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Socialism Dawns in Africa

Also:
Internationalism
on the
Waterfront



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COVER GRAPHIC: FRELIMO

Leading Edge

Since the late 60's Liberation Support Movement has focussed its practice on support for African liberation movements. Our prediction that genuine liberation was on the agenda for Southern Africa and Guinea-Bissau appears to have been basically valid. But more than African liberation has been at stake. LSM's strategy for socialism hinges on the view that revolution will spread from the underdeveloped periphery of the imperialist system to the developed center. A crucial assumption of our strategy is that it is possible for peasants and workers in underdeveloped nations to build socialism prior to the collapse of the entire imperialist system. While the useful experiences of Indochina, Korea, China, Cuba, and South Yemen also test this assumption, none provides a more diverse testing ground than present-day Africa where Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Angola are launching historic attempts to build socialism. Our main article in this issue, "Socialism Dawns in Africa - African Liberation: From Anti-Colonialism to Scientific Socialism" is our preliminary evaluation of this new and exciting stage of history.

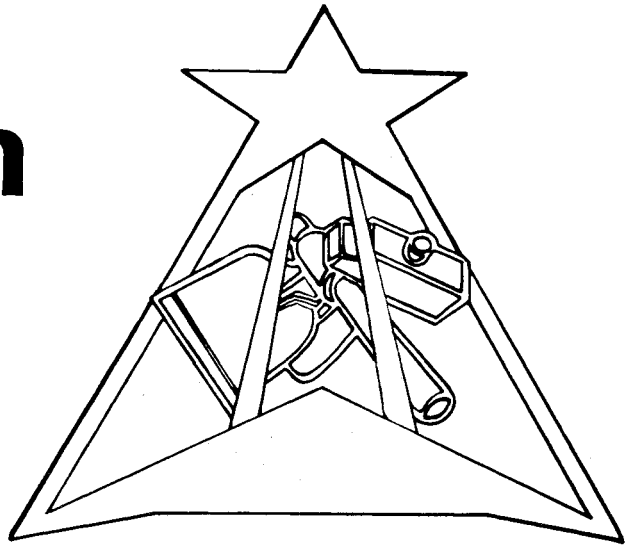
"Internationalism On the Waterfront," our North American feature, examines recent progressive activities by West Coast longshoremen. Longshoreman and LSM member, Larry Wright, draws on his work-experience to develop our understanding of types of proletariat and to add to our view

of the progressive potential of North American workers. Those who feel that LSM "writes off" workers entirely may be surprised to see highlighted this aspect of our theory which has always maintained that there *are* possibilities for progressive and revolutionary work in imperialist countries.

We have received many comments, mostly favorable, on our article "Sino-Soviet Split" in *LSM NEWS* number 13. We intend to follow up some of its undeveloped implications in time. Inevitably we have discovered a few points we wish we had expressed somewhat differently. For instance, while we are critical of China and the Soviet Union and do not align with either, we do support efforts at social transformation underway in both countries and would do our utmost to help defend them from imperialist attack. Thus our "non-alignment" is quite different from neutrality.

As this issue goes to press, LSM is completing preparations for our biannual Congress. In the coming few weeks, we will review our theoretical and strategic positions and make plans for the ensuing two-year period. Some Congress documents will likely be published in upcoming issues of *LSM NEWS*. We also expect to publish an interview with a representative of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) together with an article on the Horn of Africa region, focusing on the liberation struggle in Eritrea.

Socialism Dawns in Africa



African Liberation: From Anti-Colonialism to Scientific Socialism

Thirteen years have passed since Chou En-lai, visiting Somalia, made his famous remark that "revolutionary prospects throughout the African continent are excellent." At the time of Chou's visit, the twentieth century had seen the consolidation of monopoly capitalism in the industrialized centers of Europe and North America, while the integration of Africa, Asia, and Latin America into the capitalist world system had produced conditions of social upheaval on these continents. The rise of strong revolutionary movements in many Third World countries exemplifies the shift of the center of the international class struggle. The surge for independence and liberation has been the principal force of history since World War II.

The process of national liberation has in many cases transformed the nature of the liberation struggles. Conditions of the fight, the need to resolve the many political and practical problems, transformed national consciousness into social conscious-

ness. Part of the anti-colonial movement became anti-imperialist and socialist.

