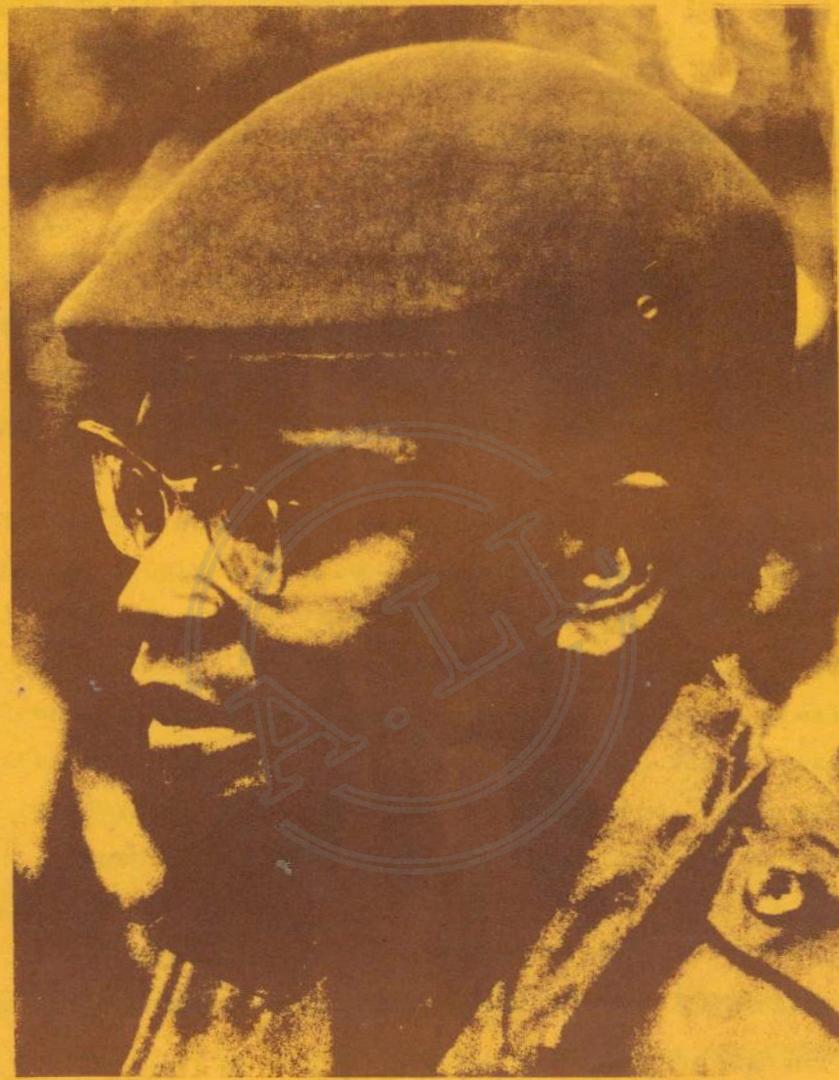


66/6/68

movimento popular de libertação de angola



AGOSTINHO NETO, PRESIDENT OF MPLA

a message to companions in the struggle



Speech by Agostinho Neto, President of MPLA  
delivered June 6, 1968, over Radio Tanzania  
in the program "The Voice of Angola in Combat"

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Companions in the Struggle,

Comrades,

It is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity, offered by the External Service of Radio Tanzania, to send you this message -- a message that is destined not only for our Angolan compatriots and comrades of the MPLA but also our brave companions in struggle in Mozambique who, under the banner of FRELIMO, raise high the flame of revolt against Portuguese colonial occupation.

United in the same combat, the people of the Portuguese colonies of Guinea (Bissau), Mozambique and Angola have inflicted innumerable defeats upon the enemy, especially in recent times. The areas controlled by the guerrillas are continuously growing. The new life in these areas is advancing and, in the process, opening up roads towards the restoration of our peoples' independence that was lost in past centuries, and also their dignity and just place in the world.

Thus it is that, in order to achieve common objectives, the movements directing the struggles in these countries that are still dominated by Portugal are united and cooperate closely, while all respecting the differences that exist in the specific conditions of each country. In general, however, what is certain is that our struggle will not stop developing and progressing.

The cooperation of the people of the present Portuguese colonies in this phase and also in the future is and will be absolutely essential not only for the conquest of Independence but also during the phase of national reconstruction.

