs the resources of Mozambique and its other colonies to compensate for its own poverty. The colonies' favorable balance of trade with the rest of the world helps Portugal retain reserves of foreign exchange and, for what little industry does exist in Portugal, the colonies provide raw materials and a market for manufactured goods. They also serve an important psychological function for backward, demoralized Portugal. Prime Minister Caetano believes that “without the Overseas Provinces Portugal would be extremely diminished in the world; it would lose much of its weight and power of projection; it would become more dependent than it is today on the greed of those who would like to see it reduced and then act as protectors.”

Rita Mulumbua (Niassa Province): I worked in the fields growing cotton. We didn't want cotton, but we had to grow it; we wanted to grow cassava, beans and maize. If we refused to grow cotton, they arrested us, put us in chains, beat us and then sent us to a place from where one often didn't come back. When I was a child I knew Chief Navativa; they arrested him and he hasn't been seen since.

(from Eduardo Mondlane, The Struggle for Mozambique)





While the Portuguese have exploited their land and labor, Mozambicans under colonial rule have led a wretched existence. Only a very small proportion of the total number of children receive any education at all, with the result that about 95% of the African population is illiterate. There is almost no attempt to provide medical services for Africans. The best land is given to Portuguese and South African settlers. Plans for the huge Cabora Bassa Dam call for the settlement of one million Portuguese along the rich Zambesi Valley. Little of the wealth envisaged from the dam will filter down to the African population.

Slavery, widely practiced in the 19th century, was replaced in the 20th by a legalized system of forced labor. Africans are still compelled by law to produce for almost no pay huge quantities of those raw materials which Portugal needs, for example, cotton for its textile industry. This disrupts the growing of subsistence crops to support the African population and results in recurrent famines. Mozambican labor is equally useful to South Africa, which hires thousands of Mozambicans on contract as miners. A mutually beneficial agreement between the Portuguese colonial government and the government of South Africa requires South Africa to pay a fee to Mozambique for each miner. Meanwhile, wages paid to the Africans for their work are incredibly low, while Europeans receive up to three or four times as much for the same work.

REPRESSION AND MASSACRE

Portugal enforces its policies with brutal repression carried out by PIDE (now called DGS), the Gestapo-trained secret police. The fascist police state in Mozambique parallels that of Portugal itself, except that in Mozambique the police are even more ruthless, the people even more defenseless, and the inequalities more extreme. Strict censorship is practiced, and trade unions and opposition political parties are virtually banned. Anyone suspected of disloyalty to the colonial regime is

beaten, imprisoned, exiled or even executed. As in South Africa, Mozambican Africans must carry passbooks which contain a record of the bearer's taxes, employment, travel and other vital statistics. If his papers are not in order, an African is subject to beatings or sentences of correctional labor.

Over the years Portugal's rigid oppression has left few choices for the Mozambican people. Through severe restrictions, burdensome financial levies and strict police surveillance, the Portuguese crushed an agricultural cooperative movement which grew up in the fifties. Police infiltrated small student groups which were beginning to develop nationalist ideas, arresting their members and sentencing them to indefinite terms in concentration camps. Dock strikes in Lourenco Marques protesting terrible working conditions resulted in the deaths of hundreds of participants and the exiling of others to the prison island of Sao Tome. In 1960 over 600 people were massacred in Mueda as they gathered to present their grievances to the governor general. It was clear that Portugal had no intention of granting even partial independence to the people of Mozambique. Armed struggle was the only way.



THE PEOPLE FIGHT BACK: FRELIMO

Mozambicans began to organize themselves after 1960. Underground groups developed and outside the country Mozambicans joined together to form political parties. In June 1962 these groups united to establish the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO). This first FRELIMO Congress elected Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane as President and outlined three programs of action in order to win independence: political activity, both within Mozambique and on an international level; an educational program; and preparation for war.

These preparations led to the initiation of armed struggle on September 25, 1964 in the northern provinces of Mozambique (Cabo Delgado and Niassa). By 1966, FRELIMO had liberated about one-fifth of the national territory; in these zones the Portuguese are confined to bases and towns and are attacked when they attempt to move outside these fortifications. In 1968, a new front was reopened in Tete province to the west. In 1969, fighting in Tete intensified, particularly near the strategic Cabora Bassa area, where Portugal is attempting to build a huge dam. In 1970, FRELIMO fighters began activity along and to the south of the Zambesi River, the core of Mozambique and the traditional route of Portuguese influence.