Cuba and Viet Nam illustrate this process. Most recently, independent Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau are starting their transformation toward socialism. In the space of twenty years, small groups of African nationalists have grown to anti-imperialist mass movements. In Mozambique and Angola, Marxist-Leninist vanguard parties are being created to lead the continued socialist revolution.

In order to draw the lessons from these African revolutions, we trace their development from the colonial background and into the present. Imperialism, already drawing its lessons, is building a campaign to isolate and "destabilize" the new revolutionary states. To counter this campaign has become a key strategic question for socialists and anti-imperialists in North America.

"Africa today is the weakest link in the imperialist chain," Fidel Castro commented after his recent tour of the continent. "The prospects, there are excellent to move from near tribalism to socialism without going through the various other stages which have been necessary in different parts of the world." The Cuban leader's observation captures the essential process which over the past decade has brought Africa onto the front stage of world history. Colonized, oppressed, and exploited for the better part of a century, the peoples of Africa are now surging back to recapture control over their natural and human resources, to once again shape their own destiny.

This process does not lead back to the precolonial past. It is revolutionary and internationally significant to the extent that it builds on the foundation of that past to advance upon the present. The revolutionary forces struggle against negative tribal traditions as well as imperialist and capitalist domination. The persistent emiseration of the majority of the people, contrasted against the opulence of privileged elites, has made it clear that a fundamental transformation of internal social and economic structures is a prerequisite to any real improvement vis-a-vis the imperialist powers and the multinational corporations which continue to dominate Africa.

The past decade has demonstrated the ability of African revolutionaries to start such a transformation. Its point of departure was the demand for national independence. Where this was agreed to by the colonial powers, the new African governments - with few exceptions - brought little change in the daily lives of their peoples. The breakthrough came where the colonial power repeatedly and brutally sup-

pressed the aspirations for independence and thus forced the nationalist movements into a struggle which came to change the course of history. In the colonies of Portugal, anti-colonial struggles grew to become anti-imperialist struggles and, with the achievement of national liberation, the transition to socialism is today clearly on the agenda in Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau. A similar process is also unfolding within the Zimbabwean and Namibian liberation movements.

The words "socialism" and "revolution" have been echoed across the African continent before. But while the hodgepodge doctrine of "African socialism" may well have testified to the African peoples' yearning for freedom and equality, it ignored the reality of capitalist penetration of Africa and therefore remained a toothless instrument for any kind of real change. What separates "African socialism" from the political lines of Frelimo in Mozambique, MPLA in Angola, and PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde is essentially the experience of the armed struggle. Protracted wars taught these liberation movements before independence what others have had to learn later, namely that their enemy was not simply colonialism but the vast structures of international capitalism. The liberation movements also learned to merge the revolutionary experiences of other peoples with concrete analysis of their own conditions. Thus, their socialism is at once universal and specific. "There is not and will never be Mozambican socialism," Mozambican President Samora Machel told Frelimo cadres at the 1975 opening of their Party school. "Socialism is the system developed by the working and exploited classes of the whole world in the

"Socialism is the system developed by the working and exploited classes of the world in the process of their struggle to conquer power and build a new society."

process of their struggle to conquer power and build a new society."

We say that Frelimo, MPLA, and PAIGC have adopted the principles of scientific socialism because, first, they articulate a vision of the "new society" they want to build, a society which emphasizes human needs rather than those of capital and in which the exploitation of one person by another, one class by another, no longer prevails. Second, and more important, these movements have demonstrated a capacity to forge concrete changes toward this goal. Learning from history, using the method of dialectical materialism to analyze the prevailing conditions within their own countries, the liberation movement leadership went on to produce the astonishing series of achievements which climaxed in the 1974 collapse of Portuguese colonial fascism.

By examining the main features of this process in the former Portuguese colonies we can better understand how a socialist revolution can grow from the soil of colonialism and underdevelopment. To progressive North Americans, such analysis is also necessary to situate ourselves within the international revolutionary process. In describing the overall process, it will be necessary to ignore many of the important specifics which have been key in formulating revolutionary strategy, such as the particular history of ethnic groups or the movement of class forces within each of the liberation movements. The traits we aim to draw out are those that illus-

trate the international relevance of the African liberation struggles.