Fortunately, we already have before us the experience of Africa after the Independence of the countries of our continent that were dominated by imperialism. If, on the one hand, this experience has shown many positive aspects, it is evident that, in other ways, it has revealed weaknesses -- one of the principle being the general economic dependence in relations with the former metropolitan countries, the effect of which is to impede access to complete Independence.

This experience must stimulate us, who are fighting with arms in hand, to look for more advanced and much more effective forms of organization in order to achieve our purpose: complete Independence. The blood that is being shed by the best of the sons of our countries, and the efforts of each guerrilla and of every one of our people, must not be spent in vain, in methods that are inappropriate for organization in the present and inadequate for administration in the future. It is necessary that the real control of the country, whether from the political, economic or social point of view, be in the hands of the people who are devoted to the struggle, and not in the

fists of bureaucrats who -- it could be said in passing-- are dishonest and not always those who will be found or are, today, to be found in the battle-field. Much less could we allow foreigners to continue to exploit our peoples; for imperialism to extend its clutches over our countries and subjugate them in neo-colonialism. We have to fight for complete independence!

There is no doubt that for complete Independence, political, economic and social, and for our peoples to really be the masters of their own destiny, it is necessary that we provide ourselves with the appropriate instruments for action. In the present phase, it is necessary that the struggle be completely under the orientation of an independent party with well-defined ideas; that its militants be disciplined and absorb fully the doctrine of their party. It is necessary that the leaders themselves be honest, modest and active, and that they do not spare their efforts for the good orientation and organization of their people. It is necessary that they be always at the side of their people, with them in their suffering and in their daily sacrifices.

One of the more debated of problems in recent times is the presence in our territories of Portuguese, or the descendents of Portuguese, whose ideas coincide with ours, whose lives have been dedicated to the struggle against fascism in Portugal, and who understand and

accept the right of the peoples of the Portuguese colonies to regain their Independence and self-government, like any other sovereign people.

On this point we have sometimes observed negative reactions on the part of some of our combatants and of our friends. It is those negative attitudes that can prejudice and deter the success of our struggle for freedom. I speak of the problem of racialism.

In our countries we are not making a racial war. Our objective is not to fight against the white man solely because he is white. It is that we fight those who support the colonial regime. All those in our territories who show raised unarmed hands, or who show themselves willing to give their collaboration to the guerrillas, providing them with foodstuffs and products that are unavailable in the forests; all those who in any manner show their desire not to cooperate with the colonial regime must not be despised or treated as enemies. They constitute a force that operates in our favor, in the same way as on the international plane. There we do not seek support only in the countries of Africa south of the Sahara, called Black Africa, where the skin of the inhabitants is darker; but we also go to look for the aid of countries of North Africa, where the people have a light skin. We go even further to Europe to look for political, diplomatical and material

help from countries where the majority of the population have white colour, and in other continents where the racial differences are even more evident. If, on account of racial differences, we despise that formidable force that is represented by progressives of the whole world, and by the underdeveloped countries, we will only be digging our own grave.

Our struggle is not an isolated struggle in the world. It is part of a global struggle by Humanity to bring an end to the exploitation of man by man, and it is within this framework that we must view our struggle - outside the narrow limits of racial prejudice.

Therefore, we invite the Portuguese, the sons of Portuguese people, who are in uniform and armed in Angola, Mazambique and Guinea (Bissau), to desert the ranks of the colonialist army and not to soil their hands with the blood of innocent men, women and children whose only objective is to be free - acting in the same manner as did the heroic Portuguese themselves during the Arab occupation of Spain. Instead of assassinating defenceless people, they must raise their arms in surrender when confronted by the guerrillas of MPLA, FRELIMO or PAIGC. They will be received as men and will be given the choice of a destination in those countries that accept political refugees. Or better still, we make an appeal to the Portuguese to desert with their

arms and cross to the side of the nationalists, avoiding the shame of participating in an unjust war that is as dirty as the war in Vietnam.

During the course of the war in Angola, MPLA have had occasion to admit to neighbouring countries some Portuguese who had deserted. And there, in various countries, some of them are actively engaged in struggle against the Salazar regime, while others go about their work so that they and their families may live in peace.

Therefore, if there exists in some of our combatants the idea of a war against the white man, it is necessary that it be immediately substituted by the idea of a war against colonialism and against imperialism; a war against oppression, for the liberty and for the dignity of all men in the world. This idea will fortify our struggle. It will offer more guarantees and new perspectives that open up a brilliant future for all men. In a time of hatred we will have fraternity and understanding.

