

MOZAMBIQUE, MY COUNTRY

URIAH SIMANGO

MOZAMBIQUE, MY COUNTRY, Angola, the so-called Portuguese Guinea and Cap Verde and S. Tome and Principe, are all territories under Portuguese colonialism. These countries have been under the yoke of colonialism for more than four centuries. This long period of foreign domination has its own unique consequences. These countries were occupied by the might of the sword. The inhabitants of these countries opposed occupation with their blood. The resistance to foreign domination never ceased from that period. Apart from killing our people, thousands were sold as slaves to the 'civilized' world, where in the United States of America the black people are still fighting for more equality in the country where all are foreigners. The Portuguese claim that they are in Africa to civilize the savages and Christianize the heathens and due to this state of affairs, they, say, it was necessary to tame them by force.

History tells the truth and it is this empirical knowledge that must bring all facts together. This experience has taught us that the motive for the scramble for Africa was one of economics. Against this truth nobody can argue. The 1885 Berlin Conference legalised, divided and established artificial boundaries and thus authorized each one in his share to milk the cows in his paddock until they bled. The shares did not please those powers that sat in Berlin to divide Africa. Contradictions became sharper and sharper amongst themselves and they led to wars which devastated the whole world, though Africa and Asia had nothing to do with those contradictions. This race of wealth accumulation—capitalism—led to the maximum exploitation of our people, leaving them in extreme poverty.

Over 80 per cent of the population in these territories are peasants. By imposed circumstances they are forced to remain as such. They are forced to grow certain types of crops and the whole harvest must be sold to the Government at a fixed price. Take cotton, which is the most

enforced agricultural produce in Mozambique. What Mozambique has seen is that in the areas where these plants are grown on a large scale by Government order, those people are victims of hunger and starvation every year.

The few workers, mostly in cities, go through untold difficulties. They have families to look after and house rents to pay for. £6 per month is the average pay and on this they must live. This must also be for payment of school fees for children and bus fare to and from work. Those found unemployed in towns or in the country are arrested as vagrants and sold to companies or individuals who need workers or go for road building and other Government projects. They cannot refuse to go, whether they like it or not. During their term of service they are not paid until they get back to their local government administrative offices, after six or twelve months. The Government Officer has first to deduct the annual tax, each one of them usually remaining with £5 to £9 if it is six months, as the case may be. This practice began from the dawn of the Portuguese colonialism.

SOLD TO S.A. MINES

The nearby territories of Zimbabwe (S. Rhodesia) and South Africa take advantage of this Portuguese practice to acquire as many labourers as they wish to work on their farms and in the mines.

In 1928 Portugal and South Africa signed an agreement by which Portugal would supply 100,000 workers annually to work in the gold mines and South Africa in return would import and export a fraction of its commodities through the port of Lourenco Marques. This convention was renewed in 1934 and 1952. The recruitment is done by the Portuguese authorities and the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (W.N.L.A.). Another form of recruitment is carried out among the population of Mozambique and Angola by the Native Recruiting Corporation of South Africa. These labourers are supposed to work in South Africa for a minimum period of twelve months. During this period the largest part of their salaries is banked in South Africa.

For each person of the 100,000 of the agreement, and for thousands of others, Portugal gets £2 10s. cash and the interest on the banked money of the labourers goes to Portugal's coffers, for what reason nobody knows. The money for those who die in accidents in the mines, paid as indemnity, does not reach the parents of the deceased.

This scandal, immorality and corruption, cannot be forgotten in the history of the Portuguese colonial rule in Africa. This exploitation is shared with those who own those mines. This is what we call naked

robbery. The many contradictions and conflicts are caused by this parasitism of the colonialist and imperialist powers who know no justice.

Colonialism and imperialism means maintaining the colonized people under darkness so as to exploit their labour all round. The illiteracy in Mozambique is fabulous. In 1940 a concordat was signed between the Holy See and Portugal, which placed African education under the Roman Catholic Church. The Government washed its hands and forgot completely the education problem of millions of the black population. This negligence was purposely in order to maintain the slave condition that still prevails in the Portuguese colonies and to perpetuate colonial rule. Because of these wilful reasons the illiteracy percentage is in the region of 98 per cent.

The health situation is also alarming. In all the Portuguese colonies in Africa in 1963 there were 613 physicians (doctors). Mozambique had the smallest number. It must be remembered that the largest number of these doctors live in towns. And this means that the largest section of the population—black—does not have the minimum medical assistance. These people, in the same year, paid over £7,500,000 in taxes which would cover the expenditure on education and health services, but only 1 per cent of it was used for these projects.

