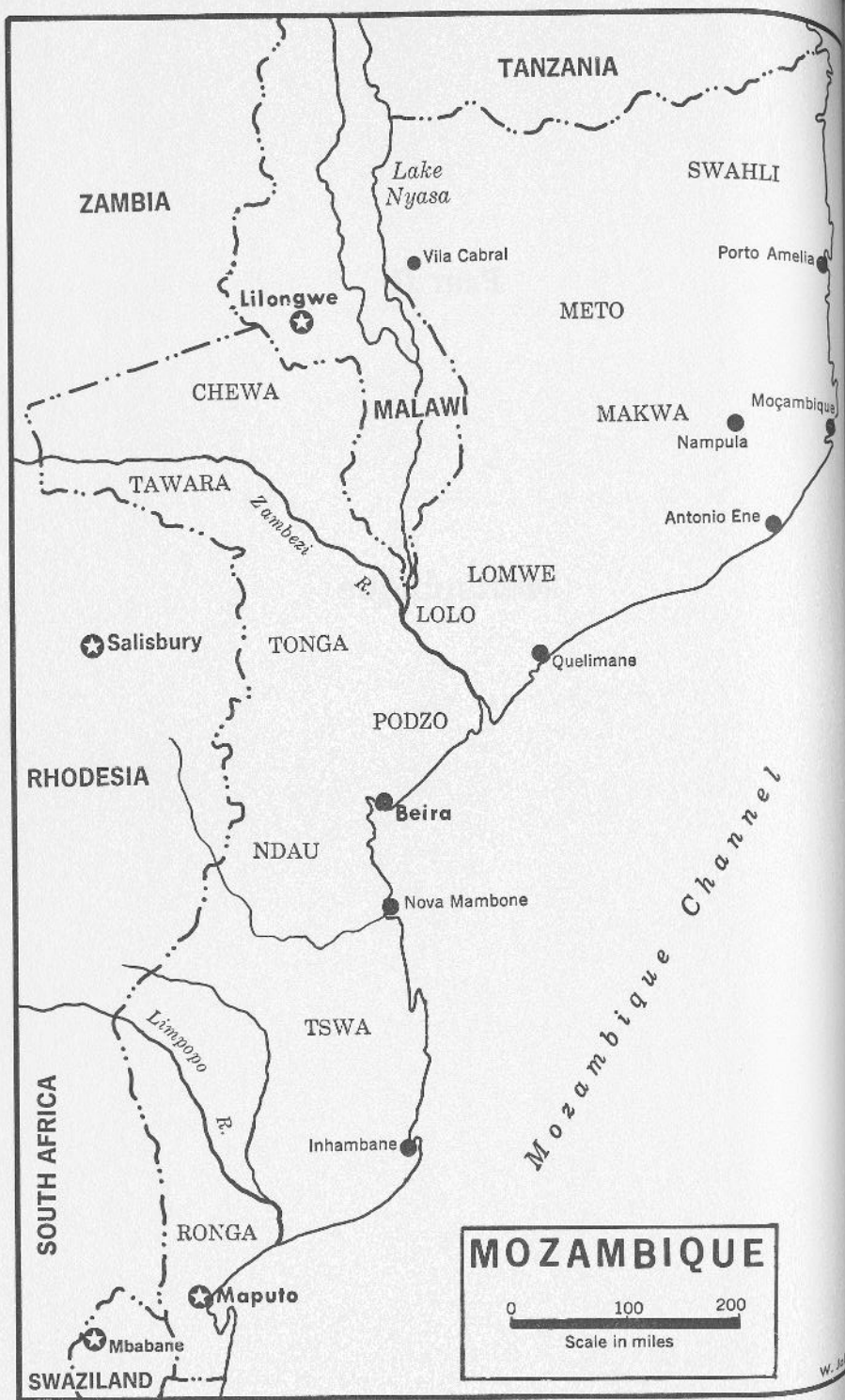


PART II

Mozambique



XI The Mozambique Detonator

Mozambique was the last of Portugal's mainland African colonies to rise up in armed revolt. Angola, 1961; Guiné-Bissau, 1963; Mozambique, 1964. That was the timetable. It is tempting to think that there was some super-body who pressed the buttons to bring each of them on to the battlefield against Portuguese colonialism according to a pre-arranged plan. But armed liberation struggles do not work like that. People can be brought to take up arms only when every other means of obtaining independence has been exhausted. A feature common to each of the three struggles was popular reaction to some especially revolting act of repression by local, bloody-minded military commanders of the Portuguese fascist government—a government determined to stamp out any sparks carried into the Portuguese colonies from the fires of independence burning elsewhere in Africa at that period.

The reaction of Lisbon and the strong-arm generals in the African colonies was a standard reflex of maximum terror to crush even the most innocent signs of yearning for the independence that was being granted, or had been wrested by force of arms, in neighboring British, French, and Belgian colonies. The distribution of pro-independence tracts in Luanda in March, 1959; a dockers' strike at the Bissau Pidgiguiti docks in August, 1959, and a peaceful pro-independence demonstration at Mueda, in northern Mozambique in June, 1960, were all suppressed with unbridled ferocity. They had been in the past, too. But the winds of successful armed resistance were blowing strongly from several parts of the world—especially from Vietnam and Cuba—and produced a cross-fertilization of ideas among a group of ardent patriots from the Portuguese colonies who were later to lead their peoples to victory. They had come to a conclusion best summed up by Amílcar Cabral, the founder and leader—until he was assassinated by PIDE agents—of the PAIGC (Party for the Independence of Guiné-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands):

It is obvious from all the facts that violence is the essential means of imperialist domination. If, then, we accept the principle that national liberation equals revolution, and is not simply a matter of raising a flag or singing an anthem, we shall find that there is and there can be no national liberation without the use of liberating violence on the part of the national forces.¹

The example of what happened at Mueda on June 16, 1960, will remain a classic illustration of Amílcar Cabral's words. Due to the accelerated process of Portuguese colonialist repression in Mozambique after World War II—the eviction of peasants from the most fertile lands to make way for Portuguese peasant settlers, the sale of labor to South Africa to work under slave conditions in the Rand gold mines—there was considerable flight into exile in neighboring countries such as what was then Tanganyika, Nyasaland, Northern and Southern Rhodesia, South Africa. The more politically minded among the exiles—and they were numerous—identified themselves with the independence movements in those countries. They supported UNIP (United National Independence Party) in Northern Rhodesia, which was soon to become Zambia; TANU (Tanganyika African National Union) in what was to become the ruling party in independent Tanzania; the Malawi Congress Party in Nyasaland, which was to become independent Malawi; ZAPU (Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union) in Southern Rhodesia (ZANU [Zimbabwe African National Union] was not yet in existence at this time). In South Africa, they worked underground with the ANC (African National Congress). They rejoiced and identified themselves with the success of some of these movements when Tanzania, Zambia, and Malawi won their independence; as well as black African countries further afield in Kenya and Uganda. The exiles saw that it was possible to have political activities and organizations and to work for a peaceful transition to independence. They started to organize themselves to this end.

In Tanganyika, they formed the MANU (Makonda African National Union) based on a large tribal grouping in northern Mozambique, which later changed its name to Mozambique African National Union. In Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, UNAMI (National African Movement of Independent Mozambique) was formed; and in Southern Rhodesia, UDENAM (Mozambique National Democratic Union). Once they successfully developed political activity outside Mozambique, the big problem was how to get an independence movement going inside the country. What should the aims be? How to present them and get people organized? The leadership of MANU felt it was necessary to send a delegation to Mozambique, take the temperature of the situation and express their views to the Portuguese that as independence was in the air all over eastern Africa—why not for Mozambique?

At that time the idea that national liberation implied armed struggle was far from their minds. The idea was to start a dialogue—as their friends had done with the British in Tanganyika. How to improve the precarious living conditions which sent people like them into exile? How to deal with the questions of arbitrary arrest, forced labor, unemployment? There was a lack of schools and hospitals and a need for lower taxes. The idea was to use these claims as a platform around which to organize political struggle in case the Portuguese proved difficult. A first group was sent in to the district center of Mueda, in the heart of Makonda country. Heading it was a popular MANU leader, Faustino Vanomba. The local administrator refused to see him, or to accept the list of claims which had been put down on paper. He returned empty-handed to Tanganyika.

A second group was sent to Mueda—this time seven persons headed by another popular MANU leader, Simao Chucha. They were promptly arrested by the local administrator and deported to southern Mozambique. A single third delegate, Tiago Mula, was sent to find out what had happened to the second group. He was also arrested. Back in Tanganyika, the MANU leadership had no idea what was going on, whether anything had even been discussed, why their delegates had not returned. The head of MANU, Quibaité Duane, decided to come in person together with Faustino Vanomba of the first delegation. This time they took the precaution of infiltrating some of their members to alert the local people as to their visit and its purpose. Apparently the word spread like wildfire that “the men from Tanganyika are coming to solve our problems.” People started pouring into the district center. It was decided to organize a big welcoming meeting and in view of the popular excitement the local authorities gave permission for the meeting.

This time they were received and the Portuguese administrator listened to their claims—the same ones that Vanomba had brought in written form the first time. It was June 9, 1960. The reply was: “I have no competence to settle such matters, but I will transmit your claims to the provincial governor. You may return in a week's time. In the meantime, if you have families here, go and visit them and return on the 16th.” It seemed that the delegation and claims had made a big impression. Preparations went ahead for a big meeting on June 16. Throughout the whole of Cabo Delgado province the word spread to converge on Mueda for a

mass meeting outside the district headquarters. Even the local police encouraged people to participate. The following description, and the essential parts of the background information, came from a young schoolteacher—twenty-two years old at that time—who was an eyewitness:

There was great excitement. The delegates arrived early on the morning of the 16th, but people had been gathering in front of the district headquarters for two or three days, eager to see how their problems were going to be solved. The governor arrived from the provincial capital of Porto Amélia [now Pombos] at about 3 P.M. Thousands of people applauded when the delegates were invited into the secretariat. Soon they came out again. Then the governor came out and started to walk down the steps, escorted by the *cipaios* [local police]. Everyone was ordered to stand to attention while the flag was hoisted. People started shouting: "We haven't come to salute the flag but to learn how you are going to solve our problems." The governor stopped and said: "I've come to examine the situation in this province. The government thinks you can do much to solve the problems yourselves by working harder, by intensifying the cultivation of peanuts and the harvesting of cashew nuts."

The people shouted back: "We haven't come to discuss peanuts and cashew nuts. You called us here. We want to know what you discussed with our two leaders—what decisions have been taken."

The governor went back up the steps and into the building. But the people wouldn't leave. Some of them went into the secretariat with the two leaders. We didn't know what was discussed, but we heard sounds of a scuffle and blows. The delegates then came out again, surrounded by police who handcuffed them in front of the crowd. None of us could understand what was happening. The governor came out again and everyone started shouting: "We want to know what is going on." The governor said that anyone who wanted to speak should step forward. A few volunteers stepped forward and were taken into the secretariat. Again, we didn't know what happened. A few minutes later they came out into the hall—also handcuffed. The governor then signaled for some Land-Rovers lined up in front of the administration buildings and the police started pushing the delegates and the others toward the Land-Rovers.

The people—I also—started advancing toward the Land-Rovers shouting: "Why have they been arrested? You can't take them to prison. What have they done? You invited us to come. We won't leave until our demands are met." The *cipaios* started hitting people

with rifle butts and bayonets and the people struck back with stones. The *cipaios* then started firing and troops who had been hidden among shrubs and trees behind the headquarters started advancing and firing from behind with automatic weapons. As the people fled, troops and police fired into the crowd. People were just mowed down—women, children, old people—there were piles of dead and wounded everywhere. Over 600 people were killed. That was Mueda!

Why was the schoolteacher there? And how did he react?

From 1957, I had been following the political situation. The activities of the movements outside the country had their repercussions inside. MANU had more influence in Cabo Delgado and neighboring Niassa province; UDENAMO had more influence in Manica, Sofala, Gaza, and Lourenço Marques in the south; UNAMI also had some influence in Niassa, but was stronger in Tete and Zambezi provinces. At that time I was more attracted by MANU. My contacts were with them. I had started to do underground work for them—often receiving their cadres at night, carrying out small tasks. The Mueda massacre only confirmed what had been building up in the minds of many of us for years—the only way forward was by armed struggle. The following year, I went as a delegate from Cabo Delgado to a conference in Tanganyika where, on May 25, 1962, the three movements decided to unite in a single national liberation front. A protocol was signed by each of the three leaders to this effect and just one month later, on June 25, the three organizations dissolved themselves to form FRELIMO—Front for the Liberation of Mozambique—with Eduardo Mondlane as its president. I thus became a founder-member of FRELIMO. The other Cabo Delgado delegate Joao Namimba, like Eduardo Mondlane, was later assassinated by the PIDE.

Writing of this period later in his fundamental and masterly work, *The Process of the People's Democratic Revolution in Mozambique*, Samora Machel, who succeeded Eduardo Mondlane as FRELIMO president, summed up the situation, starting with the difficulties of getting a unity of viewpoint among the three movements:

These elements had lived for a long time outside of Mozambique without direct contact or real knowledge of the existing situation. Their political experience was acquired in close association with

nationalist organizations of Rhodesia, Malawi, Zambia, Tanganyika, Kenya—organizations which through demonstrations, strikes, and other nonviolent actions created a situation which led the colonial power to negotiations resulting in an initial phase of internal autonomy and ultimately independence.

These elements confused the situation of a developed colonial power like Great Britain with the situation in Portugal, an underdeveloped, nonindustrialized country with the status of a semi-colony. They ignored the distinction between a bourgeois democracy—where, after all, national and international public opinion play a role, where issues can seriously be raised in parliament—and a fascist country where censorship and political repression prevent any display of opposition. . . .

Writing about the course of events which led to acceptance of armed struggle, Samora Machel cited the massacres at Xinavane (1949) and at Mueda; the brutal repression of strikes by miners, railway workers, and others; the contempt by Portugal for various anticolonialist resolutions at the United Nations and other factors which, taken together, “clearly showed that the only way to liberation was armed struggle.” The fact that this was not clear to everybody, including some of the leaders of the three movements united together in FRELIMO, was proved by the subsequent course of events.

It was clear enough however to the Mueda schoolteacher who, like another schoolteacher later to become famous as General Vo Nguyen Giap, drew the right conclusions and reached for a gun. At the time I talked with him, former schoolteacher Alberto-Joaquim Chipande was Minister of Defense of the People’s Republic of Mozambique. Like Giap, he led the very first armed action which led into the full-fledged armed liberation struggle. As Giap and Ho Chi Minh had done with the cream of the French, and later the American, Generals Chipande and Samora Machel ran rings around the best generals that Portugal could field.

It was appropriate that the former schoolteacher received me in the briefing room where Portugal’s most prestigious—and most ferocious—military leader, General Kaulza Oliveira de Arriaga, used to brief his officers on his latest “win the war” plans. But how did he come to be there? It was an obvious first question and the first part of the reply was his account of the Mueda massacre.

After FRELIMO was formed, I was sent to Algeria to get some military training. In June, 1964, I got orders directly from President Mondlane to start military action. Eduardo Mondlane’s instructions were very precise: “You were sent by the people. You are a son of the people. You should now return to the people to start armed struggle.” It was a period of great persecution. The PIDE was very active and even though I quickly got close to our frontier, it took me and my group of about thirty, two months to actually cross the border. People were demobilized and demoralized because of the great wave of repression which had followed the Mueda massacre, including the bloody suppression of strikes. Eduardo Mondlane had instructed us to “clearly define who is the enemy.” Arms are to be used against whom? Against the Portuguese army, police, and the whole administrative machinery which oppresses and massacres our people. On the other hand, all civilians, whoever they are, are part of the people. “You will protect them, whatever their race or religion. Civilians are not our enemies—they must be protected. Advance, and we will tell you when to start the war. Create suitable conditions.” Once we crossed the frontier, we advanced. I was told to go to Cabo Delgado [Mozambique’s northernmost province with a frontier of over 250 kilometers with Tanzania, extending from Niassa province to the Indian Ocean].

We continued to advance, dropping off small groups to organize support, so we could attack on as many fronts as possible. It was up to me, as head of the group, to choose the first target. The Portuguese controlled all the highways so it was quite difficult to continue advancing. We marched by night, mainly barefoot through the forest, so as not to leave any traces. However, for all our care, by the time we got to Macomia—about one hundred kilometers southeast of Mueda—the Portuguese got wind of our presence. Their vigilance was stepped up and there were arrests in the areas through which we had passed. I sent word back that it was difficult to advance farther and asked for permission to attack where we were, so as to mark the date of launching armed struggle as soon as possible. A messenger arrived on September 15, [1964] with the word to attack on September 25.

We held a meeting of group commanders on the 20th to work out plans and tactics. It was agreed that as this was to be the historic signal for launching people’s war, the very first attack must be made in cooperation with the local people. All clandestine FRELIMO workers in the area were contacted and we explained that on the night of September 24 bridges should be destroyed and roads blocked by felling trees or digging ditches across them.

My group of twelve was to attack Chai, a small administrative

center about forty kilometers northwest from where we were at Macomia.

