

LSM NEWS

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF LIBERATION SUPPORT MOVEMENT
Volume 2, Issue 4. Winter 1975/76

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ANGOLA: PEOPLE'S POWER!
INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY WITH MPLA.



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Contents

FEATURE: ANGOLA - PEOPLE'S POWER!
ANGOLA: MYTHS AND REALITIES
by Rick Sterling 1

A SALUTE TO CUBAN
INTERNATIONALISM 16

A LETTER FROM THE WAR
from Ole Gjerstad 17

SPECIAL: NAMIBIA
SOLIDARITY WITH SWAPO
A Request From SWAPO President
Sam Nujoma 22

IN AFRICA & NORTH AMERICA
WOMEN OF GUINEA-BISSAU
by Chantal Sarrazin 25

A LUTA CONTINUA
LSM Report From Mozambique, by
Ole Gjerstad 31

US TOUR ON ANGOLA
LSM Speakers Document Struggles
and Victories in Africa 33

LSM ACTIONS 34

SUMMARY OF LSM THEORY
by Don Barnett 36

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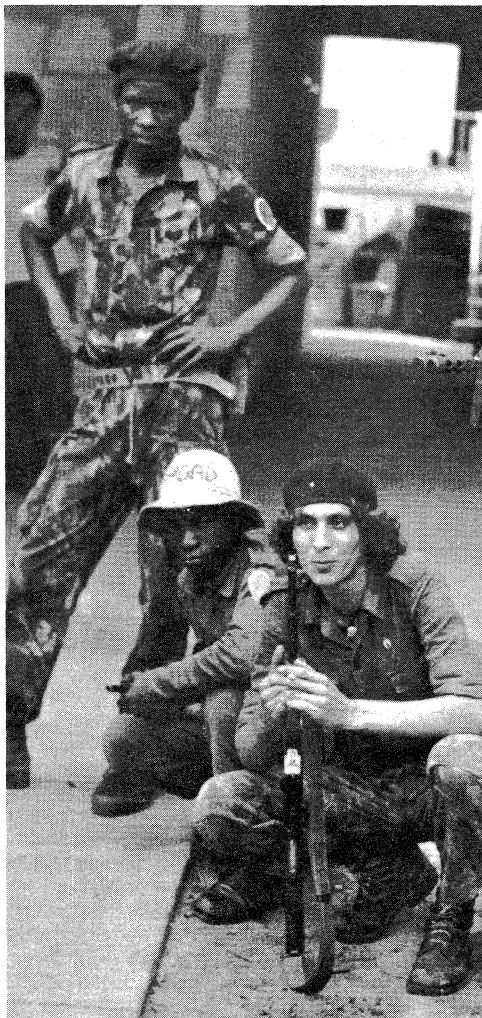
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Feature

ANGOLA: MYTHS & REALITIES

by Rick Sterling



Angolans in Luanda's shantytowns.
LSM PHOTOS

Angola has rapidly moved to the center of world attention. After ignoring the anti-colonialist guerrilla struggle there for thirteen years, the capitalist mass media in North America is suddenly focussing on Angola and southern Africa. Myths, misconceptions and outright lies are being put forward to rationalize the present North American and West European intervention and to prepare the public for increased aggression in the near future. Some of the Left in North America and elsewhere are also confused. In this article we will attempt to clarify some of the most widespread distortions and misconceptions, and explain why we support MPLA as the only progressive, revolutionary force in Angola.

BACKGROUND OF THE STRUGGLE

Is the struggle a "tribal conflict," as the North American media portray's it? What is the political character of MPLA? of FNLA and UNITA? What role did each movement play in the anti-colonialist armed struggle? To answer these questions we need to examine, at least briefly, the background of each movement.



Angolan Woman in Luanda. LSM PHOTOS



MPLA, Agostinho Neto:

"Carrying into effect the aspiration of the broad popular masses, the People's Republic of Angola will, under the guidance of MPLA, gradually advance towards a people's democratic state, with the alliance between workers and peasants as its nucleus."

(Independence Day Speech, November 11, 1975)

MPLA

The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) was created in 1956, formed from a number of clandestine movements. Dr. Agostinho Neto, since 1962 the President of MPLA, was one of the founders - along with Amilcar Cabral, later to become leader of the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde). After several years of preparations, the armed struggle was launched on February 4th, 1961. MPLA militants in Luanda attacked the central prison in order to release political prisoners and capture arms and weapons. The Portuguese responded with savage ferocity, killing some 3,000 in Luanda and forcing thousands more to flee the city. In the aftermath of this tragedy, MPLA abandoned urban armed actions, and began to sink deep roots in the countryside amongst the rural masses. MPLA rapidly gathered support to develop guerrilla warfare over much of Angola and over the next 13½ years established semi-liberated regions where MPLA was in full administrative control, extending armed struggle to 12 of 15 districts as well as maintaining underground activity in the cities.

Despite the tremendous logistical problems presented by the reactionary Mobutu regime's closing off Zaire's 1,250 mile border with Angola and over the MPLA and only sporadic support from Zambia, MPLA gained control of a large portion of the east (both north and south), the north (particularly the Dembos region) and most of Cabinda.

MPLA always emphasized that their enemy was not the Portuguese people, nor was it the white man. In 1970 MPLA President Neto said, "We are not making a racial war. . . . If there still exists in some of our combatants the idea of a war against the white man, it is necessary that it be immediately substituted by the idea of a war against colonialism and against imperialism; a war against oppression, for the liberty and dignity of all men in the world."¹ MPLA always stressed that their struggle was not simply for a token independence. "What use is the struggle if we remain subjected to forced labor, in the companies, in the mines - even if they are all directed by Africans? What use is the sacrifice if we are still obliged to sell the cattle and the cotton in markets which only benefit businessmen, even if these are Africans? What is the use of so much blood, if in the end we remain subjected to a state which, even if ruled by Africans, only serves the rich and powerful?"²

During the anti-colonialist struggle MPLA established schools and medical clinics in the liberated regions. Committees were elected by the people in each village to serve as an effective communication channel between MPLA leaders and the mass peasant and worker base. Village militias and women's organizations were formed. Many foreign journalists and supporters travelled inside Angola with MPLA and witnessed first-hand their new programs and popular support. In 1968, LSM founder, Don Barnett, travelled 200 miles to one of the MPLA base camps in eastern Angola ("Hanoi II"). At that time he wrote, "If the area through which I travelled is representative of the other semi-liberated zones - and I have every reason to believe it is - then MPLA has already achieved that popular base of support which is the *sine qua non* of a successful people's war."³

FNLA, Holden Roberto:

"I am calling on the West to save Africa from Communism...But I can also say, in all sincerity, that I am asking the West to save itself...The United States...is the guardian of world freedom. But it is a historical fact that the U.S. moves slowly in this role. In Vietnam it was always too little, too late. Now in Angola it is happening the same way."

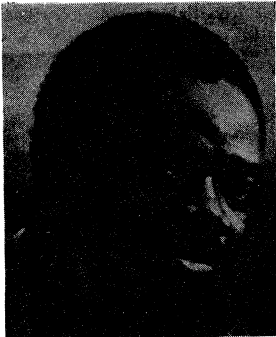
(Newsweek, December 29, 1975)



FNLA

The roots of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) lie in the UPNA (People's Union of Northern Angola), whose aims were the secession from Angola of the old Kingdom of Congo and the installation of a Bakongo ruler. Under the leadership of Barros Necaca and Holden Roberto (founder of FNLA), UPNA petitioned the United Nations in 1955: "The people of the Kingdom of Congo make an urgent appeal that they may be put under the protection of the UN as a mandate of the U.S. It is unnecessary to emphasize the superior role that the U.S. plays on the international scene. If God has given these people Strength, Prosperity and Intelligence it is for the good of mankind and of those who are suppressed." After the 1958 Pan-African Conference in Accra, Ghana, Roberto, under the urging of Nkrumah and Sekou Toure dropped the "N" from UPNA to project an image of nationalism rather than tribalism. Yet the legacy of tribalism persisted in UPA's propaganda and activities. Inspired by UPA in 1961, Bakongo peasants in northern Angola rioted without organization, killing not only many Whites regardless of political views, but also mestizos, black intellectuals and even peasants of other tribes such as Ovimbundus. In 1962, UPA joined with a tiny tribal grouping to form the FNLA, at the same time beginning the long history of attacks on MPLA forces active in the North. The first publicized case occurred in October 1961, with the murder by UPA of a 21-man MPLA detachment led by Tomas Ferreira which was marching south to the aid of comrades. At first this was denied by the UPA office. But after a former chief of staff to Holden Roberto acknowledged it, even Roberto confirmed that "he had in fact given orders to intercept and annihilate MPLA columns that were trying to infiltrate into Angola."⁴ Despite efforts at conciliation by numerous parties, this situation continued throughout the armed struggle. Although sometimes masked in a reactionary tribalism, the primary cause of FNLA antagonism to MPLA has always been political. The "enlightened" liberal JFK, while quietly funneling aid to Portugal, was also aware of the neo-colonial potential of Roberto. Since 1961 Roberto has been on a \$10,000/yr. CIA retainer, and directives from Kennedy led to covert U.S. aid to FNLA.⁵ Because of MPLA's anti-imperialist stance and popular multi-racial support, Roberto could never accept a genuine coalition and saw his aspirations dependent on MPLA's demise.

But over the long years of struggle, it was rather the FNLA which met its demise. Roberto's base was largely some 350,000 Angolan refugees in southern Zaire. Roberto was permitted by his now brother-in-law, Mobutu, to forcibly tax and recruit these Bakongo refugees. With little political understanding, FNLA soldiers fell into inactivity and indiscipline. Revolts against Roberto by FNLA military chiefs were quashed by Zaire troops. What fighting they did was as often against the MPLA as against the Portuguese. Meanwhile, Holden Roberto consolidated himself as a Kinshasa businessman. According to the monthly *Africa*, he is a major shareholder in a Kinshasa transport company and the National Congolese Bank, owns a hotel, printing house and eight landed estates. FNLA's strategy was to maintain a minimum presence in northern Angola (near the Zaire border) and wait for the time to move inside in full force . . . after the Portuguese had left.



UNITA, Jonas Savimbi:

Q: Do you think that the foreign companies exploiting Angolan natural resources should be nationalized?

Savimbi: "Never, I oppose it. Nationalization is a disease, because the foreign companies are manned by experts who know how to develop our petroleum, diamonds and copper."

(African Development, July, 1975)

UNITA

The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) was formed in 1966 by Jonas Savimbi, who had resigned as FNLA Foreign Minister in December 1964. UNITA soon gained notoriety for its fantastic claims. In North America and Europe, UNITA representatives claimed their organization was Marxist-Leninist and "the only movement based inside Angola." In 1968, just two short years after the organization's founding, UNITA was claiming to have operations in one-half of the country and to control 1.5 million people, i.e. over 25% of the total population. This was the same region in which LSM members travelled and attended MPLA's first Eastern Regional Conference of peasant delegates and militants representing thousands of people ... the same area that UNITA was claiming to "control."

MPLA communiques acknowledged some UNITA presence in the south-east, but mainly in the form of attacks on small MPLA detachments. There is also substantial evidence that UNITA collaborated with both the CIA and Portuguese colonialists. In 1970 it was revealed that UNITA members were frequent visitors at the American Embassy in Lusaka, Zambia and their main contact was a Dr. J. S. Cunningham. According to *Who's Who in the CIA*, Dr. Cunningham is a CIA operative who worked in several Latin American countries before going to Zambia.⁶ Captured documents published in 1974 revealed that Savimbi conspired extensively with the Portuguese against MPLA during the armed struggle. A series of correspondence between Savimbi and Portuguese military leaders, written between September 26/72 and November 7/72, evidenced UNITA's main concern and total lack of principles. "We are prepared to furnish guides as soon as we have located an MPLA camp," Savimbi wrote to the Portuguese.⁷ UNITA denied the authenticity of these documents, but a later interview with a former Portuguese officer confirmed UNITA's collaboration with the colonialists, and revealed that Savimbi was even treated medically in a colonialist military hospital.⁸

WHO DEFEATED PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM?

