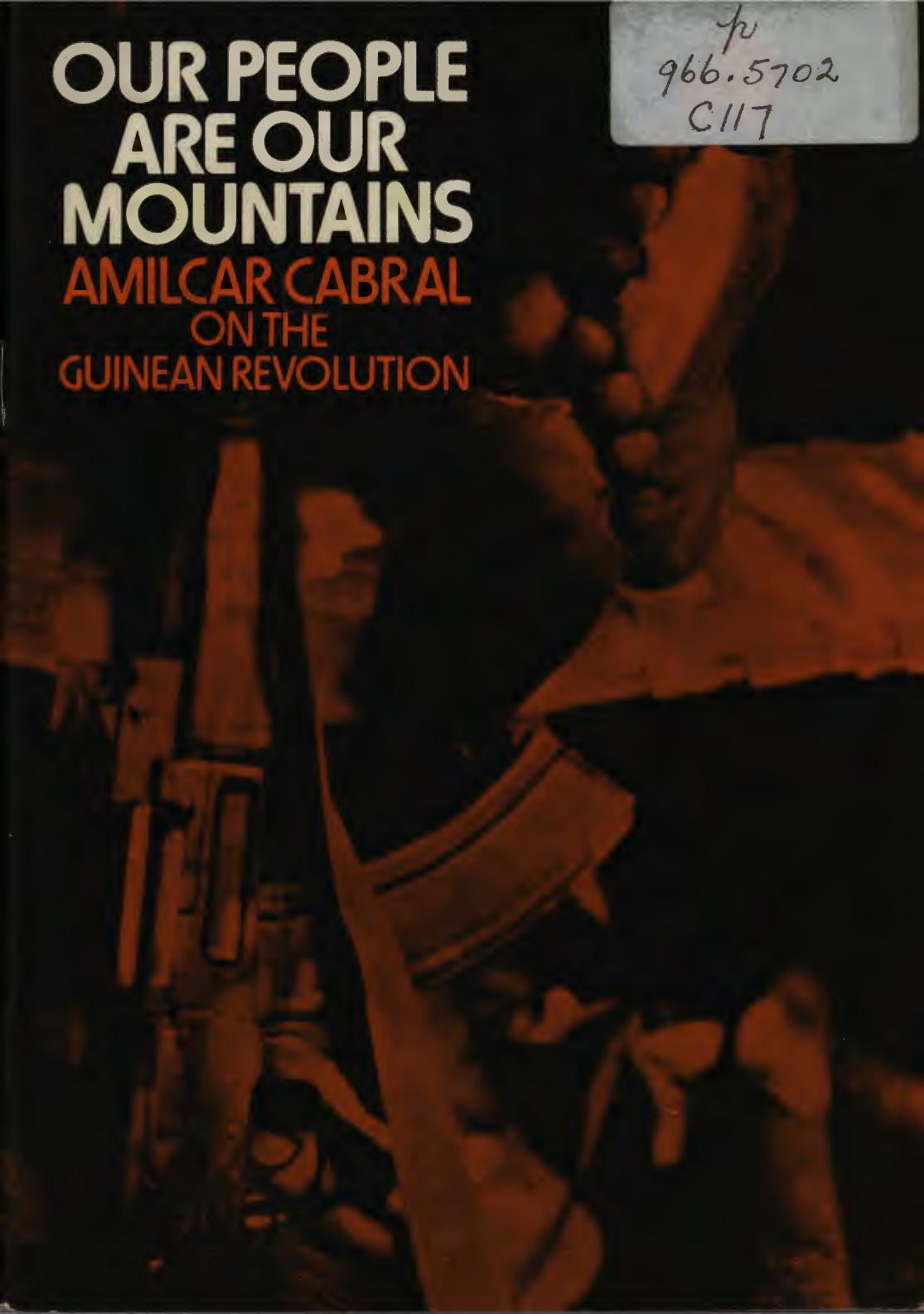


# OUR PEOPLE ARE OUR MOUNTAINS

AMILCAR CABRAL  
ON THE  
GUINEAN REVOLUTION

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# Introduction

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The road to any people's liberation from the fetters of the past and the present is never an easy one to find and to follow. Those who find and follow it successfully deserve every attention — and support — that we can give them.

It is an important fact in the world today that the Africans of Guiné — like their brother peoples in Angola and Mozambique — have undoubtedly discovered how to liberate themselves from the past and the present, and have made long strides towards doing so, laying foundations for an entire renewal of their lives, whether as individuals or as a community.

Among their leaders, none speaks with a longer and more devoted experience of participation, with a greater delegated authority, or with a more profound understanding of revolution, than Amílcar Cabral, secretary-general of the Guiné liberation movement, PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guiné and the Cape Verdes).

Last October the British Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guiné invited Cabral to visit our country. He accepted, and his tour was a resounding and memorable success.

Between three and four thousand people attended meetings to hear him speak. But many more wanted to know what he had said. From tapes recorded at two of these meetings, the Committee has put together a valuable though necessarily abbreviated report. If it lacks the savour of Cabral's direct impact — and he proved a magnetic speaker even in English — it provides a mass of information, to which the Committee have added a written report which Cabral had already made, to his Party, on the remarkable political and military achievements of 1971.

*Basil Davidson*



# 1 Speech made at a mass meeting in Central Hall, London, on 26th October 1971

Dear Comrades, I will try to speak in English. Unfortunately, I wasn't colonised by the English!

First of all I would like to say that it's a great honour and pleasure for me to be here tonight. I call you 'comrades' rather than 'brothers and sisters' because if we are brothers and sisters it's not from choice, it's no commitment, but if you are my comrades I am your comrade too and that's a commitment and a responsibility.

Tony Gifford told you that I'm a great revolutionary. It's not true. I am a simple African man, doing my duty in my own country in the context of our time. My comrade Ron Phillips said that I am his hero. We have no heroes in our country – the only heroes there are the African people.

I would like to say that I haven't come here to teach anything. I have already learnt a lot from the speeches made by the comrades before me, and I have also learnt of your moral and political support for our struggle.

Through you we would like to salute all anti-colonialist people in this country, regardless of their tendencies or origins. In politics one has to be realistic, going step by step, and we think it is essential that people wishing to act in solidarity with a movement such as ours should be united. Without unity it is not possible to give consistent moral, political or material support. We would like to salute, in particular, the workers of this country – white workers, black workers and intellectual workers as well – and tell them that we expect from them the strongest possible united front in the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism in Africa. Perhaps from this experience will come unity for new struggles in their own country. We would like to salute also the young people and students who represent the force of progress everywhere. I would like to salute all anti-colonialist women, and tell them that one of the principles of our fight is that our people will never be free until the women are free as well. I think that the non-African people here tonight will understand if I address special greetings to all Africans present, and all descendants of Africans, calling on them to be aware of the struggle in their own country, and of their particular situation wherever they are.

I would have liked this to be a question and answer meeting, but there are too many people here. Instead, I'll try to talk about some of the problems of our fight in the framework of the struggle against Portuguese colonialism.

First of all: *who are we?* I wouldn't like you to think that we're making war because we are warriors who like fighting. We like peace, but peace means nothing without freedom. We are freedom-fighters – our aim is the independence of our country and the total freedom and progress of our people.

I would like to remind you that ours is a very small country, situated between

Senegal and the Republic of Guinea, and that the Cape Verde Islands are about 400 miles from the coast. The population is 800,000 people in Guiné and 200,000 in the Cape Verde Islands. The country is not a poor one, there is great potential for agricultural development, and we have a few minerals, oil and bauxite. The Africans in Guiné belong to many different ethnic groups, at different stages of historical development. Among these groups the two extreme opposites are the Balante group and the Fula group. The Balante represent society without any defined form of state organisation, a horizontal structure, if you like. The Fula group, on the other hand, is a vertical society, with the state in a pyramidal structure. Between these two groups there are a number of intermediate positions. It is important to stress that our people have suffered from conflicts in African society before the colonialists came, as well as under the Portuguese colonial yoke.

What is Portuguese colonialism? Some people talk about 'Portuguese Imperialism', but there's no such thing. Portugal has never reached the stage of economic development that you could call imperialist – there is a difference between actual imperialism and an imperialist domination. Imperialism is the result of the development of capitalism. One day a comrade – an old sailor – was at a meeting where I put forward this idea. He was astonished, and said, "But Cabral, everybody says we're fighting imperialism. We're fighting the Portuguese, so we're fighting Portuguese imperialism". I explained that imperialism is seen in imperialist countries. In our country there is imperialist domination – a very different thing. The two are closely linked, but different.

The truth is that Portugal has never been an imperialist country. Portugal is an agent of imperialism. Since the beginning of the 18th century Portugal herself has been a semi-colony. If you know history, you will know of whom! Portugal's domination of our country was preserved because she was protected by Britain during the partition of Africa and at the Conference of Berlin. Portugal didn't at that time have enough power to keep her colonies. The reason that Portugal is not decolonising now is because she is not an imperialist country, and cannot *neo-colonise*. Her economic infrastructure is such that she cannot compete with other capitalist powers. During all these years of colonialism, Portugal has simply been the gendarme, the intermediary, in the exploitation of our people.

What are the characteristics of Portuguese colonialism? As you probably know, our people, like other African peoples, put up a great resistance to the colonial conqueror. We fought for 50 years against the Portuguese colonialists. Unfortunately there was no unity and each ethnic group fought the Portuguese alone. From this you can see that the fight isn't just anyone's invention, or that of people who like fighting, but that it's the continuation, now in a new phase, of our struggle against the Portuguese conquerors. Portugal, as you know, is the most backward and underdeveloped country in Europe. This is not the fault of the Portuguese people, it's the responsibility of the ruling classes. The Portuguese people have never known the meaning of 'human rights', of freedom, or of democracy. The ruling class in Portugal has an imperial mentality, and a culture full of ignorance and superstition. And at the heart of it lies contempt for the African people. You remember that Salazar once said that Africa doesn't exist – a very high level of racism!

Portugal has pretended to assimilate the African people. This is a lie. In my country, during 500 years of the Portuguese coastal presence and more than 100 years of full colonial exploitation, they have assimilated, according to their own statistics, only 0.3% of the population. Before the war began they were promising us that they would continue to assimilate. But to become assimilated you have to have had four years at primary school. Yes, but to go to the official primary school you have first to be assimilated! They created this vicious circle in order to prevent the development of our people. The average Portuguese didn't realise this, because in Portugal itself the situation is very bad. From official figures, 46% of the people there are illiterate; but I myself have worked in some regions of Portugal where 70% were illiterate. How could they realise that we were illiterate too? Portugal also pretends to be creating and developing a multi-racial and multi-continental nation. What fantasies! These dreams have persisted because they are useful theories to support the exploitation of our people; but they are nothing more. And now they realise that in Guiné, and in Angola and Mozambique, we will not accept the idea of a multi-racial Portuguese nation. We are not Portuguese. We are African.

Our people in Guiné (the case of the Cape Verde Islands is different because they were deserted until the Portuguese came, and settled slaves from Guiné and a few deported Europeans there were divided into two groups: 'indigenous' and 'assimilados'. What does 'indigenous' mean? It means that people can be taken and put to forced labour, and that they have to pay unjust taxes. They can live a life worse than animals. If you study Portuguese colonial laws, you will see how cynical and evil people can be in creating new forms of exploitation. In the Cape Verdes they established what they called 'contratados' – indentured labour – a new form of slavery, sending people to São Tomé or Angola.