The few secondary schools that exist in the cities are so expensive that the parents cannot afford them. The commercialisation of education has left our country comparatively far behind the many neighbouring territories.

All these strategical and tactical methods to maintain colonialism, imperialism, have been accompanied by the rule of the iron, fascist, nazi-type government under Dr. Salazar, enforced by the PIDE, which has been in power for thirty years. Arbitrary arrests and tortures of those men of sophisticated thinking and expression are day to day practices. This dictatorship went to an extent of decreeing in 1951, and it enacted a clause in the constitution to that effect, that the colonies (Angola, Guinea, Mozambique, etc.) were overseas provinces, part and parcel of Portugal. This was to legalize the occupation of our countries which cannot be legalized by a stroke of a pen. Our people resisted this from the day of occupation and will continue to resist until freedom is achieved.

Despite all repressive measures, our people grew in conscious understanding of reality. The people of Guinea, Angola, Mozambique began organizing themselves under the banner of social organization. The impatience could not allow them to continue in this manner and political organizations took over. It is illegal to run a political organization

and a crime to become a politician or politically minded. In order to work you have either to go underground or leave the country in order to work freely if you happen to have the chance. In fact, the deprivation of freedom of expression, political gathering did not hinder the progress of political maturity of those politically inclined people.

WARS OF LIBERATION

Repressions, natural bans on political organizations, declaration of the 1951 decree incorporating the colonies as provinces, led to the frustration of those who were waiting for an opportunity to organize themselves legally for freedom and independence. The Portuguese dictatorial regime became more and more ruthless. Prisons and tortures became frequent in Guinea, Angola and Mozambique. This roused an endless anger. In these circumstances the people were obliged to organize a military force to oppose these measures and vindicate their right in the country of their birth where they are denied the minimum freedom. In February 1961 the Angola Liberation war started. The so-called Portuguese Guinea and Mozambique are also at war for independence. P.A.I.G.C. has already liberated two-thirds of Guinea, M.P.L.A. is now at the front leading the war in Angola. F.R.E.L.I.M.O. is the vanguard of the Mozambique people in their armed struggle for freedom and independence.

This has alarmed the Portuguese at home and all supporters of Portugal. Portugal is a small and underdeveloped country, too economically weak to stand these wars. The friends of Portugal are committed under the NATO alliance. Portugal is their market and they have big investments in Portugal and in the colonies. Because of this they are bound to help Portugal maintain its claws of domination. The economy of Portugal, both at home and overseas, being controlled by big brothers, Portugal has no alternative but to act to safeguard the interest of the foreign financiers. The following are a few of the many that exploit Mozambique, Angola, so-called Portuguese Guinea, S. Tome and Principe:

Societe Miniere et Geologique du Zambeze (Belgian)

American Meta Climax Inc.

Empresa Mineira de Alto Ligonha (American and Portuguese)

Wankie Colliery Co. Ltd. (Rhodesia)

Central Mining Company of Johannesburg

Union Miniere du Haut Katanga

Mozambique Gulf Oil Co. (American)

Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa

Minerais Basicas de Mocambique (British, S. African and Portuguese)

Rhodesian Anglo-American
Companhia des Diamantes de Angola

This last company whose nominal capital amounts to £3,587,000, in 1962 announced a total profit of £3,111,000, making a net profit of £903,000 after distributing dividends amounting to £1,745,000. This is an example of the fabulous gains made by foreign big powers with a capacity to export capital. These companies keep Portugal alive and are therefore the masters of policy.

West Germany is becoming one of the biggest partners in the exploitation. Krupp invested more than £12,500,000 in iron mines of BIO (Angola).

Fifty per cent of Portugal's imports of machinery, vehicles, tools, come from West Germany. The West German investments in Portugal and in the colonies are increasing.

NATO ARMS

This great increase of foreign capital in our countries, which Portugal declared provinces, is terrifying and causing great concern. Apart from the NATO alliance obligations some Western countries support Portugal so that she may perpetuate her domination in Africa in order to exploit together the wealth, the original motive for partitioning Africa. The United States of America and West Germany remain the biggest suppliers of arms and money to Portugal. Apart from light weapons and machine guns that West Germany sold to Portugal, she bought sixty war planes from Canada which were given to Dr. Salazar. Last month the *Daily Express* reported a recent sale of forty supersonic bombers to Portugal by West Germany. Portugal at the same time announced that they were going to be used in Angola against the nationalists. The military collaboration amongst the imperialists against our people is becoming more and more open.