While fighting such treachery, and dealing with the problems posed by unfriendly or unstable neighboring countries, MPLA was still able to strike heavy blows against the Portuguese. Reliable reports consistently confirmed that MPLA was the major fighting guerrilla force inside Angola. The U.N. Committee on Decolonization, which went through Portuguese military communiques for the years 1968-70, found that UNITA was only mentioned once, whereas the name of MPLA occurred again and again.⁹ In 1973, secret Portuguese reports were published, disclosing that, of 2,518 acknowledged actions by guerrillas in Angola in 1970, 59% were ascribed to MPLA, 37% to FNLA (operating from Zaire), and only 4% to UNITA.¹⁰ Another document confirmed that in February 1971, the great majority of clashes and practically all "fire actions" (engagements with Portuguese troops) were with MPLA.¹¹ Portuguese soldiers, who were the ones to really know during the armed struggle, freely acknowledged which of the liberation movements

they had most to fear. A South African journalist described a Portuguese soldier's assessment: "MPLA men are by far the most resilient fighters."¹²

Contrary to the portrayals of the capitalist mass media, it is clear that only one movement consistently confronted and finally defeated Portuguese colonialism in Angola. And only one movement is fighting for genuine independence, in the interests of the mass of Angolan workers and peasants. That movement is MPLA. Unlike FNLA and UNITA, MPLA was always a nationalist movement with a multi-tribal leadership and membership; through the armed struggle it developed broad support throughout the country. Those who pretend that there existed three genuine liberation movements or that the struggle is a "tribal conflict" are simply obscuring the real history behind the present situation in Angola. The essence of the Angola conflict is the struggle between the forces of neo-colonialism seeking to maintain Angola - via tribal-based African elites within the international capitalist system and, on the other hand, the forces of progressive, self-reliant popular democracy.

AFTER THE PORTUGUESE COUP

On January 5th, 1975, MPLA agreed to form a united front with FNLA and UNITA to negotiate with the Portuguese for the independence of Angola.* On January 14th the Alvor Agreement was signed with the Portuguese, establishing a transitional government and plans for elections to be held before independence day, November 11th. The situation has some parallels to the Paris Peace Agreement where the Vietnamese Provisional Revolutionary Government agreed to form a coalition government with the Thieu clique. In both cases, the anti-imperialist front (NLF in Vietnam and MPLA in Angola) was willing to work with the puppet forces - because they knew this would win greater support from the people in the long run, and help expose the reactionary character of the puppets.

This, indeed, is what happened. MPLA representatives in the transitional government initiated and encouraged the organization and mobilization of workers and peasants in the urban shantytowns and villages. People's Commissions were established to tackle illiteracy and health problems and to involve the population in the decisions of the transitional government. Early successes of the movement included the raising of black workers' wages to parity with white workers.¹³ This movement, guided by the MPLA, was called *Poder Popular* - People's Power. Both FNLA and UNITA bitterly opposed it, exposing more and more their true character. At the time, Roberto said, "People's power leads to a people's dictatorship and the population of Angola, which is Christian, actively rejects Communism!"¹⁴

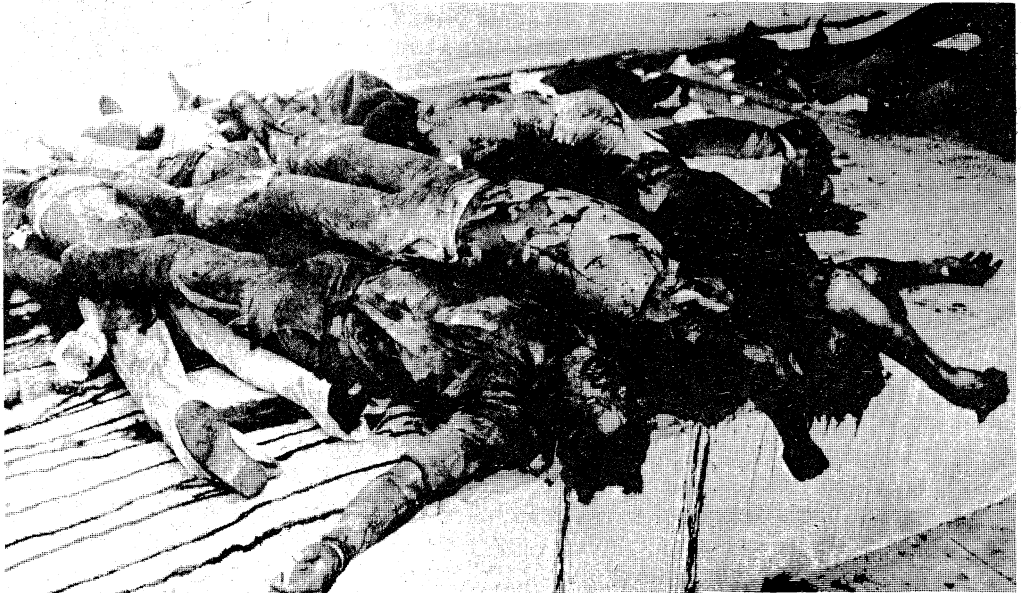
As happened in Vietnam, the puppet forces in Angola soon realized their precarious position. Lacking popular support, they began trying to seize control by force and intimidation. In late March, 51 defenceless youths - MPLA sympathizers - were massacred by FNLA troops.¹⁵ Later in the same week, doctors in Luanda's military hospital gave details of an FNLA roundup and summary execution of nearly 100 people.¹⁶ An assassination attempt was made on the leading MPLA representative in the transitional government.¹⁷ In the north, FNLA was being assisted by Zairean regular troops in trying to crush MPLA supporters. In the south, UNITA was attacking MPLA positions.¹⁸

For many weeks MPLA responded to these attacks only defensively, wishing to avoid increased military conflict. But with the continuation and escalation of these attacks, and increasing pressure from the population, MPLA finally decided that it was necessary to respond to the attacks and stay FNLA's aggressive actions against innocent civilians and MPLA sympathizers.¹⁹

The corruption of FNLA and UNITA representatives in the coalition government was

Contrary to the bourgeois media, it was not the Lisbon coup that led to Portugal granting independence to Angola. Rather, it was the three-front colonial war deploying up to 160,000 Portuguese troops (more than 40,000 in Angola) that drained Portugal and accelerated the demise of the fascist Caetano regime.

increasingly revealed. It was exposed that individuals from both movements had been stealing government revenues. Mateus Neto, an FNLA minister in the government, abruptly defected from Roberto's organization in revulsion at its practices. In a public declaration he acknowledged that "FNLA is a disorganized movement without any support from the population."²⁰ In Luanda, secondary school students and teachers went on strike for two months against the UNITA Education Minister.²¹ Meanwhile, support for MPLA's progressive line consolidated. Workers at the Luanda daily newspaper *Jornal de Angola* seized control of the paper from the pro-FNLA owners and immediately gave it an independent but pro-MPLA political line.²² In the district of Icolo e Bengo, where MPLA President Neto's home village is, peasants set up communes



MPLA sympathizers massacred by FNLA last March in Luanda. AFRIQUE-ASIE

and took over local administration,²³ providing a model for other regions. When MPLA led the take-over of foreign banks in Luanda, over 30,000 people demonstrated their enthusiastic support.

The fighting between MPLA and FNLA continued, with UNITA taking a publicly neutral position but in reality collaborating with FNLA.²⁴ Numerous truces and ceasefire agreements were reached, but they were no sooner signed than broken. Both FNLA and UNITA saw that their only chance lay in a military victory. In late July, FNLA formally declared war on MPLA and withdrew from the transitional government.²⁵ UNITA soon followed suit. The FNLA and UNITA armies began engaging in joint military activities; but with little support from the population and demoralized, conscripted armies, they were still very weak. For some time Zaire had been supplying FNLA with not only weapons, but also regular Zairean troops and officers. By early summer up to 60% of the FNLA army was actually Zairean.²⁶ Roberto and Savimbi's need for more and more imperialist support continued. By early August it was acknowledged that FNLA troops were being led by fascist Portuguese ex-commandos and other white mercenaries.²⁷ Soon afterward, South African troops invaded southern Angola under the pretense of "protecting" the hydroelectric project on the Cunene River.*²⁸ They began providing

logistical and aerial support for UNITA; then they began spearheading UNITA attacks on MPLA forces.

Imperialist governments argue that their involvement is simply a "response" to prior Soviet involvement. The reality is the exact reverse. Not only has the U.S. backed anti-MPLA forces for some 14 years (FNLA, UNITA and Portugal), but it was the covert actions of the Ford administration that "upped the ante" in Angola and fueled superpower contention. In January '75, several months before the Soviet Union gave increased support to MPLA, the U.S. began sending massive shipments of aid to FNLA and UNITA through Zaire.²⁹ As for foreign troops, both Zaire and South Africa had thousands of regular troops in Angola many months before the first Cuban or "Mozambican



South African troops training in Namibia near the Angolan border. PHOTO-TRENDS

volunteers arrived to support MPLA.

It is now clear for all but the politically blind who FNLA and UNITA really represent. Captured Portuguese mercenaries recently revealed that out of 2,500 "FNLA" troops north-east of Luanda, 2,300 were Zairean, 100 were mercenaries and just 100 were Angolans.³⁰ American mercenaries are working with FNLA/UNITA forces both in training and "advisory" capacities,³¹ and Israeli officers are now working with the FNLA General Staff.³² From Europe, imperialist support is coming especially from Britain, France, Belgium and West Germany. American C1-30 transport planes have been taking load after load of military hardware to the FNLA/UNITA forces so that even Savimbi has acknowledged that, "If MPLA has 10 bazookas, I have 20."³³

* South Africa's offensive underscores its sub-imperial role in the region and its direct investments in Namibian and Angolan mining interests. Pretoria's offensive is aimed not only at neutralizing SWAPO (by attacking SWAPO bases on both sides of the Angola-Namibia border) and MPLA, but also at isolating through this strategy FRELIMO and Zimbabwe liberation forces.

Now that MPLA has declared the People's Republic of Angola a free and sovereign state and is in firm control of the middle of the country, imperialist forces are trying to economically strangle the new people's state. A secret economic boycott, as happened in Chile before the fascist coup, is being imposed by the West. The U.S., once again, is leading the way in these maneuvers and has blocked the signing of an agreement on a coffee sale and stopped delivery of two Boeing 737's which had already been paid for at \$37 million apiece.³⁴ Moreover, under heavy pressure from the Ford administration, Gulf Oil held up a \$125 million royalties payment to the Luanda treasury due on 31 December.

The struggle in Angola is not a "civil war" any more than the Vietnamese struggle was. Rather, it is a war of liberation against foreign aggression. FNLA and UNITA have definitively exposed themselves as agents of fascism and neo-colonialism. To call for "coalition" or "national unity" with such traitors is tantamount to calling for unity with the CIA and South African fascists.*

ON CHINA, AND LEFT TAILISM

One source of confusion which the bourgeois media has played up to the maximum is China's support for FNLA. Officially, China has taken the position that it supports all three movements equally, without distinctions, and cites the official OAU position calling for a coalition government of national unity. Up until very recently, however, there is evidence that China was in fact providing concrete support to FNLA. Chinese military instructors were training FNLA troops at the Kinkuzu base in Zaire. Chinese armored trucks destined for FNLA were being unloaded at Negage this fall,³⁵ and recently MPLA militants discovered Chinese-made mortars - manufactured in the spring of 1975 - among the war materials captured from FNLA when they won control of Caxito.³⁶

In November, however, China finally withdrew her military instructors from Zaire and later FNLA statements indicated that there could be a rift. We certainly hope that People's China is reassessing its position on the Angolan struggle, for their past policy has not served the interests of Angola's masses. Recently MPLA President Agostinho Neto said, "China has played an important role in supporting liberation movements in many southern African countries. But China is mistaken in some cases. Maybe because of an incorrect analysis. In Angola we see China supporting the reactionary forces - created, armed, and financed by the Americans. But we don't have a hostile attitude toward China. On the contrary, we are seeking good relations."³⁷ Neto's comment on the Chinese position underscores what appears to be a fundamental mistake in viewing the Angola situation. China appears to have mechanically imposed its anti-Soviet stance onto Angola. While revisionism, both within and without, may be the prime concern for China, by defining Angola simply as a pawn of superpower contention (*Peking Review*, 12 December/75 said the Angolan conflict was, "wholly the making" of the USSR), China fails to comprehend MPLA's position of nonalignment. Like the Vietnamese, Cuban, Palestinian and other national liberation movements, MPLA takes no position on the Sino-Soviet split and has, like its counterparts, PAIGC and FRELIMO, accepted aid on the condition of "no strings attached." In fact, in the past China had supported MPLA (in the early 1960's).