If you read books by certain honest Portuguese doctors, you will see that the common characteristic of people in the Cape Verde Islands is undernourishment, and sometimes starvation. In the Cape Verdes, more people have died from starvation than the actual present population of the country. And in Guiné the lack of protein and many basic foods holds back the development of our people. In some regions there has been an 80% infant mortality rate. And throughout the golden age of Portuguese colonialism we had only two hospitals, with a total of 300 beds, in the whole country and only 18 doctors, 12 of them in Bissau.

As for schools, there were only 45 of them, and they were Catholic missionary schools, only teaching the catechism. There were 11 official schools for 'assimilado' children. There were no secondary schools at all in Guiné until 1959; now there is one. I myself had to go to primary school in Guiné, secondary school in the Cape Verdes, and university in Lisbon. There were only 2,000 children in schools throughout the country. And you can imagine the kind of teaching. It was a deliberate decision to prevent the development of our people, just as they did in Angola, Mozambique and the other colonies. They did their best to intimidate us too, but they forgot one thing – we are men.

If you know about political life in Portugal you can imagine what colonial life in our country is like. Portugal has been under a fascist regime for half a century. That means no political parties at all, no trade unions, nothing. In Guiné we couldn't form any kind of association: in 1953, some of us tried to set up what we called an African Sport and Recreation Club. But one thing in the statutes –

that *unassimilated* people could also join — meant that it was banned.

What exactly is colonial exploitation in my country like? It's important to see how it differs from that in Angola and Mozambique. In Guiné the climate is not very good, and also a great resistance was put up against the Portuguese invaders, so we don't have settlers as in Mozambique and Angola. We were exploited by commerce, and by heavy taxes. You must also understand that the slightest attempt on our part to gain our rights was answered by severe and often bloody repression by the Portuguese.

Our party was formed in 1956 by six Africans from Guiné and the Cape Verdes. We set up an underground party in Bissau, and extended it to other urban centres. We believed at that time that it was possible to fight by peaceful means. With the help of an underground trade union organisation we launched some strikes against the Portuguese and we held some demonstrations, but the Portuguese always answered us with guns. On 3rd August 1959, during a workers' strike in Bissau, they killed 50 African workers and wounded more than 100 in 20 minutes. That finally taught us a lesson: in the face of Portuguese colonialism, and, we think, imperialism in general, there is no question of whether you use armed struggle or not. The struggle is always armed because the colonialists and imperialists have already decided to use their arms against you. We decided, at an underground meeting in Bissau in September 1959, to stop our demonstrations, to retain our underground organisation but to move it to the countryside to mobilise the people, and prepare ourselves for armed struggle.

You know the evolution of that struggle — today we control more than two-thirds of our country. But first of all, we had to prepare our people politically for the struggle. We mobilised the people, prepared cadres and then declared direct action against the Portuguese in 1961. But even then it wasn't armed struggle — only actions against Portuguese stores, against bridges, cutting the telephone wires, and so on. The Portuguese answered this with a great repression. They killed many people. They drowned people in rivers, they burned people with petrol, they destroyed villages suspected of welcoming our party. At that time they imprisoned about 3,000 people throughout Guiné. The Portuguese colonialists do not believe in dialectics — they didn't understand that repression also has its dialectic. Instead of suppressing our fight they helped it grow. In 1964 we were able to hold our first congress in the liberated area inside Guiné.

The Portuguese Minister of Defence, General Araujo, was at that time our best propagandist. He held a press conference in Lisbon to announce that some bandits had come into the country from the Republic of Guinea and Senegal and were controlling about 15% of the country, and that the Portuguese were preparing to drive them out. But the Portuguese public remembered Goa. They assumed that it was a real invasion, and this created an enormous confusion. The next day the government had to make a new press release, confessing that it wasn't people coming from outside, but that it was bandits *inside* the country.

At that time we controlled about 25% of the country, almost all of the South. As you know, our armed fight was first launched in the south, and six months later in the North. At the congress of Cassaca in '64 we radically changed our ways of fighting. First of all, we ended the autonomy of the guerrilla units, linking them to a guiding committee; and we decided to form the first units of a regular army. We also decided to start social work in the liberated zones, setting



up schools, medical posts, a system of commerce and so on, while at the same time reinforcing our political effort. Today, as I have said, we are in control of more than two-thirds of the country.

What is life like now for people in those regions? Basil Davidson and many other Europeans, Americans and Asians have been to Guiné and can vouch for the situation there. In our liberated regions we now have all the makings of a state. Our people have a political, economic and cultural life. And *the people rule the people*. Our political organisation is well established in the villages of the liberated regions. The committee in each village is responsible for life in that village. Our people participate directly in all decisions concerning their own lives, at the level of the village, at the level of the zone, and at the level of the region.

As to their economic life, it's up to the people to improve production of the staple foods that are needed for the continuation of the struggle. An example of economic organisation is the 'peoples shops' where the villagers can buy and exchange goods made or grown locally, or imported by us. We also have popular tribunals in the villages. Previously our people couldn't have a proper trial, they could only go to the administrative boss to be judged. But now the peasants themselves participate in these elected tribunals.

We have two types of armed forces: what we now call *local* armed forces, who are concerned with the local defence of liberated regions; and *national* armed forces, who are concerned with increasing attacks on the remaining positions of the Portuguese. Both these armed forces are integrated into the population – about 90% or more of all their members are composed of peasants. And if in the beginning the leaders of the struggle were from the petty bourgeoisie – like me – with only a few workers, gradually new people have come to lead the party and today most of the leaders are workers and peasants.

We now have a *state* in our country – people like Basil Davidson and the others who came to our country didn't have to ask the Portuguese authorities for a visa – and we are doing our best to reinforce the sovereignty of our people. That's why we decided at the last meeting of our Supreme Council of the Struggle to hold elections for local popular assemblies and also for a national popular assembly. We think that these initiatives can open up new perspectives for our political work inside the country, and also in the international field. We want to strengthen our party and to spread its principles, and do our best to improve links between the party and the population. Some people think that when we speak about the creation of a popular assembly that we are diminishing the value or the role of the party. It's not that: we are increasing democracy in our country, but under the leadership of the party.

Naturally, I have told you about the successes of our fight. We have a lot to tell, and if people come to our country they can see for themselves. We have prepared and edited our own schoolbooks, and we are training many new cadres. In 1960 I was the only agronomist in my country – what a privilege! – but now there are 12 agronomists, all trained during the struggle. We now have people coming back trained as doctors, engineers, teachers, lawyers, etc. Our military successes are decisive, but the most important success for us is *the capacity to create a new life*, in the liberated regions, at the same time we are fighting and defeating the Portuguese forces.

We want independence for our country. But that means, for us, much more than acquiring a flag to wave and an anthem to sing. Independence, for us, means the liberation of our motherland and the liberation of our people.

We have to ask what does 'liberation of the people' mean? It is the liberation of the productive forces of our country, the liquidation of all kinds of imperialist or colonial domination in our country, and the taking of every measure to avoid any new exploitation of our people. We don't confuse exploitation with the colour of one's skin. We want equality, social justice and freedom. I don't need to remind you that the problem of liberation is also one of culture. In the beginning it's culture, and in the end it's also culture. The colonialists have a habit of telling us that when they arrived in Africa they put us into history. You are well aware that it's the contrary – when they arrived they took us out of our own history. Liberation for us is to take back our destiny and our history.

The present military situation is characterised by the retreat of the Portuguese troops into urban centres, and the progressive advance of our forces towards those urban centres. This year we have made great advances. And although the Portuguese have begun to bomb our liberated regions with napalm and other bombs, and attack them with troops transported by helicopter, we are still defeating them. Our action at the moment is principally against the Portuguese garrisons in the urban centres. We attacked the capital, Bissau, and Bafata, the second largest town, in June 1971. In the Cape Verdes we've developed our political work a lot in the last year, and we are preparing ourselves for a new stage of the fight there.

Naturally, the Portuguese are desperate in this situation. They are trying to deceive our people with demagogic politics. We call this the politics of 'smile and blood'. But now they are betraying their defeat by the way in which they make concessions to the populations they still control. They have even been sending Moslems to Mecca and Catholics to Fatima, in Portugal, free of charge. In the old days, in the market in Bissau, when a European came to buy something the African had to wait. But nowadays, when an African arrives, it's "Please, you go first." The Portuguese think our people are stupid and can't see why they do this kind of thing – but everytime something like this happens, if two Africans are there, you know what they say – "Jerama, PAIGC" which means "Thank you very much, PAIGC".

Now the Portuguese military governor in Guiné is well aware that he has been defeated and that it's useless to try and deceive our people any longer. You might ask then, how it is that an underdeveloped country like Portugal can keep colonies and pursue these wars in Angola, Guiné and Mozambique? I don't need to remind you that it's because Portugal is a member of NATO and receives weapons, ammunition and other materials from NATO allies. Unaided, Portugal would not be able to continue the wars. Portugal is using the best modern jet-planes against us; yet in Portugal they can't even produce toy planes for children.

You might also ask what we want from this visit to England. One thing is that the moral and political support of your presence here tonight is very encouraging to us. But we are also waiting for another thing: that the British start acting according to the principles they proclaim. We would like the British to remember the responsibility that Britain also has for our colonial situation.

I want to finish by saying that I am very touched by your coming here, and

by telling you that we hope that one day soon we will be able to receive our friends and comrades in the liberated areas and towns of our country, where we are now developing our state.



# 2 A question and answer session held in the University of London, 27th October 1971

Comrades, I salute you all. It is a very great honour and a pleasure to have this opportunity of meeting you, not for a lecture, but for a friendly and, for us, a useful discussion. As I understand it, I am facing an audience of intellectuals – intellectuals in the good sense of the word. My responsibility is therefore great. I will do my best to answer the questions you put to me, and as briefly as possible, so as to have the maximum number of questions.

*Question: What is the present military situation on the mainland of Guiné-Bissau? What are the military perspectives there and on the Cape Verde Islands?*

You will be more or less aware of the military situation in my country. We have now liberated more than two-thirds of our national territory from the colonial yoke, and both our fight against the remaining Portuguese colonial positions, principally in the urban centres of the north, and also our political work in the Cape Verde Islands are intensifying day by day. Despite Portuguese bombings and other crimes, we have developed a new life in the liberated areas, where our people are increasingly the masters of their own destiny: this is fundamental to our armed struggle. However, in order to give you a fuller understanding of the current situation, I should like to go back to some of the essential factors that confronted us at the outset of our struggle.

Our country is unique in the African continent. We are in a flat part of Africa. The country divides basically into two regions: the coastal region and the interior. The coastal region, covered by rivers and swamps, extends as far as Mansoa, which is about 60 kms from Bissau, and is characterised, from north to south, by forests and ricefields. The interior, from Mansoa to the eastern border, is lightly-wooded savannah with occasional rivers. There are no mountains at all. Our people call the hills in Boé region, in the south-east, mountains, because in Guiné we don't really know what mountains are.

Another point is that our country is very small, only the size of Switzerland or Belgium. It is important to consider these geographical aspects of Guiné in relation to the liberation struggle because, as you will know, the manuals of guerrilla warfare generally state that a country has to be of a certain size to be able to create what is called a base, and, further, that mountains are the best place to develop guerrilla warfare. Obviously, we don't have those conditions in Guiné, but this did not stop us beginning our armed liberation struggle.

