Traditionally we had no capitalism in Zimbabwe and the social fabric contained many collective aspects and principles of mutual responsibility and aid. I can't say there was no personal property by individuals. There were some people with more cattle than others, and so on. But normally, if a person had no cattle, someone would give him a cow and out of the progeny of that cow he could build up his own stock. If you were willing to work hard, society gave you the means of making a living. If you didn't work hard, or were lazy, you were the laughing stock of the community. So you were forced by society to work hard. Much of this remains even today, particularly in the countryside, where most of our people have not yet been drawn into capitalist relations of production. So in terms of socialist ideological training, what needs to be done is to sharpen our people's awareness of certain fundamental tenets of socialism which were practised traditionally. Then it will not be very difficult to introduce and teach scientific socialism — for it will not be an entirely new thing for the masses to comprehend. It must also be said that the only real exploiters known by the present generation of people in Zimbabwe have been foreigners — white settlers from Britain and South Africa. These are the people who have established capitalist industry and farming in our country, who have sucked the wealth out of our land and labour, and who have been oppressing us. So the struggle is seen by the masses as being between the whites and the blacks. Very few Africans have acquired any real wealth in Zimbabwe and they are merely agents of the capitalists who may own a small shop, engage in petty trade, etc., and who get some of the crumbs which fall from the master's table. The settlers think they are creating a middle class with these people. But such Africans are not really capitalists, not really rich — though psychologically they are made to believe that they are capitalists. As for the broad masses of the people, they accept ZAPU's socialist policies without question. For them black is synonymous with the oppressed class and white with the rich capitalist class.

The Problem of the Assimilados

MPLA

Excerpt from a pamphlet entitled Angola published by Information CONCP on behalf of MPLA in Algiers in 1969. Translated from French.
The Bourgeoisie

The Portuguese have artificially divided the Angolan population into 'natives' (99% of the total) and assimilados (1%). From these figures it is evident that the 'assimilation' phenomenon has been quite limited.

The 'assimilation' policy, which is not the invention of Portuguese colonialism, was pursued by other colonizers, who favoured the creation of a restricted privileged class able to serve as an intermediary between them and the popular masses.

This policy was bound to fail, in Angola and elsewhere, because the 'assimilated' were the first ones to lay down the theoretical and practical basis of the fight for national independence.

The problem of the assimilados must be seen in terms of social classes. It is the problem of the participation of the petty bourgeoisie, including the relatively important sector of intellectuals, and of the middle bourgeoisie where it exists. Naturally, all social classes and strata should participate in the fight for national liberation. The problem is to know whose interests must have priority, those of the masses or those of a small minority which would like to replace the colonizers.

The MPLA, as has been stated in its programme, has taken upon itself the task of 'constantly defending essentially the interests of the peasant and working masses'.

The Indifference of the Urban Petty Bourgeoisie

Paulo Jorge

Excerpt from an interview by the Liberation Support Movement (USA and Canada) with Paulo Jorge, head of the Department of Information & Propaganda of the MPLA. The interview appeared in 1973.

I would say that up to this point most of our urban 'sympathizers', especially the educated elements, remain more or less indifferent to the armed struggle and are afraid to get involved with MPLA activities. Of course, some have already escaped the persecution of PIDE or the police and come to join us in the liberated areas; a few have even been sent abroad for military and/or technical training. At present, however, the number is not great. But, as your question suggests, at a certain stage of our military activity in the towns and cities we are confident that many more of these petty-bourgeois elements will become insecure and come over to the revolution, thus helping the MPLA to solve its problem of shortages of middle cadre personnel.