For MPLA, like many underdeveloped nations, the prime enemy is the force of international capital and its local allies. After five centuries of Portuguese domination, Angola has been fully incorporated into the periphery of the international capitalist system and now must break out of this system's exploitative relations and reverse the process of underdevelopment. Regardless of extra-territorial Soviet ambitions, it is the established interests of the U.S., its NATO allies and

* MPLA's position was recently expressed by President Neto: "We don't want to negotiate with UNITA and the FNLA, or with any of the aggressors . . . There can be no agreement with the representatives of imperialism in our country." (*Le Monde*, December 26, 1975)

South Africa that the MPLA socialist project must negate in order to build an independent, self-reliant socialist society.

As Mao Tse-tung has written, "The fundamental cause of the development of a thing is not external but internal; it lies in the contradictoriness within the thing Contradictoriness *within* a thing is the fundamental cause of its development, while its inter-relations and interactions with other things are secondary causes."⁵⁸ In Angola, the prime contradiction is between the Angolan people and their vanguard, MPLA, and the forces of neo-colonialism and global capitalism. President Neto has said, "Liberation is a continuing process, it has no end." Certainly there *are* reformist, revisionist and adventurist elements which also need to be struggled with. But we should not confuse these with the main enemy.

MPLA, Agostinho Neto:

"The People's Republic of Angola sees as a priority and a vital and inalienable task the expulsion from our country of the army made up of South African and Zairese troops, Portuguese fascists, Angolan puppets and mercenaries who represent the combined forces of imperialist aggression against our country."

(Independence Day speech, November 11, 1975)

We have much respect for the People's Republic of China and feel that the ongoing class struggle and Cultural Revolution within China are setting an example for other revolutionaries around the world. However, we do not think that the Chinese position is *the* revolutionary position or that their analysis is always correct. Mao himself has stressed the particularity of contradictions - how contradictions differ according to time and place; how it was correct at one time for the Chinese Communist Party to ally with the Kuomintang, but incorrect at another time. Regarding Angola, we do not see how it is progressive to ally with the forces of extreme reaction against a genuinely progressive liberation movement. We do not think it is weakening social imperialism, and think that in fact China is retarding rather than advancing socialist revolution through its mistaken policy in Angola.

Unfortunately, slavishness to China has prevented some North American left forces from supporting MPLA. Among some individuals and groups this tailism is taken to the extreme of saying, "We don't understand what is going on in Angola, but we accept China's position." If the Chinese are incorrect, as we think they are, then it is the duty of comrades to point this out in a constructively critical manner.

Perhaps the lack of such a critical attitude accounts for the support which UNITA received in North America over the past several years. Verbal support from China for a short period along with boasts of huge liberated zones were accepted uncritically by numerous organizations in North America, thus obscuring and serving UNITA's essential opportunism. UNITA is allied with the South African racists and white supremacists, Savimbi is calling on the West to help him defeat communism, and he doesn't have enough popular support to hold the southern territory without South African assistance.

We believe it is necessary to take a constructively critical attitude toward all

individuals, movements and countries. This is definitely *not* the same as the classical Trotskyite "criticism" - which amounts to arrogant and chauvinistic judgements from "above" the revolution. Nor are we suggesting that "anytime is the right time" for criticisms, or that the positive aspects be obscured by the shortcomings or weaknesses. What we are referring to is an open, critical attitude which understands that there is a negative aspect in all things, and the willingness to question and struggle where it really can advance the struggle.

We think it is the duty of any serious Marxist to look critically at what is happening in the world, and at the statements and activities of comrades as well as the enemy. Otherwise, it is easy to follow a mistaken course. The hallmark of the

MPLA, Agostinho Neto:

"Just because the Soviet Union supplies us with weapons, it doesn't mean we have become a satellite. We've never been one. We've never asked Moscow for advice on how to set up our state. All the major decisions in our country are taken by our movement, our government and our people."

(Le Monde, December 26, 1975)

opportunist is to say what the audience wants to hear - to change principles and policies according to the audience. It is now obvious that one of UNITA's primary characteristics has been opportunism. The same applies to FNLA, for they too have declared their unswerving commitment to "international socialist revolution."* The lesson, we think, is that it is vital for North Americans to develop a comradely but critical view of revolutionary governments, liberation movements and their individual representatives.

From practical experience we know that MPLA, too, has problems and shortcomings. Some of these which directly affected us we have discussed in past issues of *LSM NEWS*. But these weaknesses do not obscure the fact that MPLA is the only progressive movement in Angola today and that we have a duty to actively support them.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ANGOLA

Why are the imperialist forces so intent on maintaining control of Angola? Is it simply to "prevent Soviet influence" in southern Africa? Is MPLA really a "Soviet client," as the bourgeois media tries so hard to stress?

MPLA has received support from the Soviet Union, but it does not logically follow from this that it is a "client of Moscow." Many other liberation movements around the world have received support from the Soviet Union, to mention only a few: NLF of Vietnam, FRELIMO of Mozambique, PFLO of Oman, the Palestine Liberation Organization. Are they also "clients?" On this question MPLA President Neto has said, "I wish to make it clear that we appreciate and recognize the assistance we receive from all our friends, including Russia, but we do not accept any form of foreign political domination."³⁹ "We do not take orders from anyone whatsoever, from any big power in this world. We have

*In 1973 LSM received a letter from FNLA where they avowed such a commitment and asked that we support them rather than MPLA.

always had the pride to determine our political line ourselves, and the ideology which suits our people's interests."⁴⁰ MPLA has always maintained a neutral position on the Sino-Soviet dispute, and in his Independence Day speech on November 11th, President Neto said that the People's Republic of Angola would follow an independent, nonaligned course in its foreign policy.

Nearly all references to MPLA in the bourgeois media are prefaced by the phrase "Soviet backed." Yet MPLA and the People's Republic of Angola has the support of not only the Soviet Union, but of nearly all revolutionary and progressive forces around the world. In Africa, *every* progressive country (e.g. Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Algeria, Somalia, Tanzania, People's Congo, Guinea) has recognized and supports the



People's Republic of Angola. SWAPO, the sole liberation movement in Namibia (which borders Angola on the south), supports MPLA and has repudiated UNITA. Other revolutionary forces supporting MPLA include Vietnam, Cuba, Korea and the Revolutionary Coordinating Council in Latin America (ERP, MIR, ELN, Tupamaros) - to name only a few. By using the term "Soviet-backed" the bourgeois media is trying to distort MPLA's independent socialist character and rouse the opposition of all elements critical of the Soviet Union, both from the right and left. MPLA should correctly be referred to as a progressive and anti-imperialist liberation movement.

The real reasons behind North American and West European involvement in Angola are much more practical than simply "preventing Soviet influence." They are actually Angola's natural wealth and strategic location, both of which are important to corporate and military interests in the West. Last year alone, multinational corporations extracted over \$1 billion in profits from Angola.⁴¹ Angola is the key to the quest for domination of southern Africa, whose mineral wealth is increasingly a vital concern of international capitalist interests. Angola may be potentially the wealthiest nation in Africa. It has vast deposits of copper, iron, diamonds, manganese, titanium, and other strategic minerals, and most of all, oil. After secret offshore finds in November '73, Angola's reserves were dubbed "a new Kuwait." To date, Gulf Oil has pumped over

160,000 barrels per day from offshore Cabinda wells, and foreign oil firms have been prospecting up and down the Angolan coast. Agriculturally, Angola is vitally important. Under a notoriously inefficient Portuguese colonialism (which employed forced labor) Angola was the fourth leading coffee producer in the world and also grew other cash crops such as cotton and maize, and has vast timber resources. A study by a U.S. consulting firm suggests that Angola could become a breadbasket for Africa.

A genuinely independent Angola under MPLA leadership will utilize these resources to serve the Angolan people. "We uphold the principle that our country's wealth must essentially serve the Angolan people. And we do not defend and do not intend to defend the principle that this wealth should be handed over to Angolan capitalists."⁴² A

UNITA, Jonas Savimbi:

"Here I am fighting Communism. Trying to stop the Russians from taking over Angola. And instead you hold me up to ridicule over the Whites! You do this to your own presidents too, don't you? What's the matter, don't you want to live in a democracy?"

(Newsweek, November 24, 1975)

liberated Angola will be a base of support for the liberation movements fighting in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa, and an example for progressive forces in Zambia and revolutionaries in Zaire. It is this which worries the imperialists and their agents in Africa.

We can be certain that imperialist forces will do everything in their power to prevent an MPLA victory. With the Zaire economy in ruins and revolutionary consciousness and guerrilla struggle on the rise, Mobutu is desperate to stop MPLA from leading a united, revolutionary Angola. In South Africa war fever is rampant and the fascist government has built a new military base in Namibia from which they will be able to launch continued and perhaps escalating attacks on Angola.⁴³ In the U.S., the Ford administration has overridden a U.S. Senate veto and continued aid to FNLA-UNITA mercenary forces (including dropping supplies directly to a South African column in the south) that amounts to an informal direct intervention. A CIA-engineered mercenary recruiting campaign has gathered perhaps 2000 or more men (some of whom signed letters of resignation from the U.S. armed forces and "volunteered" for Angola). Some have been trained at the huge military facility at Ft. Benning, Georgia.⁴⁴

At the same time, the FNLA/UNITA puppets are calling for more and increased intervention. In a recent interview Holden Roberto said, "I am calling on the West to save Africa from Communism."⁴⁵ In the areas under FNLA or UNITA occupation, identification cards are part of the "security" of the population, just as they were in the areas occupied by Thieu in Vietnam. UNITA's secretary-general has said, "Concerning our membership cards, each Angolan is obliged to have one We will not demand a membership from foreigners and Portuguese who wish to remain in Angola . . . but all Angolans have to have a card. Each must be able to identify himself, whether he is for God or for the devil."⁴⁶

But MPLA's determination and commitment have been steeled through fourteen years of armed struggle already, and it is certain that sooner or later they will achieve victory. The present period is being called "The Second War of National Liberation," and MPLA has said they are prepared to fight on for another fourteen years if

necessary. They are determined to defend the territorial integrity of Angola - from the Cunene River in the South to the Cabinda enclave in the North. While MPLA forces continue to bear down on the enemy's weakest points, popular resistance and civilian guerrilla warfare is increasing behind the FNLA/UNITA lines. Within the liberated territory of the People's Republic of Angola, the new government is trying to re-organize and stabilize the social and economic situation. Production and distribution cooperatives are being established, wage and income disparities have been drastically reduced, and the dynamic link between the leadership and population is being further strengthened through the expansion and development of mass-based action committees concerned with all major national problems.⁴⁷

The solidarity and commitment of other international revolutionary forces has

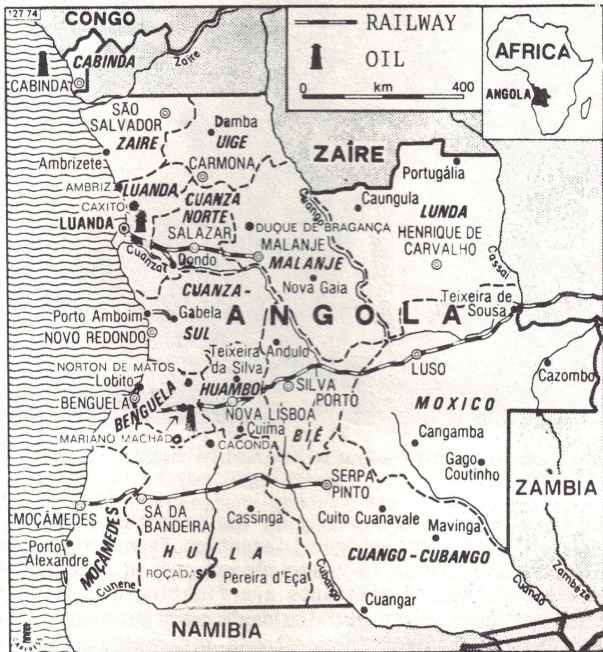


The youth of Angola support MPLA. LSM PHOTOS

also been great. Acknowledging the importance of the Angolan struggle, Samora Machel, President of the Mozambique Liberation Front, has recently said, "The fate of the revolution in Africa is being played out in Angola."⁴⁸ An initial force of 250 experienced FRELIMO militants are fighting alongside MPLA, and workers throughout Mozambique have contributed a day's wage in support of the Angolan People's Republic.⁴⁹ The Cubans, noted for their strong internationalist spirit and commitment around the world, have sent some of their best sons and daughters to fight alongside and otherwise assist the MPLA.

