



DEFOLIANTS

The fish are dead in the lagoon
carried by the flooding river into the
savanna

for the bombs fell
and killed men
and killed fish
and killed trees
—killed crops

Killed everything!

But the child remained
amid shattered bodies
not understanding
what had happened

There he goes in search of his mother's
eyes

patting her face
to make her wake
to awaken her from eternal sleep

Do not cry child!
The MPLA will avenge mama
avenge papa
and many children
of colonialist soldiers
will then also ask:

Why did papa not come?

E.N.



CHILDREN'S DAY

Angola is a rich and prosperous country which has been exploited and enslaved by the Portuguese colonialists for centuries. The entire colonised people suffers the dire effects of this situation, the illiteracy, the hunger, the disease. Within this context of suffering are the children, the innocent beings who, in already independent countries, are the hope of the future, but who in the colonies are used as cheap labour and are not respected. The children in a colonised country are subject to poverty, illiteracy, hunger and disease.

The colonialists unsparingly exploit the meagre strength of children, sending them to work in the coffee, cotton and sisal plantations, where all that counts are the profits of the exploiting boss.

Schooling is closed to Angolan children, since it is not felt necessary to educate new Angolans. The overriding aim is to keep them in ignorance.

But the MPLA, the Movement which defends the most exploited strata, broke the chains of exploitation on 4 February 1961. New children have since emerged who learn how to distinguish between friends and enemies, who know what a book is and how valuable it is, who know the school bench and look upon it with fondness, and who look to the future with confident smiles.

In every corner of our Angola in arms, our children have staunchly set their minds on defending their country, regardless of the sacrifices entailed. It was in this way that Augusto Ngangula, the Heroic MPLA Pioneer, heroically gave up his life, showing to the whole of mankind that there is nothing more noble than the freedom of the peoples.

The children of our Revolution are imbued with certainty, confidence and determination. Children are the torch lighting the way to a prosperous and just Angola, free from suffering and exploitation.

Although the first of June, International Children's Day, can be properly celebrated today in many parts of the free world, in Angola thousands and thousands of children are suffering from wounds caused by enemy bullets or bombs. They are crying, crying of hunger and cold, crying for dead parents, crying on leaving a friendly and hospitable home, crying over the torturing of their parents in prisons, crying over the blood shed by their brothers, crying over the misery imposed on them, but which tomorrow, very shortly, they will avenge.

And there is no doubt that they will avenge it, as they are already doing today, conscious that they are defending a just ideal, an ideal which was always defended by their forebears, and they swear on the memory of Augusto Ngangula that they will follow the same path.

OMA has received the following letter from Melba Smith of New York, who spent some time inside Angola and saw the hardships and also the achievements of our struggle.

Comrades of O.M.A.

Dear Sisters,

Several months have passed since we were together in Sub-Region North, and I would like to express my deep appreciation for the hospitality extended to me during my visit—hospitality which I hope somehow to return, in some way, in the future.

During the month I lived with you, ate with you, and shared your every anxiety and joy, past experiences in my life assumed an irrelevancy beside the struggle which you are engaged in against foreign domination, and your determination to regain control over your own land and your own destiny.

Yet, with enemy planes overhead, and under constant threat of approach by enemy military, I was never afraid—because you weren't afraid, and your calm and bravery pervaded the air.

Dear sisters, how vividly I recall the first days of my arrival, and the warm welcome which you extended to me, the cold dry weather for which I was totally unprepared, and your concern that clothing be found for me. Clothing sent in from outside supportive countries is put to good use, as I found when a coat was brought for me from the goodwill box of preciously harbored stores, without which I would have found the weather unbearable, as indeed you do when there are no warm clothes or blankets available.

Despite constant threat of invasion (imminent threat of invasion has altered your life style so little—you have simply adjusted), you continue about your business of preparing food, caring for your children, politicizing and educating the people—at times with a rifle under one arm and a child under the other.

Dear sisters, what a study in bravery and determination you create; a picture which I shall carry in my heart for my life, and which is the source of so much revolutionary inspiration for me even as I return to my own home country.

I cannot forget how, through your simple words and gestures, I came to a deeper realization of the nature of Portuguese colonial rule, and how it had affected your lives—the many brutalities which you endured, the psychological and physical effects of living under tyrannical oppression—and how, out of that grew your determination to liberate yourselves, which you have taken up arms to enable you to do.

My sisters, I salute you.

And through it all—the death the bloodshed, the hardships—you have managed to retain your sense of the good things in life, evidenced each evening (behind enemy lines) by the joyful abandonment of your dances. Shuffling alone in my apartment to recorded music, thousands of miles from any such dangers, I have found to be a poor substitute for the pure joy of living which you expressed, the deep inspired rhythms, the love of life with which you infected me during my stay. My innerspring mattress and all modern conveniences are no substitute for the branches and leaves which were our roof, and the blankets which almost protected us from the cold earth and the penetrating crisp night air.