I would like to make it clear that we took up this struggle only in answer to the violent oppression of our people by the Portuguese colonialists. We are not fighting because we are a warlike people, or because we think armed struggle is the only means. In some circumstances, however, it may be the only means, and even the best means. It all depends on the particular conditions of the

country involved. What we did was to establish a strategy based on this principle: start from the actual conditions of Guiné, the geographical, social, historical, political and economic conditions.

Basing ourselves on this principle, we studied our social structure as deeply as we could, together with all other factors likely to influence the eventual development of our struggle. As for the mountains, we decided that our people had to take their place, since it would be impossible to develop our struggle otherwise. So our people are our mountains. To achieve this, we adopted another principle – self-evident, it seemed to us – that our struggle is a political one, which takes an armed form because of the Portuguese colonialists, but beginning and ending as a political struggle. We are not fighting to invade Portugal, or to enter Lisbon. We are fighting for the independence of our own country.

On this basis we prepared the political ground necessary for the armed struggle to develop. The first step was to mobilise and organise our people politically; this took about three years. For this we adopted another principle, based on a national proverb which says: rice can only be cooked inside the pot. Even if you have fire, you can't cook rice outside the pot. This means that our struggle has to be carried on inside our own country; from the beginning we had to avoid any diversion of our effort through the use of neighbouring countries. This is very important, because the general tendency is to take advantage of the facilities you have abroad to fight from the outside inwards.

Owing to our small population, we adopted a further principle: to fight as economically as possible, since we can afford only the minimum of losses. So we worked out our strategy and tactics. And I may say that I know no other liberation struggle where losses have been fewer than ours.

We also agreed that our strategy had to be centrifugal. As you know, the Portuguese believed that we would develop our forces outside, in neighbouring countries, and then move in towards the centre of Guiné. They therefore concentrated their troops on the borders. But we began the general armed struggle in 1963 from the interior of Guiné, at a place south of the Geba river. That is to say, we did the exact opposite of what the Portuguese expected – we moved from the centre outwards.

Furthermore, from the start of the struggle we did our utmost to give the maximum autonomy to our guerrilla units. This was risky but necessary, as it was not initially possible for us, even in a small country like ours, to have day to day direction of every guerrilla unit. Yet it was a decision that contained some dangers for our struggle.

Clearly, there are some basic contradictions in a struggle like ours. The main contradiction, our great difficulty, is that we have to fight against a foreign power in our own land. They destroy our people and our resources, but we cannot go to Lisbon, or to the villages of Portugal, to retaliate. This makes our struggle a hard one. If it had been possible, at the beginning, for us to attack the enemy in their own country, less fighting would have been necessary. But the Portuguese have a very powerful advantage. They bring their men and their arms to fight against us, destroying our villages; and they also oblige us to destroy our own property. Yet we can never touch them in their own country. So, as part of our strategy, we have had to develop tactics which enable us, as far as possible, to avoid the destruction of our own country.

On the colonialists' side, too, there is a comparable contradiction: in order to dominate Guiné they have to be there, occupying it. For Guiné is not Portugal; it is an African country only conquered in the first place after 50 years of colonial war. And in order to maintain the conquest they have to be present. At first the presence was military; later, when they had established an administration, they used civil control, with all the apparatus of a colonial state. When we launched our armed struggle, the Portuguese were compelled to reinforce their presence – they brought in troops and distributed them all over the country, in the villages as well as the urban centres, to maintain their domination.

But this dispersion of the enemy forces meant weakness, and our strategy was to concentrate specific forces to attack the Portuguese place by place. They suffered losses immediately, and made the fatal move of concentrating their forces in order to defend themselves. But this meant leaving large parts of the country outside their control. This was, and is, a dilemma that cannot be solved in a colonial war: when they disperse their forces so as to maintain control, we concentrate ours so as to attack them, thus forcing them to concentrate. But when their forces are concentrated, we organise, mobilise, and develop new structures in the countryside, so that they can never come back.

What are the main strategic objectives of the colonial army? Firstly, to maintain their positions in the urban centres. Secondly, to disperse their forces to assure domination.

To supply their troops they must control the main arteries of communication. In Guiné this means principally the roads but also the rivers, because a lot of communication is by river. This the Portuguese did. At first they had more than 80 garrisons, large and small, distributed all over our country; they controlled the main roads and were able to travel freely along all navigable rivers. I recall that boats of 10,000 tons used to go up the Farim river as far as the internal port of Tambato, where Guiné groundnuts are loaded for export.

To destroy this system of domination we simply concentrated our forces and attacked two camps simultaneously – Tite and Fulacunda. Most of the Portuguese troops were at the time in the border areas and in Bissau. They started to move immediately, heading for the centre of the country. But our guerrillas were all over the roads, cutting trees to make roadblocks, laying mines and ambushes. We caused heavy losses; six months later the Portuguese Minister of Defence, General Araujo, had to make a press statement admitting that we were in control of 15% of the territory. It was the best propaganda we could have had, especially as our struggle was up till then unknown outside Guiné. We concentrated our forces for attack, we dispersed them to ambush the main roads, and we started trying to close off the rivers.

Since that point we have made great progress. Altogether we have expelled the Portuguese from more than 40 camps – from some small camps in both the north and the south, and more recently from important ones such as Madina and Beli. For an example: the Portuguese used to have 14 camps along the border with Guinea. Now they have only one, in the east.

We now control all the main roads except some in the western and central-eastern regions. The Portuguese cannot use them and don't even try. Recently they made efforts to asphalt the roads so they could use them, but it's really too late for them to asphalt roads because we have become very efficient at destroy-

ing their transport with bazookas and other weapons. On the roads still occasionally used by Portuguese troops we destroyed 90 trucks and armoured cars between January and August 1971; on the rivers we sank 20 Portuguese boats during the same period, having over the years developed our capacity to attack river craft.

At the moment, the Portuguese have about 35 garrisons, including Bissau, Bafata and the other main towns. But almost all the roads in the hinterland are closed to them. And we are increasing our assaults on the urban centres still under occupation by the colonialists; last June we launched our first attacks on Portuguese positions in Bissau and Bafata. In all the rural areas we are free and sovereign — that is in more than two-thirds of the country.

That summarises the general military situation in Guiné at present. As far as the perspective of the struggle is concerned (the second part of the question) the aim is to fight until victory. We are determined to fight, not only with arms, but also through political work and national reconstruction in the liberated regions. We are determined to increase our attacks on Portuguese positions. We are also determined to develop and intensify our political activity in the Cape Verde Islands. All depends, naturally, on technical problems, but the party is now in a position politically to change the nature of the struggle in the Cape Verde Islands.

*Question: Why has Portugal been notoriously unable to seek some variety of neo-colonial solution? Have Portuguese tactics changed in any measure in response to the armed struggle?*

This is an important point. Many people ask how it is possible for Portugal, the most underdeveloped and backward country in Europe — not the fault of the Portuguese people, but the fault of her ruling classes — to continue to wage three colonial wars in Africa, as they have done for over ten years now, since the start of the war in Angola. How and why? The first answer is that it is precisely because Portugal *is* underdeveloped, that she is unable to find a solution for her colonies, because she cannot hope for a neocolonialist one.

In analysing the problems of African independence we can say that independence was given to colonised countries by the colonial powers as a means of securing the indirect domination of colonised peoples. But Portugal does not possess the necessary economic infrastructure that will allow her to try decolonisation in this manner. She cannot *decolonise* because she cannot *neocolonise*.

Clearly, the Portuguese economy is not strong enough to support colonial wars. But it is very difficult for the ruling class in Portugal to adapt to reality because they themselves are trapped within the psychology of underdevelopment, from which have sprung all their “theories” of multi-racialism, non-racialism, multi-continentalism, luso-tropicalism etc. All Portuguese culture is impregnated with this type of thinking, and it stems from the economic conditions and the form of class domination that prevail in Portugal. Portugal’s *own* condition means that she cannot seek a solution of the neocolonial variety, because Portugal herself is a semi-colony. Even the telephones in Portugal are not of Portuguese manufacture, nor the tramways, nor the railways. The mines of São Domingos and São Justo are not wholly Portuguese-owned. The Portuguese in this room know all this very well, better than I. So there can be no question of a neocolonial solution.



Has Portugal changed her tactics in response to our armed struggle? We were very innocent when we began. We thought it was possible to persuade Portugal to change, possible to use peaceful means to make her change. But the Portuguese colonialists soon taught us that it wasn't possible to fight them empty-handed, that we had to try and force them to change. It was only when we Africans realised that peaceful means were useless that we launched our armed struggle — first in Angola, later in Guiné and finally in Mozambique. And now the Portuguese colonialists are changing, they are changing.

Their tactics have changed already. Salazar, in fact, was a very limited man, a man with a feudal mentality, and he was independent. He served the ruling classes, but from a position of independence, and by force of his strong personality. Caetano is none of these things. Salazar was a great figure only at Coimbra University. But Caetano taught at the Lisbon Faculty of Law, and was also a member of the Council of Bank Administration — a true servant of Portuguese capitalism, completely dependent on the ruling class.

Yet Caetano had thus a wider experience than Salazar, and he began in the political field a kind of so-called change. In Guiné he tried a new policy, making concessions to the urban people while still controlling them. You know how it's done — build a new school or two, enrol more people in schools, send them on free trips to Mecca and Fatima, give them the titles 'madame' and 'monsieur'. Before they were merely things, now they're called names like 'splendissima senhora'. And the Portuguese believe we will be fooled by these gestures. But they're failing miserably in this.

Of course, the colonialists try to divide our people. On one hand they tell us that Portugal is one multi-racial, multi-continental nation — we are all one family and so on. And changes were made in the Portuguese constitution in 1951, after the adoption of the UN Charter, with further changes following in 1961 after the UN resolution on decolonisation. Indeed, during the history of Portugal the colonies have changed names many times. During the first Republic they were called colonies, but later they became 'overseas provinces', to avoid any defence of their rights to self-determination by the democratic and progressive forces of the world. After colonies, after overseas provinces, what new name will they find?

On the other hand, after the beginning of our struggle in 1960, other kinds of changes were introduced into the constitution for all three colonies. For example, two sorts of people had been identified in Guiné — the 'natives' and the 'assimilados'. The natives form 99.7% of the population. The assimilados — after 500 years — are a mere 0.3%.

Portugal claims to encourage assimilation but in fact obstructs it, because her rulers know quite well that if people become assimilated they can't be so easily exploited. (Not that we want to be assimilated. On the contrary, we want to be ourselves. But it was better to be assimilated than native, because a native can be subjected to forced labour, and has to pay a poll tax on himself, his wife and his children. There are taxes for second and third wives too — very neat that.)

There are now further changes in the constitution. The new idea is called 'progressive autonomy' for our country. However, if you study Caetano's recent law to this effect, and his speeches on it, you will see that it means nothing, absolutely nothing. The Portuguese are fooling themselves — they've

told so many lies that they're beginning to believe these lies themselves.

The main political change that has occurred in Guiné is the fact that General Spínola, military governor of Bissau, is now claiming not only that he will lead our people forward to self-determination under the Portuguese flag, but also that he will create a social revolution in the country. That's very strange, because in Portugal it's illegal to talk about 'social revolution'. You can't even use the word 'social', it's considered a dangerous word. And 'revolution' — much more terrible! Now it would be very nice for us if *Portugal* had a social revolution. That would mean our independence would be granted willingly and we shouldn't have to fight for it. So we suggest General Spínola goes back to his own country and creates a social revolution there. He could also develop the Portuguese economy while he's about it — it's one of the most backward in Europe.