The Colonial Reality

Marxists, both African and non-African, have had difficulties in coming to terms with the social and economic realities of contemporary Africa, and those of us involved in solidarity work for liberation movements such as the MPLA have had to listen to a great deal of nonsense from many of our supposed compatriots on the Left. Some of them view the liberation movements more or less as puppets controlled by this or that superpower, while others call for "proletarian" or "bolshhevik" parties to immediately seize control over the African revolution. Whatever the particular position of such groups, their devotion to predetermined blueprints of revolution renders them incapable of perceiving the real prospects which exist for the application of the Marxist-Leninist method - dialectical materialism - in underdeveloped countries in general and in Africa in particular.

The colonial capture of Africa one hundred years ago accelerated the capitalist expansion on the continent, a process which had been under way since the 17th century. This penetration, however, was only partial, and today precapitalist modes of production continue to exist and be reproduced side by side with capitalism. As a consequence, social relations take on different forms than in the highly industrialized countries; ethnic, religious, and regional factors generally play a more important role than in Europe and North America. Their persistent influence has been an obstacle to the liberation movements from their early

period until the present.

In the Portuguese colonies, power was held in the iron grip of the colonial state; its role was essentially to maintain the territories for the enrichment and prestige of the Portuguese ruling class alliance. This was done by simple robbery, trade, slavery in many forms, agricultural exploitation, mineral extraction, and, toward the end of the colonial era, increasing industrialization - all enforced by a coercive state apparatus.

Opposite the colonial state stood the vast majority of the African population: the peasants and other rural people. Initially the victims of slavery and plunder, they later faced forced labor, expulsion from their land, and cultural humiliation as the European rulers consolidated their control. At the close of the colonial period, eighty per cent or more of Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique's people lived in rural areas. The peasant "class," however, is marked by great variations in modes of subsistence and local customs, and "outside" leadership has usually been necessary in order for the peasantry to act as a cohesive and conscious political force. Thus, earlier peasant resistance to colonialism remained confined to local rebellions.

Other population segments crystallized as colonialism matured. Angola and Mozambique saw the influx of large numbers of European settlers who came to control much of these countries' agriculture and industry. Though they depended on the colonial state for their existence, these settlers at the same time felt restricted by control from Europe. As a class, they favored the free rein that Rhodesia-style minority rule would give them. They became ardent opponents of the liberation

movements.

While Guinea-Bissau remained an overwhelmingly rural and underdeveloped country, the two larger colonies experienced a growing urbanization in the 1960's and early 1970's. Of the tens of thousands of Africans who poured into cities such as Luanda and Maputo only a fraction were productively employed. Some simply came to live with urban relatives and never really set root in the city. Others lingered, absorbed in the sea of déclassé, "what would be called a lumpenproletariat if there was a real proletariat," in the words of Amílcar Cabral. The "real proletariat," the working class, appeared late on the scene. In the period in which the contemporary nationalist movements solidified and took the first steps of the liberation struggle this embryonic class was still too weak to take the initiative.

The "revolutionary agent" was located elsewhere. To challenge colonialism, it was necessary to have a clear understanding of colonialism. And the few Africans, including those of mixed race, who had the required background and level of education to do so, found themselves in a contradictory position. On the one hand they enjoyed privileges derived from European rule; on the other hand colonialist discrimination and racism humiliated them. Their proximity to the foreign masters filled this group with resentment. More than anything else this resentment led a small minority of these "intellectuals" or petty-bourgeois to agitate for independence from Portugal.

This thumbnail sketch can only convey the rough outlines of the social structure of the former Portuguese colonies. It does not detail the important differences between each colo-

In Africa...
it was the method of Marxism
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ny. Our point is this: because the process of class formation in these countries proceeded from entirely different premises than in Europe - imposed from the outside rather than generated within - the colonial situation gives new meaning to terms and concepts which were originally developed to analyze 19th and 20th century Europe. It was the *method* of Marxism, rather than its *model*, which increasingly came to guide the practice of the liberation movements. Therefore, it was not mainly from books but from their own hard work in the years of armed struggle and construction of a new society in the liberated regions that PAIGC, Frelimo, and MPLA developed their analysis and shaped their political line.