During this, your transition period, when you are attempting to create a new society—free from enemy rule—and incorporating many new and liberating aspects into your life styles, your work is hard going for you. But as you yourselves explained to me, not so hard as when the additional burden of slavery lay also on your shoulders, and now you work with new joy, in that you are building for yourselves and your families, and for the benefit of all. Though you are alone often, with your men fighting in the other areas, and your children taking revolutionary educational instructions in the newly formed MPLA schools, you are happier with the goal of liberation firmly established in your minds. You have so much to teach us about liberation, with your advanced political knowledge blended with altruistic simplicity—a combination which overshadows the technologically advanced but morally destitute society from which I came.

I shall not forget you, brave sisters, nor the hardy militant brothers, who are laying down your lives in an effort to regain your freedom. I shall not forget the happy children who are looking forward to a life ahead, free from slavery and oppression, and optimistic about retaining their rightful place in a liberated society. Nor can I forget how freely you accepted me into your lives, took me to your hearts, and made my troubles your troubles and your joys my joys. Surely this is what revolution is all about.

In sincere appreciation,

Melba Simith

PORCELAIN ROSES FOR MARCELO CAETANO

According to a Lusitania Press Agency report, a group of Portuguese women in Angola sent Marcelo Caetano porcelain roses just at a time when he sent in his forces of repression to smash the peaceful demonstration of a group of Catholics in the Rato Chapel in Lisbon who had gone on hunger strike in protest against the colonial war.

Porcelain roses sent to Marcelo Caetano without the slightest shame, and with no respect for the Portuguese in the bloom of youth whom Caetano has sent to their death. Roses sent to Caetano so that he might continue to kill the Angolan people—women, children and old people—simply because the Angolan people want to be free and to determine their own future, which is the aspiration of every people in the world, including the Portuguese people at various stages of their history.

It is certain that none of this group of women has had a son or relative fall in this criminal war that Caetano insists on pursuing. And from Luanda—seeking refuge in a labyrinth of hypocrisy and pushing aside images of children burnt by napalm, of mutilated soldiers and the desolation caused by herbicides—they sent roses to Caetano, so that he may go on killing our people and sending young Portuguese to their death and into exile.

However, the attitude of progressive Portuguese women is an encouragement to us, since we know that they are with us and that they are courageously taking part in all kinds of demonstrations against the colonial war, risking their lives and their freedom. To them, therefore, we express our solidarity and fraternity, convinced that once fascism and colonialism have been defeated, there will be nothing to prevent harmonious relations between our peoples.

OMA ACTIVITIES ABROAD

2 March, Angolan Women's Day, was rousingly celebrated wherever OMA branches exist. Here is a photograph of one of our meetings attended by friends who had come to celebrate this day with us. We also received many messages.



An OMA delegation comprising comrades Ruth Neto and Antonia Silva was part of an important MPLA delegation to the socialist countries.

Our Organisation was in Cuba for the meeting of the Bureau of the Women's International Democratic Federation. We sent the following message to the Cuban women:

Federation of Cuban Women,

Dear sisters:

Through Maria Mambo Café, our delegate to the meeting of the Bureau of the Women's International Democratic Federation, we convey fraternal and revolutionary greetings on behalf of our Organisation.

We are extremely grateful for the message you sent on the occasion of Angolan Women's Day, 2 March. We greatly appreciate your solidarity and friendship and also the understanding you show for the problems of our national liberation struggle.

We congratulate you on the fact that this meeting of the Bureau of the WIDF is being held in your beautiful capital, and it is our hope that the meeting will go well and will be successful in finding solutions for the problems which preoccupy all progressive mothers, wives and daughters the world over.

Please accept, dear sisters, our most revolutionary greetings.

United we will Win!
Organisation of Angolan Women

MOZAMBICAN WOMEN'S DAY

7 April 1971: A day of mourning for Mozambique, a day of mourning for Angola, for Africa, and for all the freedom-loving peoples. This was the day of the death of our beloved comrade-in-arms Josina Machel, leader of the FRELIMO Women's Detachment.

Born into a family of convinced nationalists, Josina Machel was an outstanding Mozambican fighter. In her short—but so eventful and inspiring—twenty-five years of life she knew the colonialist and racist prisons, taking part in clandestine struggle and guerrilla warfare, and in the big political struggles for a correct and revolutionary line.

A devoted mother, Josina was the wife of our Comrade Samora Machel, President of FRELIMO. Neither her family commitments nor her rapidly advancing illness ever affected her energy or her consciousness and faith in victory for even a moment.

The example of this great militant will live on for ever in our hearts and light up our thoughts and our actions.

And it was on that day this year, in tribute to Josina Machel, that the Mozambican women, in a simple but very meaningful ceremony, marked 7 April as the day of the founding of the Organisation of Mozambican Women.

The Organisation of Angolan Women, which was invited to attend this event, warmly greets the Mozambican comrades, urging them to push on in this struggle for the emancipation of women, for women's involvement in the most varied tasks of our revolution.