I do not wish to say, comrades and dear companions in the struggle, that we must be weak, that we do not have to train hard and inflict the bravest possible blows upon the racists who desire to dominate the African people; that we have to be complacent with the agents of PIDE or with the settlers organized into militias. Absolutely not! To those only one language is applicable.

Only one justice is possible. Only one law of war can be adopted. They have to be liquidated, for they are the bulwarks of colonialist exploitation.

But we must not confuse friends and enemies. We have to take care in differentiating - to choose, to distinguish who are our friends and who are our enemies.

At times, it is precisely our enemies who keep us from friends, taking advantage of our political inverte or our weaknesses - one of which could be racial prejudice. Where there does not exist a clear idea on this subject, the imperialist enemy can easily separate us from our friends and we could even liquidate, with our own hands, valuable forces within our own ranks.

There was a time, between 1961 and 1963, when reactionary forces commanded by imperialism showed themselves active in the north of our country and thousands of coloreds and assimilados were assassinated only because they were coloreds or assimilados. In this way, we lost thousands of men, women and children, almost all of whom were sincere patriots and combatants, ardent for our cause of liberation.

This happened only because the imperialists were able to inculcate in the mentality of politically-unclear combatants the idea that all those who had slightly

lighter skin or who know how to speak Portuguese or still had to serve in the colonial administration were necessarily traitors who were not able and had not the right to fight for Independence. It was the Angolan nationalist forces who suffered from this -- losing precious lives, important cadres for the revolution and for the future life of the country. They were victims who were added to the victims of the colonialists themselves.

But the germs that produced such deviations from our line of political action are not only originated by imperialism. They derive also from ourselves, and therefore we have also to combat our weaknesses and our deficiencies; combat all that is negative in ourselves, in our militants, in our combatants. At times, what generates that hatred based upon skin color is ambition -- the desire to secure for himself a good place in the future.

And from racialism to tribalism it is only one step.

Within our organization, the MPLA, we rigorously fight against such defects. The ambitious, the presumptuous, those who provoke disturbances and slanders in order to be able to occupy posts that they frequently do not deserve or are not even able to fill properly; these are denounced before the militants and before the entire people.

It is also by fighting in this sphere of combat -- in the ideological formation of men and in the political education of the militants -- that we will be able to guarantee for our future a life that is truly free.

In our parties we must, therefore, look for a political line that could save us from racialism and tribalism, and from the mistakes that were committed in those countries where Independence came earlier and by other means.

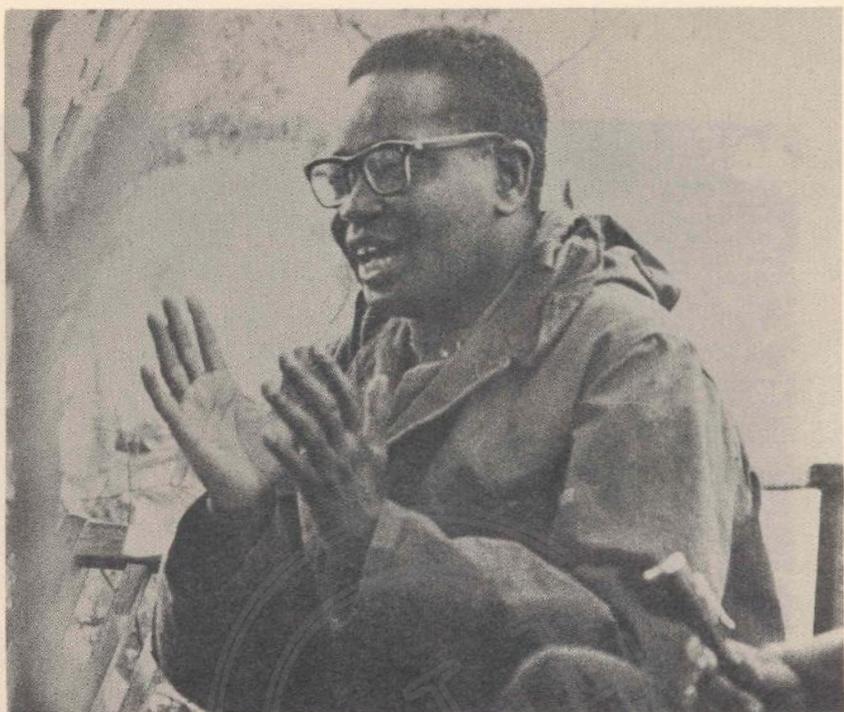
Fortunately, for those who fight on the side of justice and against tyranny, for those who desire freedom, armed action is not only a sacrifice, it is above all a FORCE. It is not only a whirlpool; it is not only the irrigation of our battle-fields with the blood of the best sons of our peoples; it is also a school. It is a means by which the people continue this struggle in the future, after political independence, in order to be completely free -- politically, economically and socially independent.