*Question: How will you move from the structure of a guerrilla struggle to structures for mass participation in a new state? How will you reduce the danger of the leadership becoming detached from the people?*

In Guiné, guerrilla struggle means mass participation. Without mass participation the guerrilla struggle would be impossible. Perhaps in other conditions it may be possible, but in Guiné the only way is through mass participation.

The problem that this question refers to is the practical application of some of the theoretical ideas about guerrilla struggle. Our movement can only be said to have had a guerrilla struggle structure during the first year of fighting — if that, because it wasn't a guerrilla-struggle structure in the sense of a structure that led the people. We began with our political organisation: we are, and have always been, first of all a party — a national liberation movement constituted by a party which leads the people to liberation. Our guerrilla forces, even when they were fewer and more autonomous, were specifically created as the military arm of the party. In Guiné there is no question of the guerrillas directing the party: the guerrilla is at all times under the direction of the party.

This is important. Since our Congress of Cassaca in 1964 we have maintained a clear distinction between the functions of the different instruments of the party. We distinguished between the role of the party, whose main task lies in political work, and the role of the armed forces, guerrilla or regular, whose task is to take action against the Portuguese colonialists. At the same time we created all the organs necessary for national reconstruction work in liberated areas.

We have therefore no really great problems in moving from the structure of a guerrilla struggle to the structures of mass participation. We are organised as a party: by village, by zone and by region. Southern Guiné is led by a National Committee of Liberated Regions in the South, and the north is led by a National Committee of Liberated Regions in the North. This forms a basic structure of government. The liberated regions in fact already contain all the elements of a state — administrative services, health services, education services, local armed forces for defence against Portuguese attacks, tribunals and prisons. The immediate problem is to move from the liberated to the non-liberated areas, and to enlarge our state till it encloses the whole country. The transition to state structure will not be a problem.

The second part of the question asked how the danger of the leadership becoming detached from the people can be reduced. This is a constant problem,

a constant struggle. But we have based our struggle in our masses, and their participation in the decisions taken for the movement by the party is continually increasing. In the liberated regions we are now preparing for the election of local assemblies, and the election of our first national assembly. We believe this will reinforce the sovereignty of our people and enlarge the democratic basis of our actions now and in the future. Up till now, all decisions concerning our struggle have been taken by the organs of the party, but after the elections of the assemblies matters affecting each region will be studied and decided by regional assemblies. Naturally, military problems are a separate matter: the council of war decides those. We believe that the fact that the people are represented in the committee of the party, in the popular tribunals, and will be represented, after the elections, in the assemblies, means that it should be possible to prevent the leadership becoming detached from the led.

But we shall have to be vigilant. For this reason: the idea of the struggle against the enemy was launched by elements of the petty bourgeoisie – by the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie if you like – with the peasants and urban workers joining in later to provide the essential basis for the struggle. But the normal tendency of the petty bourgeoisie is towards bourgeois behaviour – to want to be the boss – and the development of the struggle can crystallise in this way. Indeed this happens not only with petty bourgeois elements, but also with the peasant people; there is always a strong tendency for the framework of the movement to acquire a bourgeois caste. We must be very wary of this today, and more especially in the future.

Can the danger be reduced? We can reduce it only by constantly reinforcing the participation and control by the mass over the whole liberation movement. When we began there were just six of us in Bissau – two workers and four petty bourgeois. Later, as the workers in the urban centres joined, the group was partly transformed. And today the majority of the party leadership comes from the peasant element, and the majority of our comrades in the struggle are peasants, and in all our liberated regions the peasants are armed. At the beginning, our man was a very great man when he entered the village with a gun; with a weapon he was a privileged person. Now a weapon means nothing; all the villagers have them. But we have not yet achieved absolute equality in the movement; it remains an important question for the future.

*Question: In the building of a new society in Guiné-Bissau what will be the guiding lines of economic organisation?*

I'll be brief on this. We consider that the guiding lines in economic affairs are simply that there shall be no more exploitation of our people. We have had enough exploitation. We have been exploited by the traditional chiefs, by other sections of our society, and by the colonial power. That's quite enough.

Nor do we see any difference between one form of exploitation and another, when all that changes is the colour of the exploiters' skin. So, no more exploitation either by foreigners *or* by our own people. To achieve this, however, we will have to be realistic and pay extremely close attention to our actual situation.

We are an agricultural country – but a backward agricultural country. The Portuguese never developed Guiné agriculturally; tractors and fertilisers are largely unknown. Our first objective at this stage is to ensure that agriculture

remains the most important focus of our economic policy, and this means that our principal task will have to be a technical revolution in agriculture.

Naturally, people in Europe expect 'agrarian reform' in my country. But in Guiné (Cape Verde is a different matter) the problem of agrarian reform is not the same as it is in Europe. This is because the land is not privately-owned in Guiné. The Portuguese did not occupy our land as settlers, as, for example, they did in Angola. The Africans kept the land and the Portuguese appropriated the results of his labour. As a result, most of the land has remained the property of the villages. Of course, in tribes like the Fula or Mandjak, which have a pyramidal social structure, the chiefs have the best land. But they have it only in terms of getting the best possible production from it; they do not own it, for it cannot be sold or otherwise disposed of.

We do not therefore have the problem of agrarian reform in relation to land ownership that other countries are familiar with. What we need is an agrarian revolution to improve the yield of the soil through technology, and we believe that the best structure for this change will be a co-operative system. There is in fact a tradition of co-operation in our country between members of the same family, between different families and even between different villages. Some Africans have called this a co-operative system, arguing that the African family constitutes a ready-made co-operative. This is not really so; a true co-operative does not exist when some members still exploit others – in Fula society, for instance, where the women work but have no rights – that's in no sense a true co-operative.

We believe that we must develop the co-operative as the fundamental economic structure in our way of life, not only internally as the basis of our whole economy but also in terms of our country's international economic relations. We believe we should try to act as a nation in the same way as a co-operative acts, within a system of international co-operatives. I cannot now go into all the details of our thinking on this matter, but I have explained the basic guidelines of our economic organisation.

*Question: How do you see the relationship between the armed struggle in the three Portuguese territories and the condition of the rest of the African continent?*

The three armed struggles in Mozambique, Angola and Guiné are closely linked, for several reasons. Firstly, we are fighting the same enemy – Portuguese colonialism. Secondly, but no less importantly, the leaders of the three movements began by working together; we were people of the Portuguese colonies before we were Guinean, Mozambican or Angolan, and we worked together in Lisbon, sharing in the creation of the three movements.

Political reasons also keep us together. At the outset, our struggle in Guiné, for instance, provoked a feeling of insecurity among the neighbouring states, but as the struggle grew and strengthened in Africa, it became a positive force. Our struggles in Angola, Mozambique and Guiné now aid the security of surrounding countries who are also menaced by the Portuguese colonialists. This is the first effect of our liberation movements as far as the rest of Africa is concerned.

The second effect is that we are showing Africans it *is* possible to transform one's life; it *is* possible to fight the great colonialist-imperialist powers in our continent. Our struggle is part of the making of African history.

We also believe that our struggle helps to influence the attitudes of people in other dominated African countries, especially in Southern Africa, although of course we are also aware that whatever other peoples can do by way of destroying colonialism or racism in their countries helps our struggle enormously. We could talk about this for hours; that's the briefest answer I can give you.

*Question: You have been quoted as being willing to reach a negotiated settlement with the Portuguese. Would this allow an outlet 'with honour' for the Portuguese which would not damage their morale and would therefore allow them to intensify their actions in Angola and Mozambique?*

Our position on the question of negotiation is very clear: our battle is emphatically a political battle. We are not fighting to conquer Portugal, we are fighting to liberate our country from the colonial yoke. I can perhaps illustrate this by relating the story of the Italian journalist who interviewed a schoolboy in the north of Guiné, asking: "Aren't you tired of this long struggle?" The child replied: "It's for the Portuguese to tire of it; we shan't tire because it's our country." Journalist: "But how will it end?" The child: "Well, in the beginning it was only politics, and in the end it will be only politics too." A fourteen-year old child.

Anyone with revolutionary ideas who doesn't understand that our struggle has to include negotiations doesn't understand anything. We are always ready for negotiations. Our fundamental principle is this: we are fighting to gain the independence of our country, and to redeem all the sacrifices we have agreed upon during these long years of struggle. Independence is the only solution.

It may be true that if independence is won in Guiné and the Cape Verdes through negotiation, the Portuguese will be enabled to intensify their war against Angola and Mozambique. But if the fatalism of this hypothetical argument is accepted we will none of us have independence – not Angola nor Mozambique nor my country. Because if Angola wins her independence first, 70,000 troops will come into little Guiné and occupy all the villages, and the same if Mozambique is freed. No, it's a false problem. The Portuguese know very well if they are thrown out of one of the three countries it will be the end for them in the other two as well. Public opinion in Portugal will demand the wholesale liberation of the African territories, and even the Portuguese troops will refuse to fight.

You may recall that France, trying to prevent the liberation of Algeria, gave independence to the other colonies, to avoid having to fight there as well. It might be independence in name only, but the very fact that it was given strengthened the fight in Algeria. The struggle for independence is a process that cannot be reversed.

*Question: You have also been quoted as being willing to discuss independence for mainland Guiné without the Cape Verde Islands. How do you defend this statement against the charge that it is potentially a betrayal of one-fifth of your constituency?*

The press is in fact slightly mistaken about our position on the Cape Verde Islands. At my press conference I was asked: "What will your position be if the

Portuguese decide to grant independence to Guiné without the Cape Verde Islands?" My reply was: "We are ready to negotiate and we will answer this question if and when the Portuguese ask it, not when you do." The Portuguese, you see, have launched some trial balloons in order to ascertain our position in advance, but obviously we can't answer except directly to them during negotiations. However, we are ready to discuss the issue, as we said. This doesn't mean we shall concede it; we are the African Party for the Independence of Guiné and the Cape Verdes. But we know that there can be more than one way of achieving the same aim, just as we know that even twins are not born at exactly the same moment. What we can assure the comrade who put this question is that we shall not cease our struggle before the total independence of Guiné and the Cape Verde Islands. We are one country, one people.

*Question: You have said you would be prepared to talk to the Portuguese. What is your position vis-a-vis 'dialogue' with the racist regime in South Africa?*

The problem is what kind of dialogue and with whom? We consider it to be a real betrayal for the head of an African state to want a dialogue with the racists of South Africa, disregarding the rights of the people of that country. And don't muddle Banda up with the idea of dialogue. Banda isn't having a 'dialogue', he is the servant of the South African racists. We are in favour of any kind of initiative from the independent African states that will facilitate negotiations between the South African racist regime and the nationalists in South Africa. But we do not recognise the right of any head of state in Africa to negotiate with the racist regime in the nationalists' place. Our position on this is quite clear and we could not adopt any other.

But I hope this problem of negotiation is fully understood. The aim of the struggle is negotiation. We do not criticise the Vietnamese people for negotiating a peace treaty with the American imperialists: to do that would show one understood nothing of the struggle.

*Question: What light has your experience of the armed struggle thrown upon theories of armed struggle current in the last decade?*

We think that our experience is *our* experience. It's very difficult to say how our experience can help others, although we are sure it can be useful for others to study it so as to understand the priorities in their own countries, not necessarily by adopting other people's policies.