We marched the whole night of the 23rd and slept in the forest, without anything to eat. The same on the night of the 24th. We were in position at 3 A.M. on the 25th. But how to attack? The Portuguese had defense units, sentries. We didn't even know how many or how they were disposed. I gave orders to call off the attack for that night and withdraw. Some of our comrades objected strongly. I said: "We've had nothing to eat or drink for three days. We'll withdraw and rest up." Others objected: "After coming so far, we can't stop now." My reply was: "We don't know the real situation. Perhaps we will kill civilians by mistake." So we marched back fifteen kilometers and rested alongside a small lake. There at least we had water, also dense forest for protection.

We decided to send a scout into Chai early next morning. He was in civilian clothes, a valid identity card in his pocket, and bandages around one leg—pretending he had to enter the hospital. We had given him money to buy some peanuts and manioc for us. He got into the administrative courtyard and was able to contact some prisoners. They told him where the police were stationed and how many, and where the sentinels were posted. He came back and drew a map of the situation. We worked out a plan, ate some manioc and peanuts, and set out immediately after sundown. We surrounded the building and advanced to within fifteen to twenty meters of the positions guarding the barracks. At just 9 P.M., one of our men tried to grab a sentry from behind, but there was a pillar in between and he just couldn't get his hands right around him. There was a scuffle and I ordered that the sentry be shot. He was killed and that was the first shot in our armed struggle. There was a sharp gun battle and the Portuguese started hurling grenades from inside the post.

We withdrew without loss. The armed struggle had started. The next day many people fled to join us in the forest, including one of those in the post when we attacked. He said we had killed the head of the post and five others and that there was tremendous panic. He immediately asked to join our unit—and was accepted.

By one of those fortunate coincidences with which diligent journalists are occasionally rewarded, I met another of the "Chai Twelve," Comandante Martinis Mola Muainkongua. He is an enormous man, at least six feet tall and well proportioned, with a massive head and jaws, and his face is entirely covered with tattoo scars of the Makonda tribe. At the time I met him, he was in charge of a re-education center in Inhumbane province. At the

end of the visit, as is my custom, I asked where he had been during the armed struggle. "I was a battalion commander, from 1964, in Cabo Delgado," he replied. I asked if he had been there at the time of the attack on Chai. "Yes, I took part in it." His account was similar to that of Defense Minister Chipande, with a few extra details.

"We were only a small group with very few arms. But we had one French light machine gun. Some of the local population joined in. The Portuguese were taken by surprise but started firing back and throwing hand grenades very quickly. We dispersed singly and regrouped at the agreed rendezvous point later. A second group attacked a post at Diaca [less than 50 kilometers east of Mueda—W.B.] and fared better than us because they captured two 7.7 cm. elephant guns. The main thing was that the armed struggle was launched."

"How did the Portuguese react?"

"They started thrusts into the jungle to find us. At first in two or three truckloads. It was easy to ambush them and get plenty of weapons. We gradually built up a stock of arms. But our first work was political—getting people ready for the idea that we were going to fight. We had to persuade them to move back with us into the forest—away from roads and built-up areas."

"When you attacked at Chai did you think that it would take ten years till final victory?"

"We never even thought about that. All that mattered was that we had decided to fight. Better to die on our feet than live under colonialism."

"How many of the original twelve survived?"

"All of us, starting with our leader, Alberto-Joaquim Chipande."

A ludicrously modest beginning, many FRELIMO members must have thought, even a hopeless, reckless venture. After all the political preparation and training, after all the marching and risks—two elephant guns! And an irrevocable challenge flung down to an experienced colonial power with a modern army and powerful Western friends. But, by the very conditions which force patriots to such a desperate enterprise, national liberation struggles have to start from zero—at least materially. From nothing except revolutionary vision and optimism but based on a clear and realistic appraisal of what comes next.

Total Portuguese control of information at home and abroad prevented news of the armed revolt in Mozambique from getting to the outside world for a long time, but the word spread like wildfire inside Mozambique and, from that viewpoint, the attacks against Chai and Diaca achieved precisely what the FRELIMO leadership intended.

XII Lighting Fuses

The echoes of the shots fired at Chai and Diaca reverberated through the forests and mountains of Cabo Delgado and the neighboring northern province of Niassa, arousing hope in the minds of some and fear in others. Firing the first shot is a solemn and irrevocable step. Not one for faint hearts to take. Once firearms are used, you have to be prepared to go through to the end. The enemy's reaction is predictably swift and savage, especially in the case of a long-established colonial power trying to put

down an armed revolt. Even within the leadership of national liberation movements there are always those who, fiery and militant as they may be in debate, shrink from the ultimate decision to launch armed struggle. These dive for cover, hands over their ears, when the first shots ring out. FRELIMO was no exception, as Samora Machel pointed out. There were those who wanted only political struggle, as in the former British colonies.

Opposition to armed struggle blocked the liberation process. To solve this contradiction in the interests of the masses, erroneous conceptions had to be dealt with. . . . A first group with Baltazar Chakonga and other former leaders of UNAMI and MANU withdrew from FRELIMO because they were opposed to the principle of armed struggle. Another group with Gumane and former leaders of UDENAMO and MANU underestimated the real strength of the enemy because they had not studied it. They thought that some violent and terroristic actions would be enough to push the enemy to capitulate. In reality this was also opposition to the principle of armed struggle because they wanted armed actions to be launched without any prior mobilization of the masses, without any preparation of cadres who would orient and direct the process.

The process was carried out by careful preparation of cadres and the meticulous work of those cadres in winning over the people and getting them to accept and support armed struggle. The following account from a gnarled old veteran, Mueva Macuta, from the village of Muidumbe in Mueda district, is typical of scores I heard:

One day I was contacted by a FRELIMO militant. He gave a long and detailed explanation about the aims and organization which would lead our people to freedom. A few days later I told my wife I had some "very important secret information." This was that there would be armed struggle. We decided to flee from the colonialist-controlled village. It was the most important moment in our lives. We were going to take to arms for the liberation of our people. We knew that the only way to avoid another Mueda-type massacre, in which many of our friends were murdered, was to go deep into the forest.

Then we heard about the attacks on Chai and Diaca on September 25. We felt we had to organize to help the comrades who had done this. But what could elderly people like us do? In fact everyone could do something. My weapon was a mattock to help feed the

soldiers. Of course there were difficulties. We had to cut down trees to make cabins in the forest. At first there was no water; we went for days without drinking anything. We had practically no clothes. But we had sworn that we would never return to live under colonialist domination and that we would put up with anything to bring off victory.

Mueva Macuta and his wife were thus psychologically and ideologically and even organizationally prepared for those first shots. They were ready to stay with the fight till the end. At Mataca, a hilly, forested area in the southwestern corner of Niassa province, Comandante Laitone Dias, a stocky, powerfully built cadre charged with implanting the first communal villages in the area when I met him, explained how this preparatory work was done. In 1965, at the age of twenty-six, he had been sent by FRELIMO into the Mataca area, to prepare for the extension of armed struggle into Niassa province the following year. His functions were those of a political commissar.

My task was to arouse the political consciousness of the people, to prepare them psychologically for armed struggle. It was not easy. The first difficulty was to persuade people that FRELIMO really intended to fight. Once that was accepted—and many were scared—I had to persuade those who would listen that not only would we fight, but we would win. That was still more difficult to accept. But it was normal. People could see the strength of the enemy, it was more difficult for them to see our latent strength. We never tried to create illusions. We were prepared ourselves, and we set out to prepare the people for a long, hard struggle. And mine was a long, hard task. But people started to believe in our determination; that we were not alone. The fight was going on not only in neighboring Cabo Delgado, and not only in Mozambique, but in Angola and Guiné-Bissau as well. And in Vietnam and other parts of the world. We had the support of progressive forces everywhere and the socialist world.

Gradually people came round to the idea that we would fight and win. Then came the toughest part. To persuade them to leave their villages and move deep into the forest, away from roads and built-up areas, so as to avoid reprisals once the fighting started. To do this meant real commitment. Some could not face the prospects of life in the forest. They abandoned the villages but fled over the borders into Tanzania and Malawi.

In Niassa, there was no attack on Portuguese posts, as there had been in Cabo Delgado, to initiate the armed struggle. It

started in the Mataca area, when one fine morning the Portuguese found a number of villages completely deserted. Mataca is an area of seemingly endless, silvery forests of trees which grow to a remarkably uniform height, then seem to spread out at the top rather than push any higher. From the air, the forest gives the impression of a well-clipped lawn; and although it is infinitely less dense than the Vietnamese jungle, protection from aerial reconnaissance is almost as great. The armed action started when Portuguese patrols were sent to locate the vanished villagers. According to Comandante Dias:

The first phase was when they started sending columns on foot to find the new villages. We ambushed them and grabbed weapons and ammunition.

The next phase was that of sending in armored cars. We planted mines and blew them up. Each phase was separated by a long period while the Portuguese decided what to do next. This gave us time for training and consolidation and to get production going in the new villages. Also to get fresh supplies of better weapons down from the frontier areas.

The third phase was when the enemy used reconnaissance planes to locate the villages, then bombing those they managed to find. We fired at their planes and occasionally brought one down.

The fourth phase was divided into two parts. The Portuguese started using heliborne troops to encircle the villages.

At first they had a regular pattern of operations. A reconnaissance plane would come over. If it found something, it would be followed by three fighter-bombers to bomb and strafe. Then seven to eight helicopters with troops. We hit back and often managed to knock down a helicopter. Later they used a "recce" plane, four bombers, and twelve to fifteen big helicopters. By that time they had started setting up *aldeamentos* [Vietnamese-type "strategic hamlets"] in which they herded any villagers they could grab. They would just bundle anyone they could lay hands on into the copters and fly them off to the nearest *aldeamento*.

This started a tug-of-war. Our troops, supported by the people living in the area where an *aldeamento* had been set up, and by those inside, would attack to help them break out. They would go back into the forest and the Portuguese would try to round them up again. This phase lasted until the end, with the Portuguese pushing in toward our strongholds and establishing posts while we attacked their posts and cut communications. By the end of the war they had twenty military posts ranging from platoon to battalion strength, but by then

we either controlled or had cut all the roads between these posts. Then we started encircling them and wiping them out one by one. Nothing of this would have been possible without the total support of the people in the new villages—which were our bases and local headquarters.

One of the rather moving aspects of the struggle in Mozambique was the illustration it afforded of solidarity of neighbor states—in this case, Tanzania and Zambia—as soon as they were in a position to help. Tanzania, for instance, only gained its independence in December, 1961, becoming a republic within the British Commonwealth a year later. Very shortly after FRELIMO was founded, it was able to open an office in Dar es Salaam. Later on, bases for military training were opened up; and once the armed struggle in Mozambique started, it was nourished with arms which had been transited through Tanzania. Thus, the first two provinces to begin armed struggle were Cabo Delgado and Niassa, which between them have over 600 kilometers of frontier with Tanzania.

Similarly, once Zambia had consolidated its independence, gained in October, 1964, and the armed struggle had developed sufficiently in Cabo Delgado and Niassa, it was possible to open up a new front in the vital Tete province, which has some 400 kilometers of frontier with Zambia. (It goes without saying that in its turn, Mozambique, within a year of winning its independence, was providing the same sort of base, training, hospital, supply, and other facilities for the Zimbabwe freedom fighters as Angola was providing Namibia); and militant black solidarity of this type was clearly a source of enormous encouragement to militants across Mozambique's southern frontier in South Africa.

The importance of this support for FRELIMO can be judged from the pattern of military developments. The first actions took place within about one hundred kilometers of the northern frontiers. Gradually the areas in which the actions took place were denied to the enemy and consolidated into bases from which the liberation forces could steadily push south. This was how it was, first with Cabo Delgado, then with Niassa. Four years after Chai and Diaca, something similar started in Tete. If the pace seemed agonizingly slow, what were a few years when the stake was ending 500 years of colonial domination? The opening of a front in

Tete province was a bitter pill for the Portuguese to swallow. Rich in minerals, including uranium, gold, copper, titanium, beryllium, bauxite, coal, iron ore, manganese, and wolfram, it is also the province of the Cabora Bassa Dam (which ties with the Grand Coulee in the U.S.A. for fourth place in the world's great hydroelectric complexes). The Portuguese believed that Cabora Bassa, and the heavy South African investment in its construction, plus the importance of Tete's largely unexploited minerals, could be a means of internationalizing the war if FRELIMO pushed things too hard. In the provincial capital—also called Tete—was the headquarters of the Zambezi Planning Council, which was controlled directly from Lisbon, bypassing the Mozambique colonial administration. Ostensibly its competencies were an ambitious development scheme for the valley of the Zambezi, which flows through Tete, virtually cutting the province in half. Ten thousand square kilometers bigger than the whole of Portugal, the population of Tete was only 600,000—about one tenth that of the colonial power. From the rugged mountains which lead up to the frontier with Malawi in the east, heavily forested hills and plains stretch almost 600 kilometers to the frontier with Rhodesia. The whole of the territory north of the Zambezi river stretching up to the Zambian border is excellent for guerilla activities as far as cover is concerned, although water is a problem in the dry season.

António Hama Thai, a big handsome man with a gleaming smile, now Governor of Tete province and the dynamic leader of FRELIMO's armed forces there during the war, explained the general strategy and tactics of the guerilla forces:

We divided the province up into four operational sectors, three north of the Zambezi and one to the south. The two northernmost sectors, leading to the frontiers with Zambia and Malawi respectively, were opened up first and then consolidated for the transiting of supplies and as bases for advance into the other two sectors. Once the latter two were consolidated, they were to serve as base and transit areas for advances further south and east.

The enemy had relatively strong forces stationed in the provincial capital: around the Cabora Bassa Dam site, which they turned into a formidable fortress with a military headquarters at Estima; and also at Changara—a road junction ninety kilometers southwest of Tete and only fifty kilometers from the Rhodesian border on the Tete-Salisbury highway. There were regular Portuguese army, navy

and air force units, commandos, special force units, PIDE, and volunteer companies formed from local Portuguese settlers.

We had to dispose our forces according to those of the enemy, although not in the same numbers. Our main activities were road-cutting operations and ambushes. Guerilla units operated under each of the four sector commands. They could operate as single units, or several together in a coordinated action.

For instance, to deal with a convoy of thirty to forty trucks escorted by twenty to thirty armored cars or other military vehicles, we would use several units amounting to between seventy-five and 150 men, disposed along the estimated length of the convoy. After a sharp coordinated attack, the units would withdraw immediately and rush to other positions along the route of the convoy. In this way we could hit the same convoy four or five times, by which time there was usually not much left of it.

Apart from the losses in men and weapons inflicted on the enemy, it slowed them up tremendously. After we got more experience, it would take the enemy up to fifteen days to cover the 147 kilometers from Tete city to Cabora Bassa. For longer hauls it would take them up to ninety days. We cut all subsidiary roads so the only ones left open were those leading from Tete to Cabora Bassa, and from Tete to the Rhodesian and Malawi frontiers respectively. This made it easier to concentrate our forays for ambushes on those roads.

After two years of consolidation in the northern sectors, we were able to cross the Zambezi and extend our operations into the southern sector. That was in 1970. Two years later, we had pushed the armed struggle into Manica and Sofala province [of which the port city of Beira is the capital]. By that time, the Portuguese only controlled Tete city, the Cabora Bassa construction site, and the three main highways along parts of which they had established *aldeamentos*, into which they herded whomever they managed to round up in their helicopter raids. All the rest was a liberated zone in which an entirely new type of life was being built up. For the first time people knew what it was to live without foreign oppressors on their backs. And if the highest level of free life until that time was in the liberated zones, the highest level of oppression was in the enemy-controlled *aldeamentos*. Our people well understood the contrast!

In the name of "fighting terrorism" colonial powers and local dictators go over to the highest stage of terrorism, one aspect of which is the concentration camp village. Another is the My Lai type of massacre. A standard type of reprisal was described by

N'dlovo Chaca, another of the old veterans of the struggle in Tete. He was from Furancungo, a district town less than fifty kilometers from the border with Malawi, on the Tete-Malawi highway. He had joined FRELIMO in January, 1968, as he explained: "Because I felt the urge to fight against those who rounded us up for forced labor and arrested people for no reason at all." The preparatory political work seems not to have been as successful in his town as in other places, because people stayed where they were, even after the armed struggle started.

Shortly after the first shots were fired in Furancungo we were attacked. The Portuguese invaded our settlement, burned our houses and barns, killed our goats and pigs. On June 15, 1968, two helicopters attacked us. On that day, ninety-nine people in our village were killed. After that we fled and settled in another place close to the Zambia frontier. For some years, as was the aim of the massacre, there was no more resistance from our villagers. But later, the shot came back through the breach. It had only added to people's hatred. To see their families and friends gunned down only because they wanted to help the combatants—their children—this was something they could never forget. When we got settled in the new village, people started saying: "We have to pay them back." Word was sent to a local FRELIMO headquarters to send arms and soldiers and we would help them. We even formed a women's detachment and set up a special unit to transport arms from the frontier.