Since 1960 the governments of South Africa and Rhodesia have been collaborating with Dr. Salazar directly. Mozambique people working in those territories live in fear of being arrested and deported. What is happening at the moment in Swaziland and South Africa is fantastic. Refugees from Mozambique are being deported in dozens. The British Government is guilty of co-operation in this dirty business. According to our information it is done with the connivance of Swaziland, South African and Portuguese police (PIDE). This therefore does not exempt Britain. This collaboration has gone very far indeed. Portugal is recruiting South African soldiers who are stationed in Tete, a province with boundaries with Malawi, Zambia and Rhodesia. They are said to be farmers but our findings tell us that they are soldiers, placed in a strategic province from where within a day, or hours, they can be

fighting in any of three surrounding territories if that becomes necessary. This is a very serious matter. New discussions are going on on what to do when F.R.E.L.I.M.O. reaches the southern part of Mozambique.

BRITAIN'S ROLE

A white zone in southern Africa. This is the dream of Salazar, Verwoerd and Smith, supported by some reactionary and imperialist forces. Britain is responsible for the situation in Rhodesia and if no solution is found within two months, until the end of April, Britain will see blood flowing and irrigating the soil of Zimbabwe so that freedom and independence should germinate. The chaotic situation of South Africa was nurtured by Britain. If it is the indigenous people who take power, Britain makes no hesitation to quell the rebellion by the sword, splashing blood. This is another challenge to Britain. We, the people of Southern Africa, are in danger because of this British policy. Our lives are threatened, even our own existence.

The British Government has declared a policy, that 'whenever the interests of the indigenous people (majority) clashed with those of the immigrants (minority) the interests of the indigenous people must prevail.' This policy is abandoned for it is the interests of the immigrants (minority) that is prevailing these days.

It was for no other reason but opposing this white supremacy that the people of so-called Portuguese Guinea, Angola and Mozambique rose up with arms to fight for their freedom and National Independence. Were it not for those countries that are supporting Portugal, Salazar would have long surrendered. A report on the financial situation (General Accounts) of the State for 1963 announced that Mozambique had a deficit of £12,990,000 in its balance of trade each year. This is sufficient to indicate that if U.S.A., Britain, France, Belgium, West Germany stop forthwith giving loans and investing in Portugal and in the colonies, Portugal would immediately enter negotiations for a peaceful settlement of the conflict—the independence question. These powers, which are friendly to Portugal must advise her to come to reason; it is never too late to mend.

These unjust and imperialist wars have led over 20,000 Mozambicans to leave their country and they are now found in Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia and Swaziland. These people abandoned everything because the Portuguese soldiers are killing and bombing villages indiscriminately with NATO-supplied arms. Now they have no houses, neither any facility of life: food, clothing, medical assistance, save those who are in Tanzania. The situation is lamentable. These people are suffering but not because of their fault, this is what is meant by colonialism, imperialism and the civilisation that Dr. Salazar boasts about.

The people of Britain, the whole of Europe, Soviet Union, U.S.A. know what it is to be dominated. The four big powers, France, Soviet Union, Britain, U.S.A. formed a block in an alliance during the second World War in order to resist and defeat Hitler who had swept all the small countries in Europe including France and subjugated them. Hitler had decided to rule the world but was forced to kneel by the Soviet Union. This second World War is still vivid in our memories. The whole of Europe resisted as a bloc to defend their land, families, democracy, freedom and independence. We are convinced that our war is just, we are defending justice, democracy and freedom in this century, and history will record this phenomenon.

MOZAMBIQUE WILL BE FREE

Since Lord Kilbracken reported last October about his visit to Mozambique, more areas have been liberated. The guerrilla units have increased. The confinement of the Portuguese troops in military posts (barracks) is being tightened. The provisioning by planes is being extended to other areas. More and more the Portuguese soldiers are becoming desperate. It is the people's war. It is a liberation war. It emanates from the people. It cannot be defeated. The people have encouraging victories. About 2,000 Portuguese soldiers have already been killed. Many military trucks have been destroyed and some ten planes downed, suffering destruction with an exception of one. These victories continue to be achieved. The people of Angola and Guinea (Bissau) are marching forward to liberate their countries.

The people of the Portuguese colonies will maintain their vigilance and will never vacillate but strive on to finish the work they are in; they will not lay down their arms until Portugal has agreed to enter negotiations and to grant independence. This is the only condition for peaceful coexistence with Portugal.