There are, of course, general laws of the theory of armed struggle for national liberation. These laws cover, for instance, those contradictions I mentioned earlier. Firstly, that we cannot counter-attack the enemy on his home ground (up till now, anyway; perhaps the anti-imperialists will give us planes and warships so we can go to Portugal and finish this whole business off). Secondly, the contradiction that the colonial forces have to disperse themselves to assure domination, but in doing so become vulnerable.

But every theory of armed struggle has to arise as the consequence of an actual armed struggle. In every case practice comes first, theory later. Yet it's wrong to suppose that it can be entirely empirical, for each struggle contains something shared by all other struggles and something which it creates for itself on the basis of the general experience — just as with art, if you like. Picasso is a very great and

original artist, but he is also the product of other artists who preceded him. It's the same with the armed struggle. If you really want to advance the struggle, you must make a critical assessment of the experience of others before applying their theories, but the basic theory of armed struggle has to come from the reality of the fight.

Let me put it like this: it's possible for a scientist, working away in a closed room, to think about all the relations between the planets and stars, taking into account all the forces and movements and cosmic dynamics, and to speculate that another planet exists. For the liberation movement these armchair methods are impossible. *No-one could create the theory of the struggle for liberation without participating in the struggle.* There are of course some people – and very brave they are too – who write manuals of guerrilla warfare without having taken part in a guerrilla war, but that's not our fault. All the true manuals of guerrilla war have been written by people who have taken part.

So, to summarise my answer to this question: if you have to wage a guerrilla war please study the real, the concrete conditions that face you. Be familiar with the experience of others, but try to find your own solution, your own method of fighting.

*Question: Besides nationalism, is your struggle founded on any ideological basis? To what extent has the ideology of Marxism and Leninism been relevant to the prosecution of the war in Guiné-Bissau? What practical peculiarities, if any, have necessitated the modification of Marxism-Leninism?*

We believe that a struggle like ours is impossible without ideology. But what kind of ideology? I will perhaps disappoint many people here when I say that we do not think ideology is a religion. A religion tells one, for example, that Christ was born in Nazareth and performed this miracle and that and so on and so on, and one believes it or one doesn't believe it, and one practices the religion or one doesn't. Moving from the realities of one's own country towards the creation of an ideology for one's struggle doesn't imply that one has pretensions to be a Marx or a Lenin or any other great ideologist, but is simply a necessary part of the struggle. I confess that we didn't know these great theorists terribly well when we began. We didn't know them half as well as we do now! We needed to know them, as I've said, in order to judge in what measure we could borrow from their experience to help our situation – but not necessarily to apply the ideology blindly just because it's a very good ideology. That is where we stand on this.

But ideology is important in Guiné. As I've said, never again do we want our people to be exploited. Our desire to develop our country with social justice and power in the hands of the people is our ideological basis. Never again do we want to see a group or a class of people exploiting or dominating the work of our people. That's our basis. If you want to call it Marxism, you may call it Marxism. That's your responsibility. A journalist once asked me: "Mr. Cabral, are you a Marxist?" Is Marxism a religion? I am a freedom fighter in my country. You must judge from what I do in practice. If you decide that it's Marxism, tell everyone that it is Marxism. If you decide it's not Marxism, tell them it's not Marxism. But the labels are your affair; we don't like those kind of labels. People here are very preoccupied with the questions: are you Marxist or not Marxist? Are you

Marxist-Leninist? Just ask me, please, whether we are doing well in the field. Are we really liberating our people, the human beings in our country, from all forms of oppression? Ask me simply this, and draw your own conclusions.

We cannot, from our experience, claim that Marxism-Leninism must be modified — that would be presumptuous. What we must do is to modify, to radically transform, the political, economic, social and cultural conditions of our people. This doesn't mean that we have no respect for all that Marxism and Leninism have contributed to the transformation of struggles throughout the world and over the years. But we are absolutely sure that we have to create and develop in our particular situation the solution for our country. We believe that the laws governing the evolution of all human societies are the same. Our society is developing in the same way as other societies in the world, according to the historical process; but we must understand clearly what stage our society has reached. Marx, when he created Marxism, was not a member of a tribal society; I think there's no necessity for us to be more Marxist than Marx or more Leninist than Lenin in the application of their theories.

*Question: Can you comment on the realities of classes in Africa? How suitable are the correct ideological weapons of class analysis for African liberation movements, social revolution and unity?*

First of all, the question about the realities of class in Africa is too wide a question. Although we are in favour of unity from the Mediterranean to the Cape, we must recognize that there is not "one Africa". Historically, economically, culturally, Africa is not one. The class situation in one country is very different from that in another. Moreover, it is not for me, at this stage of the struggle, to analyse the realities of classes in other countries.

As far as Guiné is concerned, our analysis of the class and social structure of our country has been made; it is published in *Revolution in Guinea*,\* the book produced by our friend Richard Handyside. I'm not just making propaganda for his talents as editor: you'll appreciate there isn't time for me to make a full class analysis of Guiné now, especially when it is already available. I would simply like to remind those who put the question about ideology that when we began to mobilise our people we couldn't mobilise them for the struggle against imperialism — nor even, in some areas of Guiné, for the struggle against colonialism — because the people didn't know what the words meant. You have no difficulty in understanding what imperialism and colonialism are, but we who were suffering the effects of colonialist-imperialist domination didn't know what it meant.

So we had to mobilise our people on the basis of the daily realities of suffering and exploitation, and now, even the children in Guiné know what colonialism and imperialism are. Again, we couldn't mobilise the people of Guiné under the slogan of 'land for those who work the land', because our people take for granted the fact that everyone will have land since there is no shortage of land. As a slogan it may have strong ideological content, but it doesn't happen to be relevant to Guiné. It is essential to link ideological weapons to the reality of the situation. It is right that those who fight should forge a correct ideological weapon for their country. But it is very difficult, I repeat, to define a general correct ideological weapon for all African countries.

\* by Amílcar Cabral, Stage One, 1969.



*Question: What are the class differences between the town people and the country people in Guiné, and what effect do these differences have on a) the organisation of the party and b) the methods of liberation?*

Again, the full answer to this can be found in *Revolution in Guinea*. I would however like to make just this point, that towns in Guiné are not like your towns, with centuries of existence as crystallised cities behind them. A majority of our townspeople are first-generation — half peasant — and a large proportion of them still have their parcel of land in the rural areas, to which they return to work periodically, alternating between town and country. There are thus more links between town and country in Guiné than in Europe or indeed in many other African countries.

So there is no great contradiction between the urban worker and the rural worker as far as the African labourer class is concerned. However, within the urban population there are several different groups, or layers. There is the colonial class, which mainly refers to the Portuguese administration but also includes certain Africans; there is the petty bourgeoisie; there are the white-collar workers in the state administration and in commercial business; there are the workers, who are not a working class as exists in Britain, but who are wage-earners; and finally there are those who live from hand to mouth.

In the countryside, there is no homogeneous rural society in Guiné, as *Revolution in Guinea* explains. Classifications cannot be made on a national basis, as everything is complicated by the fact that there are several different ethnic groups, ranging from the Balante to the Fula, with wide differences of social structure. Between these two extreme types there are many variations of social organisation.

That is a summary of the differences between town and country people in Guiné, but I would like to emphasise that even in the towns the people are influenced by these rural or tribal structures: a Balante is a Balante even in the town, and a Fula the same. Though it remains true that the creation of towns has radically transformed our country, as for example did the introduction of money.

What effect does this social analysis have on the decisions of our party, once we have studied all the links between the structures? Well, I could talk about this subject for hours — the links between, and the effects of, the social structure on the organisation of struggle and of methods of liberation. But I will have to refer you again to *Revolution in Guinea*.

*[At this point, though there were many more questions and an enthusiastic audience, the meeting ran out of time and had to end.]*



# 3 A brief report on the situation of the struggle in Guiné (January-August 1971)

by Amílcar Cabral, September 1971.

## SECTION I

Despite appearances, and an obsolete propaganda system which none the less manages to get a favourable hearing in parts of the Western press, the degradation of the economic and political system in Portugal is a fact which the Portuguese authorities themselves, at all levels, can no longer conceal. This fact, reflected in the attitudes of the different Portuguese classes, is the main consequence of the outrage against humanity which the Portuguese government has perpetrated for 10 years, from the moment it launched the colonial war in Angola, quickly to be followed by those in Guiné and Mozambique. For Portugal this is the result, dramatic today but certainly tragic tomorrow, of the absurd, irrational and lying policies followed by the Portuguese ruling class, who not only persist in scorning the rights of the African people and international law, but who also consciously operate against the interests of the Portuguese people.

It is this reality, made clearer in the last two years and particularly in 1971, that explains the weakness of the demagogic politics of Marcello Caetano, the growing split between the ruling class and the popular masses (workers in the towns and rural areas, students and intellectual anti-fascists), increasingly frequent and intense upheavals in Portuguese society and, as an extreme indication of the conflict, the armed revolutionary activity which has recently taken place in Portugal. The limited and sporadic nature of these actions should not mislead anyone. For a fraction of Portuguese society, however small a minority, to take the decision, despite the inveterate nationalism which is a common characteristic of all Portuguese, to resort to violence as a means of protest – and without any opposition from the popular masses – means that the state of mind of the average Portuguese, faced with the aggravation of the socio-economic and political situation, is reaching the edge of despair.

In following Salazar's policies of colonial war and genocide against the African peoples, Marcello Caetano has not just disappointed those who believe in his 'political intelligence'. He has also missed, or is in the process of missing, the one moment since the overseas discoveries when a Portuguese ruler could have gone down in history with credit. Because he cannot, or will not, understand the trend of history, not even the very interests of his own people – something that will not surprise anyone who knows the development of his ideological formation – today, the present head of the Portuguese government is nowhere near concealing in his speeches and public pronouncements, after three years in office, his perplexity and even his confusion in the face of the socio-economic and political reality of the complex of diversities which he insists on calling the 'Portuguese world'.

Timid reforms, mainly of an administrative kind, that he has sketched out and dared to include in the new Portuguese constitution have convinced no-one but the already converted. They have even disappointed the most important – be-

cause the most active — group of his 'liberal or 'less reactionary' supporters, from whom came the conflict in the so-called Portuguese National Assembly during the recent discussion of the constitutional reforms, a conflict which, if parliamentary politics in Portugal were more than a caricature, would have brought about the fall of the government.

The irrefutable truth of life in Portugal today is this: while Portugal protects and accentuates from day to day the miserable privilege of being the most backward country in Europe, the Portuguese government is deliberately waging three colonial wars of genocide in Africa, and persists in keeping the Portuguese people in suffering and ignorance, cut off from Europe and the rest of the world, outside all the advances in science and technology that are today within the grasp of most other peoples. As always, the Portuguese remain deprived of basic human rights.

The truth, of which the Portuguese masses are becoming increasingly aware, is that galloping inflation added to a decline in population due to emigration and the war, the increase in the cost of living and public and international debts, the lack of manpower as well as the stagnation of the Portuguese economy, are all the direct result of the absurd colonial policies of the ruling classes of Portugal, whom Marcello Caetano is accustomed to obeying.

Marcello Caetano has confirmed by his own deeds that he is a prisoner of the weighty heritage of Salazar — which is fiercely defended by the 'ultras' of the regime — and therefore he has plenty of reason to go from bewilderment to despair. All the more because the resistance of the African people, and of the Portuguese themselves, to the colonial wars is becoming more vigorous and effective every day.