The Furancungo massacre was one of many such at the start of the armed struggle in Tete. They were obviously aimed at stamping out from the beginning any sparks of struggle wherever they appeared. Terror tactics were stepped up as more and more territory eluded Portuguese control and the carefully laid fuses of revolt led to explosions farther south and toward the Indian Ocean in the east. More and more, the massacres began to express the frustrated rage of the Portuguese command rather than any hope of a deterrent effect.

This seems the only explanation for what happened at Wiriamu, a village some twenty-five kilometers southwest of Tete city, on December 16, 1972. It was just a few months after the first explosions of revolt had been detonated in Manica and Sofala province, well to the south. On December 14, a small Portuguese

plane flying from Beira to Tete was hit by ground fire, which the authorities believed must have come from the general area of Wiriamu. The following day a Portuguese patrol sent to investigate the incident fell into a FRELIMO ambush. Portugal's most prestigious soldier, General Kaulza Oliveira de Arriaga, in his advance headquarters at Tete, considered this too much. The war was getting too close. All that remains of Wiriamu today is a bare, elevated piece of land bordered by a few dead trees with burn marks on the lower part of their trunks, a mound of stones to mark the spot where the inhabitants were buried by neighbors from nearby villages and a small wooden chest under a shelter, which contains a few skulls and bones found after the mass burial.

One of three known survivors of Wiriamu, João Xavier, a slim young farmer who has rebuilt a cabin on the outskirts of the former village, was working in the fields on Saturday morning, December 16. This is what he told me:

Around 11 A.M., I heard the sound of planes, then I saw trucks. They came right into the village and troops started jumping down and moving into positions all around the village. I dropped to the ground and hid in some bushes. The trucks pulled back and the troops moved around to join up with others which had arrived by helicopters. The Portuguese commander was accompanied by a Mozambican called Kangolongondo whom everyone knew was a PIDE agent. He went from hamlet to hamlet, roaring out that everyone must assemble in the center of Wiriamu. Almost everyone went, from the fields as well. After they were all assembled, the commander said, through Kangolongondo: "Today you will all die because you have been the 'kitchen' of the terrorists."

By then they were surrounded by the troops, who opened fire on them. People started running in all directions. The troops stopped firing and rounded everyone up again. The villagers were then tied up, men, women and children, their arms and legs bound and carried into the huts. Incendiary grenades were thrown in and I could hear the terrible screams and see the red flames and black smoke. [While this happened planes came and shot at all the cattle.] Almost everybody was killed on the spot, but a few who managed to flee were shot down by the planes and died trying to cross the river or of wounds even if they managed to reach the forest. After the Portuguese left I found two others alive and together we headed for the liberated zone.

Those who came from neighboring villages to discover what had happened buried the remains of 328 bodies, but it is believed that the real figure of those killed is closer to 400, many bodies having been carried away in the river into which scores of the wounded, according to João Xavier's eyewitness account, collapsed.

In June, 1970, General Kaulza de Arriaga, who could roughly be compared to France's General de Lattre de Tassigny in the first Vietnamese resistance war against the French, or to General William C. Westmoreland in the second resistance war against the United States—that is, their respective countries' most prestigious military strategists—announced the launching of the "Gordian Knot" war-winning operation in Mozambique. In the same briefing room in which the great man had announced this absolutely unbeatable strategy, I asked the former schoolteacher, Alberto-Joaquim Chipande, what it was all about and why it had failed.

It was Kaulza's reaction to the impasse in which the enemy was already finding himself. Until then, one must admit, the Portuguese did not use very sophisticated weapons. But in June, 1970, more modern weapons were supplied by Portugal's NATO allies. The French provided Alouette helicopters which Kaulza used as troop carriers. The Americans supplied jet planes. Our leader, Eduardo Mondlane, had been assassinated a few months earlier. Kaulza calculated that FRELIMO would be demoralized and that one powerful offensive could finish us off.

He had succeeded in infiltrating agents into our ranks to sow confusion and sap our confidence, to create dissensions and divisions. But the enemy never learns. Massacres and the assassination of Eduardo Mondlane only stiffened our resolve.

"Gordian Knot" was a "kill all, burn all, destroy all" type of operation aimed at penetrating the liberated zones, destroying not only FRELIMO bases, our armed forces, cadres, and organizations, but at the wholesale massacre of everyone within the liberated zones and everything that had been built up there. But Kaulza was too late. If "Gordian Knot" had been launched at the beginning of our struggle it is possible we would have been crushed. It was a well-prepared operation; from a professional military viewpoint it was well executed.

But we were ideologically far stronger—a point the importance of which the enemy never could grasp. We had come through an

important ideological crisis—a struggle between the revolutionary line originally launched by Eduardo Mondlane and strongly defended by Samora Machel, and the reformist line defended by Reverend Uria Simango and Lázaro Nkavandame.¹ The revolutionary line had won out. It was a question of for whom the war was all about.

We were somewhat fewer in numbers, but stronger and more united than ever. Kaulza had plenty of material—everything from planes and helicopters to bulldozers to push into our positions. But we gave them all a real hearty welcome. By the time “Gordian Knot” was launched we had accumulated six years’ experience of armed struggle under the most varied and impossible conditions. We beat it back and from then on we kept advancing until the end. We carried the battle into the enemy-controlled areas. No longer was it a question of just cutting roads and ambushing convoys, but of wiping out his fortified positions and garrisons. Kaulza’s offensive aimed at creating dissensions within FRELIMO had the opposite effect. We started our counteroffensive and never stopped until we had won the final victory.

XIII The Green Revolution

If peasants could be talked into abandoning their homes and hamlets and moving back into the unknown, deep into the forests, forewarned that life would be tough and dangerous, there must have been deep and compelling reasons. It was not the glib tongues of the FRELIMO cadres which made people say that the start of armed struggle was the “happiest,” “most important” day of their lives.

In the past any changes in their lives proposed by the Portuguese authorities had always been for the worse. They found that even when they thought they had reached the rock bottom of hopeless misery, there was still a lower depth being prepared for them. If they could be mobilized to risk their lives in ambushing convoys hauling material to the Cabora Bassa Dam, it was because the FRELIMO cadres could explain that one of the schemes of the Zambezi Planning Council was to use the waters of the dam to irrigate the Zambezi valley, expel the Africans living there, and settle up to one million Portuguese peasants in their place.

In their blood, in their legends, and as far back as family and clan memories could reach, it had always been like that. For five centuries they had been pushed around by the white overlords, more precisely pushed off the more fertile lands, pushed off those which had access to rivers and streams into marginal lands where only a starvation existence was possible. And the reward for generations of hard work in developing the marginal lands was to have them expropriated once their productive potential had been demonstrated. It was not quotes from Marx or Mao that persuaded people to join in or support armed struggle, or abandon their traditional lands to carve out new *machambas* and build new stick-and-mud cabins in the wilderness. It was because of what their lives had been for as long as any could recall.

The Portuguese masters were content—as far as the agricultural techniques of the Mozambicans were concerned—to let things remain as they had found them when Vasco da Gama dropped anchor at Mozambique Island, from which the country takes its name, in March, 1498. A simple fact illustrates this. When a UN mission arrived in Mozambique almost 500 years later, on April 7, 1976, to assess the type and quantity of economic aid needed to compensate for the severe losses incurred by the

People's Republic of Mozambique in implementing UN sanctions against Rhodesia, the request, as far as aid to agricultural production was concerned, was not for tractors or modern harvesting machinery. It was for one million hoes, one hundred thousand shovels, half a million jungle knives and machetes, two hundred thousand sickles and scythes, and fifty thousand axes! In traveling several thousands of kilometers through the country I saw only two plows, one drawn by a horse, the other by oxen. My interpreter was so excited in seeing the first of these that he asked the driver to stop so that we could take a picture. To illustrate progress!

Cultivation in the *machambas* was by the slash-and-burn method. Members of a clan move around in the same general area recognized by other clans as theirs, cutting down trees and burning clearings, which are cultivated in the best of cases by hoes and mattocks, but often enough by holes made in the ground with pointed sticks, into which the maize or other seeds were dropped.

The first colonists had been adventurers who grabbed as much land as they could, mobilized the Africans who lived on the lands they had seized into their private armies, and went to war against similar adventurers to decide whose domains should be the greater. These were replaced by royal charter companies somewhat similar, apparently, to the East India Company of notoriety which was the spearhead of British imperialist penetration of India. Since Portugal itself was not sufficiently developed economically to digest such huge colonies as Angola and Mozambique, the capital in the charter companies was mainly British, but also Belgian and Swiss, and of course partly Portuguese. Such companies, known as *companhia magistratura*, not only had the right to exploit the land granted to them, but the local population was considered in every respect as their "property," to be taxed, exploited as slaves, recruited into private armies—whatever the certified owners thought fit and profitable.

After the fascist regime took power in Portugal in 1926, Salazar—first as minister of finance, then prime minister—launched some new policies in an attempt to gain greater control over the colonies. He reduced the holdings of the charter companies and passed a law under which Portuguese peasants were encouraged to migrate to Mozambique, where they could have land for the asking. It was the start of real colonization, a colony of

settlers who would farm the land, export some of Portugal's own problems of population pressure in the overcrowded Tras-os-Montes region in the north, and the militant unemployed laborers from the latifundia in the south. From Salazar's viewpoint, this was a means of ensuring effective Portuguese control over the colony at a time when the first stirrings of demands for independence in Africa had become discernable.

Joaquim de Carvalho, a veteran FRELIMO militant who was appointed Minister for Agriculture when the People's Republic was set up, and who had made a profound study of the country's land problems, explained the consequences of the Salazar settler policy:

When the Portuguese settlers arrived, they looked around for land that they thought suitable and simply applied to the government for ownership rights. Government approval was virtually automatic and the settlers then had the right to governmental help to expel the "natives" in case they refused to leave voluntarily. That was the sort of situation with which FRELIMO was confronted when we started to launch our national liberation struggle. An exact statistical analysis showed that 0.2 per cent of landowners, virtually all Portuguese, owned 49.9 per cent of the cultivated land in holdings of over twenty hectares; another 23.6 per cent, mainly Portuguese, owned 26.4 per cent of the rest in holdings of from two to twenty hectares. The remaining 76.2 per cent of cultivators, working fields of well under two hectares, accounted for 23.7 per cent of the cultivated land. The actual figure was 1,258,000 families holding 1,184,000 hectares. The statistics by no means reveal the true situation, because the land held by the African cultivators was in the poor, infertile regions to which they had been expelled by the Portuguese settlers.

Of course we did not have these statistics at our disposal when we launched our struggle. But we had the picture of the acute misery, the conditions of almost permanent famine, the weight of the oppression if they raised their voices, in which the rural population lived. They were our natural allies once they grasped the fact that we were going to fight to change all that.

After Salazar came Caetano in 1968, but by then the armed struggle was launched and was sufficiently vigorous for Caetano to modify the land policy. His idea was to create a rural bourgeoisie—Portuguese mixed up with Africans—in farms of a hundred up to one thousand hectares, the proprietors of which would have a vested interest in defending their properties against our armed struggle.

Fortunately for us, they started too late. The Portuguese immigrants were poor people. They had neither machines, capital, nor farming know-how to work big holdings. Because of us, they could no longer use the old slave labor methods. Any attempt at forced recruitment of labor ended up in swelling the ranks of enthusiastic volunteers for our armed forces. The writing was all too clearly on the wall for Africans to want to become part of an African-Portuguese barrier against national liberation.

Tens of thousands of Portuguese *colon* families were, however, settled in the valley of the Limpopo river, which runs roughly parallel to the South African border in Mozambique's southern province of Gaza. African farmers were simply expelled from their lands. And over half a million Mozambique African farmer families were forced to abandon subsistence farming for their own consumption to grow cotton for the big, multinational companies which had acquired huge cotton-growing concessions. Dealing with the situation in agriculture at the time FRELIMO started armed struggle, Samora Machel made the following comment in the booklet referred to earlier:¹

It is certain that the unleashing of the armed struggle forced the colonial government to . . . step by step abolish forced agriculture in an attempt to win over the peasant masses and persuade them to abandon their demands. But the needs of the concession companies, which in the final analysis controlled the government, rapidly reasserted themselves and again started the system of compulsory crops within the framework of the *aldeamento* concentration camps, set up to isolate the population from FRELIMO. As a result more than a million and a half Mozambicans, about one sixth of the population—according to government statements—were interned in such camps where, under the threat of colonialist arms, they were forced to produce these products [essentially cotton, sugar, and sisal] later acquired at low prices by the companies which enjoy a purchasing monopoly.

Samora Machel pointed out that in 1961, producers in Israel received the equivalent of 12 *escudos* per kilogram of first-quality cotton, those in neighboring Rhodesia 6.97 *escudos*. Producers in Mozambique were at the bottom of the list with only 3.70 *escudos* for cotton of the same high quality. It was this that enabled the hopelessly antiquated Portuguese textile industry—with fifteen

per cent of the spindles over fifty years of age and the average well over twenty years—to compete on the home and international markets. He continued:

The implantation of European communities on lands expropriated from the African population is one of the constants of Portuguese colonial policy. There is a double objective: to absorb the unemployed rural manpower in Portugal; and to transform the European farmers into defense bastions of the colonial order. Various regions of our country have been the object of this practice—the Limpopo valley, Montepuez [Cabo Delgado], Marrupa and Gurué [Niassa], Vila Manica, and others. But because of its proportions, the plan to install over a million Europeans in the Zambezi valley acquires a special significance because this is a matter of modifying the ethnic composition of our country and of erecting a human barrier to the development of the liberation struggle. In this way conditions are prepared to distort the real content of our struggle, transforming it into a racial confrontation.

The creation of such settlements is radically opposed to the interests of the African rural communities. Plunder of the land and the transfer of the rural population to new zones systematically reduces them to misery and augments the supply of cheap labor for the companies and *colons*. A typical example was the creation of the Limpopo settlement in the second half of the 1950s, which blocked and destroyed the development of a prosperous African rural community, which was already integrated into the market economy, and which had laid the basis for mechanized agriculture.

Forced labor on company plantations, which is the basis for the fabulous profits of companies monopolizing sugar and sisal production, for instance, constitutes a particularly brutal form of exploitation of the rural workers. They are forced to abandon all their agricultural and handicrafts activities for a wage of less than five *escudos* for a working day of twelve to fifteen hours. More than a hundred thousand workers are subjected to such conditions every year.

Despite the expropriation of their lands and forced labor at token payments, a direct head tax of about twenty-five per cent of their annual revenue was imposed on the rural population and, together with indirect purchase and excise taxes on everything they purchased, it was this most impoverished section of the population, according to Samora Machel's survey, which contributed 29.8 per cent of revenue to the Mozambique colonial admin-

istration. They were financing their own repression. The FRELIMO president was basing his figures on the situation in 1970, when Kaulza Oliveira de Arriaga took over as Portugal's proconsul in Mozambique. In that year 45 per cent of government expenditure went for the war, 3 per cent for education and 2.6 per cent for public health. Obviously this meant education and public health mainly for the urban centers, which meant essentially for the white population. The magnificent sum of 1.5 per cent was allotted for "rural development." In the harsh light of such realities, Samora Machel explains that:

National liberation for the broad masses of the peasantry means a radical change in the situation of the peasantry; the abolition of forced labor; an end to the plunder of the land and its exploitation by company concessions; an end to the big plantations; liquidation of the practice of selling workers abroad; restructuring the tax system in favor of the workers. These demands amount to the dissolution of the colonial state; the state of compulsory crops and plantations; the state of dependency on imperialism as represented by the multinationals and of subservience to the South African mining interests and Rhodesian plantation agriculture.

Obviously it was easy for FRELIMO, or any other organization, to offer a more attractive alternative. It is equally obvious—as shown by the outcome of the struggle—that FRELIMO was able to convince the rural masses that they would abide by their pledges to transfer real power in the countryside to them. They did this in the liberated zones because it was the only way the FRELIMO armed forces—and the peasant producers who went deep into the forests with them—could survive. But history is rich in examples of the peasantry being used to win someone else's battles—notably those of the bourgeoisie in Europe against the feudal lords, or those of the feudal lords against absolute monarchs—and then being crushed in turn. An outsider with access to the history books can be excused a certain skepticism as to the rewards of peasant loyalty to a revolutionary cause. How is it working out in Mozambique? Perhaps in that first year of independence it was too early to say.

In any case the creation of communal villages was FRELIMO's concept of the reward. The first definition I heard of

what a communal village is, was during an impromptu halt on a remote road in the central coastal province of Zambezi. A group of mainly elderly people were constructing some buildings. Some were cutting slim saplings into even lengths; others were ripping strips of bark from freshly cut branches. These would be used to lash together the pointed poles that had been stabbed into the earth to form walls; and these walls would be plastered over with the mud which was already being softened up from nearby soil. Barefoot and bare-chested, trousers in tatters, these men with wrinkled, knobby faces as if roughly hewn from coal dropped their poles and strips of bark (but not their knives, I noted) and gathered around the Land-Rover as we stepped out.

To my somewhat obvious question as to what they were doing, the reply was: "We want to construct something good for the people."

"What exactly?"

"A communal village."

"What does that mean?"

"It means a village where we will live together and have our own hospital, a school, bathhouse, maternity clinic, a small orphanage for those who lost their parents in the war, a people's shop, a water tower, and a big hall for public meetings."