LSM hopes that North American radicals and progressive people will also see the importance of the Angolan struggle and how it is in our own interests to support the Angolan Revolution led by MPLA. A genuinely independent, socialist Angola will qualitatively advance the struggle for the liberation of all southern Africa, and strike a heavy blow to our common enemy, the international ruling class. We urge progressive and socialist North Americans to carry out as much informational and material support for MPLA and the Angolan Revolution as they can. MPLA's progressive policies and practice need to be more widely and fully understood. Supplies and money are needed by the People's Republic of Angola. We should expose and harrass the ruling class and its collaborators and agents. A Luta Continua - The Struggle Continues! Support the MPLA!

MPLA, Agostinho Neto:
 "On putting an end to colonialism and determinedly barring the way to neo-colonialism, the MPLA declares...its firm resolve to radically change the present economic infrastructures and that...the goal of economic reconstruction is the satisfaction of the people's needs."
 (Independence Day speech, November 11, 1975)



AFRIQUE - ASIE

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Feature

A SALUTE TO CUBA

Long Live the Spirit of Proletarian Internationalism.

The peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau - and many other revolutionary peoples around the world - have always found a firm supporter in the Cuban Revolutionary Government and people. Throughout the years of armed struggle in Portugal's former African colonies, many liberation movement guerrillas and technical cadres were trained in Cuba. Today, some of Cuba's best sons and daughters are sacrificing their lives alongside their Angolan comrades, fighting against the combined reactionary forces of Zairean, South African, mercenary and puppet troops, supported and financed by U.S. imperialism.

With characteristic hypocrisy and deceit, Ford and Kissinger have tried to browbeat and bully Cuba into stopping her militant support of MPLA and the Angolan Revolution. Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro responded to these threats on December 22 at the historic first Congress of the Cuban Communist Party: "Who does Ford think he is talking to? This is not the old Cuba ... this is the new Cuba! We do not care if we wait 100 years to establish relations with the U.S. We will continue to support the MPLA of Angola!"

LSM Salutes the Cuban people and the heroic Cuban volunteers serving in Angola.

LONG LIVE PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM!

VICTORY TO MPLA AND THE ANGLAN REVOLUTION!

VENCEREMOS!

"And let us develop a true proletarian internationalism; with international proletarian armies; the flag under which we fight would be the sacred cause of redeeming humanity. To die under the flag of Vietnam, of Venezuela, of Guatemala, of Laos, of Guinea, of Colombia, of Bolivia, of Brazil - to name only a few scenes of today's armed struggle - would be equally glorious and desirable for an American, an Asian, an African, even a European.

"Each spilt drop of blood, in any country under whose flag one has not been born, is an experience passed on to those who survive, to be added later to the liberation struggle of his own country. And each nation liberated is a phase won in the battle for the liberation of one's own country.

"The time has come to settle our discrepancies and place everything at the service of our struggle."

Ernesto Che Guevara

Feature: Angola

A LETTER FROM THE WAR

From Ole Gjerstad



Ole Gjerstad spent two months in the People's Republic of Angola, beginning early November. His most recent letter to LSM comrades, printed below, vividly describes various aspects of Angola's "second war of national liberation."

Lourenco Marques
Mozambique
25 December 1975

Dear all of you, comrades,

...who perhaps wonder whether I'm still alive, whether I'm captured by the South Africans, or what. Not so bad; only caught up in the general "bricabrac" of Luanda & the rest - and by an extreme fatigue which set in after I did the "water test" with the FAPLA commandos. But more about that later.

...The most important thing right now is the war. And this one, like all wars, is hell, draining the people & the resources available. Let's just hope that some of the most serious internal contradictions will be overcome in the process

LSM PHOTOS

& that the process of politicization will get the boost it badly needs. Then the suffering won't have been for nothing.

As you most likely know, the enemy plan was to capture Luanda before 11 November; by FNLA/Zaire/ELP¹ from the North joined by the South Africans/ELP/UNITA/Chipenda ensemble from the South. Then the South Africans would likely have disappeared from the scene & that would have been that, more or less: Angolans defeating other Angolans in "fair" battle. But not so. In the North, they came to within 20 kms., in the South they were stopped around Nova Redondo (on the coast) & Quibala (on the road from Nova Lisboa). In the North, the front started moving northwards again; first slowly & now rapidly. When I left, FAPLA² was past Ambriz (on the coast) and supposedly only 40 kms. from Carmona. In the South it's pretty much a standstill, but I think with a great build-up of men & equipment on both sides - heavy & sophisticated stuff: tanks, artillery, rockets. The front goes somewhat like this: from north of Nova Redondo, along the Queve River to Santa Comba, then to somewhere south of Mussende (near Malange), south-east to Kirima & right to Luso, the capital of Moxico District. To my knowledge Mussende, Kirima (Quixima) & Luso are all in the hands of FAPLA, though there have been heavy battles near the latter. All along this line, it seems to be the South Africans & partly ELP which carry the load at the front with their messengers, Holden, Savimbi & Chipenda, doing the occupying.

It is a difficult situation for FAPLA, but it seems the lowest point has been passed. The invasion from the South was a shock which they were not prepared for, and in the North, as well, enemy superiority in equipment caused problems. With little relevant experience & faced with a well-equipped & trained invasional force, FAPLA lost the South almost as fast as they had gained it a month or so previously. I believe this is where the Cubans came in so effectively; better trained & prepared to take hand of much of the logistics: the battery of trucks & other equipment needed - & which the MPLA simply don't yet have the cadre to handle. To what extent Cubans have been fighting, I don't know, but they have (and are still in) certain commanding positions at the front & work closely with Iko Carreira.³

As for equipment, I think MPLA is catching up, at least in some places. This is not to say, however, that the battle will soon be over. When I was in Malange about 2 wks. ago, we were taken to a bridge at the Cuanza River (towards Mussende) when the enemy opened up from about 30 kms. away (20 miles). It appears that a FAPLA front line attack was being met by the heavy stuff from the enemy's defense line, & before long, our troops started to come back across the bridge, many wounded. I was sent back to Malange (no visitors at the front!) just as they pulled their heavy materials & armored cars back & blew one span of the bridge. The front line, however, stayed where it was & now they have gone southwards & taken Mussende, the day before yesterday.



MPLA Militants en route to Caxito. LSM PHOTOS

KEEP UP WITH RAPIDLY CHANGING SOUTHERN AFRICA.

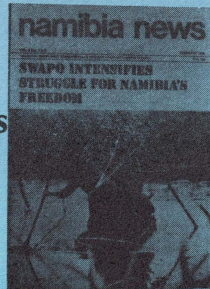


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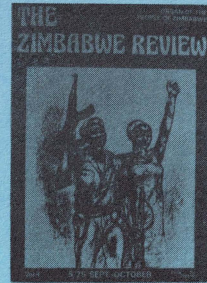
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HELP US RENAME *LSM NEWS*!!

For some time we have been considering renaming *LSM NEWS*. We'd like to find a name which is both more lively and descriptive. So far, the suggestion we like best is *Revolutionary Notebook*. Please let us know what you think of this and send any other suggestions you might have.



See the World

From an Anti-Imperialist, Socialist Perspective.

We began *LSM NEWS* in 1974 to create a flexible outlet for ideas, information and analyses generated by Liberation Support Movement in the course of our political work. We found that our other publications could not keep up with developments in our practice - in North America and Africa - or with our ability to analyze trends in the growth of national liberation movements, the fall of imperialism and the development of anti-imperialist struggles in North America. *LSM NEWS* is our solution; we hope it helps you, too.

We want to utilize *LSM NEWS* to build effective international solidarity among anti-imperialist forces both by spreading information, developing necessary analysis and strategy and offering comradely self- and mutual criticisms of revolutionary practice. Upcoming issues will include:

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WHAT DO YOU THINK OF LSM NEWS?

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We have been publishing LSM News for two years now and are looking forward to more feedback from you, our readers. Your comments, suggestions and criticisms will help us improve our work in 1976. Please write down your comments on this form and mail it to us.

**Revolutionary New Year's Greetings,
LSM Information Center Staff**

THIS ISSUE IS VOLUME _____ ISSUE _____.

1) What do you think of this issue's overall content? What would you like to see more or less of?

2) Which article or selection do you like best and why?

3) Which article or selection do you like least and why?

4) How does the cover, layout, and printing strike you?

5) Any other requests or suggestions for improvement?

DATE _____ ARE YOU A SUBSCRIBER? _____

I GET LSM NEWS FROM _____

All in all, I'm quite impressed with FAPLA. Of course, thrown together in a hurry as the major part of it is, there are problems of discipline, periodic demoralization & lack of experience. But, as a whole, they're disciplined, motivated & seem very integrated with the population: "FAPLA e o povo" ... is the people.

What's going on on "the other side" you may know as well as me. It's clear that for Holden & particularly Savimbi, the prolonged & increasing South African invasion is a political disaster. He is now supposed to be scurrying around asking for help to defeat the "South African aggressors," appealing for unity with MPLA on this basis, etc. Just before I left Angola there were reports that FNLA & UNITA troops were fighting each other in/near Huambo & that Chipenda⁴ is in Benguela where he has expelled all UNITA people and hoisted the MPLA flag. Or rather, the MPLA-Chipenda flag, whatever that is.

The Luanda Gov't. is now on a diplomatic offensive, directed primarily at those African countries which have not yet recognized the People's Republic. This, they feel, is also the best way to help other countries, even France & the U.S., to make up their minds, and they're using all their evidence of foreign invasion: ELP, Zairean & especially South African, to force the neo-colonialist dominated countries in the OAU into the open. Nigeria is a good example: the evidence of South African involvement became too much for this regime which is not exactly progressive or ideologically mature. The message from the Nigerian president to the Angolan people was horrid: "...the fight of the Black race..." etc. I was at home with half a dozen MPLA militants (including Whites & mestizos) listening to the thing on the radio, twisting in our chairs. But, anyway, this support is vital for the People's Republic, both economically & politically. Nigeria counts in circles where MPLA never had a hearing, including Britain, W. Germany & even the U.S. The paradoxes of diplomacy....

There are many other things I could go into, like the economic boycott the country is facing, being refused any credit abroad. But it would be too much. I've done an interview with Diolwa (Minister of Economic Coordination) which I'll try to transcribe and translate and pass on as soon as possible. I feel it throws a good light on many of the essential things about Angola today.

Now some more situational - and less analytical - comments. Luanda, any ordinary day: the most dangerous thing is the traffic, completely wild west. But, all in all, life was much more difficult a month or two back. Still long lines for food, speculation, black-marketing. The rear-guard is not easy to discipline & there is a wave of theft. ODP (*Organização de Defesa Popular*: a militia of ordinary people) is about to start nightly patrols. The port is in chaos and serious measures must be taken. Theft & work stoppages all the time. But, after all, for a country at war and abandoned by 75% plus of all highly qualified personnel, it's amazing that there has been no complete breakdown. And those who suffer most are those who enjoyed the biggest privileges (except, perhaps, when it comes to food. With enough money, one can still get most things).

6 December Trip to Caxito: 20 kms. north, ELNA⁵ Panhard in the ditch marks the southernmost point of the drive on Luanda. A bit further on abandoned artillery positions, spent shells & furniture (:): they really felt they were going to Luanda to stay. Porto Quipin, shot to pieces; a bridge across Dande River has been blasted & repaired. Caxito: the houses are shells with gaping holes, all smashed windows & piles of bricks & smashed furniture or whatever. Not a single soul in sight but FAPLA's and the front is already 50 kms. north. All the people went to Luanda when the fighting got heavy, back in July. Plans for building cooperatives and restarting the huge Fazenda Tentative Sugar Plantation (owned by Espirito Santos group) seem remote (- but before I left Angola, work had started!).

9 - 15 December Trip to Malange: 300 miles of beautiful country and we cruise at 80 miles plus in the big Peugeot. About a dozen roadblocks to check our documents & ask for cigarettes. The FAPLA's are not paid, but are always polite: they ask, not demand. Most checkpoints are on the outskirts of towns or at major crossroads, but somewhere out

in the middle of goddam nowhere we come around a turn at 70 and almost run down a bunch of Pioneiros who've set up a "control" of their own, soliciting "contributions for OPA" (*Organização dos Pioneiros de Angola*). "You're too young to smoke." "OK, *Pode passar. Vitoria é Certa.*" Two-fingers-up signs all the way around as we pull off.

Malange - both town & district - was dominated by its 20,000 settlers. Now there are 20 left - twenty! The colonial economy has 100% collapsed & reconstruction started, but problems are enormous. 60 production cooperatives started and hopes are high. Lucio Lara⁶ arrives on 10 December (MPLA day) & attracts big crowd.

People are well organized, but ideologically "less than mature," according to one cadre. The "asphalt city" is completely abandoned and all the houses of departed colons sacked. They left in early August, after UNITA had fled and FNLA was (truly) eliminated by FAPLA & the Povo together. They (FNLA) had anti-aircraft guns on the highrises and used to shoot into the *bairros*.⁷ So, "...as FAPLA advanced, the people advanced behind them," says Lolo, the Political Commissar of the District. The most precious things had already gone to the colons themselves or FNLA. Furniture, etc. went to the masses. And much of what they couldn't use was destroyed - being identified with the settlers. The hotel we slept in was completely cleaned out: we had new mattresses on the floor, and that's all there was. Unfortunately most of the tractors & other machinery to be used in reconstruction suffered the same fate. Only now are the consequences obvious to all. "A costly lesson," says Lolo. A great need for mechanics, doctors, teachers & just about any kind of technical cadre.

Visit garrison with Commander Mona who fought in the East. Talk to UNITA & FNLA prisoners. They seem to know nothing of what this war is all about. The whole district is run by the Movement, and Povo is 100% MPLA. Flags & posters & two-fingers-up signs all over. But people in Luanda know nothing about Malange and so I wrote an article w/photos for *Diário de Luanda*, incorporating the international aspect and the reasons for my visit to Angola. End Malange.

"Let's go to the beach tomorrow." It's all but dry humor, as we're wading in water up to our shoulders, along the shore south of Luanda, pitch black night without a sound, 280 commando trainees & instructors from the "*Resistencia Popular*" CIR⁸ & myself. On the 4th hour, and after a 15 mile fast hike from the base to the sea. To the shoulders..., my shoulders. But I'm 6' 4" & so is the Instructor *Chefe* who's at my side heading the column. "*Pensa a nos comaradas mais baixas...* Think of us comrades who are not as tall as you" comes the plea from behind. I turn around to see only the nose & forehead of the guy next in line. And the G-3 held up above the water. We turn closer to shore.

The previous day I have spent at the base watching the various phases & kinds of training. It's short (3 mos., barely) but intensive: literacy for those who cannot read/write, then military gymnastics, and either marching, target practice, combat practice, explosives, arms knowledge, leaps from moving truck (what scenes!). All by squad; one thing in the morning, another in the afternoon, then 2 hrs. of political education, supper, military theory & lights out at 10 p.m. No joke to become a commando or military police. Any mistake & you're in for extra duty or push-ups or "kangaroos" with the rifle held behind your neck. In a blazing afternoon sun. I talk to many students & instructors and answer more questions than I get to ask. Great interest for the outside world. In here, the stress is on discipline: "*A disciplina é a sentinela da nossa linha politica*"⁹ on big posters. Class suicide the fast - and painful - way for Luanda's students or lumpens. It's easier for those from the country, everyone agrees. And *very* difficult for the 8 women.

Anyway, this is when I'm invited (challenged?) to join in on the "water test." It's an honor, I cannot refuse. And eager to prove that we in LSM take this thing about solidarity seriously. The students don't know what's up. Me neither; only something about walking in water. And there's none around the base. We start at 3 p.m. The hike goes well; I move up & down the column, shooting film & talking, though I talk less as time goes by. Pass through Cubano territory and all kinds of equipment. At seven we're

on this cliff overlooking the beautiful ocean. We have a break and eat our Portuguese combat rations. At eight - now completely dark - we descend, one by one, to the beach & into the gentle water. We walk, crawl, run, sit down, duck & roll in the salty mess. And some more. And still more. 4 hours later we stagger out of the fucking water, line up & march for one hour to where the trucks are waiting. Finally, let's go, top gear, home to bed. But what happens? One hour of push-ups, somersaults, close combat practice, kangaroos and - and - and mad rushes back into the sea! It's all by squad again, so I cannot participate. I'm content with strolling around, "inspecting" the comrades' performance. "*Ja, aha-ja; muito bom, muito bom.*" Feel like a duck, too old for slaughter. Freezing cold, I still fall asleep in the open truck going back to the base at 3 a.m. 250 of us in two (2) trucks; you can't believe it until you're one of them: a G-3 up your arse, an AK down your throat & elbows, knees, canteens & grenades in between the ribs & every other bone there is. And so I shall wear my FAPLA hat & badge with a feeling of somehow having earned it.

And there you are, comrades. Some of the essentials & some of the impressions which have made this stay in Angola so inspiring.

YOUR COMRADE,
Ole



"MPLA is the People, the People are MPLA."

1. ELP - "Portuguese Liberation Army," a fascist organization reportedly linked to former Portuguese General Spinoza.
2. FAPLA - People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola, politico-military forces of the MPLA.
3. Iko Carreira - MPLA leader now directing Defense Ministry of the People's Republic of Angola.
4. Chipenda - MPLA expelled Daniel Chipenda in December 1974 for his involvement in assassination plots against President Neto in 1972 and '73. After unsuccessfully trying to split MPLA, Chipenda joined the FNLA.
5. ELNA - "National Liberation Army of Angola," military wing of FNLA, composed mostly of Zaireans.
6. Lucio Lara - member of MPLA's *Comité Director*.
7. *bairros* - African districts of the city.
8. CIR - Center for Revolutionary Instruction; CIR schools were begun as part of MPLA's national reconstruction program in the semi-liberated territories during the anti-colonial armed struggle.
9. "*A disciplina...*" - "Discipline is the guardian of our political line."

Special: Namibia

SOLIDARITY WITH SWAPO

A Request From SWAPO President Sam Nujoma.

South West Africa People's Organisation

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



Solidarity — Freedom — Justice

P. O. Box 577
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LUSAKA
ZAMBIA.

Ref. No. OP/382/75

31st October 1975.

Liberation Support Movement
P.O. Box 94338
Richmond, B.C
Canada V6V 2A8

Dear Comrades,

As our struggle against the illegal South African occupation of our country and for a completely independent and democratic Namibia expands, important new aspects and needs emerge. The Pretoria regime is currently spending millions of dollars annually in its propoganda drive directed against SWAPO's steady advance. Externally, the regime aims at whitewashing its brutal exploitation of our people and our country's rich natural resources; internally, its objectives are to prop up its appointed puppets and divide the Namibian people. It is frequently aided by Western establishment media in its efforts.

It is urgent for SWAPO to respond to our oppressor's offensive. The voice of the Namibian people must be heard abroad, while information and educational materials must be made available to the masses in our country in order to strengthen their vision and determination in this long and difficult struggle.

For this reason our movement has given high priority to attaining self-sufficiency in the realm of printing and publication. In view of LSM's experience in this field as well as your previous efforts to equip the MPLA of Angola with a printshop, we request your organisation to assist us in the following:-

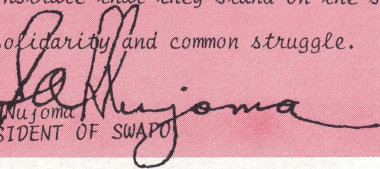
- a) Supply the necessary equipment to accompany a small offset printing press donated by a European organisation.
- b) Provide instructors to train a number of SWAPO cadre in the operation and maintenance of the printshop.
- c) Provide adequate accessories and supplies to make the printshop fully operational.

If succesul in our efforts, such a printshop could also enable us to produce our own educational materials for SWAPO's several schools and training centres at various places in Africa.

As the funding for such a project will no oubt be considerable, we hope that LSM will be able to solicit the support of all North American organisations and individuals in solidarity with our struggle against racism and imperialism. Both American and Canadian corporations are directly involved in exploiting the Namibaian people and our country's dwindling wealth; we urge the people of your countries to demonstrate that they stand on the side of justice.

In solidarity and common struggle.

Sam Nujoma
PRESIDENT OF SWAPO




SWAPO President Sam Nujoma. AUGUSTA CON-
CHIGLIA PHOTO

As announced in the last issue of *LSM NEWS*, LSM has recently launched an international campaign to meet SWAPO's request for a complete printshop. We have begun raising funds to purchase and send full printing equipment and supplies to SWAPO, and to send two cadre to help train six SWAPO members in the techniques of offset printing. We estimate the total cost of the project will be \$20,000.

The Namibian people's struggle against apartheid and imperialism has many fronts, and one of the most important is education and information. Progressive North Americans can now help SWAPO advance on this front by contributing their support to the SWAPO Printshop Project. We hope that *LSM NEWS* readers will be moved to express their international solidarity with the Namibian people's struggle in this manner and, in President Nujoma's words, "demonstrate that they stand on the side of justice."

Please send contributions,
suggestions and enquiries to:
SWAPO Printshop Project

LSM INFORMATION CENTER P.O. BOX 94338,
Richmond, B.C. CANADA, V6Y 2A8.

IN AFRICA & NORTH AMERICA



Women selling palm fruit at the People's Store in Moeres, Guinea-Bissau. LSM PHOTOS

Africa

WOMEN OF GUINEA-BISSAU

Liberation Is A Process, by Chantal Sarrazin.



Chantal Sarrazin working with life-history subject Binta Seidi. LSM PHOTOS

Guinea-Bissau is a small country of less than one million people wedged between Senegal and the Republic of Guinea on the western bulge of Africa. After 10 years of armed struggle against the Portuguese colonialist government and its NATO allies, the people of Guinea-Bissau declared their independence on 24 September 1973. One year later, Guinea-Bissau achieved total liberation following the coup in Portugal.

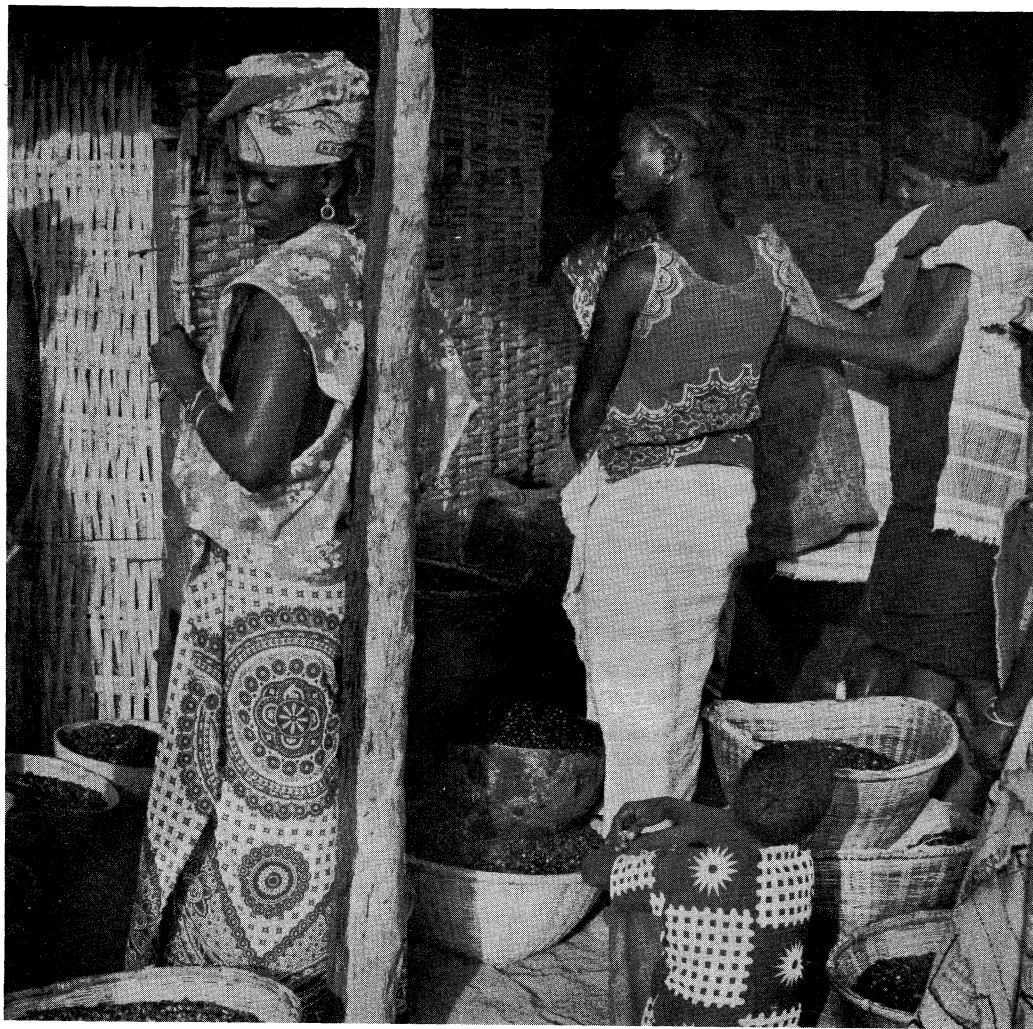
Chantal Sarrazin, a 27-year-old Quebecoise member of Liberation Support Movement, visited Guinea-Bissau with Ole Gjerstad for three months in the Spring of 1975. They were invited by the new revolutionary government primarily because of LSM's work in translating and publishing the PAIGC's journal, *PAIGC Actualités*; a book, *Guinea-Bissau: Toward Final Victory*; and other forms of anti-imperialist support for the struggle in Guinea-Bissau.

The sun shone brilliantly down on Tchugué and the air was hot and dusty. It was still the dry season in Guinea-Bissau. Under a huge, shady mango tree, we met the people of Tchugué, a small village in the south of Guinea-Bissau. Women in brightly-colored dresses tended bawling babies amidst pigs, goats, chickens and barking dogs. The villagers had gathered for a meeting called by the village committee to introduce our two-person team from LSM and to explain the purpose of our mission in Tchugué.

At the invitation of PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde), my comrade and I had been sent by Liberation Support Movement on a three-month mission to record autobiographies of PAIGC militants who had participated in the armed struggle - young cadre, militants, women and men - for LSM's series: "Life Histories from the Revolution." We were certain that these people, after 11 years of armed struggle against Portuguese colonial rule, would have many rich experiences to speak of. We also thought that their recounted lives would offer North Americans fresh perspectives on the anti-imperialist revolutionary process.

While working on the life histories, in day-to-day contact with the people, I gradually began to realize how significant the advancement of women in Guinea-Bissau has been during their war of liberation. The lives of the peasant women of Guinea-Bissau not only deepened my understanding of their national struggle, but also helped me to see my own political life, as a woman, in a clearer perspective.

IN AFRICA & NORTH AMERICA



Women selling palm fruit at the People's Store in Mores, Guinea-Bissau. LSM PHOTOS

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TCHUGUÉ VILLAGE

This village had been a stronghold for Portuguese merchants before the war, but during the period of mobilization in the early 60's, support for the Party (PAIGC) was strong. The colonial troops descended on Tchugué and slaughtered many people. Most of the population fled into the surrounding forest. Periodically, control of the village changed hands until the Portuguese returned to occupy the area in 1972. Today the village is still heavily scarred by the war. War materiel - uniforms, ammo cases (now used as stools), and both live and exploded ammunition - can be seen everywhere.

But the destruction of war is rapidly becoming a relic of the past in Tchugué. The village bustles with new construction. A new people's store is being built where the people can exchange their produce for soap, pots and pans, cloth and other goods. This work must be completed in a month's time before the rainy season, when the village will turn its attention to rice cultivation.

Still the villagers take time from their work to meet with us under the huge mango tree and to approve the life history subjects proposed by the village committee. Then we divide into teams with our translators and meet with the militants whose stories we are to record. I am to tape the story of Cidu na Quida, a 55-year-old peasant woman - my first experience with women in the countryside.

CIDU NA QUIDA'S STORY

When PAIGC militants first came, in secret, to the countryside to organize the peasants, Cidu was the first woman in Tchugué to hear about the start of the armed struggle. At that time those people who helped the Party had to be very secretive since there were a few traitors among the population. A traditional idea among the people was that women could not keep secrets, but Cidu's husband trusted and confided in her.

At first, Cidu secretly prepared rice for the guerrillas in the forest. But as the war became more dangerous, the villagers had to evacuate to the forest themselves. From that time until the end of the war, Cidu worked as a cook in one of PAIGC's military bases.

She also persuaded her youngest son, Manuel, to join PAIGC's army. This was no easy task. Cidu and her husband had sent him to study in a mission school in Catio, an administrative center near Tchugué, because they wanted to have at least one educated son. But when the Party began mobilizing for the struggle, Cidu changed her mind and walked many days to Catio to convince her son to return home and join the guerrilla forces.

The priests had done their work well: Manuel did not want to have anything to do with the "bandits." "My son," Cidu said, "you must leave your studies and come back to go with the Party." He was very hesitant. "You must help us to liberate ourselves from the Portuguese. We must stop being treated like slaves!" Although he was still reluctant, his mother's earnest words had impressed him very much. Manuel decided to join PAIGC. He received military training both in the countryside and in the USSR and later he became a FARP (People's Revolutionary Armed Forces) commander in the North.

Cidu's actions, both her mobilization of her sons and also her own work in the Party, showed her strong commitment and dedication to the struggle. For it was not an easy task to send her own sons away to fight and risk death or at best a long separation. Even today, she has not seen Manuel since he left to join the army many years ago. Like most Guineans, Cidu has suffered in other ways from the war. She has lost her husband and her eldest son. I was moved by the pain which showed in her face when she spoke of these things.

WOMEN'S LIFE IN TCHUGUÉ

We stayed a few weeks in Tchugué and, through our work, got to know quite a few of the

500 or so inhabitants. All the people - knowing the purpose of our visit - made us feel very comfortable and welcome.

When I was not working, I wandered around visiting people and taking pictures to try to capture the daily life of Tchugué on film. A few times I went to pick mangos with some of the women. We sat and ate our green mangos with a pinch of salt and talked to each other in a hand sign language. Then they would touch my short, straight hair and try to figure out how braids could hold in it.

I was strongly impressed with the physical strength and skill of the women, whose lives were so different from my own. Women take charge of all domestic work and participate in all stages of rice production. Because of the primitive technique of cultivation, almost all the people's time throughout the year is devoted to the rice production cycle. Fortunately we have come during the dry season, the one period when relatively little work needs to be done. But the women are always busy. Very early in the morning, before everyone else is up, the rhythmic thudding sound of women pounding rice begins. After the morning meal, the women go to the fields and return with 60-pound baskets of rice on their heads. They are on their way to sell the rice at the People's Store.

From the store, they gather at a well to wash clothes with wooden washboards. Other women come to fetch water in huge clay jars. They carry everything from the heaviest jars of water to the skinniest bottles on their heads without ever spilling a drop.

After their afternoon rest, the women walk to the distant fields. There they beat piles of dried rice plants with special t-shaped sticks which make the grains of rice fall off. Usually there is enough rice to fill up their baskets for the next day. Then they begin to pound rice for the evening meal. It looked very simple until I tried it myself. The whole body and arms must be used in hitting the exact center of the bowl as hard as possible. The young girl who showed me how to do it had a good laugh as she watched me spill the rice all over the ground.

I cannot help thinking, however, that Guinean women have been forcibly prevented from developing newer and easier techniques by the forces of colonialism and capitalism. Labor power was extremely cheap for the Portuguese colonialists. They were not concerned with making the work easier or producing things the people needed. They were only interested in extracting maximum profit. Now that the revolution has overcome the initial obstacles to real development, the people can begin to apply themselves to the task of conquering and transforming nature.

ARRANGED MARRIAGE

After leaving Tchugué, we recorded the life story of our guard and translator, Dalme M'Bundu. He had accompanied us during our entire trip in the south. Through working with us on these stories he had come to appreciate their importance. He did his best in recounting his own. Dalme knew the south very well because he fought there during the war. He participated in many important battles including "Operation Amilcar Cabral," when PAIGC forces captured the strategic Portuguese garrison at Guiledge in 1973. He was very anxious to tell us about his experiences in the army. Now that the war was over, his family - from a small village in the far north - had found him a wife. There was pride in his face when he told us.

It surprised me at first that a politically strong militant like Dalme would be happy that his parents had chosen him a wife. It's the Party, after all, which has led the fight against forced marriages set up by parents in return for payments. So isn't an arranged marriage a sign of political weakness in Dalme and the Party?

Now I don't think so; the revolution can't and doesn't change everything overnight. What the Party is trying to change first are the most negative aspects of the traditional system, such as forced marriage and polygamy. Forced marriage is now illegal, while legal measures are being designed to gradually eliminate polygamy without causing economic hardship for women. It is already banned within the Party. Dalme's marriage was voluntary on both sides and therefore consistent with Party principles.

THE NORTH-MORES VILLAGE

We returned to the capital, Bissau, to organize our trip to the northern village of Mores. This Moslem village has become famous as the center of the fighting in the north. Starting from scratch, the population is rebuilding everything. The only things left from before the war are a few burnt sticks which mark the former locations of the huts. The government is trying to help out with seeds, grains and food to last until the first crop. A new hospital, power station, Party Boarding School and, for the first time, an ample water supply make Mores a model of the new Guinea-Bissau. But problems are many: shortage of food, the need for shelter and tools for refugees returning every day from Senegal; inadequate diet; epidemics and an incredibly high infant mortality rate.

Feio, the efficient political commissar, helped us find the people for our life histories as well as Mandinga-Creole interpreters. I soon began recording the stories of a man and a woman, Dao Camara and Binta Seidi.

BINTA SEIDI

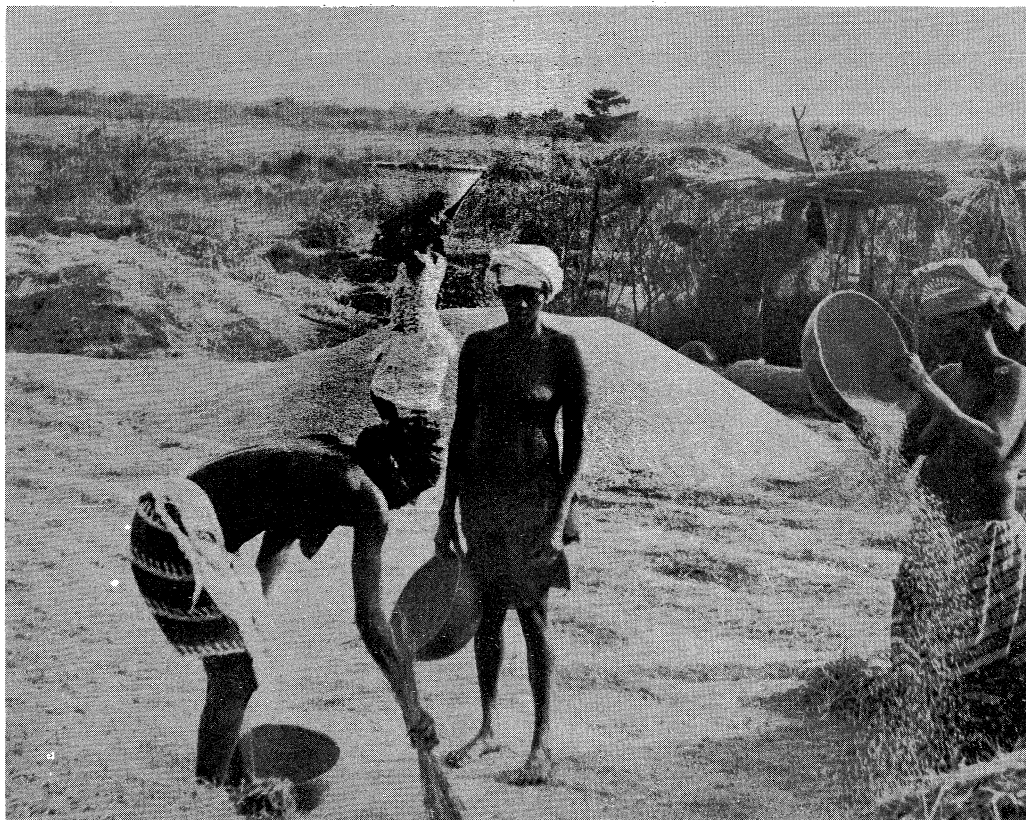
As Binta told her story it became clear that among the Mandinga people, women suffered greatly from male domination. Binta is 65 or 70 years old (she isn't sure, since there are no written records) and has known nothing but brutally hard labor all her life. Every year, after the rainy season had destroyed the roads, the Portuguese administrators forced all the Africans - with the exception of children and very old people - to rebuild them. Every day Binta had to leave home at three or four in the morning to work on the roads. She was beaten and not allowed to sit down or eat. In the middle of the day the sun was unbearable and many people fainted or even died. Binta remembers, "The Portuguese told us: 'You can go home when you can't see your own skin!'"

Men, too, were forced to do road work. But from Binta's story I concluded that the Mandinga men didn't do their share of the work at home.* For instance, they planted cotton - a relatively easy task. The women had to care for, weed and pick it and then spin it into thread. Then the men would weave this thread into beautiful designs, again a fairly light task. While the women were working, men often used to sit around talking.

When the war started, the men began to do more work to support the armed struggle and some men joined the army, for they too were oppressed by the Portuguese. The Party struggled with them to take up their share of the labor and to join their wives in the fields. Although there are still times when the men rest and talk while the women work, the situation has greatly improved.

Binta responded to the PAIGC mobilization by bringing food to the guerrillas in the forest, always risking being captured by the Portuguese. She also cared for her aged husband in addition to her increased responsibilities as a member of the village committee. But, strong as she was, Binta also had to cope with the timidity and internalized sense of inferiority that is the heritage of women in most male-dominated societies. At first, for example, she was afraid to come to work alone with me partly because I am white. (The only Whites she had known before were Portuguese colonialists.) But soon we became quite close. One day she brought me some rice and asked me if I had a mother where I came from. She said, "Tell her to pound this rice for you and that you have another mother in Guinea." Binta's strength and enthusiasm were infectious. Working with her filled me with innovative ideas and great optimism. It is very inspiring that she and I, women with very different backgrounds, can work together as comrades.

* See A. Cabral, "Brief Analysis of the Social Structure in Guinea-Bissau" in *Guinea-Bissau: Toward Final Victory*, LSM Press.



Gathering rice in the fields of Tchugue Village. LSM PHOTOS

WOMEN OF THE PARTY

I recognized Ana Maria Gomes at a meeting and celebration when women from Bissau came to visit the women of Mores. I was glad to see Ana Maria again. I'd recorded part of her life story in Bissau. Ana Maria is a strong militant who moved into the forest with the guerrillas when she was only thirteen. She received political and military training and learned to read and write from PAIGC militants in the forest. A few years later, she was sent by the Party to the Soviet Union to study nursing. She worked mostly in the north and was put in charge of the nurses in Mores. Because of her discipline and political commitment she became a political commissar of the sector and is now a deputy to the National Assembly.

Ana Maria is one of the "new women" of Guinea-Bissau who have grown up with the PAIGC. Another is a young militant named Sadjo who worked at the Tchugue sanitation post. She had studied for four years in Cuba. Ana Maria and Sadjo were sent overseas by Amilcar Cabral (PAIGC's beloved leader who was assassinated in 1973 by the Portuguese) to learn skills which would be useful in the reconstruction of a liberated Guinea-Bissau. These women are relatively free of the fetters of traditional women's inferiority and are playing an important role in transforming the women's position in Guinean society.

PROBLEMS & PROGRESS

During the course of my stay I noted that there were still obstacles for young women cadre in continuing their development. Later I learned, in an interview with Carmen Pereira* (member of the Party Executive) that an organization of women in the Party and Government was then being formed. This new organization is a very exciting development since it is designed to advance the position of women from within the organization and political line of the Party.

There is much work for such an organization to do. Some women, for instance, with years of training haven't been given tasks which utilize their skills. Also, when I talked with a group of student nurses in Mores, they were very uneasy and rapidly became intimidated and defensive about answering my questions. I brought this up with Aminata Camara, the political commissar of the nurses, who acknowledged that the female nurses were frequently afraid to speak up and raise their problems at meetings. Not only their traditional background but, more importantly, the vestiges of centuries of oppression by Portuguese colonialism is at the roots of their problems.

I had come to Guinea-Bissau with a view that people who had made a revolution would be relatively free from such difficulties, expecting a high level of consciousness from everybody. But my work with Guinean women has forced me to recognize that revolution is a continuing process. While Guinean women have many struggles ahead, they have actually made tremendous progress over the course of the armed struggle.

In fact, although women had previously been mere servants for their husbands, women's tasks in the traditional system were transformed into important responsibilities during the war. Without food, there can be no war, so PAIGC put women in charge of food production. They no longer grew food as laborers for their husbands but as militants contributing to the revolution. Later on during the war, women proved to be very capable in talking with and mobilizing villagers and many served in the new role of political commissar. Some worked as nurses in combat and helped transport artillery when there were no casualties to care for. Later on, the Party made sure women were elected as members of the village committees and the people's tribunals. These women served as important models for the population to learn from.

Along with all these changes went a great deal of political education which was reinforced by the example of women's new social roles. Men were taught that the revolution needed the women and that they therefore had to work together side-by-side. Men were patiently persuaded that for some to be free all had to be freed. As Dao Camara told us, "The Party said everyone has to work and we men must always respect women."

LIBERATION

Our LSM team did not go to Guinea-Bissau with the idea of passing judgement on women or the revolution but rather to learn from their struggle. We found that the Guinean women have begun to change and liberate themselves because they have a larger goal, national liberation, which demands that they change in order to achieve it. Their history of intense oppression, which made them so receptive to PAIGC during the period of mobilization, has continued to generate a willingness to struggle and change.

Whether in Africa or North America, people transform themselves most effectively when their main aim isn't personal transformation but the transformation of the world they live in. Some contradictions (such as living as a woman in a male supremacist society) can only be resolved as a part of the resolution of the larger social contradictions in the world.

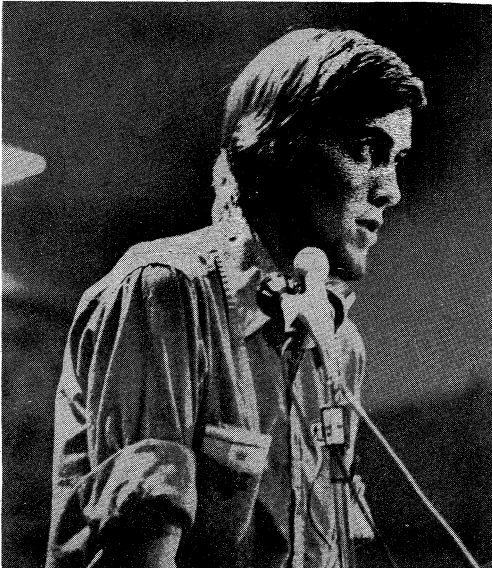
Before we can expect to change our lives, we women in North America will have to adopt the same spirit of self-sacrifice and willingness to struggle to advance the revolution and build international socialism as have the women in Guinea-Bissau. It is only through struggling for these goals that we will be able to change our own roles as women.

* See *LSM NEWS*, Vol. II, No. 3, Fall 1975.

Africa

A LUTA CONTINUA

LSM Report From Mozambique by Ole Gjerstad



Ole Gjerstad

From Lourenco Marques, People's Republic of Mozambique, LSM's Ole Gjerstad phoned in the following report, broadcast on 3 January 1976 over radio KPFA in Berkeley:

Nowhere has solidarity with MPLA been more in evidence than here in Mozambique. Mass rallies, benefit soccer games and concerts have drawn tens of thousands, and in a few days the campaign for all Mozambicans to donate a day's pay to the MPLA will be completed.

Not surprising perhaps. From the outset the Angolan liberation movement was closely linked to FRELIMO and the PAIGC, its counterparts in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. But the reasons for the continued alliance are not strictly historical.

The Mozambican government knows that if Angola falls under the control of South Africa and its allies, this country will be in an isolated and difficult position. "We find ourselves facing an open offensive by reactionary forces," said President Samora Machel recently.

"It is therefore only natural that parties like FRELIMO and MPLA and the PAIGC unite around a strategy which is at the same time the strategy of all progressive forces. In Angola," Machel concluded, "the MPLA represents the progressive forces of the entire world."

In Lourenco Marques it is now quiet and peaceful. Life has returned to near normal after the rebellion by dissatisfied elements within the army two weeks ago. This is not to say that the incident is something to be forgotten, or that FRELIMO has tried to gloss it over. On the contrary, as with the discovery of explosive devices here in the capital last September, the regime is using the occasion to accelerate the struggle for a new society.

The rebellion followed a three-day army conference where steps were taken to uproot indiscipline, corruption, alcoholism and banditry within the corps. "Therefore," said the President in his New Year's speech, "this attack is not surprising. Each type of regime creates its opposition. The people's regime arouses hatred and attack from reactionary forces." And, I would add, with the process of building socialism now really beginning to tear at the roots of the old system, nobody here suffers from the illusion that this last incident means the end of open opposition.

Looking at the six months of Mozambique's independence the most important development has no doubt been the implementation and consolidation of people's

democratic power in all spheres of social life. Millions of Mozambicans organized in work places, schools, neighborhood committees, in communal villages and the army - a national mass organization - now play an active role in solving the problems which arise at all levels, from the campaign of "Every House, Its Own Latrine" to questions of how to increase agricultural production.

"It is only this organization of life in collective form," President Machel said New Year's Eve, "which can bring about the new mentality needed to deepen and consolidate the gains of the liberation struggle." "People's democracy," FRELIMO states, "constitutes our historical transition from a colonized underdeveloped society dominated by capitalism to a socialist society."

Equally frank about its full support for the liberation movements in South Africa and Zimbabwe, the FRELIMO government represents an ominous threat to the conservative racist regimes of these countries and their western allies. To isolate Mozambique, these latter forces must defeat the MPLA and install a puppet regime in Angola. FRELIMO's government, on the other hand, needs the support of a progressive, democratic Angola to continue on its present course.

This is the perspective as we enter 1976, the crucial year for all those concerned with the struggle against neo-colonialism and racist repression.



FRELIMO leaders Samora Machel, Marcelino dos Santos (left) and Joachim Chissano (right) enter Lourenco Marques. AFRIQUE-ASIE

North America

U.S. TOUR ON ANGOLA

LSM Speakers Document Struggles & Victories In Africa.

This spring, Liberation Support Movement presents a tour of "Revolution in Africa" programs in the U.S. Featured speakers, LSM members Ole Gjerstad and Chantal Sarrazin, have recently returned from over a year of work with liberation movements in Africa. Their focus will be the crucial struggle in Angola, where escalated fighting between neo-colonial forces and the anti-imperialist MPLA has gained world-wide attention. For many Americans left confused by superficial coverage in the media and reports of growing U.S. and Soviet involvement, LSM's programs will offer an in-depth analysis of this struggle backed by direct experience and documentary materials.

After covering events in Portugal for several weeks early last year, Gjerstad and Sarrazin went on to spend three months working with the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau, where they documented the reconstruction efforts that have followed liberation from Portuguese colonialism. From Guinea, Ole travelled to Mozambique, where he participated in Independence Day Celebrations, June 25, in Lourenco Marques (Can Phumo) and for several weeks reported on the rapid progress toward socialism being led by the new FRELIMO government. Then, during three months in Zambia, Ole worked closely with SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization) militants and cadre, concretizing plans for the SWAPO Printshop Project and gathering much interview and life-history documentation on the little-known struggle in Namibia. Most recently, Ole has completed a two-month stay in Angola where he witnessed MPLA's program of "People's Power" in action in the *muceques* (shantytowns) and factories, confirming that the new People's Republic of Angola is developing a non-exploitive society to serve the Angolan people while at the same time repelling the onslaught of imperialist-backed UNITA and FNLA.

Ole and Chantal have returned with a wealth of experience to bring to the "Revolution in Africa" programs. Ole will speak on *People's Power in Angola*, *Socialist Development in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique*, and *The Struggle Against Apartheid*. Chantal will be talking about *Women in the Revolution* - based on her work in Guinea-Bissau. Both will have slides and photos from their trips as well as literature and films.

The tour will cover the eastern seaboard from 15 March to mid-April, and then from mid-April to mid-May they will tour the West Coast. For booking arrangements and more information, please write or phone:

LSM TOUR HEADQUARTERS:
P.O. Box 94338, Richmond, B.C., CANADA, V6Y 2A8.
Telephone no. (604) 873-6051.

EAST COAST COORDINATORS: LSM EAST COAST UNIT,
P.O. Box 673, Brooklyn, New York, 11202.
Telephone no. (212) 772-1758.

WEST COAST COORDINATORS: LSM BAY AREA UNIT,
P.O. Box 756, Berkeley, CA., 94701.
Telephone no. (415) 465-0909

North America

LSM ACTIONS

LSM EAST COAST UNIT SUPPORT FOR THE PFLO

Over the autumn, much of the ECU's work was in support for the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO). In doing this, we tried to activate broad political co-operation and unity. To fight the news blockade and information shortage on events in the Arabian Gulf, the ECU organized a public forum on Oman with the aid of several other organizations. The forum drew 150 people who heard speeches in solidarity with the PFLO by representatives from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), LSM, and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. In addition, a film was shown and cultural presentations given. The program was well received, and funds were raised toward the ECU's shipment of medical supplies to the PFLO. An important result of the event was that other organizations responded to the call for material support and carried on the project in subsequent events.

During a Week of Solidarity with the People of Oman, organized by the Coalition to Support the People's Struggle in Oman, additional funds were collected toward the shipment. The Arab Cultural Club also contributed with money raised at political programs in the Brooklyn Arab community.

This support enabled the ECU to ship over \$2700 worth of medical supplies to the PFLO, which, along with a shipment from LSM/BAU, brought the total medical shipment to over 250 cubic feet.

LSM/ECU is now working with the recently formed MPLA Solidarity Committee in N.Y. The Committee's first public action was a program commemorating the 19th Anniversary of the MPLA of Angola. This program drew 350 people and gained much support for the only genuine liberation movement, MPLA, and the new People's Republic of Angola. The Committee is also planning a demonstration on February 4, the anniversary of the beginning of armed struggle against Portugal in 1961, and intends to mobilize against U.S. intervention in Angola and for revolutionary solidarity with the MPLA. At this critical point in Angola's history, such work is a major priority for those who support national liberation and proletarian internationalism.

LSM BAY AREA UNIT DEMONSTRATORS DEMAND "DEL MONTE OUT OF THE THIRD WORLD!"

Del Monte Corporation is the world's largest canner of fruits and vegetables. This giant multinational agribusiness extracts millions of dollars in super-profits each year from the food and labor resources of Namibia, South Africa, Oman, Iran, the Philippines, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Mexico, among others. At the same time, people's liberation forces in many of these countries are fighting armed struggles to kick Del Monte and all other exploiters out, so that they can begin to use these resources to feed and develop their own peoples and nations.

Taking a clear stand in favor of the people's forces, LSM Bay Area Unit, along with Bay Area Namibia Action Group and Committee Against Hunger, held a spirited demonstration outside Del Monte's annual stockholders' meeting on September 23 in San Francisco. The 75 demonstrators called for support of the Third World liberation movements directly confronting Del Monte - specifically, the South West Africa People's Organization in Namibia, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman, and the liberation struggle in the Philippines - while denouncing Del Monte's exploitation of workers and peasants on the plantations and in the packing plants of these countries. A range of other issues was

also raised, from consumer opposition to Del Monte's increasing production of "junk foods" to protest of racist and sexist hiring practices in its U.S. operations. Meanwhile, inside the meeting, the corporation's officials refused to answer questions on such topics as Del Monte's recent infamous bribery of the Guatemalan government to obtain vast banana plantations there, and its blatant violation of U.N. sanctions against resource extraction from Namibia, which is illegally occupied and controlled by racist South Africa.

The action was also a vehicle to expose the real nature of the current world food crisis. Far from the result of overpopulation in the Third World as Del Monte and Kissinger would have us believe, the crisis has occurred because imperialism requires that Third World peasants divert their productive energies from the growing of subsistence foods to feed their families to the concentrated cultivation of non-nutritious "cash crops" such as coffee, which enrich multinational agribusiness. So, while nutritional levels drop and famine stalks more and more "poor" countries, Del Monte's profit earnings rose 20% in 1974 alone. The demonstrators pointed out that Del Monte, like all its imperialist counterparts, will never willingly abandon its profitable investments in the Third World. For this reason, the only viable option for progressive elements in the oppressor nations is to actively support the people's liberation movements in their struggle to force them out.

CONCRETE SUPPORT FOR PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH VIETNAM

On September 2, 1975 the Vietnamese people celebrated the 30th anniversary of their declaration of independence. But this was the first year that the Vietnamese were able to celebrate total independence, with all foreign aggressors forced out of their country. To mark this historic occasion, LSM/Bay Area Unit worked together with Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, Winter Soldier Organization and others in a coalition to sponsor a celebration in the San Francisco Bay Area. Over 500 people attended the cultural/educational program featuring a slide show on the Vietnamese struggle and the U.S. anti-war movement, speakers recently returned from Vietnam, poetry, and songs by Holly Near. The event generated \$1500 which was sent to the Provisional Revolutionary Government to aid in reconstruction as a concrete gesture of our continuing support for the heroic Vietnamese people.

MEDICAL SUPPORT FOR THE OMANI REVOLUTION

In October the Bay Area and the East Coast Units made a joint shipment of medicines and medical supplies to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO) in the Middle East. The BAU raised 3/4 of a ton of antibiotics, vitamins, emergency medications, bandages and other drugs and medical supplies for the PFLO.

Since 1965, the PFLO has been engaged in armed struggle against the notorious agents of British and U.S. imperialism, the feudal Omani Sultan Qabus and the Shah of Iran. During the 150 years of colonial and feudal rule, not a single hospital was built for the people, and now the war is magnifying the scarcity of drugs and supplies. LSM sees this medical support as one way to help advance the Omani revolution and the anti-imperialist struggle, as well as to contribute to building proletarian internationalism.

Theory and Practice

SUMMARY OF LSM THEORY*

by Don Barnett

In essence, our view is that capitalist growth over the past five centuries has seen both the concentration of productive means, wealth and power in Europe, North America and Japan, and the retardation, distortion and stagnation of economic, political and cultural development within dominated territories containing the vast majority of the world's peoples. This grossly uneven development within the international capitalist system between "rich" and "poor" nations, the West and the "Third World," has accelerated rapidly this past century and qualitatively shifted the principal contradiction in the system from that between the Western working class and bourgeoisie to one between the latter and the super-exploited peasant-worker masses in the dependent colonies and neocolonies.

Metropolitan workers, led by an increasingly numerous and powerful "labor aristocracy," have been bribed and corrupted out of the super-profits from the colonies and neo-colonies. Class collaboration between Western industrial workers and their domestic bourgeoisies has, since the 1870's in France and even earlier and more clearly in England, "de-revolutionized" the metropolitan proletariat. They will ally themselves with the bourgeoisie until such time as the Western "welfare" states can no longer maintain that standard of life to which they have become accustomed at the expense of unpaid labor and looting in the colonies. Increased real incomes from rising wages and public-sector spending (the result of centuries of unequal exchange, capital concentration yielding increased productivity and government taxation of multinational corporate super-profits) have shaped a set of material and subjective conditions among the metropolitan proletariat which is in conflict with and threatened by genuine national liberation movements promising political, economic and cultural independence for colonized peoples - promises which can only be achieved through socialist development and proletarian internationalism.

Unfortunately, Western workers rationalize these non-revolutionary material interests by a class-based ideology riddled with national chauvinism and various forms of racism and ethnocentrism. They generally see their own well-being as tied to "national" interests and throw themselves willingly into the trenches in defense of bourgeois hegemony over the so-called "Third World."

Only through the armed struggle to free themselves from imperialist control will the oppressed masses and revolutionary classes of the colonized "countryside" liberate themselves, and in so doing force a sharpening of metropolitan class contradictions which will revolutionize wage workers, setting them against the bourgeois state apparatus and transforming their chauvinism into revolutionary proletarian internationalism.

Of utmost importance for metropolitan revolutionaries, therefore, is to find a praxis which hastens this process of imperialist disintegration and the concomitant transformation at the structural and ideological levels from bourgeois nationalism to socialist internationalism.

LSM AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

We believe that far too little practical and fraternal assistance has been given in support of national liberation movements by North Americans who are both capable and, in theory, desirous of providing such vitally needed support. The Liberation Support

Movement was established in order to help resolve this glaring contradiction between theory and practice, **between** the potentiality and actuality of our own contribution to the anti-imperialist struggle.

Within North America, vast human and material resources are at our disposal to serve the pressing needs of Imperialism's super-exploited masses in their just struggles to achieve genuine political, economic and cultural independence. Such struggles, and the peoples engaged in them, are in a very real sense our own. The victories against exploitation and oppression achieved in the "countryside" of the Empire serve to hasten the total destruction of the Imperialist System. They thus bring those of us who dwell in the "metropole" of the American Empire closer to our own decisive victories and liberation.

Therefore, the major objectives of the LSM are (1) to provide concrete and substantial support, in the form of essential supplies, funds, technical assistance, publicity and information, to *vanguard* liberation forces fighting colonialism and neo-colonialism in the "countryside" of the U.S.-dominated imperialist system, and (2) to carry out *rearguard* anti-imperialist programs in the metropolitan centers of the empire so as to increase "urban" popular disaffection, further the moral isolation of the ruling-class regime, exacerbate the strategic military-manpower weakness of the establishment, expose the multinational corporate "mafia" and mobilize progressive metropolitan forces to support the armed spearhead of the anti-imperialist revolution in the "countryside."

* See TOWARD AN INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY and PRINCIPLES OF LIBERATION SUPPORT MOVEMENT'S ANTI-IMPERIALIST WORK, by Don Barnett, as well as past issues of LSM NEWS (all available from LSM Information Center) for in-depth development of the points outlined in this summary.



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