As I said, the experience of Africa has taught us many things. Amongst those, we can cite one more. This is the lesson that the parties must control the life of the country during every moment. That strength that gave us arms with which to defend ourselves from foreign occupation, with that same will we will be able to

guarantee true Independence in the future. And it is necessary that the party be built up, that it constitute the backbone, the base and the principle element in the life of the nation..... and that it be independent. Where there is no party, where the militants are not placed under a strict discipline, where the leaders are not bound to revolutionary principles -- there anarchy enters. There the enemies penetrate more easily, and instead of Independence we will have neo-colonialism or and insecure balance between progress and reaction.

And that we do not want! We want complete independence.

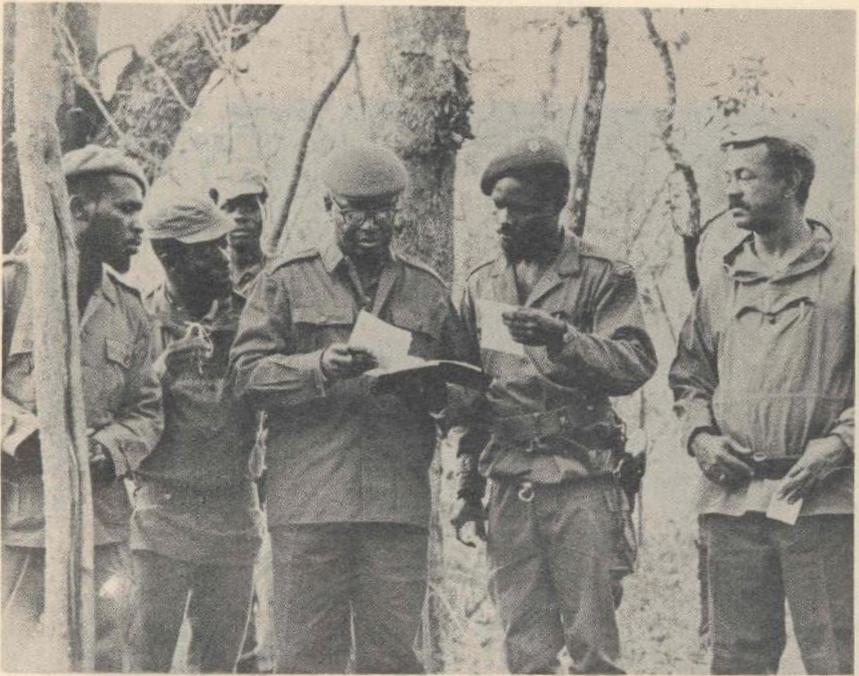
At the beginning of this message I spoke about the existing union between the organizations directing the armed struggle in the countries dominated by Portugal, namely FRELIMO, PAIGC and MPLA, or between the peoples of Mozambique, Guinea (Bissau) and Angola. This union is just and necessary, and the forms of our cooperation in the struggle must be perfected because our enemies also coordinate their activities. Nobody is ignorant of the support given by the NATO countries to help Portugal continue her unjust war. No one is now ignorant of the fact that the struggle in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau) could have already ended victoriously for the respective peoples were it not for the material and other help rendered to Portugal by the imperialists united in the North Atlantic Treaty





MPLA LEADERSHIP AND VILLAGERS

APRIL 1965 (MPLA) (MPLA) (MPLA)



from left: Commanders Junginda, Toka, President Neto,  
Commander Monimambu, and central committee member de Melo



Deloloa (C.I.R.) and President Neto

Organization. It is the United States of America, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Great Britain and certain other countries which sustain Portugal.

Yet another danger, however, is appearing and is already taking concrete form in certain spheres. This is the intervention of the racist regime of South Africa -- hated by all honest Africans for its violent oppression of the Non-White people of that country. The alliance between these reactionaries and those of Rhodesia with the Portuguese fascist government holds a very great danger for the people of Angola and Mozambique. In South Africa there is open discussion, in the press and over the radio, of direct intervention in Angola and Mozambique against our peoples. Clearly, if that aggression takes place, the South African racists will learn from their own experience what the Portuguese already know. They will have many corpses to bury. They will have many families in mourning, as in Portugal. They will have many vehicles destroyed and many planes downed. And in the end they will know the shame of defeat, because in this war victory can belong only to our peoples. That victory will be the victory of our peoples and of the whole world over the disgrace of colonialism. It is this that the arrogant South African racists will learn, despite all their aggressiveness and technical potential.