A wizened old man whose ribs could easily be counted, ticked off the various projects on his fingers as he replied. There was a mirthless sort of laugh when I asked if they did not have such elementary facilities before.

"For any of these we had to walk fifteen kilometers to Namacurra—the nearest district center—and if we carried someone who was seriously ill, we had to wait for hours at the hospital until the last white had been treated, even if he only had a sore finger or headache."

The group of fifty represented the "construction brigade" for that particular week of a scattered collection of peasants in the area who would soon move into the new communal village of Mutanse. Other brigades were out harvesting rice. For that season they still had individual *machambas* but they had been cultivated and were now being harvested collectively. Next season there would only be big cooperative fields. About 600 people would comprise the new village. Symbolic of a new outlook was the fact that the first building completed was the big meeting hall, capable at that time

of standing several hundred people. It was simply a big, thatched, sharply sloping roof, propped up by poles.

I saw similar scenes of building activity in my travels all over the country. In February, 1976, FRELIMO's Central Committee had approved a decree on establishing communal villages, the most audacious decision since that of launching armed struggle. It entails the complete restructuring of the countryside, a total break with old life styles and production methods. But like every other such measure it is not new for that part of the population which lived in the liberated zones where conditions of survival imposed such a collective style of life and work. Compared with the work of persuading peasants to abandon their homes and hamlets to start a new wartime life in the forest, the work of persuading them to abandon old individual habits for the promised land and benefits of collective life was clearly much easier. As part of the motivation for this revolutionary decision, an introductory part of the decree states:

The great mass of the Mozambique peasantry are dispersed all over the country, practicing subsistence farming. In agriculture the peasant family generally carries out its activity with poor-quality soil, practicing the hacking down of trees and undergrowth on small *machambas*, burning them down so as to proceed to sowing. The soil is not properly worked, the seed is not selected. Because no technical or financial assistance whatsoever is available, it is impossible to wage an effective struggle against various scourges such as rats and insects, or natural calamities such as flooded fields from torrential rains, which are far beyond their power to handle.

All this leads to an extremely low productivity of labor; to very small harvests providing only subsistence for the family and, in some cases, a small surplus. The latter is in general sold in its entirety to the *cantineiros* [literally, "innkeepers," almost exclusively Portuguese who held a monopoly on rural trading] who, representing the only commercial organization to which the peasants had access, imposed their well-known methods of exploitation. The *cantineiro* was the center of all commercial life in the countryside, buying at the lowest prices the surplus products of the peasant masses and selling at the highest possible prices essential products such as salt, pepper, textiles, etc.

This situation was aggravated by the isolation of the peasants in relation to each other, preventing them from organizing and combining their forces in the sense of controlling nature on the one hand,

and, on the other, constituting a force capable of resisting capitalist exploitation.

Another result of this dispersal is the difficulty of developing and diffusing political, technical, and scientific knowledge to permit an organized struggle against superstition and reactionary traditions. It is for all this that the peasant, feeling himself crushed and incapable of changing his status, tried to flee from this vicious circle of misery and stagnation by emigrating to the cities or across the frontier to try to improve his way of life.

It was to change all this that the nationwide drive was launched to create the *aldeais comunais*, or communal villages. Eleven criteria were laid down as the minimum requirements for a communal village. They could be summarized as providing for decent housing which would "guarantee protection against the sun, rain, heat, wind, or cold, which means that each family should build a house with hygienic conditions and security." Facilities for the storage and marketing of produce, and for the manufacture and repair of farm tools. A school and clinic in every village with emphasis on prevention of disease as far as public health is concerned. Crèches and nurseries to free parents for production. Decent streets within a village and roads to link them with neighboring villages, and "to facilitate easy circulation and the disposing of produce." Cultural and sporting activities, "with the affirmation and development of Mozambique culture and personality," provision for public meetings, discussion and recreation for all sectors of the population, and finally and most importantly: "Carrying out administrative tasks related to different aspects of life in the village, in coordination with different government branches."

Nothing very dramatic in Western terms, but an enormous leap into the future for a Mozambican semi-nomad peasant. Such units could be established either "on the basis of existing villages which can be adapted providing the locality has good conditions for productive activity," or "on the basis of a completely new locality, in which is selected a place most suitable for housing, production, and the rest of the planned activities." It was considered advisable, the decree stated, that a communal village should have a minimum of fifty families, "a figure which can be increased according to conditions in different regions and the development of the village itself."

To give the scheme a good start, the Ministry of Agriculture sent teams to help lay out three pilot villages which would establish guidelines for the others. One of these was at Mataca, in Niassa province, mentioned earlier as the locality where Comandante Laitone Dias had persuaded the peasants to follow the resistance into the forest. I had arrived at Mataca late at night after a seven- or eight-hour drive in a Land-Rover from the provincial capital of Lichanga. Early next morning, people were coming out of their huts, rubbing their limbs in front of small fires in front of each house. Women lowered shoulder shawls to feed their babies, others fanned fires to heat water. Mataca is in the highlands; the air was chilly but the sky clear and blue. Young women were warming themselves up by pounding at cassava in wooden tubs hollowed out of bits of tree trunks, with six-foot-long poles. A dozen or so cabins bordered a large clearing which had been the site of the first village abandoned and which, Comandante Dias explained, would be the new administrative center. Alongside his own neat, mud-plastered house were drum-shaped pigeon coops on top of sawed-off tree trunks, and behind them were rabbit hutches—an example to others that each family should raise some private livestock.

I asked how people were reacting to the new ideas and Comandante Dias replied:

For those who have come back from Tanzania and Malawi, it is a new type of life. They are used to individual work. People have to be politically educated to the new ways. Such things are discussed in many meetings, people putting forth their ideas, asking questions, until we get answers that everyone agrees to. Many of the older people point out that what we are doing is a continuation of what we did in the liberated zones during the war. In the old days some groups went to the Rovuma [the river which forms the northern frontier with Tanzania—] for arms. Now a group of over three hundred has left to get building materials. Others have chosen the place for the housing settlement and started building, while still others are doing the farm work.

When I asked whether they were producing for their own food needs or for a marketable surplus, Inacio Muava, a short, stocky man in charge of overall production, replied: "Because much of the labor power is diverted into building work, we don't

have conditions for producing surpluses. The main aim is to make the center self-sufficient, then produce surpluses for exchange with other centers. We have a large proportion of refugees—mainly from Tanzania—who came a little late for us to have good results this season." Mataca was going to be a big communal village with a population of about 3,000.

Although all the work was still being done with hoes, the fields were laid out on the basis that one day tractors would be available. One field of 250 hectares, selected for maize for the following season, was already cleaned of the stumps and roots which are a feature of the traditional *machamba*. A brick-making brigade was at work, some patting moistened earth into molds, others emptying the molds of embryo bricks to dry in the sun. At the site selected for housing, dried bricks were being built into the walls of houses such as no Mozambican peasant had ever dreamed of occupying. Each had four bedrooms and a sitting room—with chicken coops and rabbit hutches behind—and plenty of space for trees and gardens between the houses.

Provisions were made in the construction for the unbelievable day when electricity and piped water would be available. And, in accordance with the Central Committee's decree, land had been set aside for a strip that could land a light plane. (At least a helicopter pad must be provided, according to the decree.) Lines of young women—almost every one with a baby tucked into a shawl on her back—were hacking away with mattocks, singing in rhythm with their work, doubling the area of a hectare-sized vegetable plot. The older women were watering lettuce, carrots, cabbages, and beans—the first fruits of their collective work. Students from Maputo University, doing their annual monthly stint of practical work, discussed plans with Inacio Muava to dam the stream from which the women were drawing water in kerosene cans, and irrigate the vegetable plots by gravitation.

The atmosphere indicated that Mataca had got off to a good start. Formation of the communal villages has to be voluntary according to the decree, which means that the success of building them up in the old liberated zones will be a crucial factor in stimulating their formation elsewhere. Peasants all over the world are slow to change their habits. They have to be convinced by practice or example to take a new step. But once they have taken that step—provided it was a voluntary one—there is usually no

retreat. The idea of moving a whole country from an archaic rotating slash-and-burn type of agriculture to one of large, stable fields, soon to be cultivated by plows, with tractors and helicopters over the horizon, represents a tremendous leap into the future. "We will start by rotating crops instead of fields," said Inacio Muava.

The idea of houses with windows, villages with running water and electricity, crèches to take the babies off the backs of their working mothers, clinics, granaries, shops—none of this figured even in the dreams of the vast majority of Mozambique's peasants, not even at the moment of independence. But all this is swiftly taking shape in a handful of pioneer villages which will doubtless become focal points for inspection delegations from all over the country as they start to function. But it needed a bold and confident leadership to project such visions and press on with their materialization.

XIV Cabora Bassa Dam

As an illustration of the Portuguese concept of using Mozambique as a gigantic servicing station for South Africa and Rhodesia, the Cabora Bassa Dam and hydroelectric complex is the most impressive. One of the world's great engineering projects, its setting is fit for a Wagnerian opera. Wild, towering mountains split into a huge rugged gorge along which the Zambezi used to flow. Their tree-covered slopes now form the banks of an enormous man-made lake of 2,700 square kilometers—270 kilometers long. The calm lake waters converge on a dam higher than the Eiffel tower and, shaped like a crescent moon, curve inward to restrain the pressure of this enormous body of water. At the time of my visit at the end of May, 1975, the waters were just creeping up to the full mark—323.5 meters. At 325 meters they would be diverted to a spillway.

With a total capacity for 3,600,000 kilowatts, Cabora Bassa is by far the biggest such complex in Africa and is exceeded by only three others in the world, two of them in the Soviet Union, at Krasnoyarsk with 5,000,000 kilowatts and Bratsk with 4,500,000, the other in Canada at Churchill Falls, also with 4,500,000 kilowatts. One might well ask what need has Mozambique, with a population of a little over 9,000,000 and virtually no industry, of such a gigantic power-producer. The answer is that she has no such need. Present power consumption of Mozambique and her two neighbors, Zambia and Tanzania, could absorb only about fifteen percent of the Cabora Bassa output.

In a vast underground hall, carved out of the bowels of a mountain on the southern bank, were five turbines in various states of installation. Number 1 was already whirring and purring away, its performance being studied by a group of Portuguese and Angolan technicians through red and green lights on a control panel. Number 2 was also in place awaiting its turn for the test run. Number 3 was awaiting a giant rotor to be lowered into position—it had been held up because there had been a rockfall in the transport gallery which killed six Africans, bringing the new total to sixty dead. The gleaming overhead transmission lines disappeared into purple mist and swirling clouds on their way eventually to deliver their charge to distant South Africa.

The transformer station converts Alternate Current into Di-

rect Current; the mono-polar high-tension lines stretched some 1,400 kilometers across Mozambique to bring Cabora Bassa power to South Africa. The transformation and transmission systems are so designed that Mozambique can not tap a single kilowatt hour of energy for itself. It was South Africa that put up the money and Portugal pledged repayments in electric energy over fifteen to twenty years. But the original estimate of costs had been far exceeded and the period of repayments which Mozambique had inherited could well run into thirty years.

As things stand Cabora Bassa represents a whole herd of white elephants which Mozambique will be obliged to feed at great expense for decades. The only immediate benefit was that the station could serve as a higher institute of training for a large number of Mozambican electrical engineers!

With considerable investment, the lake could be tapped for irrigating the lower reaches of the Zambezi valley as the Portuguese had intended, to further their plan of implanting one million Portuguese settlers. One might well ask what the Portuguese government hoped to gain from such a grandiose scheme that promised no financial benefits for decades. The plan to replace African farmers by Portuguese settlers in the Zambezi valley was only a by-product of the main scheme. Portuguese engineers at Cabora Bassa assured me there had not even been preliminary studies for irrigation and possible navigation prospects. The main Portuguese by-product was the use of Cabora Bassa Dam as bait to get South Africa heavily involved so that the guerilla war could be internationalized and South Africa would acquire a powerful vested interest in the extermination of the national liberation forces.

The South African leadership was in a very swaggering mood in those days; its armed forces were reputed to be by far the strongest in the whole of southern Africa. Even though by 1975, Prime Minister Johannes Vorster was talking about *détente*, the real, unchanged attitude came out on January 2, 1976, when Defense Minister Pieter W. Botha presented a "Defense Amendment Bill" to the House of Assembly proposing that South African troops could be conscripted for service in Africa "anywhere south of the equator," wherever South African interests were threatened! The bill as finally adopted on January 28 provided for compulsory service for South African troops, "anywhere outside

South Africa." Things looked great at the time Botha introduced his bill. South African troops were some 1,200 kilometers inside Angola as the result of a month-long *blitzkrieg* drive from the Namibia-Angolan border starting October 23, 1975. By the time the bill was passed, the South African column of about 5,000 men, supported by two hundred armored cars and heavy artillery, was in full flight, the myth of South African military invincibility having been destroyed. The fascist regime in Lisbon obviously could never have contemplated such a disaster in the days when the Lisbon fascists and the Pretoria racists affixed their signatures to the agreement to build Cabora Bassa!

How right the FRELIMO guerillas had been to concentrate harassment attacks on the work site and to ambush the convoys hauling material and equipment! There was not a single advantage for the Mozambique people in the construction of such a monster. According to plans published in the early stages, which made it appear that "development" of the Zambezi valley was the main aim, the project would force hundreds of thousands of Mozambican families to leave their fertile farms to be replaced by a million Portuguese. As news of the enormous quantities of power to be generated leaked out—along with the fact that it was all to be exported to the South African capitalists, and secondly only to the Portuguese to further their exploitation of Mozambique workers—Cabora Bassa became the symbol of everything that the detested Portuguese colonialists represented. This hatred was transformed into military action. The Portuguese were forced to transform the dam site into a fortress, and line the approaches with pillboxes and control points. The tug-of-war battles around the area continued until the armed struggle ended in a FRELIMO victory and the Portuguese pulled out—South Africa not having come to the rescue.

But now that Mozambique was an independent and sovereign state—what to do with such a gargantuan and freakish prize of war? Cut the losses and close it down? Exploit the fish in the lake and later on the waters for irrigation? To close it down would have caused a major crisis with Portugal because of the latter's financial obligations toward South Africa—and newly independent Mozambique was not seeking a crisis with Portugal. But there was still another reason why not only the hydroelectric station should not be closed down but why power should even be

kept flowing toward South Africa. A young Angolan engineer at the transformer station expressed himself as follows:

We have to consider that this is a very precious source of cheap electric power. We are for technical progress and this represents very advanced technology. We have to consider that it belongs to the peoples of Africa. A few years ago it seemed impossible to many of us that we would live to see the day when we would be free; when our brothers in Guiné-Bissau would be free; our brothers in Angola would be free. But it has all come about. Now we must look forward to the day when our brothers in Zimbabwe, in Namibia, and in South Africa itself, will also be free. Cheap electric power will be terribly valuable in building up all our countries. When we look back at yesterday we should be all the more confident about tomorrow.

So the work continues at Cabora Bassa and as the turbines start to turn, one after another, the power pulses down those 1,400-kilometer-long transmission lines to South Africa, the only possible client for the quantity produced. When the southern substation is completed by January, 1979, a second four-turbine substation will be built on the northern bank and then the giant complex will be considered complete. Driving up over a mountain pass, glimpses of the great gleaming stretch of water backed up behind what looked like some grotesque temple, it was impossible not to be impressed by the grandiose scale on which it had been conceived—coupled with the hope that the peoples of South Africa would also soon be free and the energy generated would be at the disposal of all the peoples of southern Africa.

It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast than to visit in one day—both in the province of Tete—the culminating triumph of all that the old system had built in Mozambique and the modest start in forming the New Man for the New Society!

Leaving the asphalt highway which spans the 150 kilometers from Cabora Bassa to Tete, the provincial capital, we turned off into a dirt road of deep ruts and quagmires, eroded and criss-crossed by streams, with logs and branches thrown into the mud to prevent even a sturdy Land-Rover from sinking into it over its running boards. After a three-hours' hair-raising and bone-shaking drive we came to a modest collection of thatch-roofed and

mud-covered frame huts which constituted the pilot school of Jecque. The low scrubby country and high tufty grasses for scores of kilometers on end had obviously been ideal for guerilla warfare, which had been waged very diligently in that region. The state of the track made it clear that it had been denied for years to the Portuguese, even though the village of Jecque was only sixty kilometers from the Rhodesian frontier.

It was around sunset on a Saturday evening when we arrived. The well-spaced school buildings were set out under tall trees, classrooms grouped toward the center, living quarters dispersed around the perimeter. Everything was well-swept, spick-and-span. The children were playing with balls made of bundles of rags. Their clothing was ragged and patched, but their faces and limbs glowed with health and cleanliness.

“What makes a pilot school different from others?” was the first question I put to Comandante Gonçalves Koliata Chahona, the school director, a tall, lean man in leopard-skin-type camouflage uniform.

Everything from building the schoolrooms and living quarters to study and work in the fields is done collectively. All problems are solved by collective discussion. If they arise among the children of a class they do their best to solve them at that level. If not among the children themselves, then between them and the teachers, and only as a last resort are the problems taken up at administration level. But at every level, it is done through discussion and so they get used, from the beginning, to running their own affairs, settling their own problems without running to the school authorities whenever a difficulty arises.

