This exemplifies the lack of power that we people suffer from in Mozambique. So the political structures of the past have gone, and have gone for good. FRELIMO must fill in the vacuum with new politics.

The Portuguese, because theirs is a fascist regime, in the last 40 years never encouraged any development of local traditional political structures the way the British have done in British Africa. Therefore, we are dealing with a fresh situation which is actually a challenge for us.

The Evolution of FRELIMO
Eduardo Mondlane

Excerpt from a previously unpublished interview by Aquino de Braganca, recorded in Algiers shortly after the Second Congress in 1968.

de Braganca: What would you say if it were asserted that FRELIMO began by being a front and has transformed itself into a political party?
Mondlane: Of course, of course. I agree that as a result of the experience of ten days of the [Second] Congress, FRELIMO has a political line that is much clearer than previously. In the first place because this line came to be seen as important in the conditions of our struggle, in part also because there were some elements within FRELIMO who brought these ideas with them to the struggle. A common base we all had when we formed FRELIMO was the hatred of colonialism, the necessity of destroying the colonial structure — but what type of social structure no-one knew. Some knew, had theoretical ideas, but even they were transformed by the struggle. There is a coalescence of thought that came about in these last few years that makes it possible for me to say, and I do believe it, that FRELIMO is now really far more socialist, revolutionary, and progressive than ever before, and now tends more and more in the direction of socialism of the Marxist-Leninist variety.

Because the conditions of life in Mozambique, the type of enemy we have, permit no other alternative. It is impossible to create a capitalist Mozambique. It would be ridiculous for the people to fight to destroy the enemy’s economic structure and then reconstruct it for the enemy. It would be ridiculous, and I have said so several times. Now we’re not going to do that. We are going to create a socialist system and there now exists a wealth of experiences of various socialist countries that we shall study carefully. So that it is in this way that the theory of Marxism-Leninism and the experience (including the errors) of the socialist countries that have been working and living a socialist experience since 1917 are very relevant for us.

The training of politico-military cadres includes instruction about socialism. So that those who came to the movement with a Catholic religious background continue to be Catholics but Marxist Catholics. It is possible!
Without compromising the Party which has not yet made an official declaration asserting it is Marxist-Leninist, I think FRELIMO can be said to be inclining more and more in this direction because the conditions under which we struggle and live require it.

Self-Criticism

FRELIMO

An editorial in Mozambique Revolution (FRELIMO), 38, March-April 1969, following the meeting of the Central Committee on 11-21 April.

The Central Committee of FRELIMO met in ordinary session from 11 to 21 April. The agenda included the discussion of the main problems of our struggle. The work of the different Departments was analysed exhaustively, lines of orientation were drawn up for each one and their respective programmes of action were approved. So far, this meeting of the Central Committee was no different from any of the previous meetings.

But something completely new happened at this meeting, distinguishing it as an historical landmark in the development of FRELIMO: like a fresh wind there appeared a completely new element of criticism and self-criticism, resulting in the elimination of erroneous conceptions enabling us to lead some misguided comrades back to the correct revolutionary line, and to re-establish a sense of reciprocal confidence among us.

This confidence had been prejudiced by differences among the leadership. We were not very clear about where the basis of these differences lay, but we perceived that, when important decisions had to be taken there was a clash of standpoints, revealing the existence of two lines, each represented by a certain number of comrades, defending different positions.

All of us were conscious of this division — but, because we thought we would aggravate the situation if we brought the question into the open, because we were convinced that it was necessary and convenient to present at least an appearance of unity in the FRELIMO leadership, we never discussed the problem.

These divergences were manifested in many important instances. For example, in the definition of who is the enemy, in the question of deciding on the strategic line to take (a protracted people’s war), on the importance to be given to the armed struggle in relation to the other forms of struggle, etc. This situation had become more evident since 1966, when we started having liberated zones in our country. Certain events had taken place since March, 1968, which seriously affected our organisation. We all felt that the origin of this situation was the division existing within FRELIMO — but we were unable to locate the roots of the contradictions and consequently, we were