One of the most appropriate weapons to enable us to repel this danger is precisely the consolidation of our unity, extending it to other peoples who also suffer from the same oppression. But, this unity must be completely free from hostile influences -- completely free!

Now, I will address myself especially to many Angolan compatriots, to the comrades of our movement our beloved MPLA, and to the combatants who, on various fronts, are giving the finest examples of courage, spirit of sacrifice and dedication in this hard war. This war that is full of incidents -- some of which are discouraging but the greater majority of which are full of satisfying encouragement. The progress that has been made by our guerrillas is clear in their putting into practice of the slogan of generalising the war throughout the national territory. When the Portuguese say that the guerrillas have not yet reached the central regions of the country.....it means that the guerrillas are already there. Those who want to mislead the Portuguese people, blinding them to the truth, only fall into ridicule, because the Portuguese population knows that the guerrillas are established in the center of the country, and knows that very soon they will reach the urban centers where, as yet, there are not military-type activities. We can guarantee to the

"Honorable" representatives of the colonial administration that they will shortly experience more heavily and more extensively the effects of the actions of our armed forces, And then it will be not only the center but also the South and North that will know a period of struggle, of much more difficulty and of much more blood for the miserable colonialists.

It is not difficult to unmask the liars of the colonial government in Angola who are endeavoring to blindfold their settlers and world public opinion. On the one hand, they say that the guerrillas cannot advance, and yet, on the other hand, in the districts where there is armed warfare, all the Angolan inhabitants are forcedly controlled by means of certificates of residence. These certificates are compulsory as much in Moxico as in Bie, as much in Uige as in Malange; and very shortly there will be decrees and orders making these certificates compulsory in Huila and in Mocamedes, in Cuanza Sul and in Huambo. The war will be generalized.

Then, on the one hand, they tell us that their armed forces are in high moral; and, on the other hand, it is publically debated within the colonial regime whether the great merchants should give up only their rings or must sacrifice also their fingers in order to protect their property. There is opposition between the

military and the civilians because, while the military risk their precious lives, the masters of theft and exploitation are involved in accumulating property, in luxurious carefree living, and in intoxicating themselves with cheap (or at times expensive) pleasures, in order to forget the misery of the colonial war. The Portuguese soldier is nothing but cannon fodder for the defense of the wealth of the masters of exploitation.

On the one hand, it is said that almost nothing exists in Angola, that there is peace; and yet, on the other hand, they so fear that the Angolan people will adhere to the guerrillas that they compel them to live in encampments close to the barracks. There isn't any kind of trust between the Portuguese and the Angolan population, and there are hundreds of men who leave these encampments to go to live in the forests where they are already building a free life under the leadership of MPLA.

The desperation of the colonialists will shortly be greater as the technical resources of MPLA become more complete and greater involume. The organization is continually broadening. The men are more clear in guerrilla tactics and have more political experience. Whereas, the morale of the Portuguese troops can best be illustrated by the desperate cry of that poor

soldier (perhaps the son of a peasant or of a worker) who, during the attack by our forces upon Kalipande Barracks, abandoned his shelter, weeping and calling for his beloved mother, full of fear or remorse. Shame! Thus it is, almost always, that the courage and conviction of the Portuguese soldier fighting in Angola is expressed.

To all of them, to the cowards and to the fanatics, we say: there is only one way to stop this shameful situation. That way is to recognize the right of our people to Independence; to abandon repression and establish just relations between our peoples - the Angolan people and the Portuguese people.

The Portuguese colonialists and their allies have spread to the four corners of the land the rumour that the war in Cabinda is paralysed because American dollars have had their effect upon MPLA. We want to make it perfectly clear that, in this war, it is neither MPLA nor the Angolan people who have sold their colonies and even their own country. It is the Portuguese fascists who are granting more and more facilities to foreign investors, to the disadvantage of the Portuguese people (this Portuguese people of glorious traditions) who gain nothing from the transactions.

Who exploits the iron-ore in Angola? The Germans!  
Who exploits the petroleum? The Americans and the Belgians! And to whom does the Benguela Railway belong? To the English! Who owns the Diamond Company? The Americans, the Belgians, the French and the English! Who exploits the petroleum in the district of Cabinda? The Americans! And in the metropolitan country itself, the Portuguese people know very well, despite the camouflaged forms of exploitation, that there are parts of Portuguese territory that are not under their control, that are mortgaged. Parts where the Portuguese do not command, but obey the dollar: it is so in the Azores, in Beja and in a considerable part of the tourist industry...etc...