I asked what the main aim was. What type of end product did they want to turn out?

First you must understand that the school was established here in 1972. Studies and armed struggle went on simultaneously. We had to educate and struggle not only against Portuguese colonialism, but against ignorance, obscurantism, tribalism. The aim is to give the pupils not only the rudiments of general education but to inculcate in them that the highest aim is to use the knowledge they acquire to serve the people. They consciously study not to advance their own interests, which was the goal of anyone fortunate and privileged enough to get some education in the past, but in order to better serve

the majority of the people. Life was so harsh, people were so downtrodden that such a concept was simply impossible under the colonialists. If you didn't fight for yourself and your family, you went under. The pupils here are already used to working in a collective way for the future socialist society, with high moral qualities, good educational standards. They are absolutely devoted to our country and people. The fact that the pupils come from every corner of the country, that they live, study, and work together, is a big help in getting rid of tribalist and racial ideas.

There were 390 pupils and twelve teachers. Subjects taught included the Portuguese language—the single national language in Angola and Mozambique—mathematics, history, geography, politics, drawing, and physical culture. There were still no textbooks—the People's Republic was not yet one year old—but teaching followed the national program approved by the Ministry of Education.

What was most impressive was that pupils with only two or three years of education—the school only taught up to the third grade—were completely at ease and self-possessed, expressing themselves without any prodding from either teachers or the director. If one judged things by the rather primitive cabins, the much-patched clothes and half-educated teachers, some visitors might laugh at the idea that this could possibly represent the future of the country. But such schools—I visited others deep in the forests of Niassa province later—are the real crucibles for forming the cadres of the new society. From here the graduates go on to special FRELIMO secondary schools from which they will emerge as highly motivated cadres for all levels of the administration.

If it was difficult to imagine anything more remote from the people than the Cabora Bassa monster, it was harder still to imagine anything closer to their daily life and needs than the Jecque-type pilot schools. If there were only a few of these in comparison to other schools, this is because there were too few cadres of the quality of Comandante Chahona to be spared. The children were somewhat special, too, all having taken part in some way in the armed struggle as combatants, transport workers, or scouts, or in some other activities suitable to their age. They had grown up in the spartan life of the forest away from oppression but also from the corruption of the Portuguese-controlled areas.

When FRELIMO was formed in 1962, there were less than 5,000 black and mestizo pupils attending primary schools in Mozambique. By the early 1970s, there were over 200,000 at school in the liberated zones. (The first pilot schools were started later.) In 1962 there were less than ten Mozambican students in Portuguese universities. Less than ten Mozambican blacks held degrees as professors of higher education during the whole period of Portuguese colonialism. To attain such status students were forced at a much earlier stage to sign away their Africanism and become *assimilados* pledged to serve Portuguese colonialism. As in Angola, only when they had renounced their Africanism could they be considered "civilized."

Within a few years hundreds and then thousands of young cadres, "immunized," as President Samora Machel expressed it, against the values and ideas of the old society, against Portuguese colonialist, tribal, and feudal concepts, will be available as the motors of the new society, conditioned to the idea of service to the people as the highest motive in life. Pupils in the pilot schools are called *continuadores*, the continuators of the revolution which their fathers and elder brothers launched. It is a name and a role that the youngsters seem happy to accept.

An element not present at the Jecque pilot school, but which I found at others, was the presence for short periods of groups of young university students doing their month's practical work, or part of it, at a pilot school, bringing with them the latest techniques in seed selection, compost fertilizers, soil testing and other knowledge which they impart to the primary school farmers. At the Eduardo Mondlane Pilot School near Mataka—the communal village of which is described in the previous chapter—there were nine university students from Maputo doing a month's practical work together with the pupils. Three others who were doing some historical research on the liberation struggle had come with the same group but had moved on to other areas. The group was divided into two teams, one for agriculture, one for building. "Even rabbit hutches and pigeon coops are receiving the attention of architects," said the school director, Foesa Liututu, with a smile.

These students were almost all white, because they were the only ones to have had access to pre-university education, but they seemed to have integrated with the pupils very well and, as Foesa

Liututu remarked, it was very useful in breaking down racial prejudices. For the pupils such contacts were exciting because they had their first introduction to the application of science to agriculture, and since the students brought modern musical instruments with them—guitars, flutes, mandolins—the pupils were able to get a whiff of the unpolluted aspects of urban life.

Almost all the primary-school graduates would go on to specialized FRELIMO secondary schools. From there most would be allotted by the local representative of the Ministry of Education to wherever their services were needed in Niassa province. Some would go on to higher education, but the need for cadres of their quality was so great that immobilizing too many in the universities was a luxury that could not yet be afforded.

XV Samora Machel

A short, lively man with twinkling eyes and a jaunty beard which he seems to use as a pointer, his head constantly in action when he talks. A man who smiles and laughs so abundantly, one feels that as a male nurse he must have been a good morale-booster. A man with a razor-sharp intellect and analytical mind. These were some

of my first impressions of Samora Machel. The Catholic Church lost a popular priest when young Machel, after six years in a Catholic primary school, refused to go on to a seminary. By dint of his *assimilado* status and hard work, he managed to graduate from secondary school and obtain the relatively privileged status of a male nurse. This enabled him to see more of the country than his compatriots and everything he saw appalled and revolted him. One of the first eye-openers was that educational qualifications were irrelevant in approaching anything like equal status with the whites. Even for blacks and whites doing the same skilled or semi-skilled jobs, the salaries were several times higher for the whites. Racial discrimination at every level, in every field, economic as well as social, bit deeply into Machel's consciousness. The smile disappears from his face, even today, when he recalls the humiliation of it all. The miracle is that it did not turn him into a black racist, which would have been easily understandable.

Gradually I saw that nothing could help but collective action. A man on his own could achieve nothing. At that stage—it was after 1956—I began to understand what the key problems were, the key economic and political problems, and just why it was that we Africans were disadvantaged. Then 1960 taught me more—the independence of the Congo and its tumults. I began to think seriously about the possibilities of Mozambique becoming independent. . . . Then it was that the consciousness of being oppressed, deprived, exploited, began to have its effect, as well as these ideas about independence.

At that time, the Portuguese authorities were increasing their repression of all educated and literate Africans. That was something else that greatly increased our curiosity: to understand why they didn't want us to read newspapers, listen to foreign broadcasts. Yes, and then came 1961, in Angola. . . .¹

With that sort of awakening it was natural for him to join FRELIMO soon after it was formed; and because he is a man impatient to put ideas into practice, it was natural also that he went to Algeria, in the same group as Alberto-Joaquim Chipande, to get some military training. Once the first blows had been struck at Chai and Diaca, Samora Machel entered the country with another 250 combatants and became commander of the first military base on Mozambique soil. Commander of the military forces then was Felipe Magaia. When he died, it was Samora Machel who was

appointed commander. Elected to FRELIMO's Central Committee at the second congress in 1968, he became president in 1969 after the assassination of Eduardo Mondlane. From then on, he led the armed struggle from inside the country.

My interview with Samora Machel—by then President of the People's Republic of Mozambique—took place on the lawn behind the former Portuguese governor's residence. The setting reminded me of my interviews with President Ho Chi Minh on the lawn behind the former French governor-general's residence in Hanoi! There was also the same informality. Shirtsleeves and no questions barred. Three chairs around a table under a sunshade which was moved as the sun rose higher in the sky. The third chair was for Jose Oscar Monteiro, Minister of State to the Presidency. Fluent in both English and French, he acted as interpreter when the President was occasionally stuck for a word in his own fluent French. It was Sunday, and in the background Samora Machel's wife, Graça Simbine, Minister of Education and Culture, was splashing about in the swimming pool with the Machel children and their friends.

My first question was based on having studied some of the President's speeches and writings—and traveling for some five weeks in the interior, especially in the old resistance bases: "The question of 'why and for whom' was posed from the beginning of your national liberation struggle. Class struggle and national struggle went on side by side. Was this due to some special conditions in Mozambique? Or could it be a model for other national liberation struggles?"

This question opens up a whole series of questions, touching the fundamental nature of our struggle. If we speak of armed struggle—what is armed struggle? Also you have raised the question of the transformation of society; of transforming the mentality of those taking part. The aim of armed struggle is obviously to destroy the enemy. In the process we discovered the real context and definition of the enemy. The armed struggle is only one aspect of overall struggle which gives us the definition of who is the worst enemy.

Was this clear from the start? It was not. At a first glance it might seem clear. Portuguese colonialism. But one had to go deeper. That the enemy was the exploiting class became clear during the overall struggle.

Suppose we had defined the enemy in a simple, restricted way—Portuguese colonialism. The Portuguese colonialists have now been defeated. But why do we have as a national slogan "*A Luta Continua*" (The Struggle Continues)? Or we could have said the enemy are the whites. The Portuguese colonialists are whites after all! But if we had accepted that—where would we be today? Against whom would we be continuing the struggle?

We unhesitatingly stated from the beginning that such definitions would be too facile—that is, to say the whites are our enemies because the colonialists are white. This would imply rejection of a deeper analysis as to who is the enemy. It would be opportunistic not to correctly define the enemy. If we define the enemy as the exploiting class it becomes clear that it is not a question of the color of the skin. There can be Portuguese exploiters and Mozambican exploiters.

We struggle for the emancipation of the workers. Is that just part of a program, or a fundamental part of the whole national liberation struggle? The war being waged was People's War. When we say People's War, we don't only mean a war waged with the participation of the people, but that the aim is for the people to have real power in their hands. This can only be done by the elimination of the exploiting class, whatever its color. That is why a correct definition of the enemy is of crucial importance.

We speak of "armed struggle serving the revolution." Why do we make a difference between armed struggle and revolution? Because we must clearly define what is armed struggle and what is revolution and put an end to the use of the word "revolution" to describe a *coup d'état* for instance. Is revolution a spontaneous uprising? No, it is part of a long process of which armed struggle is a part; it is not an automatic process. In our case it was a clear and continuing process, an ideological process.

Armed struggle becomes the highest point of political consciousness which enables us to support all sacrifices. The problem is to transform consciousness into physical action. That is when demands are made on ideology. It is at this moment in the whole process that through the intervention of ideology and political consciousness, the struggle becomes a class struggle. That is why armed struggle can create the New Man—an essential step to prepare the class origin of the new regime.

This is why we can say that the whole process started with armed struggle which transformed itself into People's War. Later when the consequences of the ideological content of People's War became clear and were accepted, it became a revolutionary People's War. It became a revolution. Why and for whom? The people!

“In your writings you have spoken of the differences between a bourgeois democratic regime such as exists in England and the fascist regime in Portugal and the effects this had on the type of independence struggles that could be waged in the British colonies and that which had to be waged in the Portuguese colonies—especially in Mozambique. Was this difference to your advantage or disadvantage?”

Because of the concrete conditions of Portuguese colonialism it was not possible to wage legal struggle. Objectively this was an advantage because legal, political struggle is a great occasion for the emergence of elitism; the formation of a “political elite,” who take over as representatives of the local bourgeoisie when the colonialist bourgeoisie leave. Now we can see why the armed struggle was a highly political act. *Par excellence!*

It was also an ideological struggle. All aspects were included in that struggle, including a cultural revolution, a revolution in human relations, a revolution in our relations with other peoples. Every activity had its specific political content—just the sort of thing the bourgeoisie try to avoid. Thus we can say that the impossibility of waging legal struggle was a great contribution by the Portuguese colonialists to our struggle. It forced our political struggle to be armed struggle. This is as opposed to the concept that “politics” is the exclusive fief of a privileged ruling class in the urban centers. But to say that armed struggle is essential under such conditions is not enough. A small minority can also come to power by waging armed struggle—but with the aim of only satisfying their own class interests. It is not automatic that armed struggle always implies the participation of the people, or that even when it does, that the people really come out on top. Because of the nature of the Portuguese colonial regime we were faced with the question of whether to wage armed struggle. There could be only one answer—yes! Then—armed struggle *plus* a bourgeois revolution? There were some who also said—yes. We had to decide on armed struggle plus a people’s revolution.

“To what extent are the experiences of living, fighting, and surviving in the liberated zones valid for the construction of a new society after the victory? Why, now that the whole country is liberated, do you still refer to the ‘liberated zones’ in the present tense?”

We had to give a concrete content to our armed struggle by the nature of our liberated zones. For us a liberated zone was not merely

the physical liberation of territory, but the liberation of ways of thought; liberation from a system. At first we called them “guerilla zones.” Only later did we call them liberated zones—because we became mentally liberated. Although our habits, life styles, and customs were still of the old type—we still had not formed a new consciousness to replace the old habits—we had arrived at the conclusion that the liberated zone constituted the highest point of contradictions with the old habits of the enemy, leading to the point of rupture. It was a violent rupture. In the liberated zones, because the enemy could not penetrate physically, we were waterproofed against his ideas and habits. That is why we still call provinces like Cabo Delgado, Niassa, and Tete “liberated zones.” We do not say the same about Maputo, although territorially speaking, power is in our hands over the entire country. That is why we still say the liberated zones “must invade the cities.”

In the liberated zones there was the concrete process of ending the exploitation of man by man. That is why, at the beginning of our talk, I said we had developed the capacity of correctly defining the enemy. It is in this that you will find the explanation for the fact that the very first measures we took after independence were to nationalize education, public health, justice, property—to a certain extent—and even funeral parlors. Because this corresponded to the struggle we waged in the liberated zones against exploitation in these fields.

We had to take a clear position on these questions. We had to have people’s public health, people’s education. . . . Even in the liberated zones this was not accomplished without struggle. There were those who tried to defend their privileges in these fields. It was a logical consequence of the society in which they were reared. It was also why we decided that criminality was a social, not a legal problem. That is why we associated the people with the investigation, judgment and punishment of wrongdoers, not leaving such matters in the hands of some isolated, specialized group. There were those in our ranks who asked, why be in such a hurry to nationalize these fields immediately after independence? But we had tried this out as part of our whole process in the liberated zones—and it worked. This is what we mean when we speak of the countryside “invading the cities.” If we abolished prostitution and closed down the night haunts, this was because we had already done this in the liberated zones. If we gave priority to improving people’s livelihoods, this was not based on an abstract notion of organization, but on very practical forms that worked in the liberated zones. There was nothing hit-or-miss about this.

The experiences of the liberated zones constitute a precious

patrimony for us. Something which we have to defend and use to make a rupture, at the national level, with the old myths, values, and habits, with the structures of social life, organization, and production inherited from the colonialist society, and which still exist in our midst. Practice showed that we could solve production and other problems without huge resources or ultra-modern techniques, but merely by relying on our own strength and organization. The liberated zones were a political laboratory, a scientific laboratory, a laboratory of ideas. There we could try out what had to be done later.

“Was the timing of the nationalizations—just one month after independence—not due to the massive departure of the Portuguese and their abandonment of business enterprises and plantations?”

This had nothing to do with it. It was a question of the extension of FRELIMO power and organization to the whole country. The nationalization decrees were the means of establishing people's power and consolidating the gains of the revolution. It was an integral part of our overall program. We cannot build a new society on the structures of the old where there was exploitation and discrimination at every level.

Education, public health, property—these were key instruments of the bourgeoisie which had to be taken away from them. They were the instruments by which they hoped to retain power; to organize and consolidate their position and move into areas abandoned by the Portuguese. We had to nip such efforts in the bud. An alligator is very dangerous when he is grown up and in his own element in the middle of the river where he is stronger than us. Better to kill him on the bank when he's still young and in a place where we are stronger.

People still had in their minds the image of colonialism as the main enemy. So it was necessary to act quickly. People are still living in revolution. They feel the need to transform society. Another fundamental problem is that we are incapable of being managers of capitalism. Even if we tried we would fail.

At this he laughed heartily as if to emphasize the point that the FRELIMO leadership had no intention of trying to learn to become good managers of capitalism.

“There is a good deal of talk about the ‘New Man’ in the new society that is to be created. How does one define this ‘New Man?’”

We believe that the struggle for the transformation of society must go hand in hand with the struggle for the transformation of man himself. But this is not an automatic process. It is not enough to be born into a certain type of society—to be born in the liberated zones, for instance. Some people thought the New Man would automatically emerge from the liberated zones and appear in the cities. But we explained to our students there: “The fact that you have been brought up in the liberated zone—that you have never seen a colonialist—doesn't make you a New Man. Perhaps the contrary, because you have not gone through the process of rejection. You have not been immunized against the old society.”

The New Man is essentially only formed by remaining committed to struggle which is why in our schools in the liberated zones, education is linked to manual labor, and stress is placed on serving the people in a disinterested way. When someone studies, it is an effort to master knowledge in order to better serve the ordinary people. Not in order to pin a diploma on the chest and say: “I'm worth so much.” Those who study should be like matches to light fires which the people can share. Study should not be used as something to divorce students from their class origins.