The accomplishments of the liberation forces were made evident to all in July 1968, when delegates from all parts of Mozambique met at the second FRELIMO Congress, held in liberated territory (Niassa Province). The Congress was attended by representatives of other liberation movements, including PAIGC (African Party for the independence of Guine) and MPLA (Popular

Movement for the Liberation of Angola), with which FRELIMO is allied in its struggle against Portuguese colonialism.

BUILDING A NEW MOZAMBIQUE

Although the military struggle is far from over, FRELIMO's efforts have also been directed toward building institutions for a new Mozambique. In liberated zones, the Portuguese policies of forced labor and forced cultivation have been stopped and agriculture reorganized in many places on a cooperative basis. Despite the destruction of war, production of food has increased. Eighty percent of the land being farmed in liberated Mozambique is under cultivation for the first time.

Non-agricultural goods have been in short supply in the liberated zones, Asian and European traders having withdrawn from these areas. FRELIMO has responded by organizing cooperatives for the import of textiles and other essentials via Tanzania. Also some small scale industries have been established. Tremendous efforts have been made in the field of education. When the northern provinces were liberated, for example, African education was almost unknown. By 1971, 20,000 children were attending schools, staffed by 250 teachers. Extensive medical programs provide care for war victims and popularize techniques of preventative medicine. One statistic suggests the extent of this work: 3,485 persons were treated from September 1968 to August 1969 at a single FRELIMO hospital in Cabo Delgado. The FRELIMO Women's Detachment has established an orphanage, and other welfare and development projects have begun.





A Portuguese prisoner inside Mozambique. FRELIMO seeks to exchange them or to help them leave for the country of their choice if they do not wish to return to Portugal.

As the military struggle has expanded and as lives have been transformed inside Mozambique, so has FRELIMO's ideology developed. FRELIMO defines the enemy not as Portuguese colonialism alone, but as all forms of exploitation of people everywhere. Mozambicans view their struggle as part of a world wide effort to destroy colonialism and imperialism; they see themselves as tied to all peoples who fight against oppression. Exploitation in the forms of tribalism, oppression of women, and capitalism are being fought from within. The Mozambican struggle, in the words of President Samora Machel, is "not only an armed struggle, it is a revolutionary struggle, a struggle to create a new society . . . a new man . . . a new mentality."

While the war of liberation continues, much of the energies of the Mozambican people must continue to be devoted to fighting. Sacrifices are great. Among the losses sustained by the Mozambicans was the assassination of FRELIMO's first President Eduardo Mondlane on February 3, 1969 by a Portuguese bomb. Of the deaths of Mondlane and of other freedom fighters, the FRELIMO Central Committee said: "Out of Mozambican blood, shed for justice, new warriors spring up and their forces are multiplied by consciousness." Today in 1971, the struggle continues with increased energy.

PARTNERS IN OPPRESSION

Portugal's war in Africa has many parallels with the United States' war in Vietnam. It is a war waged mostly from the air in which sophisticated bombs and napalm are dropped on a non-white peasant population. It is accompanied by forced resettlement of villagers into "strategic hamlets." The significant difference between the two wars is that in Vietnam the U.S. is paying for its own war, while Portugal could never sustain its African

war without massive military and non-military support from South Africa and from its NATO allies, especially France, Germany, and the U.S.

South Africa aids Portugal both economically and militarily. In fact South Africa is second only to Portugal among Mozambique's trading partners. It is now financing one half to two thirds of the Cabora Bassa Dam project which is expected to provide over 1500 megawatts of power. The building of Cabora Bassa gives South Africa an excuse to maintain troops in Mozambique. (A similar situation exists in southern Angola where the Portuguese and South Africans are building another dam complex on the Kunene River.) At least one South African batallion is said to have been helping to guard the Cabora Bassa Dam site.

Portugal, which spends almost half its national budget on defense yet builds scarcely any of its own weapons, must rely on powerful friends besides South Africa. Most of its military equipment comes from its Nato allies.