One can then very clearly understand the attitude the Portuguese head of government is now adopting — that of mere victim — as was shown in his speech on 23 July this year, to explain the incidents which took place in the National Assembly. After expressing regrets that 'unfortunately' he was not in the position of people who are able 'to appeal further to liberty, in the name of immortal principles', he affirmed 'on my shoulders rest the responsibilities of national defence, with military operations in three overseas provinces and a sensitive home front. Not a day goes by on the international scene without a new blow from our adversaries, which forces us to pay constant attention and make a continual effort in the diplomatic struggle and enlighten the jaundiced opinions of foreign countries'.

With this assertion, the head of the Portuguese government publicly acknowledges, for the first time, the existence of colonial wars — which he calls 'military operations' — though it is no less true that he still pretends to enlighten 'the jaundiced opinions of foreign countries', that is to say that he stubbornly continues to disregard international law.

In the same speech, after recognising that 'internally (i.e. in Portugal) the enemy is receiving support . . . and is looking each day for opportunities to infiltrate schools, the armed forces and corporate organisations', he goes on to say, 'And while we need to face all of this, we must give priority to the real needs of the people, from the struggle against inflation, which like a cancer devours the economy of all countries, destroying the stability of prices and making wage claims easy, to the problems of economic development of a nation which cannot

and must not stagnate nor let itself be bled by the exodus of young people any more than by the unreasonable demands of a population desiring better educational opportunities and welfare. For all this takes money, and God knows, the worries we have to find it!

With this Job-like lamentation, passed without comment, Marcello Caetano pretends to justify the fact that he is not going as fast as his 'young friends' would like. But if it is true that (as he recalled in his speech, *à propos* of the French revolution) when a Jacobin was made a minister, he did not necessarily become a Jacobin minister, the politics and the arguments of Marcello Caetano prove conclusively that, when a Salazarist is made prime minister, he does become a Salazarist prime minister.

In effect, despite his pretences of originality and liberalisation, it is precisely the deeply Salazarist character of the politics of Marcello Caetano – stubbornly continuing with fascism in Portugal and colonialism in Africa – that explains the minimal results, or indeed the complete lack of them, after three years of government. He gave the balance sheet on 27 September last. In his speech, where he called on 'Portuguese worthy of that name' to unite around the 'leaders chosen by them' (*sic*) he asserted: 'We are seeking courageously to face the problems of our nation. We have successfully maintained the defence of our overseas provinces against the subversion increasingly fostered by that incredible organisation called the United Nations' (*sic*) 'and if we are not discouraged in the struggle overseas, neither have we given quarter to those who wish to bring terrorism to the metropole.' The same terms, the same stubbornness.

But Marcello Caetano is not unaware that to face problems is not to solve them. That is why, after having flashed before the impoverished Portuguese people, the image of 'the patrons of development in wealthy Europe', he recalls, so as not to allow daydreams, that in Portugal, 'a dangerous atmosphere of facile demands is being created absolutely incompatible with the realities of possibilities of the country'. And then the usual lamentation:

'I am failing in my duty to tell the truth to the Portuguese if I do not remind them that we are living in very critical times, times when the acuteness of national problems is also aggravated by disturbing conditions in international economics and politics. No-one should think that we live amidst an abundance of human and material resources.' Obviously, this would certainly not refer to the people of Portugal who would not make such an estimation; people who live in misery, and watch their children facing the dilemma of secret emigration or an inglorious death in the colonies.

These quotations, perhaps too long, are nevertheless presented to show in the Portuguese ruler's own words, that it is true that the myths, tactics, lies, arguments and objectives of the fascist colonial regime have not changed in the slightest with the disappearance of Salazar; the social, economic and political degradation of Portuguese society as a result of the colonial wars is a fact that even the lamentations of Marcello Caetano cannot manage to disguise. To be aware of this fact is of primary importance in the outline of the perspective of our struggle.

Much more realistic than Marcello Caetano is the *Confidential Report of the Portuguese General Staff* presented in 1970 under the title '*Report of the Psychological Section, No. 15*'. In this document, which analyses in detail the

action of the liberation movements and Portuguese groups against the colonial war, as well as the methods, actions and results of psycho-social warfare, the authors revealed that: 'The proliferation of anti-government organisations and the agitation that they claim is widespread lead to the creation of a climate of instability which, by affecting the activities of students, affects the country, which seems troubled and does not know what to do to lead its children back to the right path.'

Having referred at some length to the increasingly difficult situation among colonial troops, exacerbated by desertions and demands, the aforementioned report concludes:

'The enemy (i.e. the liberation movements and the forces against the colonial war)\* has perfected and increased its efforts on all fronts, internally as well as externally.

'In the metropole generally, the population continues to show little interest in the war overseas and ignores the efforts being made by the armed forces. The student masses remain highly vulnerable to pacifist propaganda.

'The working masses, ignoring great national problems, let themselves be easily led by the propaganda oriented towards demanding better wages and living conditions. The most advanced groups continue to be hotbeds of subversion and the groups which are springing up have proved highly effective.

'Overseas, in a general way, the native populations continue to tend towards subversion, especially when it proves effective, or when geographic conditions make actions by our troops difficult or impossible. The indigenous population on the periphery of the largest urban centres, generally detribalised, continue to show themselves as very susceptible to enemy propaganda. The European population continues to demonstrate overt support for the war, but only co-operates against subversion when its material interests are directly in danger.

'The psychological situation is precarious, in the metropole as well as overseas.'

Facing such a situation, which gets worse daily, one could ask why the Portuguese Government, which is aware of the difficulties it faces and still has to face, stubbornly persists in these absurd, criminal and wilful policies of colonial war and domination of the African population. It is not difficult to see that the principal reasons for the persistence of Portuguese colonial policy rest on the following facts:

The chronic and characteristic underdevelopment of Portugal which does not have a valid economic infrastructure, and shows itself incapable of imagining a process of decolonisation in which the interests of the Portuguese ruling-classes would be safeguarded, within a neo-colonialist situation, from effective competition with other capitalist powers;

The inhibiting effects of almost half a century of fascist rule on a society which, throughout its history, has never truly (on any significant scale) known human rights, freedom, and democratic practices;

The imperialist mentality of the Portuguese ruling-class and the ignorance, myths, beliefs, prejudices, and narrow nationalism that characterise the culture of large sections of the Portuguese population, subjected down the centuries to the doctrine of European Superiority and African Inferiority, as well as to the myth of 'the civilising mission' of the Portuguese, to Africans supposed to be 'savages.'

Despite the vain attempts of Portuguese colonialists to foster the myth of 'the creation of multi-racial societies,' such a doctrine, to which has been added lately the bogey of 'communist subversion', ends in the crystallisation of a Primitive Racism, often lacking any evident economic motivation.

The racist character of Portuguese domination is shown by the scorn of African cultural values just as much as by the most abject crimes committed by the administration and by the settlers during the 'Golden Age' of colonialism. Today the racist character of Portuguese colonialism manifests itself in the acts of cruelty which are typical of Portuguese troops. However there is a tendency at present, in the face of African resistance, to show paternalism and false solicitude in 'achieving the social promotion of the African within the framework of the Portuguese nation.'

Portuguese racism, which is one of the subjective causes for these colonial wars, reaches a peak in the upper echelons of the ruling class. Thus, General Kaulza de Arriaga, (one of the most outstanding personalities of Portuguese colonial rule, C.-in-C. of colonial troops in Mozambique, and candidate for the presidency), in approaching the Portuguese strategic problem – Vol. 12 *Lessons of Strategy in the Course of High Command* 1966/7 – said: 'Subversion is a war above all of intelligence. One needs to have superior intelligence to carry on subversion; not everyone is capable of doing it. Now Blacks are not highly intelligent, on the contrary, of all the peoples in the world they are the least intelligent.' (*sic*).

In these same 'lessons' the author, who reckons that 'the export of African slaves to Brazil was a good thing', and that 'the tribal condition of the Blacks is favourable to Portuguese strategy', reveals in all its cruelty the principal objective of Portuguese colonialism, that is, To maintain White domination, over Black Peoples.

After remarking that the danger lies in the rise of 'developed Africans', Kaulza de Arriaga affirms that 'we will be able to maintain the same white domination, which is a national objective, only if the white population carries it out, itself, at a pace which will accompany and overtake, however slowly, the production of developed Blacks (*sic*). Because if the opposite happens – if the white population should be overtaken by the production of developed Blacks – two things will fatally arise: either we shall have to set up Apartheid, which would be terrible and which we couldn't maintain, or we shall have black governments with all the consequences that this would entail. (Breaking up of overseas provinces etc.)'

The master racist goes on to explain further tactics for avoiding such a situation: 'The white population does not aim at balancing the demographic black potential; they aim at balancing the black assimilados . . . because, thank God, we cannot possibly assimilate all blacks, but because it's possible, in fact almost certain, that we can place whites there (in Africa) in such quantities that will balance out the blacks who become developed (assimilated).'

On this basis, after underlining that 'We will not be too efficient in producing developed blacks; we must promote them, yes, but not too much,' the General, who is a candidate for the Presidency, reveals the guideline of Portuguese strategy in Africa: 'Firstly, growth of the white population; secondly, limitation of the black population.' Faced with the difficulties of the problem and





believing the myth of African fertility, he suggests, albeit in a negative fashion, a method for scientific control of the population: 'Obviously it is an incredibly difficult problem because we can't give a contraceptive pill to every black family . . . . The way in which we can do it is to discourage the growth of the black population.'

One of the principal objectives of the Portuguese colonial wars in Africa therefore becomes more evident: since it is at present impossible to limit the birth-rate in order to ensure white supremacy, recourse is taken to physical liquidation of the populations, through more intensive use every day of aerial bombardment, napalm, and other methods of mass destruction of Africans by the deliberate application of genocide. This objective – the achievement of which is being frustrated by the effective armed resistance of the people of the Portuguese colonies, supported by African and international solidarity – clearly exposes the criminal nature of the support, whether moral, material or political, that Portugal receives from her allies through NATO, or in bilateral agreements. Today, it is no longer a secret to anybody that the Portuguese government cannot in any way sustain colonial wars in Africa, and continue to repress the legitimate aspirations of the Portuguese people for peace and progress without the aid of her racist allies in the West.

We are fully aware of the situation in which the enemy of our people finds himself, and of the internal and external factors and circumstances which make possible and condition her criminal attitude. Thus we must constantly analyse the position of our struggle and the perspectives for its evolution.

## SECTION II

The politico-military activity of the Portuguese colonialists in our country continues to have, as its fundamental political objectives, the following:

To defend and consolidate the positions they still occupy in urban centres and other zones not yet liberated.

To immobilise the populations in liberated areas.

To continue violently to destroy the material and human resources which sustain the victorious development of our struggle.

To contain the war by war – encouraging Africans to fight against Africans.

To maintain the presence of colonial troops in the principal strategic positions at any cost, in the hope that in the long run our political and military organisation will enter a crisis and finally disintegrate.

To deprive our people of the brotherly solidarity and logistic support of neighbouring countries, using open aggression or armed provocation against these countries.

In order to try and practice these objectives the enemy continues to use the politics of the stick and carrot by making a number of social concessions to the population it still controls, and by ferociously repressing all those who, individually or collectively, are suspected of nationalism or of actively supporting our party. But the enemy, acting in the belief that the African people are the 'least intelligent in the world', have not got the results they had bargained for, and their despair at such a setback becomes more apparent every day.