We reproduce below an extract from the message we read on this occasion:

'And we Angolan women, who have known the most diverse forms of oppression—slavery, forced labour, economic exploitation, illiteracy, lack of medical care, the crushing of our personality, complexes, vices, torture, etc.—we fighting women who, in addition to this violent domination, suffer the burden of all the consequences of our effaced role in the social and political life of our countries, must carry on this struggle for the liberation of women from all these bonds, so that our peoples, led by our Movements—FRELIMO, the PAIGC and the MPLA—may achieve the true independence and freedom for which we intend to fight.

The advance of our struggle, the ever growing support of the progressive forces throughout the world, and the despair of our enemies are creating the necessary conditions for women's involvement in the revolution, in the most diverse tasks, on an equal footing with men, in a determined and conscious way.

LONG LIVE ORGANISATION OF MOZAMBICAN WOMEN!
LONG LIVE FRELIMO!
DOWN WITH IMPERIALISM!
DOWN WITH COLONIALISM!
LONG LIVE THE AFRICAN PEOPLES' LIBERATION STRUGGLE!

LABOUR DAY

The first of May, an important day for the workers in all countries, was the day chosen by the 1889 Congress of the 1st Socialist International, in tribute to the workers in Chicago who, two years earlier, had died in defence of working class rights.

Although the exploitation of man by man still persists, and the labour power of the workers is still the chief capital of the big monopolies, we are advancing towards the liquidation of this system. The trade unions must play their revolutionary role by leading the working class to achieve new victories.

As a trade union organisation within our revolution, the National Union of Angolan Workers (UNTA), besides taking part in the armed struggle, is also contributing to the achievement of this objective for which the MPLA is fighting.

The Organisation of Angolan Women hails the workers of the whole world in their just struggle for working class rights, and urges the National Union of Angolan Workers to push onwards unflinchingly until final victory.



The JMPLA (Youth of the MPLA) has been invited to attend the World Youth and Student Festival to be held in Berlin from 28 July to 5 August, and the Pan-African Youth Festival, which will take place in Tunis from 15 to 22 July 1973.

This will be the third time that our Youth takes part in these international festivals. This attention from the international and African community is a good indication of the international impact of our struggle and of the prestige of our organisation.

The JMPLA intends to contribute actively in every sphere at these great international forums, especially as regards the historical and political significance of national liberation struggles in the contemporary world.

Fruitful participation in the cultural events at these festivals is also planned, so as to acquaint the world with our new popular, national and revolutionary culture, which is an integral part of world culture.

ANGOLAN YOUTH DAY

In Dar es Salaam too, the Angolan youth held a meeting on 14 April, Angolan Youth Day, with the cooperation of the TANU Youth League and the participation of representatives of the African liberation movements and of friendly and progressive forces represented in Dar es Salaam.

Angolan Youth Day is a great day on which young Angolans reaffirm in a more collective and determined way, their commitment to continue and to raise the level of their active participation in the various tasks of our revolution.

When young Angolans embraced the noble mission of serving our people, most of us were no more than valid potentials terribly marked by the whole colonial system of exploitation. We merely felt the need to affirm everything that had been denied us till then. Today the youth of Angola find in the MPLA the true dimensions of their revolutionary aspirations, and they have wholly dedicated themselves to the defence of their people who have maintained the same strong belief in the Angolan youth as they had at the outset of the struggle. In the MPLA young people are learning how to constantly renew their strength, enthusiasm and courage in this long fight against Portuguese colonialism and international imperialism.

Young Angolans are very much aware of the desperate fight the Portuguese colonialists are putting up to deter young people who consciously say NO to the dirty colonialist policy, both in the countryside and in the towns, in the universities and in places of employment, even when the colonialists redouble their psycho-social campaigns and the whole process of economic, cultural and social alienation, and even when they step up their appalling methods of corrupting and depraving Angolans. The Angolan youth know that the Portuguese colonialists are continuing to enslave the Angolan people, exploiting them and torturing and murdering them in prisons and concentration camps. They keep them in ignorance, denying them medical and health care, mulcting them of their strength and sharing out the resources of their land with the imperialist forces.

The Angolan youth are therefore the driving force of our struggle. Consciously engaged in the revolution and in the work of national reconstruction, they are giving their best cadres where their presence is most needed—in the various branches of education, in the medical assistance services, in agricultural work and on the battlefronts, where the MPLA is writing great pages in the history of our revolution, and where we learn that very often we win by losing, by losing the life force of our finest fighters.

We recall 14 April 1968, the day on which our valiant Comrade Henda lost his life when the enemy were stubbornly hanging on to Karipande barracks on the Eastern Front. Henda was commanding a guerrilla group in an MPLA attack when an enemy bullet felled him, as though seeking to demoralise us. Henda died there, but a young hero was born there. And young Angolans smile proudly when they think of the innumerable guerrillas who have fallen heroically at their posts, because from them we learn that there is a high price to be paid for our people's liberation. That price is often our lives, in this arduous quest to ensure our country's due place among the free and independent nations.

Sent by:

Organisation of Angolan Women

P.O. Box 20604

DAR ES SALAAM
TANZANIA

To: