

## **Guerrilla Warfare: Only Valid Form of Struggle**

### **MPLA**

*Article in MPLA – Informations (Algiers), March 1969.*

The entire world was shaken at the end of last year by the news that Marcello Caetano had been appointed to succeed the old dictator Salazar at the head of the Portuguese government. A number of African political leaders immediately started to speculate about a change in the Portuguese attitude towards the colonies, since the reputation and ambiguous speeches of the new head of State had aroused the hope of 'liberalisation'.

Having intimate knowledge of Portuguese policy and the reactionary forces now in power, the MPLA always expressed its apprehension about these hopes, which were not founded on concrete facts.

Salazar was not a lone man in his country. He was the representative of Portuguese financial oligarchy, which is itself subordinate to international high finance. In governing, he was defending certain interests, those of exploiters.

These very same business circles chose Caetano to replace Salazar. The very same government team is in power. The fall of the dictator changes nothing in Portugal's fascist and colonialist policy. Changing one person, even if his name is Salazar, cannot change the Portuguese constitution, which designates the colonies as 'overseas provinces'.

In any case, neither the Portuguese government nor the settlers are prepared to yield their domination and influence in Angola and Mozambique to the political, economic and military expansionism of South Africa, which is highly industrialised and showing a tendency to interfere increasingly directly in the affairs of non-independent countries of Southern Africa.

For the time being, therefore, Portugal has to continue the war. Caetano has already confirmed this line in the speeches made some time after he came to power. He has shown himself to be clearly in favour of the continuation of colonial war.

He has sent already at least 7 battalions (3,500 soldiers) to Angola and Mozambique and he intends to increase troop effectives in Angola by 20,000 men. He reprimands those who speak against the war, notably young Portuguese Catholic circles who on 1st January, for example, demonstrated in favour of ending the war in a Lisbon church. These young people have been accused of treason.

It is the new Portuguese government which is brandishing threats of reprisals against the Republic of Congo Brazzaville if it continues to aid MPLA.

At the present juncture it is therefore impossible that any substantial change might be effected in Portuguese colonial policy.

The MPLA has reached the conclusion that under the present conditions the only possible form of struggle in Angola is armed struggle, and to wage this hard and protracted struggle it is necessary for the whole of Africa to commit itself and sincerely to come to aid of the Angolan People through their organized representative and dynamic force, the MPLA.

Armed struggle is not simply a sacrifice to those who are fighting on the side of justice and against tyranny, to those who aspire to freedom. It is above a force. It is not simply a burial ground. It does not simply stain the battlefields with blood of the best sons and daughters of our peoples. It is also a school. It is also a means of ensuring that the people will continue that struggle in the future, after political independence, so as to be completely free: politically, economically and socially.