Despite UN appeals and NATO guarantees, both stating the NATO weapons should not be used in Portugal's African wars, American and European planes and weapons flow regularly to Portugal's African territories. So it is that Portugal can fight in Mozambique with American fighters, bombers, transport planes, and trainers, with French transports and helicopters, with German and Italian fighters and bombers.

These planes are usually sent to Portugal under the pretext that they will be used only in Europe. But early in 1971 it was learned that the U.S. had authorized the sale of two Boeing 707's to Portugal to be used for transporting troops to Africa; according to State Department officials there is no restriction on the use of these planes. And in May, Bell Helicopter of the Textron Corporation of Fort Worth, Texas was authorized to sell five helicopters to Portugal for use in the Tete Province of

Mozambique.

Planes are perhaps the most deadly weapon from NATO powers being used in the Portuguese wars. Portugal also gets ships, jeeps, tanks, and small arms. Furthermore, Portugal's airforce is NATO trained, and its officers attend counter-insurgency courses sponsored by NATO and the U.S.

Portugal also receives massive non-military aid, in the form of trade and investment. An underdeveloped country itself, Portugal maintains a neo-colonial relationship with investors in the richer Western nations. Two thirds of all investments in Portugal and its colonies are now made directly or indirectly by foreign companies.

But the international pressure is beginning to build up against the economic support which Portugal receives in Africa. Pressure is being applied to members of the Cabora Bassa Dam consortium. Swedish and Italian firms have already dropped out of the project. This spring, at the stockholders' meeting of Alcan Aluminum Ltd., a group of Canadians protested the sale of 6,000 tons of aluminum rods to a Portuguese company for use in the Cabora Bassa Dam; an English group also protested the involvement of Barclays Bank in the project. In May the General Electric Company of the U.S. submitted but then withdrew an application from the U.S. Export-Import Bank to finance a \$55 million transformer system for the dam. This leaves West Germany and France, together with South Africa, to play the key roles in the consortium.

SUPPORT FOR THE PEOPLE OF MOZAMBIQUE

In opposition to Portugal, South Africa and their NATO friends is an alliance of progressive forces, increasing in strength and numbers. Included in this alliance are:

(1) The Organization of African Unity (OAU), which has formally recognized and supported the liberation movements since its inception in 1963,

(2) A majority of the members of the United Nations, who have adopted resolutions condemning the policies of racism and colonialism practiced by both South Africa and Portugal,

(3) The World Council of Churches, which last year donated \$15,000 to FRELIMO. This year \$20,000 was granted.

In June, 1970, a conference of 177 groups from 64 western countries met in Rome for study and to devise "ways of developing political, moral, and material solidarity with the struggling peoples of the Portuguese colonies." The Pope, at this meeting, recognized for the first time the true representatives of the people of Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau by receiving the FRELIMO, MPLA and PAIGC delegates in an audience.

WHAT WE CAN DO:

The people of Mozambique are fighting for independence, for an end to Portuguese colonial oppression and imperialism in Africa. We as Americans should aid that struggle, not only because it is just, but also because western—particularly American—imperialism is affecting our own lives. There are several ways in which

we can lend support and solidarity to the people of Mozambique:

Keep informed on developments in Mozambique; write for the "News and Notes" of the Committee for a Free Mozambique; subscribe to *Mozambique Revolution*, the bulletin of FRELIMO, at P.O. Box 15274, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Then *Inform Others!* *Work for Change in US Policy.* Mobilize people to demand changes in American governmental policy toward Portugal, such as the supplying of arms to Portugal through NATO. Demand that US corporations such as Gulf Oil cease their support of the Portuguese war effort. *Aid FRELIMO, the Liberation Movement, Directly.* FRELIMO needs money, clothes, medical and educational supplies, and communications equipment such as radios, cameras, tape recorders, etc.

You can contribute to the freedom struggle either by sending your material aid directly to FRELIMO, through the FRELIMO representative in New York, or via the Committee for a Free Mozambique, a private American organization. The Committee for a Free Mozambique is presently sending monthly pledges from donors all over the country to FRELIMO, and conducting a campaign for radios and medical supplies.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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VENCEREMOS