Anti-Colonialism & People's Power

Only a few of the people who helped found these liberation movements had any clear vision of the kind of independence they wanted. For the most part, the discrimination they felt and the oppression, misery, and brutality they witnessed around them were sufficient to persuade them that a change was needed. Besides, the decolonization taking place in the French, British, and Belgian colonies led them to believe that the Portuguese, too, could be persuaded to withdraw from Africa. A handful of the leaders, mainly as students in Portugal, had been in contact with anti-fascist and

Marxist organizations, and some had taken part in political work within the "mother country." The perspective thereby gained helped guide the movements through the years that lay ahead. But the adaptation of Marxist-Leninist principles to the African anti-colonial struggle was to be a long process based on concrete experience from the struggle itself. The Marxist position - clearly present in MPLA's 1956 founding program, for instance, was of little immediate help in shaping the initial strategy for independence.

As a group, these pioneers faced another major contradiction in launching their struggle: they were "nationalists without a nation," as one of them later remarked. Some were of the "mestizo islands" in the larger cities, others had spent years in the care of missionaries and colonial masters in order to acquire their education. In either case, their assimilation had been at the expense of their Africanness; their sense of identification with the masses of their people was remote. A gulf existed that could only be bridged in time by the demands of the liberation struggle and by political education within the movements.

The nature of the colonial fascist state became the main factor in setting the early direction of the struggle. All forms of opposition to colonial rule - cultural, political, and economic - were suppressed and the would-be liberation movements were forced underground. From precarious positions, they nevertheless expanded their social basis to include wage workers, lower level functionaries, and *déclassé* of the urban centers. As the reformist option was closed, educational work and strikes replaced petitions and appeals, but the ferocity and growing effectiveness of the



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Angolan factory worker.

colonial police gradually made it nearly impossible to function in the towns altogether. Around 1960, after three and four years of such work, respectively, PAIGC and MPLA concluded that, first, only armed struggle could win independence for their countries and that, second, the arena for such a struggle would have to be in the countryside where the participation of the masses of the people could be won. These conclusions also served as Frelimo's initial basis of unity when several smaller Mozambican groups merged to form the Front in 1962.

The first major plank of these movements' strategy could be formulated thus: in their situation where "the colonial state commands history" and there is no developed national consciousness, the class struggle takes the form of a common struggle by all segments of the population against colonial domination. No one segment can succeed on its own. "Unity of all the social strata is the prerequisite for the success of the national liberation struggle," Cabral has written.

As the armed struggle gained ground and liberated areas were established, things began to change. First, the struggle itself became an instrument for tremendous cultural progress. Old traditions were modified or broken down, superstition and tribalism reduced. Literacy campaigns, political education, and the introduction of new technology ushered in a new era in the villages and makeshift bush settlements. Second, within this process, class relations and class consciousness went through a corresponding transformation. The peasants gained a sense of national identity, self-confidence, and appreciation of collective effort. The petty-bourgeois movement cadres, on the other hand, had to adopt the hard and simple life-

style of bush life and combat their elitism and contempt for the "indigenous" which many brought with them from the mission schools and universities. In very concrete ways, many of them merged their interests with those of the masses of the people.

It was the protracted character of the liberation wars which made such a transformation possible. A process was started through which, as new contradictions showed themselves and were resolved, often through bitter struggle, the level of unity and ideological clarity within the movements was continually raised. Externally, Portugal could carry on the wars only because of support from the major capitalist powers. The liberation movements, on the other hand, were assisted by the socialist countries and

**The protracted character
of the wars
turned the liberation struggle
into a genuine revolution.**

anti-imperialist organizations in the West. Internally, reactionaries and new exploiters came to the fore in the military struggle and particularly in the building of the new society in the liberated zones. Samora Machel has summarized Frelimo's experience in this stage of its development:

[It] established a new basis for unity: the struggle against colonialism had to be widened to encompass the struggle against its allies: imperialism and national reactionary forces. The struggle against the colonial system had to be linked with the struggle against the imperialist system, against the system of exploitation of man by man.

Summing up the consequences of this new phase, he added: "Once engaged in this process, we were able to turn the liberation struggle into a revolution, raising the armed liberation struggle to the level of a people's liberation war."

To accomplish this leap forward required a high quality of leadership. Of the early veterans, some were killed; others defected to the enemy or simply drifted to the margins of the struggle. But those who prevailed were joined by others, frequently youthful cadres from the countryside whose schooling had been entirely within the framework of the struggle.

A widening social basis enabled the movements to gradually improve their methods of work. With differences in emphasis and concrete application, these methods rested on the organizational principles of *mass participation*, *democratic centralism*, and *collective leadership*. The military struggle required central command and undisputed authority, but whenever possible, important decisions were preceded by discussion among the militants and population of the liberated zones. In this way, personal weaknesses could be neutralized and more people actively engaged in building the new social order. Similarly, criticism and self-criticism were used to build open and responsible leadership which could be subjected to the scrutiny of their subordinates at any time. When the practice of these principles lagged, as inevitably happened, setbacks or stagnation in the struggle often followed.

The overall purpose of such methods was to combine effectiveness with mass participation, technological progress with political and cultural progress, individual advancement with collective advancement. As the liberated regions

expanded, growing administrative complexity was counterbalanced by a strengthening of base level organisms. By this process the movements slowly created the structures of People's Power which would enable them to continue the revolution after national liberation had been achieved.

The success of this effort can be measured in concrete terms: by the tens of thousands who learned to read and write in the bush schools, by the clinics and People's Stores established to upgrade the lives of the population, by the new and humane codes of justice created by the People's Tribunals. But most of all it can be judged by this: the guerrillas of the three liberation movements completely wore out a military force many times larger and better equipped

**The victories
of the colonized African peoples
illustrate the trend
of the world revolution today.**

than their own, they exhausted the political-military strength of a regime with ample access to the most advanced capitalist technology, and in the end they freed the people of Portugal as well as their own peoples from colonial and fascist oppression. Their victory is a most graphic illustration of the trend of world revolution today.

An understanding of this process is key to assessing the present class forces and the prospects for building socialism in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. Most of all, we must understand that despite continued material hardship and a low level of technological development, these peoples have reached levels of national

and class consciousness which may make it possible for their countries to force the pace of history. But the extent to which this will be possible does not depend only on the characteristics of the liberation movements. The context - political and economic, domestic and international - surrounding their victories now imposes itself with full force on the plans of the new governments.

The Watershed of Independence

Imperialism's strategy of decolonization has been to create an indigenous bourgeoisie and help it build a state to ensure continued economic dependency and political subservience in relation to the imperialist metropole. Even where independence was won through mass action, for example in Kenya, this new bureaucratic bourgeoisie can betray the liberation struggle and pressure imperialism into concessions which cause the new class to thrive and consolidate its power. Installed by imperialist initiative or acquiescence these neocolonial regimes remain (willing) prisoners, dependent on foreign capital and technical assistance.

Attempts to carry out this strategy in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau failed. In the latter two countries, Western-sponsored "liberation" movements never gained a foothold among the people, and the rapid collapse of Portuguese colonialism left imperialism little time to develop a new strategy. In Angola the neocolonial option was eliminated with the defeat of FNLA, UNITA, and FLEC in the bloody and traumatic Second War of Liberation. In all three countries, the political, social, and cultural transformations which took place during

the armed struggle placed the largely petty-bourgeois leadership - the class imperialism would normally use as its agent - beyond its immediate reach. Years of living and fighting under the most difficult conditions, integrated with the population in the rural areas, helped reshape the outlook and values of many cadres to transcend their former class position. Further, this process of "class suicide" has been paralleled by the rise of a new generation of cadres whose schooling and practical political experience has been almost entirely within the framework of the liberation struggle and who exercise a growing influence within the movement and government structures. Their combined experience has shown them that the aims of their struggle are incompatible with the neocolonial option - that only socialism can help them achieve economic, social, and cultural independence.