The New Man is born in struggle at all stages; he is dynamic, creative, capable of analysis and self-criticism, original, audacious. With a new mentality, acquired through struggle, the New Man becomes an agent of transformation and activation for social relations of a new type which will characterize the new society in all fields—production, education, culture, leadership structures, and relations with the grass roots in every field. The structures of socialism. To create such an outlook requires internal struggle which has to be systematic and organized. Not sporadic, spontaneous, emotional, but consciously planned, scientific, and systematic. But this can no longer be an individual struggle. There is no such thing as individual victory—only collective victory.

When we speak of internal struggle, this means rejecting the old values which everyone had absorbed to a greater or lesser extent—rejecting racism, tribalism, regionalism, egoism, elitism, all the various forms of subjectivism. In general we see this as a collective struggle that has to take place at the level of society and nature, as well as the individual level. It is not enough to change one aspect of society unless we change the outlook of the whole people.

We have to shape the superstructure, which is what we are doing now. This means creating a new system at the level of the superstructure. This has to be staffed by New Men with new, socialist outlooks.

As to whether the Mozambique national liberation struggle, and the first steps in building a new society, could be a model for others, Samora Machel replied briefly: "We can be a source of inspiration for other revolutions just as we drew inspiration, and continue to do so, from the struggle of other peoples. But there is no single model for other peoples. We are all models for all."

The background to the next question needs some explanation. South Africa produces about seventy per cent of the gold mined in the Western world. Not that this reflects the proportion of known gold deposits, but the fact that cheap labor in South Africa makes gold mining possible and profitable under wage and labor safety conditions unacceptable in former gold-producing countries such as the United States, Canada, and Australia. A large proportion of South Africa's gold-miners come from Mozambique. In the "bad old days" which persisted until the People's Republic was founded on June 25, 1975, the Portuguese literally sold up to 100,000 Mozambique laborers a year to the Rand gold-mining companies, pocketing the hard currency thus earned and permitting the miners to draw some starvation wages for themselves and their families.

Samora Machel drew attention to this situation in his remarkable book:

Mozambique constitutes a vast reservoir of manpower at derisory prices for the South African mining industry and the great Rhodesian plantations.

More than one million Mozambicans work in diverse sectors of activity in those two countries. Eighty per cent of foreign manpower used in the South African mines are from Mozambique. The importance of these workers can be more exactly measured if we consider the situation in the South African gold-mining industry in the Rand, where the main part of Mozambique workers are concentrated. . . .

The rentability of these mines is low. It is necessary to work 160,000 tons of earth to produce one ton of gold. In Canada, the U.S.A. and Australia, mines with a superior gold content were closed down. . . . The secret of the rentability of the South African mines is the low price of African manpower and the total disregard for the safety conditions of the workers. . . .

By virtue of agreements signed with the South African government which permitted the Rand mining companies to recruit up to 100,000 Mozambique workers every year, the colonialist government received from South Africa one billion *escudos* [approximately

forty million dollars], in foreign currency, the product of taxes and wages of the workers and the receipts from the ports and railways of Lourenço Marques, used by South Africa as a complement to the purchase of workers. . . .

Mozambique workers were still going to South Africa after the country's independence, but on a voluntary basis and on terms under which they received the full value of wages paid. With unemployment high due to plants closed after the departure of their Portuguese owners, management, and technicians; with tens of thousands of Mozambicans returning from exile in Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, and other places; and an estimated annual revenue loss of half a billion dollars for having applied the UN sanctions against Rhodesia, a cutoff of the labor supply to South Africa's gold mines would mean another heavy burden for the young People's Republic to shoulder. It could be argued that Mozambican workers are contributing to the prosperity of the South African regime. It is also argued that a hundred or so thousand militant Mozambican workers, a proportion of them indoctrinated by FRELIMO, represent a powerful reinforcement to the South African working class.

With this in mind, I put my question to Machel: "Should Mozambican miners in South Africa be regarded as an integral part of the working class there, capable of being drawn into the fierce class struggles that are beginning to develop? Or are there factors which isolate them from the mainstream of class struggle there?"

Obviously the struggle of the people of all countries is our struggle. The struggle of workers all over the world is our struggle. Such struggles are a necessary prerequisite for the life of all peoples, an essential condition for the development of society. The foreign working class does not remain aloof or neutral, just because it is foreign, from the great struggles that take place where that working class has its relations with production, where it earns its wages, where its living conditions are established. But Mozambican workers will not be decisive or the determining factor for the political and social liberation of South Africa. This can only be done by the South African workers themselves.

On the question of the struggle in South Africa, Samora Machel warned against diverting attention from the main prob-

lem to what he considered the secondary problem of *apartheid*:

Is racism or exploitation the main question? There is a danger of losing sight of the class struggle by keeping racism in the fore. Despite different characteristics, the struggle is essentially the same as elsewhere in southern Africa; it is against the exploitation by colonialist capitalism. Racism is only a form and instrument of action. Fundamentally it is a question of oppression and exploitation. Racism gives a particular color to it; but odious and horrendous as it is, it is not the principal problem. There is a risk that fighting to end *apartheid* diverts attention from the main problem. In fact, racism is a fundamental ingredient of colonialist oppression. The result of getting the priorities wrong would make the ending of *apartheid* look like a final victory.

As long as there is oppression there can never be equality. What is equality under colonial capitalism? Is the aim that all blacks should live like whites? No. The fight against *apartheid* must be seen as part of the general class struggle.

Regarding FRELIMO's attitude to the struggles going on across its borders in South Africa and Zimbabwe, President Machel was categorical:

We cannot feel free with colonialism on our frontiers. Namibia becomes a base for South African aggression against Angolan sovereignty. Rhodesia is a base for daily attacks against the People's Republic of Mozambique. Why do they attack us? Because we are independent and have won our freedom. They want to reverse the course of history and continue to oppress us. Why is there no outcry in the West? Colonialism is a permanent crime against humanity—a cancer which corrodes daily, nourished by the blood of the poor and oppressed. Racism is a permanent crime against mankind, depriving man of his personality and dignity, humiliating him to the point where he believes he is inferior because of the color of his skin. It is hard for outsiders to imagine how we suffered—even wishing we had been born with a different-colored skin from that of our parents. Why was I born with such an unfortunate color? Only colored people can really understand the permanent affront to our human dignity. Now, here in Mozambique, we have established real equality between men. It is from this that so many Portuguese are running away. They cannot face up to real racist equality. We are the most obdurate and uncompromising enemies of racism. But we also feel

that by putting too much stress on the *apartheid* issue the danger is that revolutionary forces may be diverted into waging an anti-white campaign. That is why we say, let us define the enemy. It is not the whites; it is not a question of skin pigmentation. It is, in our area of the world, colonialist capitalist oppression.

It is known that we support the struggle of peoples everywhere fighting for independence, but especially do we support, unreservedly, the struggle of the southern African peoples against colonialism.

That these were no idle words was demonstrated time and again by concrete acts of support for the Zimbabwe freedom fighters—for which the Mozambique people paid dearly in the form of overt acts of aggression by the Smith regime in so-called punishment or "hot pursuit" raids against villages deep inside Mozambique. The FRELIMO leadership did not waver because of this. Samora Machel took the lead in helping to promote unity among the various factions in Zimbabwe, urging and encouraging them and providing material support for them to step up their armed struggle. While helping to deal with the smaller "alligator" first—Zimbabwe—just as Angola was helping to deal with Namibia, there is no question but that Samora Machel knew that Mozambique could never really relax until the biggest "alligator" of all was dealt with. The people of Mozambique were already being politically and psychologically prepared for the sacrifices that all-out support for the freedom fighters in South Africa would entail.

XVI People's Health

If there is one thing which visually and immediately distinguishes the pilot schools and their pupils from other such establishments, or children from areas not yet liberated at the moment of independence, it is the "poor but clean" atmosphere that reigns. Under their often tattered clothes, limbs and bodies are glowing with cleanliness and health. They are taught to bathe every day. Open-air bathhouses with tall reed palisades surrounding them—separate ones for the boys and girls—are a feature of every school. There are also small medical clinics, equipped well enough to administer first aid and take care of the most common ailments. These were legacies of the style of life in the liberated zones. Children elsewhere still suffered from the colonialist heritage and this could not be done away with during the first year of independence by simply issuing an administrative decree. But it is certain that wherever the pilot school graduates go, they will be proselytes of personal and public hygiene and living examples of the results. Incidentally at none of the schools which I visited did I see anyone, either pupils or staff, smoking. When I asked whether smoking was forbidden, I was told simply that the teachers and administrative staff set the example and the children had naturally followed it.

The type of conditions inherited from the Portuguese was summed up in a FRELIMO Central Committee Resolution on Public Health adopted in February, 1976, at the same time as that on communal villages. The situation described in the resolution underlines the crucial importance of the pilot schools in training future cadres totally unpolluted by colonialist-capitalist mentality. It was impossible just to take over existing administrations and cadres as they were and place them at the service of the new revolutionary regime. Also it brought out the secondary importance of fine buildings and equipment in comparison with the primary importance of forming cadres with the right outlook who, when the time came, could put the fine buildings and modern equipment to their most effective use. The two essential characteristics of public-health work in the Liberated Zones are summed up in the resolution as follows: (1) It had as its objective to serve the masses; and (2) The people themselves took part in carrying

out a great number of tasks in the public-health field, helping to protect their own health.

The resolution then goes on to describe the situation as it existed in September, 1974, when agreement was reached that FRELIMO would be responsible for governing the entire country even before the formal accession to independence nine months later. FRELIMO authority, in other words, was extended to large areas that until then had been entirely under colonialist administration. The resolution continues:

What was the main characteristic of this situation? In the first place the existing structures were oriented toward satisfying the needs of a privileged minority.

On the other hand, the motive of medical aid was not to alleviate human suffering but to make profits. Under the colonial-fascist medical system—with some honorable exceptions—it was the unbridled seeking after riches which reigned. We thus inherited a completely unbalanced public-health structure.

The urban areas, essentially monopolized by the colonialists, had a structure capable of providing medical assistance but only on the basis of the ability of each individual to pay. Here there were consulting offices and private clinics—places of exploitation where the patient was regarded as a source of profits. It was in such places that doctors and nurses accumulated their wealth. In the state hospitals where the less privileged went—those living in the suburbs, for instance—medical aid was precarious and patients were also treated according to their ability to pay. Patients were even classed according to the social-racist structure of colonial-capitalism, starting with the white colonialist, then the *assimilado*, down to the "native." There was a total lack of interest in the poor patient, manifested by the way in which he or she was treated by the doctor or nurse; in the lack of hygiene in the places where they were treated; and the total lack of discipline among the medical workers who treated them.

It is further pointed out that there was a high proportion of Mozambicans among the nurses—"victims of the virulent racism" that reigned in the hospital. They were not permitted to hold any responsible posts, these being exclusively reserved for the Portuguese.

Yet, as they worked in a sector dominated by the spirit of money-making, in daily contact with doctors who were making fortunes,

they ended up by becoming infected with this mentality and started also to aspire after riches.

Due to the exploitation and discrimination of which they were victims, their consciousness was aroused as regards colonialist oppression, but their aspirations were essentially of a capitalist nature. Despite the discrimination they were still relatively privileged as compared to the broad masses of the people. Thus one can understand that their national sentiments, born of revolt against racist humiliations, did not go beyond the idea of replacing the *colons*.

Here the resolution touched on the crucial difference between the national liberation struggles waged in the Portuguese African colonies—in Mozambique and Guiné-Bissau, and by the MPLA in Angola—and the independence struggles waged in many other African colonies. The difference between revolt and revolution; between “changing the color of the bosses” and eliminating the boss concept. The tendency to see the end aim as replacing white plantation and factory owners by black ones, and white bureaucrats in leading positions by black ones, had to be fought against at every step of the way toward total independence. There are any number of examples, especially in Africa, of not only “just changing the color at the top,” but of the new rulers taking over almost intact the same forces of repression—army and police—that the colonialists had used to maintain their rule. There were fierce internal struggles inside the FRELIMO leadership before such concepts were rejected. The example of the nurses is typical of the colonialist poison which infected many of them who, objectively speaking, should have been wholeheartedly on the side of the people. It would mean ignoring some of the basic constants of human nature to expect the nurses not to have been affected by the money-grabbing that went on all around them, especially as there was virtually no possibility—above all in PIDE-controlled Maputo and other major urban areas—for them to have access to any counter-influence. If that was the situation in the urban centers, one can imagine what it was in the rural areas where ninety-five per cent of the Africans lived:

The rural areas did not have any public-health structure whatsoever, because there was nothing there to enrich the doctors and nurses. “To go to the forest” was considered a punishment or very bad luck.

The rural population was left to itself with neither public-health organization nor guidance.

The few *colons* living there had the means to go to the urban areas where they could get whatever medical assistance they could pay for. Because nothing existed in any planned way, because there had never been any mobilization of the population to fight disease, epidemics frequently appeared that were almost impossible to control. This explains the country’s high average mortality rate. Mozambique also had one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world.

While preventive medicine played an important role in the liberated zones, priority was given to curative medicine in the enemy-controlled areas, because it was only this that enabled the medical personnel to enrich themselves. The prophylactic struggle against disease still remains to be organized in the former enemy-controlled zones.

The colonial-capitalist concept of the health services is reflected also in the educational system for the public-health services. Recruitment of pupils was based on social and racial discrimination, so that the majority of qualified medical personnel are foreigners; from a social and economic viewpoint, the Mozambique nurses constitute an elite with privileged status in Mozambique society.

Conscious of the depth of the problem and of the necessity to find radical solutions to end exploitation and speculation on disease, the government of the People’s Republic of Mozambique decided to nationalize medicine and forbid the exercise of medical practice for lucrative ends.

The nationalization of public health was decreed just one month after the People’s Republic was set up, together with that of education, urban property, and other key areas. Obviously the nationalization measures did not suit everyone, as the resolution makes clear:

The colonial public-health structure was shaken to its foundations. Doctors and nurses are now obliged to work exclusively for the state and to serve patients without any discrimination whatsoever.

This medical system was received with great satisfaction by the people who see their aspirations satisfied, their interests defended. But many doctors and nurses do not accept it because they see themselves deprived of their means of exploitation.

Obviously it was not only in Mozambique that doctors, particularly the specialists and those with lucrative private practices,

fought against nationalization of medicine. In virtually every non-socialist country where it has been introduced, there has been a vigorous backlash by the medical community intent on retaining their privilege to fleece patients. Any attempt to extend social services to benefit the majority of the population is met with the battlery, "Our craft is in danger!"; and the methods used by sectional interests to wage the battle are often devoid of any scruples. Thus the resolution notes:

If some doctors and nurses devote themselves with energy and enthusiasm to getting the new public-health structure working, others drag their feet. Others again, concentrated in various state hospitals and other medical institutions, create real centers of subversion, including the diffusion of reactionary slogans. Such pernicious elements encourage lack of interest in the work, especially in hospital hygiene; they foster laxity and indiscipline, and deliberately try to provoke chaos in order to prove nationalization was a mistake. Through rumors and intrigue, they agitate for the departure of the [Portuguese] doctors and, taking advantage of their daily contact with the patients, they diffuse the most diverse rumors and slanders. Racism and opportunism find a fertile soil in this atmosphere.

It was to correct all the problems and abuses manifested during the first seven months of the functioning of nationalized medicine that the Central Committee laid down the broad lines of a political and organizational struggle on the public-health front. It was the sort of approach which only a revolutionary government, certain of grass-roots support from the people, could wage. If it is grotesque to imagine such methods being used in developed Western countries, it is, unfortunately, no less grotesque to imagine it in many African countries which acquired their independence long before Mozambique. It is the typical political-ideological-educational approach of the FRELIMO of Eduardo Mondlane and Samora Machel.

Our policy should be guided in the sense of:

Developing intensive political work inside the hospitals with the participation of all the public health staff and the patients in order to put an end to divisionism, élitism, and racism, and create real national unity.

Arousing the consciousness of the social tasks in which medical workers are engaged; strengthening their dedication to the cause of

building up democratic people's power by promoting the spirit of "serving the people."

Setting up structures capable of applying the line as traced by FRELIMO, so that discipline is consciously adopted as the sentinel of that political line. In this context it is especially important to create [FRELIMO] party committees in the hospitals and other medical institutions, directly linked with the party leadership and the government.

Mobilizing and organizing the people so they can participate consciously and actively in the fight against disease. We must implement the slogan: "Each of us transforms himself into an agent of public health to promote public hygiene to preserve the health of the collective and to create conditions for preparing the body for this struggle."

After winning independence, people have the right to good health, to education, to decent food and clothing. But independence was the prerequisite for all other advances. In an amazingly short period of time, as I could feel throughout my travels, FRELIMO had gained the confidence of the people in the former nonliberated areas, and above all in the rural areas. Everything that they asked people to do was so clearly in their own interests that it was easy to mobilize enthusiasm. In the big towns it was somewhat different because it was not so clearly in everybody's interests—not their short-range interests. Some intellectuals, especially those who had enjoyed a privileged social or economic status, felt veiled contempt for people who had spent all their lives in the forest and did not even know how to use a flush toilet, yet lectured them on everything from public health to political matters, up to and including how to run the country! But this was a small minority without any political base. Eventually they would either have to join in the building of the new society or be left behind in every sense.