In the urban centres and the other areas still occupied (a few coastal zones,

■ *Photo: PAIGC soldiers repairing a captured bazooka, Guinea/Bissau (Basil Davidson)*

the islands off Guiné, and the Cape Verde archipelago) the enemy's position is less and less secure. This is the result partly of the blows – growing stronger every day – struck by our armed forces, and partly of the development of an underground network by our party in the towns and on the islands.

### Guiné

In Guiné the enemy continues its policy of lies, demagogic concessions, promises of promotion for Africans, even of a 'social revolution' (*sic*), which, if it was practised, would not only realise our party's social and economic programme, but would also give our people a much higher standard of living than the Portuguese. To complete this farce the chief Portuguese colonialist – the sinister General Spínola – now promises to 'lead the people to self-determination under the Portuguese flag'. A fervent follower of the ideas of General Kaulza de Arriaga, who considers the black as a being without intelligence, the military governor of Guiné wants to bring to life the story of the shrewd man who promised the king that he could teach a donkey to read. Like the man in the story he is no doubt convinced that, given time, either the donkey will die, or the king, or even himself.

Having just about arrived at the end of his four-year term of office – meanwhile our struggle, which he swore to destroy, has developed, intensified, and been completely consolidated on all fronts – General Spínola is showing signs of a desperation sharpened by the growing support that the populations of urban centres are extending to our party.

Then, too, after our attacks on Bissau and Bafata, and faced with the widely favourable reactions displayed by the inhabitants of these towns, the military governor has abandoned his mask of paternalism and reformism to reveal himself, as he really is, in a threatening statement made on Radio Bissau on 25 July (1971).

It is worth citing some passages from this declaration which marks, like our attacks on Bissau and Bafata, the opening of a new stage in our conflict with the Portuguese government. He said: 'Given all the circumstances of life in the Province, it should surprise no-one that sometimes nonsensical rumours are spread; this is a constant in any surroundings and at any time, and we do not claim to be exempt . . . . However, the scale and the nature of recent rumours have unfortunately made their mark among the most easily alarmed elements of the population. This has provoked an unjustified climate of apprehension in the capital of the Province. It is essential to insist on an unequivocal position which shows the situation in its proper perspective, so that nobody can undermine those whose judgment might be impaired by fear.'

Having recalled that 'adequate measures have been taken to ensure peace and security at all times', he threatens an even fiercer repression: 'It is important also that there should be no illusions about the firmness with which the government will act to guarantee the peace, order and security of its citizens. Any attempt against individual or collective security will therefore be considered an act of treason against the people of Guinea. The offenders will be relentlessly punished, in the name of respect for the principles of liberty and equality that we are defending and to which all good Guineans aspire. And any lapses in civil discipline that could disturb the normal rhythm of life in the capital and the Province

will be taken as aiding and abetting, and as an act of treason against the people. As such, they will be punished without the least mercy and with all the severity which the enemy deserves, as will all those persons who support the enemy's interests which have nothing in common with Portuguese Guinea.

'It is right that nobody should doubt the fact that the normal rhythm of life in the town will be preserved at all costs, and in all circumstances. The necessary operations will be put in hand, and their effectiveness will only be doubted by those who do not yet know the firmness and determination of the Governor of the Province.'

If it can be agreed that this declaration is confirmation of the fact that the inhabitants of the urban centres, particularly Bissau, are giving their support to the struggle (as was noted in the above-mentioned secret report of the Portuguese General Staff), then there can be no doubt at all that it is also a confession of the political failure of the so-called 'better Guinea' policy, just as all other attempts by the colonialists to consolidate their position have failed.

In the face of the patriotic resistance of the people of the liberated areas, who each day become more aware of the realities and objectives of the struggle, and better integrated into the Party organisation, the Portuguese colonialists have this year intensified their bombing actions and their acts of terrorism. This has been made possible by virtue of the fact that they have obtained new aeroplanes and helicopters from their allies; but nevertheless they have not achieved their aims. Today the organisation of the population for self-defence is better, and is more effective than ever in countering the bombing and in repulsing terrorist attacks and attempts to burn our crops in order to dominate us through hunger. What they have succeeded in destroying during the first few months of 1971 is not sufficient to affect the victorious progress of our struggle. On the other hand, and in the absence of an effective anti-aircraft defence, the civil defence measures generally adopted by the people have contributed to a significant decrease in the number of victims claimed by the barbarous actions of the Portuguese air force.

The attempt to maintain the war by war, bringing Africans, mostly recruited by force, to fight against Africans, is a pressing need for the colonialists, who are faced with the increase of disputes and conflicts within the colonial army. But this policy will fail — and more than ever after Portugal's shameful defeat in its imperialist aggression against the Republic of Guinea. As much in Conakry as at Koundara and at Gaoual the Portuguese, in conjunction with European soldiers and mercenaries originating from the Republic of Guinea, used a number of their so-called 'African units', of whom the vast majority did not return to Bissau because they had been killed or captured. This fact, which sparked off a protest by the families of the victims in Bissau and other urban centres, is a tragic lesson for those Africans who still allow themselves to be enrolled in the Portuguese colonial Army. At the same time, the liquidation this year of some of their leaders, such as 'captains' João Bacar Djalo and Guela Balde, and 'lieutenant' Loro Bamba, has upset the colonialists' sinister plans. They thus have to face increasing difficulties even in the recruitment of tramps and convicts, as well as in the growing desertion rate within their so-called 'African companies'.

As for the enemy positions, we have attacked them all during the first months of this year, including the capital, Bissau. The colonial troops know that today they are not safe in any part of our country. The civilians in urban centres,

especially the Portuguese, live now in a permanent state of alert and can hardly disguise their fear. Most officers are sending their families home to Portugal. The enemy has not only seen the security of its troops diminish everywhere, but has had to recognise that our Party is becoming stronger every day, and that our armed forces are more powerful than ever. Considering what we have and what the enemy has, in terms of material and human resources at our disposal, this fact represents a major defeat for the Portuguese colonialists.

In desperation, the enemy has increased its armed provocation and criminal acts against the countries that border ours, in spite of condemnation by the United Nations and international opinion. It has committed numerous acts of aggression against the people of Casamance (Senegal) and against the frontier zones of the Republic of Guinea. Hoping to free themselves from the nightmare that is our struggle, the Portuguese colonialists, with the support of their allies, are preparing a new act of imperialist aggression against the latter country. Like the last one, its aim is to overthrow the regime of President Sekou Touré and replace it with a government favourable to Portuguese domination of our country.

Even with this plan the Portuguese are condemned to defeat: our relations with the neighbouring governments and peoples improve every day and no aggression against the Republic of Guinea would be able to stop the forward march of our struggle. Any future aggression, whatever form it took, would only serve to tighten still further the bonds that unite our people to the people of the Republic of Guinea, and to reinforce both African and international solidarity with our struggle.

The modifications introduced into the structures and the functioning of the leading organs of the Party by the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau in April 1970, have enabled us greatly to improve the work of militants and of those responsible for various fields of our activity. The political work both of the local commissars and Brigades of Political Action (BAP) has become more effective both in the organising and training of local populations in the liberated zones, and in the carrying out of new directives decided by the higher leadership of the Party. In spite of certain difficulties which have arisen in getting the National Committee of the Liberated Zones (CNRL) off the ground, regional committees (CR), area committees (CZ), and village committees (CT) have all been working normally and with encouraging results.

As a result of work undertaken at the end of last year, there have been several meetings between the secretary-general of the Party and delegates from local committees (approximately 200 delegates, of whom a third were women). These meetings, which were really seminars, have been received with much enthusiasm by village committees and local populations, and have brought immediate rewards in the militant spirit and practical action at grassroots level. Here is an initiative which must continue to develop with the utmost attention.

The results of the scholastic year have also been encouraging, both in schools in liberated zones (in spite of terrorist action by the enemy), and in the 'Amizade' Institute. Around one hundred boys and girls were selected this year to go and continue their studies in friendly countries, and they have already left for this purpose.

In the field of health, where there is still a certain amount of confusion and

inefficiency in the work of intermediary cadres, particularly where nursing is concerned, a clear improvement has been made both in medical supplies, and in help for the people generally. The vaccination campaigns which we have been carrying out, particularly against cholera, have enabled us to avert some serious problems. However, in spite of the return to the country of several doctors trained during the course of the struggle, we still have difficulties in that area, if only because a large number of the foreign doctors who had come to help us have themselves had their health affected, and have been obliged to interrupt their work.

In spite of the lack of rain during the agricultural year 1970/1, production has, in general, sufficed both for the needs of the people and for the basic needs of our fighters. The return to the country of several technical cadres in the field of agriculture (agronomists, technicians, and other specialists) who have been trained abroad, has permitted us substantially to improve our help to the peasants, and above all to carry out limited projects and experimental schemes which could serve as a base for the development of agriculture, the principal element in our economy.

The people's shops have been much improved in the range of goods they offer, particularly with cloth, thanks to international support.

### **Cape Verde Islands**

Aware of the progress the PAIGC has made in the last few years, reflected in the strengthening of our clandestine organisation and in the growing nationalist feelings of the population, the Portuguese colonialists have increased their repression and vigilance in all the islands. Fourteen Africans were arrested recently and charged with belonging to PAIGC and attempting to hi-jack a coastal merchant ship to Dakar. However, the pressure of public opinion forced the Portuguese colonialists, during a trial at S. Vincente, to acquit four other Africans who were part of a group imprisoned some time before.

As a result of the criminal Portuguese policy of abandoning the people of the Cape Verde Islands to natural disasters, the people are once again suffering famine after three years of drought. The Portuguese have tried to use this circumstance to destroy the basis for development of our struggle in the islands, and have resorted to the mass transportation of workers to São Tomé and Portugal, where they have already sent around 10,000 Cape Verdians.

The denunciation of this famine situation by our Party in April this year has driven the colonialists, who refuse to accept offers of humanitarian aid springing from international solidarity, to take some measures to 'combat the crisis'. But these measures have not lured the people away from us; aware of the need to liberate themselves from colonial domination in order to get rid of poverty and famine, they therefore give growing support to the action of our Party. The reality of the growth of Party activity in the Islands and the support that it receives there is recognised even by the enemy himself. For example, in the above-mentioned secret report of the Portuguese General Staff, the enemy affirms: 'During this period two subversive appeals were issued addressed to the Cape Verdian soldiers, officers and sergeants. On the last night of the year pamphlets were distributed in three islands; during May, parcels containing PAIGC leaflets destined for the islands were intercepted in Lisbon.' In reality, on the last night of the year pamphlets were distributed simul-

taneously in all the populated islands.

During the first months of this year, conflicts between sections of the population and the colonial troops grew significantly in the principal islands. The colonial administration, both civil and military, is becoming more isolated every day. A gulf is progressively opening between the colonial class and the mass of the people, between the servants of colonialism and the patriots.

At the meeting of the Superior Council of the Struggle (CSL) last August, when the principal problems of our life and struggle were studied at a very profound level, important decisions were taken towards strengthening and improving our political work; for the consolidation of the structures of our developing State; and for the intensification and growth of our armed action. Among these decisions, it is important to highlight that of the creation of the first Popular National Assembly of Guiné, which will be elected with the shortest possible delay and give to our people yet another organ essential to the people's sovereignty, opening new perspectives for our political action both in our country and abroad. We should also highlight the decisions relating to the strengthening of the armed struggle, the development of the struggle in the Cape Verde Islands, and, on the humanitarian level, the creation of the Red Cross of Guiné and Cape Verde.