From the recognition of this fact to actually achieving socialism is a long and difficult road. First, the national economies of the former colonies were developed only to the extent that they served the interests of the settlers and the metropolitan bourgeoisie. Agricultural "development" involved exporting cash crops such as coffee and cotton while many Africans were subsisting on starvation diets. Minerals, too, were mined only to be exported, unprocessed, in exchange for currency which either went to finance the colonial wars or to import luxury goods for the privileged minority. In short, the colonial economies were geared to the mechanisms of the capitalist world market and not to the needs of the African peoples. To make matters worse, much of the infrastructure was destroyed during the war. Immediately before independence departing settlers and

colonial personnel almost drained the countries dry, sending out all the money and valuables within their reach and even destroying much of the property that had to be left behind.

Second, to rebuild their countries, the new regimes need money and technology. Even if the capital could be obtained, colonial education left the vast majority of Africans with nothing. "The denial of education to our people was perhaps the worst of all the crimes of colonialism," an MPLA cadre has said. To build a system of education - both general literacy and technical training - will take years and requires an enormous effort.

A logical consequence of colonial penetration was the growth of the urban areas, especially in Angola and Mozambique. Administrative and industrial nerve centers such as Maputo, Beira, Luanda, and Huambo, attracted growing numbers of Africans whose lives came to revolve around the requirements of foreign interests. Clerks, industrial workers, domestic servants, and "lumpens" were fed crumbs from the colonialist table and most could only with difficulty be physically and politically reached by the liberation movements. The resulting pervasiveness of "European" values in the cities and the urban-rural gap which separates such people from the rural majority creates another obvious barrier to the consolidation of liberation movement rule.

Finally, the effective seizure of state power is not an overnight operation. The very structure of the state apparatus was molded over centuries to serve the cause of colonial exploitation and oppression; the people who filled its slots were either direct representatives of the colonial system or, in the case of African functionaries, had been deeply compromised by

it. To transform such a colossal apparatus requires clear objectives. Thus, six months after Mozambican independence, President Machel could still report to the Central Committee of Frelimo that, "The existing state apparatus, its functioning, the norms that rule it, the manner of recruiting personnel, the orientation that directs it, ... all these correspond exclusively to the interests of the colonial and capitalist bourgeoisie in dominating, oppressing, and exploiting the working masses."

The *internal* contradictions of this period thus oppose a ruined and distorted economy to the tremendous material needs of the population; a desperate shortage of skilled cadres to the many tasks ahead; swollen, corrupted, and generally parasitic cities

**National liberation
has brought the liberation movements
to face imperialism directly.**

to the sparsely populated but politicized rural areas; and an outdated state apparatus to the socialist projects of the new regimes.

Externally, as well, national liberation has given way to a new and complex set of contradictions. The elimination of Portuguese colonialism has brought the liberation movements cum governments to face imperialism directly. Substantial assistance from socialist and some social-democratic countries is not sufficient to escape the reach of multinationals, the big capitalist powers, and their multi-lateral financial and trade networks. As the Vietnamese, too, have come to recognize, emphasis on self-reliance does not eliminate the need for modern technology, controlled foreign

investment, and export revenue to finance imports. A decisive break with imperialist economic domination is a process, not something to be achieved by a single blow.

Mozambique and Angola also face military pressure from the racist regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa, bolstered by inveterate colonists who fled to the white-ruled fortress after the Portuguese collapse. These forces, with the backing of ultra-reactionary European organizations and Mobutu's Zaire pursue a strategy of military aggression and sabotage from within in order to turn back the tide of revolution throughout Southern Africa. At times this strategy may clash with that of the more "enlightened" imperialist factions, but generally the two complement each other as in the 1975-76 invasion of Angola and in efforts to preserve the Smith regime in Rhodesia.

People's Democracy and the Transition to Socialism

It is in such an environment that the liberation movements assume state power. Faced with an explosive constellation of internal and external contradictions, the revolutionary regimes enter the stage of People's Democracy, "our historical transition from a colonized, underdeveloped society, dominated by capitalism with feudal manifestations to a socialist society," in the words of Frelimo. More concretely, People's Democracy involves the destruction of the colonial state, the democratization of political and economic structures, and an immediate improvement in the social and material conditions of the masses of the population. People's Power,

the experience from the liberated regions, is to be generalized throughout the territories.