In the meantime FRELIMO was pushing ahead with its work. On October 23, 1976, a decree was issued which stated that "all Mozambican women, regardless of their marital status or whatever work they do, are entitled to sixty days fully paid maternity leave. . . ." It can be taken from the twentieth day before the date of probable delivery and does not affect the regular annual holiday. In addition, from the fifth month of pregnancy and during the first six months after the birth, mothers are exempted from night work.

That is something so removed from the wildest dreams of any Mozambican working woman that it must have seemed little short of a miracle. What effect can the sneers and jibes of city sophisticates at the "bumpkins from the bush" have in relation to revolutionary measures which touch the very heart of people's day-to-day problems?

In a 1977 New Year's message, Samora Machel was able to announce that "due to the efforts of the government and international solidarity," the number of doctors practicing in Mozambique had risen in 1976 to three hundred—more than four times the number at the time of the Portuguese departure! And that 2,000 new primary schoolteachers had been trained, and yet another 3,000 had completed refresher courses to be oriented in the FRELIMO line in education. The number of secondary schools had increased from thirty-three to ninety-nine during the first year of independence. In addition, "1976 saw greater attendance in schools and hospitals than has ever been registered in the history of Mozambique," said the President.

FRELIMO also made patient efforts to rally to their side all who could be rallied. Being careful not to reject or waste talents that could be utilized, they allocated valuable cadres for such work of "recuperation."

At the Re-education Center at Inhussane (Inhumbane province) I was able to have a look at recuperation efforts of a more complicated nature. It was there that I met Comandante Martinis Mola Muainkongua (mentioned in the first chapter as one of the twelve who took part in the opening battle of the national liberation struggle). After a long drive through coconut groves and forests of acaju trees (which produce Mozambique's biggest foreign currency earner—cashew nuts) we stopped at a group of huts where some black-uniformed people were strolling around. "We're here," said my guide-interpreter to my great surprise. There were no guards, no barbed wire, not even an entrance gate. Comandante Martinis emerged from one of the huts, an enormous man with a tiny "peashooter" pistol on his hip. His military rank required that he wore a pistol, but it became clear that he wanted one that was as un-intimidating as possible.

After a look around a farm of about 100 hectares, which provided maize, sunflowers, tomatoes, and a wide range of vegetables for the inmates' own consumption, and a site where finish-

ing touches were being put to the roof of a large storehouse, it was clear that the Comandante was a popular figure. He was greeted with friendly deference by all the inmates in the fields and along the dirt tracks. He explained who was being re-educated and how:

Colonialism treated everyone badly and we have to cope with the results of this. Most of the 399 here are petty criminals who turned to thievery because they had no jobs or skills. There are some who preferred robbing to any other way of making a living and a handful who were guilty of criminal assaults.

The government decided to give them a chance to learn the FRELIMO line and get rid of the old ideas which are products of the colonialist-capitalist system. It is because we regard them as victims of society that we consider that our center here is in no sense a prison. They all take part in political classes and in productive work. Great stress is also laid on the anti-illiteracy classes which they all attend.

Most of them already understand the new situation and accept the FRELIMO line. After all, they are on the receiving end of one aspect of it and many of them are well placed to make comparisons between their treatment here and what happened to them if they fell into the hands of the Portuguese police. Those who didn't understand the FRELIMO line before, now do.

Most of them are taking part in production for the first time in their lives and of course it is on a group basis. The responsible cadres only give the general orientation, they do the rest themselves. We encourage the maximum initiative from them. This introduces them to another aspect of FRELIMO policy—self-reliance. Discipline is excellent. Our staff is comprised of the commandant (myself), a political commissar and deputy political commissar, a cadre responsible for cultural and educational affairs, one for production, and another for professional training.

I asked if there were not problems with production and building activities due to the almost total lack of experience on the part of most of the inmates. Also, due to absence of guards and obstacles to escape, were there not problems of the inmates running away? And what had happened to the first "graduates"?

Those who are more advanced teach those who are backward. The first group was of 300, but most of them were free to leave after twelve months. We now have a second group of 399 which includes 99 who did not make it the first time. A few of the first group ran away

and it was those who had committed the most serious offenses. But after a while they all came back—they had merely gone to see their families.

As for what happened to the first “graduates,” we have not undertaken any followup. They are completely free when they leave here. By then the overwhelming majority can read and write. They can all take part in agricultural work, many others in carpentry and building. We know of some good results because some of our graduates are working in mechanical workshops in Inhumbane [the capital of the province in which the center was located—W.B.].

Comandante Martinis explained that a few of the inmates were mechanics who were allowed to go to work in Inhumbane from time to time “to keep their hand in” and to take some of the others with them for initial training. He hoped soon to set up a properly equipped workshop at the center. In fact he had discussed a number of important changes with the provincial governor a few days earlier. He advocated turning the re-education center into a fully equipped professional training school where each graduate would have mastered one profession. He also submitted plans to improve housing and give the trainees civilian-type clothing. “The governor agreed that we should do everything to avoid the idea that this is a punishment center and avoid anything that could humiliate them or offend their personal dignity. Everything should be done to recuperate them, to mold them into decent, useful citizens able to make their contribution to building up the country.” To my question as to how the practitioners of one of the world’s most individualistic professions—agriculture (at least as practiced in Mozambique) adapted to group work, he replied:

When they first arrive the accent is very much on political work and this helps to do away with their prejudices about collective work. Political study includes the history of the resistance struggle and its aims. They learn for the first time how we carried on the struggle; they study the essential role of the peasants in growing food, in transporting arms and other supplies. They are extremely interested in this. We tell them about the struggles inside FRELIMO and the international support we received. They are fascinated by this and their feelings of national pride start to be aroused.

Inhumbane was another example of the practical and human way in which the social evils left by the Portuguese were being

healed, combined with a Vietnamese-type frugality in salvaging every possible scrap of what is considered the most precious raw material—human beings. The re-education center was an extension of the drives to bring public health and education to the most inaccessible corners of the land and this included tackling the problem of moral health. The fact that a cadre of the quality and experience of Comandante Martinis Mola Muainkongua should be in charge of the Inhussane center was a measure of the importance that the FRELIMO leadership attached to this.

XVII FRELIMO 1977

The painfully slow-but-sure, step-by-step progress of the Mozambique revolution and promises of a quickened pace to come were spelled out at FRELIMO’s third congress, held in Maputo from February 3-7, 1977. The conditions under which each of the three congresses was held tell part of the story. The first (September,

1962) was held only three years after FRELIMO was founded. It had to be held on foreign soil, in what was then the British colony of Tanganyika (which, once independence was acquired, fused with Zanzibar, another newly independent British colony, to become Tanzania). The second (July, 1968) was held in the newly liberated territory of Mozambique's own Niassa province. It took place out of doors, deep in the forest with the tribune table and delegate's benches made from lengths of saplings lashed together. But the third was held in a splendid conference hall in the center of Maputo, capital of the nineteen-month-old People's Republic of Mozambique.

The universality of the guest delegations reflected FRELIMO's Vietnam-type position within the Communist world. It was rare by that time to see the Soviet Union, China, Albania and Yugoslavia sending delegates to the same Congress—or meeting anywhere else outside the United Nations. There were delegates from all countries where Communist parties held state power. Among the revolutionary parties and movements were those from Cambodia—also a rare participant by that time in events beyond her own frontiers. All former Portuguese colonies were represented—including East Timor.

The decisions of the three congresses reflect the political development which grew parallel to the armed struggle. The first decided to establish maximum unity of all sections of the population, including all tribal groupings and classes for the overthrow of Portuguese colonial rule by all means, including armed struggle. The second decided, after considerable argument, that the form of armed struggle should be Protracted Revolutionary War, and that the independence struggle was in the phase of a National Democratic Revolution. Mozambique's struggle, it was decided, was an integral part of the world struggle against imperialism.

While it is not explicitly stated in documents available from the second congress, it seems that the old problem as to whether armed struggle should be urban or rural-based was fought out, as it is being fought out today within the leadership of South Africa's African National Congress. The decision to launch armed struggle is a momentous one; to decide what form of armed struggle is hardly less so. It is crucial to success or failure. Armed struggle based on the industrial working class or on the rural peasantry?

Seizure of power in the cities with gradual extension of the struggle to the countryside as in the Bolshevik revolution or seizure of power in the countryside, gradual encirclement of the cities and their capture in the final phase as in the Chinese revolution? Pro-Soviet revolutionaries tend to favor the former, pro-Chinese the latter. It was the road chosen by the Vietnamese. The use of such terms as "Protracted Revolutionary War" and "National Democratic Revolution" shows that the advocates of the Chinese-Vietnamese rural-based war were in the majority. This was the model chosen as most appropriate for a backward people to wage anti-colonial struggle. It was at this congress also that revolutionary aims emerged and the split developed between the Eduardo Mondlane-Samora Machel leadership on the one hand and the more conservative, and ultimately secessionist, leader from Cabo Delgado, Lazaro Nkavandame. Reverend Uria Simango also broke away from FRELIMO at this point for virtually the same reasons as Nkavandame.

It is a fact of life that people support national liberation struggles for different reasons and some desert whenever policy decisions conflict with their own aims and interests. Almost all sections of a colonized society can be mobilized for the overthrow of the colonial power. There will be deserters however when the question of land reform is inevitably decided in favor of "land to those who till it." Local landowners, whose concept of victory was that of adding the land from their Portuguese neighbors to their own, are liable to turn against the liberation struggle when they realize that not only will they not be expropriating their neighbor's properties but that their own may be in danger if their holdings are too big. And, while overwhelming support can be mobilized for land reform, there will be other deserters when the question of nationalizing industry is decided at some later stage of the struggle. To announce final aims—even if they have been decided by the leadership—at too early a stage would negate the possibility of mobilizing all those forces susceptible of being mobilized in the initial phases of a national liberation struggle. Not to define them at an appropriate moment would lead to disaffection by the forces on which the struggle is based and for the satisfaction of whose deepest aspirations it is being waged. Through the struggle itself political consciousness is developed to a point where the leadership can pose new problems and, if the solutions proposed are

acceptable to the overwhelming majority, the leadership can be assured of mass support. It is a step-by-step process.

Thus the third congress decided that the liberation struggle could be escalated to the stage of a People's Democratic Revolution as a transitional step toward reaching a summit from which the socialist revolution could be launched.

FRELIMO, which had started like the MPLA as a front organization, had functioned as a political party much earlier than the MPLA. It was at the third congress however that, on February 3, 1977, it was formally transformed into a Marxist-Leninist, workers-peasants political party, retaining the name of FRELIMO. The Central Committee of twenty-two members elected at the second congress was replaced by one of sixty-seven members which elected an eleven-member Political Bureau, headed by Samora Machel, who was also elected party president. It includes Marcelino dos Santos, Alberto Joaquim Chipande, Joaquim Alberto Chissano and other founder members of the original FRELIMO.

In his introductory report, Samora Machel stated:

The working class is the ruling class of history. Only it is capable of engaging in the whole process of the transformation of Nature and Society and of stimulating and guiding this process. This requires a conscious and active participation in tasks at all levels of society. . . . The peasantry is the most numerous part of our population—the principal force of our country. It is the peasantry allied with the working force—the leading force—which constitute the political power base of Democratic People's Power.

FRELIMO, which started as a movement or front, had transformed itself into a Marxist-Leninist party, whereas the MPLA in Angola decided at a special Central Committee plenum (October 29, 1976) to hold a special congress in the third quarter of 1977 to form a Marxist-Leninist party. There was no question of transforming the MPLA into a party, although MPLA activists would certainly form its nucleus.

Small and medium farmers, handicraft workers, small business people, progressive intellectuals in all fields would have their role to play and would be encouraged in all activities in line with the central aim of serving the people. The specific plans outlined

for every sector of economic and social life all reflected the total neglect by the Portuguese colonialists of all spheres of activity which touched the life of the people and the orgy of destruction and sabotage which preceded their departure.

During the stage of the People's Democratic Revolution, economic policy is defined as:

Building up an independent, planned, and advanced economy capable of satisfying the elementary needs of the people and creating the conditions for moving on to the higher stage of Socialist Revolution. In our country the level of development is exceedingly low and the main obstacle to economic development is the dependency in which our economy finds itself in relation to foreign monopolies. Because of this the building up of an economy capable of satisfying the basic needs of the working people and enabling a transition to socialism necessarily implies the liquidation of colonial and neocolonial dependency in relation to imperialist states and international monopolies. . . .

Everything of any value in Mozambique was in foreign hands, and the major part, in terms of value, was not even in Portuguese hands. As part of the policy of giving major powers a vested interest in Mozambique remaining in Portuguese hands, dictator Salazar opened wide the gates to foreign investment. From the start of the colonial wars in Angola in February, 1961, until armed struggle began in Mozambique in 1964, industrial installations with a capital of two million or more dollars increased from eighty-five to 647. Between 1962 and 1969, total investments in industry more than doubled to reach a total of 526 million dollars. That all this investment was made at an accelerated rate is seen from the fact that between January and July, 1973, installations of industrial and other plants were approved to the value of 400 million dollars. Of the total investments from 1962 to mid-1973, when the military situation started to deteriorate sharply for the Portuguese, 52.3 per cent were for 180 large-scale industrial units exclusively for exports, while 47.7 per cent were for 1,724 industrial units to supply the internal market. Foreign capital greatly outweighed Portuguese capital, but whatever profits Portugal did pocket went to finance the war.

The great advantage that Portugal had to offer foreign investors was cheap labor—with salaries averaging from one to two

dollars per day except in such specialized branches as oil refining—and a no-strike labor discipline imposed by the PIDE, along with other notorious forms of Portuguese repression. Trade unions, of course, had never been heard of. The extent of the foreign (from a Portuguese viewpoint) and multinational hold on the Mozambique economy can be illustrated by examining a few key industries.

The production and refining of sugar—one of the country's main exports—was monopolized by five major companies, with British companies holding a ninety per cent interest in two of them, Sena Sugar Estates and the Incomati Agricultural Society. Companhia do Buzi belonged to the Companhia de Mozambique, which in turn was controlled by the big British South Africa monopoly. The Mozambique Sugar Company was owned by French and associated interests; and MARAGRA, although nominally owned by a Portuguese monopoly, was suspected of being closely linked with the giant South African Industrial Development Corporation.

Four of the five biggest sisal and coconut plantations were dominated by British, Swiss, West German, and Dutch capital respectively; while in the fifth, Swiss, French, and Norwegian capital were combined to secure a controlling interest.

The cotton-growing and textile industries were monopolized by four major interests: British South Africa (through the Companhia de Mozambique), the Banco Português do Atlantico and the Banco Comercial de Angola, both of which are very closely linked with Barclay's Bank of England, and, finally, a Portuguese capitalist in the form of the João Ferreira dos Santos family.

Cashew nuts represent one of Mozambique's major natural resources. Over large areas of the coastal regions there are acaju forests where the nuts grow in a natural state. Four main groups monopolize the transformation into edible nuts, including the grading and packing processes. These are (1) Spence and Pierce, Ltd., a consortium of two all-British enterprises; CAJUCA, in which an Italian company holds a majority interest; (2) MOCITA, a consortium which is headed by the South African, Anglo-American Corporation (with a strong participation of Portuguese capital) but also includes the Tiger Oats and Milling Corporation; (3) an Italian firm, the Industria de Prodotti Alimentari de Bologna; and (4) SOCAJU, associated with what was then the biggest Portu-

guese monopoly, CUF, and the Banco Nacional Ultramarino, which, like virtually all Portuguese banks, was heavily infiltrated with foreign capital.

In the three main tea-producing companies foreign—mainly British—capital also prevailed.

Prospecting and exploitation for oil and natural gas was in the hands of exclusively American, South African, French, and West German companies. The mineral-rich province of Tete had been divided up among the Companhia Carbonifera de Moçambique, controlled by the Belgian-owned Société Minière et Géologique; the Companhia de Urânio de Moçambique, one of the British-South African Corporation's group which headed a consortium—the Companhia Mineira de Tete—including the Bethlehem Steel Company, among other non-Portuguese participants; and the Companhia Moçambique de Minas, set up by the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Corporation and the Anglo-American Corporation.

The country's richest coal mine at Moatize, twenty kilometers northeast of the provincial capital of Tete, the Carbonifères de Mozambique, was wholly Belgian-owned. Almost sixty per cent of the coal produced—575,000 tons in 1975—was high-quality coking coal, most of it exported to Japan. And in Mozambique province, the Japanese Sumitomo Trust had secured the exclusive rights for prospecting and exploiting iron ore deposits. In other fields of exploitation of mineral wealth, British, American, Canadian, South African, even Luxembourg firms had each carved out their concessions. What they had not calculated, however, was that most of the areas which were richest in minerals were in the mountains of the northernmost provinces—the first to be liberated by FRELIMO guerillas!

The material quoted above comes from a detailed study by Samora Machel, which describes the extent of the multinational grab of Mozambique's natural resources at the pressing invitation of the Portuguese fascist government. Continuing that part of his report, Samora Machel said:

Portugal thus clearly appears as the manager for the interests of companies which are above all non-Portuguese . . . Portuguese colonialism has thus succeeded in financially exploiting its role as a

parasite while at the same time trying to integrate Mozambique more directly in the plans of certain belligerent circles.