Who is it, then, who is sold to foreigners in order to be able to continue with their shameful politics? It is only the Portuguese fascists. MPLA, the Vanguard of the Angolan people, who fight honourably with arms in hand, has not sold itself. We accept nothing in exchange for our Independence! Victory or death! Victory is Certain!

If the rhythm of the struggle has slackened recently in Cabinda, this is not due to any kind of compromise made by MPLA. It is due, on the one hand, to the necessity of generalizing the war, on which account we

sent to other region leaders, and political and military cadres who, during a certain period, had functioned exclusively in Cabinda. And it is due, on the other hand, to the action of counter-revolutionaries, called the "Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile". They provided a good agent for the enemy when they sent Alexander Taty, who, making use of tribalistic arguments, has placed himself at the service of the Portuguese.

In the same way, if it were not for the counter-revolutionaries in the North of Angola, the Portuguese would now be feeling the effects of guerrilla war not only in Calomboloca and Caxito, but in the streets of Luanda. But now, fortunately, the counter-revolution is in its death's agony. The collaborationists and their colonialist patrons will be smashed together.

There exist today areas inside our country controlled by MPLA. In one of these areas the Headquarters of our movement is established.

At this juncture, I wish to repeat the appeal to all Angolan nationals who are refugees in neighbouring countries - in Congo (Kinshasa), Congo (Brazzaville), Zambia, Botswana and South West Africa - to return to the areas controlled by MPLA, there to make their contribution to the struggle, to fight the enemy, to repopulate the territory.

Angolans must return to Angola, to the areas controlled by MPLA and there live a truly free life, within the hardships of struggle.

Students, men trained in Universities or Technical schools must return to the country and there make their contribution to the war. With regard to students it is necessary to seriously counter the opportunistic arguments that some put forward in order to conceal their desire not to participate in the war and work with the people -- to escape danger. They want to live a good life on foreign scholarships which they earn through the reputation won by the combatants in our country.

I repeat the appeal to all men and women who find themselves in the interior of our country to redouble their activities, whether underground or in the liberated zones.

It is necessary that there be no point of Angola where the Portuguese do not feel the effects of the war.

Groups and committees of action must be constituted where they don't yet exist, and they must be put into well-ordered action, destroying the economy and the resources that the Portuguese possess to pursue the war and continue exploitation.

Our contribution has to be given not only for the liquidation of the colonial system but also for the liquidation of ignorance, disease and primitive forms of social organization. It is in the schools in the literacy campaign; it is in the clinics, in the Centers of Revolutionary Instruction, in agricultural and industrial production, as well as in commerce, that each Angolan must make his contribution....beneath the bombs that periodically fall over the forests.

All sincere Angolan patriots have to return now to the interior of the country. They must be active.

Organizations of the masses, Trade Unions, organizations of youth, women and others are now undertaking their first activities inside the country. Institutions of medical assistance, education, and commercial exchange, and of cooperation in labor are making their appearance in the Liberated Zones.

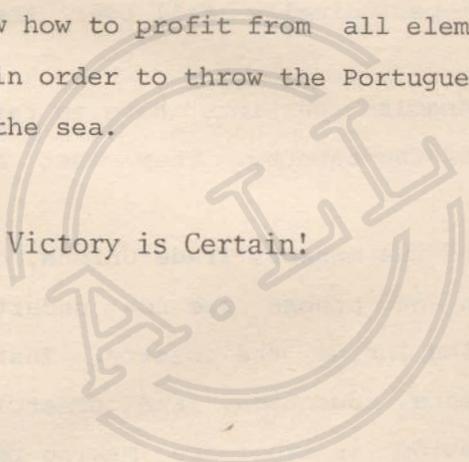
It is, therefore, now that all Angolans must leave those foreign lands in order to return to their country and there work for the victory of the Revolution.

I will not speak of those who necessarily fall during the war. To these we render our sincere and simple homage. The liberation of the fatherland necessitates blood and, first and foremost, the blood of our best sons.

We will not weep over deaths. We will follow the example of their heroism and their valour in order to advance as much as possible and with the greatest rapidity possible. Thus, do we turn their heroism to the service of our people. We must continue the action.

We should know how to profit from all elements at our disposal in order to throw the Portuguese colonialists into the sea.

Comrades: Victory is Certain!





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