In addition to the programmes we already broadcast on the 'Voice of the Revolution' (Republic of Guinea, four times a week) we have recently been granted the use of the network of Radio Senegal (three times a week) and Radio Mauretania (once a week). This has enabled us to expand enormously the opportunities of conveying information to our own people and to Africa.

### **Relations with Africa**

Our relations with independent African countries were widened and consolidated during the first months of 1971. The Republic of Senegal is now showing more and more interest in giving us as much help as possible; but apart from our relations with neighbouring states, other countries like Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia and Libya have expressed a desire to help us by giving us bilateral aid as some other states are already doing.

The OAU Conference of Heads of State held last June in Addis Ababa was yet another important victory for the liberation movement in Africa, in particular for our Party. Once again we were unanimously elected as spokesmen at the conference for all the liberation movements. The decision to increase aid to the freedom fighters as well as the creation of a Special Commission of the OAU for West Africa, the assistant director of which is a member of the leadership of our Party, gives us the hope of a considerable improvement in African solidarity with regard to our struggle. The OAU Liberation Committee continues at the same time to make unsparing efforts to get us all possible aid. In carrying out the decisions of the Extraordinary Conference at Lagos (December 1970), the Committee has given our Party special financial aid which has been of enormous help.

We must emphasise that, in the course of conversations that we have had with various African Heads of State at Addis-Ababa, Conakry, or in their respective countries, and with the Secretary General of the OAU and the members of the Secretariat of the Liberation Committee, we have always found the closest

interest in our struggle and an enthusiastic wish to help our Party. That is a great encouragement for our people and for all the militants and fighters in our organisation.

### **On the International Front**

Even the enemy himself admits that he feels himself more and more accused, condemned, and morally isolated in spite of political and material support from his allies in NATO and others. We have made considerable progress on the international front during the first months of this year.

Our relations of solidarity with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries are increasingly useful to our struggle. They are translated concretely into much appreciated aid both of basic essentials, and of other material, some of which we have already received this year. In the Western countries the *support committees* have intensified their activity in the fields both of disseminating information and of raising funds on our behalf. Sweden has decided to double the aid which she gave us last year; Norway and the other Scandinavian countries are also ready to help us. It is important here to make special reference to the courageous attitude taken by the Norwegian Foreign Minister during the last meeting of the Council of NATO in Lisbon, when he denounced the policies and the colonial wars of the Portuguese as being against the interests of humanity and incompatible with the principles defined in the charter of the organisation.

In Portugal, the people are showing themselves to be more and more aware of the fact that colonial war is a crime against their own interests. Increasingly frequent demonstrations against colonial policies, and the actions taken by the courageous Portuguese patriots of the ARA, constitute victories in our common struggle against colonial war, as well as a guarantee of the friendship and solidarity which our people hope to preserve, develop, and consolidate with the Portuguese people.

### **From the Military Point of View**

The action of the Portuguese colonialists is still determined by a truth which the colonial authorities themselves have often publicly admitted: *that they cannot win the war that they are waging against the African people*. This failure is the result not only of the growing strength of our armed forces, and our victories in battle, but above all because of the continued growth of political consciousness among our people. Aware of this fact, the imperialists are trying every means within their power to perpetrate the most barbarous crimes possible against our people, killing our cattle and burning our crops: in short, intensifying their criminal and terrorist activities, and thus giving the lie to their claim to be improving the socio-economic and political life of the African people.

Thus the actions of the enemy during the first months of this year were characterised by continual aerial bombardment, including the use of napalm, and attacks by troops flown in by helicopter to destroy villages, burn crops and kill livestock. Having at their disposal the latest and best planes and helicopters, supplied by their allies, the colonialists have reinforced their bomb attacks and increased their terrorist activities. However, faced with the courageous resistance of both soldiers and local people, they rarely achieve their objectives. The areas most affected by these criminal acts are precisely those areas which are most

densely populated, or where the Party is strongest: Cubisseco, Cubicaré, the Balana border (in the south), Oio and Saara (in the north).

Dozens of villages have been destroyed and large amounts of rice burned in the Unal, Tombali and Como areas, and about 200 head of cattle have been killed. Fortunately, the loss of human life falls far short of the enemy's intentions, despite the fact that they deliberately attack hospitals and schools, and that their victims are mainly children and the old.

### **The Actions of our Armed Forces**

In the first half of this year — at the height of the dry season — our actions were more extensive and vigorous than ever before. This fact has been recognised by the Portuguese colonialists themselves, who, in order to gloss over the impression given by their war communiqués — though these are always distorted — suggest that the development and intensification of our struggle is due to the presence of foreign experts, particularly Cubans, within our army. This lie, like so many others, only convinces those who wish to believe it, and succeeds only in underlining the abilities and high level of initiative of our fighters, who spare no effort or sacrifice in carrying out the instructions of the War Council of our Party.

Our national armed forces have been regrouped in different army corps, and freed in part from the task of defending the liberated areas thanks to the formation and reinforcement of Local Armed Forces. Thus they have been able to increase and develop their activities on all fronts, at the same time making more efficient use of the war-matériel at our disposal. This reorganisation, which took place at the beginning of this year, our increased experience and use of certain kinds of material, have played an important part in the successes which our brave fighters, following the plans drawn up by our higher command, have obtained.

The renewed vigour of our armed forces reached its highest level during the *April offensive*. Indeed, during that month, by increasing the intensity and number of actions on all fronts, and by redoubling our efforts, we have completely disoriented the enemy, who have had to concede the defeat of their plans. We carried out 86 attacks on Portuguese positions (an average of three per day); and we set eight crushing ambushes, putting out of action more than 250 soldiers and officers of the colonial army, including 158 known dead. Among our operations, the following deserve special mention: the successful campaign of several army corps on the Kinara front from April to June, where all enemy positions were attacked repeatedly, with heavy enemy loss of men and equipment; the operations on the Catio front, where the town of that name was twice assaulted by our soldiers, causing considerable damage; the actions on the Eastern front, where the town of Gabu was under attack three times by our forces, who also set ambushes which proved among the costliest the enemy has suffered. In one of these ambushes the commanding officer of the garrison of Pitche was killed, while ten lorries, an armoured car and several artillery pieces were destroyed. Finally, there have been equally intensive and continuous actions against Portuguese positions along the frontier with Senegal.

But the first half of 1971 will be particularly remembered in the history of our struggle as the period when, for the first time, we were able to attack all the urban centres still occupied by the enemy, including Bissau, the capital, and



Bafata, the second largest city. As we said in our communique published after we received reports of these operations, the attacks on colonialist positions in Bissau and Bafata mark a new stage in the political and military development of our struggle. They are also a clear refutation, if any were needed, of the Portuguese colonialists' lying statements that we act from bases in neighbouring countries, lies which form a pretext they use for their criminal aggressions against those countries.

It is true that the attack against Bissau was mainly intended as a warning to the population of the capital, and that in order to carry it out we had to attack seven enemy garrisons in logistic support. Hence the enemy did not suffer serious losses of men and material; but the psychological and political effect of this action was higher than that of any previous one. At Bafata, where our infantry entered the town and remained for some time without any enemy response, our soldiers destroyed four barracks, the meteorological station, the airport control tower, and several military and administrative buildings. A number of colonialist troops were put out of action, and our soldiers detained 75 suspects, of whom 68 were later released.

During the period in question (January-August 1971) we carried out 508 major actions, including:

- 369 attacks on garrisons in urban centres
- 102 ambushes and other operations on roads
- 15 major mining activities
- 14 actions against river transport
- 8 commando operations in town centres;

Our forces put out of action 735 enemy soldiers and agents, including 480 dead. The number of confirmed wounded (255) is far from the true figure. In fact, news from Bissau and Lisbon indicates that the military hospitals have never had so many wounded as they have this year. So far as equipment is concerned, we have destroyed or damaged 90 military vehicles, sunk 28 boats and speedboats, and shot down two aeroplanes and three helicopters. Our forces, who have driven the enemy out of three entrenched camps and razed several encampments, such as the one at Umaru Cossé, on the Eastern front, took possession of a large quantity of military equipment, including G-3 machine-guns, Mauser guns, American bazookas, and telecommunication equipment.

It is true that we are not reporting here the final victory in our armed liberation struggle. All the same, there is no doubt that the report of this 8-month period is the best in our 8½ years of struggle, and represents a decisive contribution to the victory which our fight for liberation is certain to achieve. This result, and all our earlier victories, explain the growing despair of the Portuguese colonialists, and the ever increasing ferocity and savagery of their colonial war.

In an attempt to justify their criminal obstinacy, and faced with the progress of our struggle, the Portuguese colonialists resort to all kinds of arguments, like those made, for example, by General Kaulza de Arriaga, in the above-mentioned *Lessons of Strategy in the Course of High Command*: 'Naturally, as our troops are dying in Guiné, and as we are spending a lot of money there, I do not take losses into account, and don't consider that such an amount is spent only in defending Guiné. Actually, if that was so, I should find it unacceptable, but a man who dies in Guiné is indirectly defending Angola and Mozambique.'

This confirms, in all its implications, the miserable cynicism and spite of the Portuguese colonialist leaders with regard to human life, — even Portuguese life. But it has the merit of reminding us of the common struggle and the interests which unite our people with their brothers in Angola and Mozambique. It shows clearly the extent of our responsibilities in the united struggle for the total elimination of the Portuguese colonialist presence in Africa.

To take full advantage of the victories achieved by our people, and successes so far this year, and to live up to our responsibilities, we must make 1971 one of the most decisive periods in our long but fruitful struggle. We must daily increase our awareness of the facts, and do not forget that we face a desperate enemy who has no scruples. We must be ready to make even greater sacrifices; to overcome all difficulties; to correct progressively our mistakes and shortcomings; to improve our collective and individual behaviour, and our action in the political and military spheres, as well as in all the other branches of the new life that we are in the process of building.

At the same time as we intensify our armed action, by taking it within the enemy's lines, we must pay close attention to our political work, both within the country and on African and international levels. One of the principal strengths, if not the main one, of the Portuguese colonialists, is the political and material support of their allies. We must learn the lessons of this fact, as much for the present as for the future, and consolidate friendship and solidarity with all anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist forces. We must strengthen our links with Africans and non-Africans who, in helping us in our difficult struggle, have given us a real proof of their friendship.

No manoeuvre or crime on the part of the Portuguese colonialists — no power in the world — can prevent the sure victory of our African people, who are on the road to national liberation and the construction of the peace and progress to which they have a right.

*[Translated from the French by the Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guiné]*

### **Postscript**

The visit of Amilcar Cabral to this country has given a new impetus to the support committee in Britain. This is not only due to the encouragement given to us by Cabral himself, but also because his successful tour provoked a tremendous response from a larger public than we had previously been in contact with.

This increased awareness of the struggle in the Portuguese colonies means that the demands made on the Committee have become greater. We need your support — political and material — more than ever.

Here are some of the ways in which you can help:

Organise meetings about the liberation struggle — we can supply speakers, films, literature and exhibitions.

Subscribe to our bulletin, *Guerrilheiro* (bi-monthly, 40 pence p.a.)

Give money or other material support to the committee and the liberation movements.

Read, think and talk about the struggle, and support it wherever you can.

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