The Portuguese government and its diplomatic and propaganda machinery are constantly insisting on the necessity of integrating Mozambique into a NATO "zone of intervention." Certain American strategists would like to transform our port of Nacala, the best natural port on the African side of the Indian Ocean, into an American naval base. There are political schemes aimed at creating a military alliance between the main imperialist powers on the one hand, and on the other, Brazil, South Africa, Portugal, and its "territories" of Angola and Mozambique.

Samora Machel's analysis was written before independence was won, but he was already preparing the ground within FRELIMO and outside it for nationalization of the country's natural resources and of the business enterprises whose owners had fled, or who were sabotaging the national economy. It was clearly impossible to start economic planning or even national reconstruction when everything of value, apart from the land and its people, belonged to foreign interests.

However strenuously the Portuguese authorities tried to conceal the truth, the defeat of General Kaulza de Arriaga's "Gordian Knot" offensive and its staggering implications began to seep through to the outside world. Capital and people began to move the other way, first in a trickle, then a flow, and, finally, a flood.

It is typical that while foreign money continued to pour in, local capital started to creep out—another illustration of the fact that the great captains of finance are not all that bright. Their eyes are too closely glued to computerized projections of profits per investment to see the larger picture. They simply cannot imagine that ragged, barefooted guerillas can block their plans. Time and again, ingrained racial and class prejudices blind them to political realities. The Portuguese government was still signing authorizations to open up mines and set up industries in territory it no longer controlled, or ever could control, even while small and medium Portuguese capitalists in Mozambique were starting to transfer their capital back to Lisbon and making preparations to follow it.

The figures presented in the General Report to the Third FRELIMO Congress tell the story. The "Gordian Knot" offensive took place between May and July, 1970.

After the defeat of the colonial forces in Operation "Gordian Knot," capitalism, which was already entering a period of crisis, started to become ever more fearful for its future in Mozambique. The colonial bourgeoisie stepped up the flight of hard currency and started the process of economic sabotage. The exodus of *colons* also started at this period. According to colonial statistics, about 6,000 *colons* left in 1971. In 1972, about 12,500; and in 1973, some 22,000 abandoned Mozambique.

And that was before the "Captains' Coup" of April 25, 1974, in Lisbon, before the specter of independence and black rule appeared! The General Report goes on to describe the state of affairs during the Transitional Government period (September 20, 1974, to June 25, 1974), under the cover of which the Portuguese would gradually withdraw:

During the transition period the capitalists were once again forced to revise their strategy and work out new plans. They sowed panic and provoked the departure of owners of small and medium enterprises, technicians, and other qualified workers. The big capitalists who planned and directed these schemes hoped thereby to safeguard their own interests by pretending to advocate a policy of moderation and false realism, in the name of overcoming the technical and administrative shortcomings which they themselves had created. To defend their own interests either in industrial enterprises or within the state administration, they used the internal bourgeoisie, hastily formed during the final years of colonialism. They intensified the theft and unbridled destruction; cattle, tractors, machinery, heavy trucks disappeared across the frontier, or were embarked from our wharves due to the complicity of reactionary and corrupt administrative personnel. When pillage was no longer possible due to growing vigilance by the state and the working masses, the class enemies resorted to destruction. Thousands of head of cattle were slaughtered and left to rot. Essential consumer goods were hoarded, disappearing completely from the market to appear later on at fabulous prices. The ordinary trade channels, already inadequate enough, were systematically sabotaged. . . .

Subversion was organized against our country. Radio broadcasts were directed against us from abroad, counterrevolutionary pamphlets were secretly introduced. Drugs, pornography, religious propaganda of a subversive and obscurantist nature were distributed. Rumors were spread and provocations launched to accelerate the flight of technicians. Campaigns in the press systemati-

cally distorted the people's revolutionary gains to slander and discredit people's power. Armed agents with explosives were introduced to carry out criminal and terrorist activities. Outside the country, the illegal racist regime of Southern Rhodesia was once again used as an operational force to attack our country and massacre our people. . . .

The FRELIMO response to this was to rapidly extend its party and mass structures throughout the whole country and to set up *Grupos Dinamizadores* (literally, Dynamizer Groups, but which shall be referred to as Activist Groups) in every factory and enterprise and at all levels within the administration to counter enemy activities and explain the real position of FRELIMO. The General Report described them as "our fundamental weapon in fighting against all forms of economic sabotage; against all attempts to confuse, corrupt and subvert the workers." As I noticed in my travels these groups quickly acquired prestige and authority; people in factories and villages naturally turned to them when problems arose. It was also a shortcut method of building up a devoted body of mainly young people who quickly acquired experience in handling real day-to-day problems. They became vanguard units and natural transmission belts for FRELIMO policies. They blocked the attempt of the Portuguese colonialists and their internal supporters to achieve by political and economic sabotage what their armed forces had not been able to achieve on the battlefield. The "last stand" by the latter was to provoke a small military mutiny in Maputo by some four hundred soldiers and police on the night of December 17-18, 1975. They managed to seize a few buildings and fired a lot of shots in the air but it was easily put down by loyal elements of FRELIMO's armed forces vigorously supported by the Activist Groups.

A pleasant surprise for FRELIMO was the reaction of the workers to the abandonment of business enterprises. It was impossible for the government to have foreseen the scale on which it was done, nor was it technically possible to have standby management teams ready to take over. It was done spontaneously by the workers themselves. Their main interest was to not be thrown out of work. With the departure of virtually all administrative and technical personnel, they had enormous difficulties to overcome because there had been a conscious effort to keep them in ignorance of technical processes but they carried on as best they could.

The big CAJUCA factory for the processing of cashew nuts situated in the outskirts of Maputo was an interesting case in point. Foreseeing the end of cheap labor once Mozambique became independent, but unwilling to abandon such a profitable enterprise, the owners (who were mainly Italian) decided to mechanize the whole process, sacking 700 of the plant's 1,900 workers as soon as the new machines were installed. The workers advised the government that this was against the national interest. The government, without posing the question of ownership, withdrew the administrative rights of the owners and appointed an Administrative Committee, composed of three of the plant's workers.

I spoke with two of them, Luis Guila, responsible for production, and Luis José Pereira, in charge of maintenance. To my question as to what the main problems were at the beginning, Luis Guila replied:

During that first period there was plenty of confusion. No one wanted to work. They said: "We're independent now. Why should we work more than three or four hours a day?" Once our committee was set up we had lots of political work to do, explaining that we should work well, produce even more than before, because it was the whole country and not some Italian and Portuguese capitalists, which would benefit. Gradually political consciousness was raised and production went up gradually from thirty to sixty tons a day. But it was difficult because people who had never had any rights before could not understand why now that they were free we could not just halve the working hours and double the wages. We had to explain that this would sabotage the revolution and play into the hands of our enemies. Bit by bit, helped by the radio and press, there has been a real transformation in people's thinking. After the first few months, we were able to take back the 700 workers who had been sacked. A vitally important role in raising political consciousness—which is still not high enough—was played by the factory Activist Group.

Luis José Pereira explained that nine out of the ten Portuguese technicians had left and there were some complicated machines that their own workers could not handle. Otherwise production would be stepped up to one hundred tons daily—a lot of cashew nuts! Most of the finished nuts went to traditional

markets in the United States, Australia, and other Western countries.

At the Maputo Metallurgical Plant, which turns out freight wagons and port handling equipment (mainly for South Africa when I visited it in May, 1976), I spoke with members of the factory Activist Group. They were in the midst of grappling with another type of problem. Like the CAJUCA plant, it was still operating on behalf of its owners but with a Portuguese manager.

We had great difficulties at first—now we are well organized and united. We had to carry out an intensive political campaign to explain the national importance of production from this enterprise. Workers at first saw things in a very partial form, putting forward all sorts of claims that were perhaps justifiable but impractical to fulfill without harming overall interests.

Last year the manager tried to divide the workers with false and demagogic offers. He promised higher wages to one group of about 150 workers in order to provoke divisions. We had to explain to them not to fall for this.

That Mozambique would pay a high price for its militant support for the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and the African National Congress in South Africa was obvious. But it was an acceptable sacrifice. In a statement to the diplomatic corps in Maputo on June 19, 1977, Samora Machel said that between May, 1976, and June, 1977, 1,432 civilians had been killed and 527 wounded. "There have been 143 Rhodesian acts of aggression in the year ending last March," he said, "and violations and massacres have now reached an unprecedented scale." Most of the victims were Zimbabwean refugees fleeing the war and the savage repression of the Smith regime. But in 1976, 49 soldiers of the FPLM (Mozambique People's Liberation Forces) had been killed and twenty-seven wounded in repelling these attacks. The total figures for 1977 were bound to be higher. Samora Machel was speaking just after one of the most serious attacks of the year. It started on May 29, against the town of Mapai, about one hundred kilometers inside Mozambique at an almost equal distance from the Rhodesian and South African frontiers. The town was occupied by Rhodesian forces for almost one week and destroyed before the invaders withdrew.

A far greater attack started on November 23, 1977, against a

refugee camp outside Chimoio, (former Vila Pery) about eighty kilometers inside Mozambique's northern Manica province. Rhodesian troops were brought in by helicopter after parachutists had secured landing sites. Jet bombers and helicopter gunships were used in the "softening up" action which preceded the invasion. Nearly one thousand civilians were killed—one hundred of them school-children when their school received direct hits from the bombers—and seven hundred were wounded seriously enough to be admitted as in-patients to the Chimoio hospital.

The Patriotic Front asserts that it has no guerilla training bases in Mozambique—they are mainly in southern Tanzania. Representatives of the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and western journalists who visited the sites of these main attacks have confirmed that they were refugee centers. But by such actions the Smith government not only wants to punish the FRELIMO government for its total support for the Zimbabwean freedom fighters but also to further its aims of internationalizing the war. The reasoning is that if Mozambique can be provoked into requesting a Soviet-backed Cuban troop commitment—as in Angola—the West will be forced to come to Smith's rescue and thus provide the best chance for his survival. It is a forlorn hope, but one of the best he has!

At a press conference in Maputo, on September 17, 1977, a captured spy, Afonso Joane Cotoi, revealed some details of what was in store for Mozambique if Rhodesian-South African plans materialized. A Mozambican from Inhambane province, Cotoi had been recruited as a labor spy by Pretoria's intelligence services while working in a South African coal mine. From informing against his fellow-workers, he graduated as a sabotage and intelligence agent. He was taken under the wing of the "Free Africa" movement, headed by a certain Jorge Jardim—one of those extremely rich Mozambicans whose concept of liberation was that of adding expropriated Portuguese assets to his own. Quite unrepentant, Cotoi told the press that his only "regret" was that he had been captured.

The soldiers who trained us were Rhodesians, Portuguese, South Africans and others who spoke various languages. It was very tough training, lasting the whole day with intervals for lessons. . . .

Around the barracks there were women for us—women from

Portugal, from South Africa, Rhodesia and some from Mozambique . . .

They spoke to us a lot about Jorge Jardim, saying that he was our chief and future president, that he was going to lead us to victory . . . Just as FRELIMO had kicked out the Portuguese colonialists with weapons, we would be able to kick out FRELIMO if we trained enough. They told us that Jorge Jardim was going to lead us in kicking out FRELIMO, and so we would be able to run Mozambique, and we could get very rich, occupy the chairs of the ministers and directors. We would be the owners of the factories, the farms and everything else. . . .

They told us that for us to take power it was necessary to attack and kill the main leaders and cadres of FRELIMO. They assured us that this was being set up according to plans worked out by our principal leaders, mainly Jorge Jardim . . .

Cotoi was one of a group of 105 spies and saboteurs infiltrated into Mozambique from Rhodesia at the beginning of September (1977), his group of five being landed by helicopter near Mapai. They were briefed as to the importance of gathering information in preparation for a big attack toward the end of the month. His own assignment was to watch movement of troops and supplies along roads and railways and he was given a rendezvous point where a helicopter would pick him up and whisk him back to the Rhodesian operational base. From that point on his story was rather similar to that of Nito Alves. Some kindly village folk offered him hospitality.

I found a house and asked if I could rest there, saying I had come from Maputo. They welcomed me, put a mat on the floor and told me I could sleep there. I was very tired and fell asleep, but was woken up some hours later by a group of FRELIMO fighters who had surrounded me. They asked me who I had come to see and where I came from. I showed them my documents and said that I had come from the South. They insisted on taking me with them. On the way I could see the game was up and I told them everything, that I had come from Rhodesia, that I was an agent of "Free Africa" . . .¹

A few days after Cotoi's press conference the Rhodesian security forces launched a heavy attack with parachutists and heliborne troops, supported by jet fighter-bombers in the Mapai-Chicualacuala area where Cotoi had been operating.

Apart from coping with the military threats and other "de-stabilization" efforts, the FRELIMO government continued to pay a heavy price in ending the Portuguese concept of Mozambique as a service station-transit facility and source of cheap labor for South Africa. In 1975, 130,000 of about 400,000 workers in South African mines came from Mozambique. Under what is known as the Mozambique Convention the South African government paid to Portugal—later to Mozambique—a proportion of the miners' wages in gold at the official world price of forty-two dollars per ounce. The gold was then sold on the open market at three to four times that amount. In the last years of Portuguese rule the difference between the official and the real price of gold amounted to about one third of Mozambique's total exchange earnings. Compulsory recruitment was ended with independence, and the total of Mozambique miners in South Africa by the end of 1977 had dropped to 34,000. This is due to two reasons. Despite problems of unemployment the FRELIMO government discourages—but does not prevent—workers going to South Africa on a voluntary basis. As the main reason that South Africa employs foreign workers is that they are less likely to strike or engage in militant activities than local workers, the importation of possibly politically-motivated "new" Mozambicans was viewed with alarm by a security-minded South African government. Especially as the country's main wealth derives from mining. Recruitment from neighboring states—Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho—was stepped up. The numbers imported from Rhodesia increased from 25,000 in 1976, to 40,000 in 1977. Malawi, which had imposed a ban on recruitment of labor for South Africa following an air crash in which eighty of its miners were killed, was under pressure to lift the ban and provide about 20,000 miners by 1978.

The preferential gold rate for payment to the fast-dwindling force of Mozambican miners will end in 1978, and with that will also end any incentive for the FRELIMO government to permit its nationals to continue working in South Africa.

While Mozambique still got substantial revenue from South Africa's use of Maputo's port facilities, the rapid development of the South African harbor of Richard's Bay, 320 kilometers to the south meant that that source of revenue also would soon dry up.

There have been some compensatory factors. Part of the labor force which would normally have left for the South African mines was employed in a great drive to increase the harvest of cashew nuts, now Mozambique's greatest source of foreign exchange. Compared to the 1976 harvest of 95,000 tons, it was expected the 1977 harvest would reach an all-time record of 180,000 tons. A major contribution to the take-off period of economic development was a fifty million dollar aid agreement signed in Maputo on November 7, 1977, with the Nordic countries—Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland and Iceland—for the financing of twenty-six projects in the field of agriculture and fisheries. The agreement is described as the biggest Nordic support to any single country in the history of Nordic aid. Spread over three years it will include support for state farms, improvement of livestock and dairy cattle breeding methods, forestry development and the training of personnel. The port facilities of Maputo and Beira are more and more being used for Mozambique's own trade with the outside world and her developing internal coastal trade.

Democratic structures were strengthened by a series of ballots which started on September 25, 1977, with the election of people's assemblies at the level of villages and small towns and ended on December 4, with the election of a 226-member People's National Assembly, the supreme legislative body. It was the first time that the African population had ever taken part in a democratic exercise of this kind. In addition to choosing people in whom they had confidence—at least at local levels—the long drawn-out electoral procedure was, as Samora Machel expressed it in his address to the first session of the national People's Assembly, on December 23, 1977: "A real school, a university in which national and class unity have been consolidated. The elections are the reality of our freedom."²

Mozambique faced the New Year (1978), with heightened tension on her borders, a state of war with the Smith regime and increasingly stronger invasions of her territory; a structured party grouped around the leadership which had launched the liberation struggle fourteen years previously; an elected parliament and a government whose key members were also leaders of the FRELIMO party, and an economic plan with modest aims of two parts:

One is aimed at organizing and stimulating production of essential goods and ensuring their distribution, guaranteeing the production targets in strategic sectors, keeping the balance of payments under control and defining an adequate investment program.

The other is the central program for the activities of the state apparatus . . . to ensure that tasks are clearly defined and that the state apparatus becomes increasingly geared to the productive process . . .³

On December 19, 1977, Marcelino dos Santos, speaking in his capacity as Minister for Development and Economic Planning, summed up the government's attitude to economic development as: "We direct the state enterprises, we support the cooperative sector, we control the private sector." He was speaking in Tete province to announce that the Cabora Bassa hydroelectric concession and the Moatize coal mines—though remaining in private hands—would come under government control. Cabora Bassa started supplying electric power to South Africa on a regular commercial basis in April, 1977.

Huge problems but also great accomplishments. If the road ahead looked rough as 1978 loomed over the horizon, the FRELIMO leadership and the people of Mozambique could have confidence in the future by looking over their shoulders at the road travelled since FRELIMO was formed on June 25, 1962.