In the economic sphere this translates into efforts to reorganize and increase agricultural and industrial production. With more than 80 per cent of the people living from the land, the first priority must be to develop food production and move toward self-sufficiency in this sphere. Industry, where it exists, will be restructured to produce for agriculture and, gradually, the mass consumption goods that presently have to be imported. In this way, using "agriculture as the basis and industry as the driving factor," the new revolutionary governments are starting to build for economic independence.

Innumerable obstacles have to be overcome in the coming stage of the economic struggle. Many kinds of data must be collected and analyzed in order to create an overall plan. Thousands of cadres must be trained, transport and communications improved, and new international links developed. In these tasks the state plays the central role, even when private initiative is still present, including foreign investment in activities that the governments themselves do not yet have the capacity to undertake. In all three countries, banking has been nationalized as have the enterprises which were abandoned by their colonial owners and managers during the period leading up to independence. In Angola, settler plantations have been turned into cooperatives run by the peasants and former plantation laborers, who can now market their produce through special trading cooperatives and, for the first time, obtain bank loans for fertilizer and equipment. In Mozambique, emphasis is given to establishing communal villages that



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Mayday in Luanda.

will enable the rural population to raise their productive level and gain easier access to schools and clinics. In short, an extensive transformation of old productive relations precedes further technological development and expansion of production.

Large proportions of the nations' resources are being devoted to improving social conditions. Following Cuba's example, all three countries have undertaken literacy campaigns and made elementary education compulsory. Teachers are recruited from among secondary school students, and a shift from strictly theoretical to practical knowledge accompanies the struggle against the elitism which pervaded the colonial schools. In the health sector the emphasis is on small, often mobile, clinics which can serve the basic medical needs of the population throughout the country. Mass inoculation campaigns against such diseases as cholera and measles have also been part of the early effort.

To protect their revolution has become an inescapable concern of all three regimes. Mozambique is regularly attacked by the Rhodesian Army, and Angola is attacked by Zaire and by South Africa from Namibia. Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, too, have been targets of counter-revolutionary violence since independence. The creation of national defense forces with a basis in the former guerrilla armies has therefore had high priority. The organization of local militias - composed of peasants, workers, and students; men and women - plays an important role in this effort.

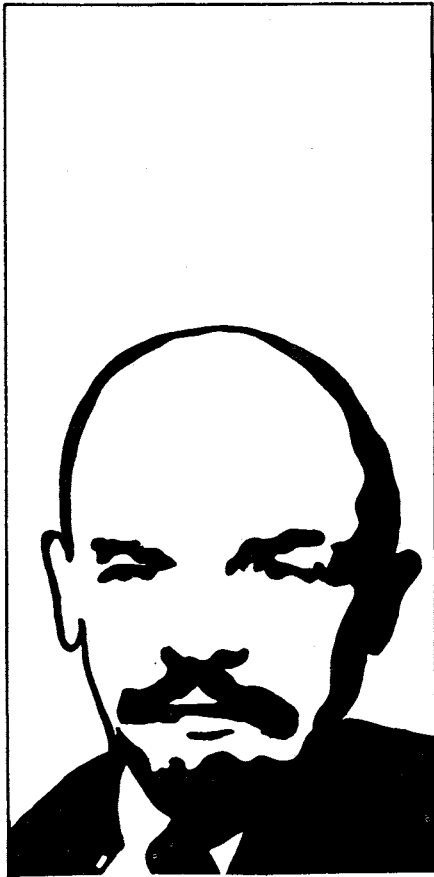
Military and political organization go hand-in-hand. The essential role of mass organizations of women, youth, workers, and peasants is to mobilize the population to actively defend their sovereignty while erasing the

**The decision to create
Marxist-Leninist vanguard parties
is a decisive step forward
in the newly liberated colonies.**

colonial heritage and building a new society. First and foremost this requires raising the level of political consciousness of all. To get children to school; to get people to work collectively and for long hours; to recruit volunteers for the militia; to combat racism, tribalism and superstition; all these are tasks that can only be achieved by a high level of organization and under a strong and united leadership.

The most decisive step in this organizational offensive is the present decision to create Marxist-Leninist vanguard parties in Mozambique and Angola. *De facto* vanguards, guided by a socialist world view, developed within the liberation movements during the armed struggle, but the movements nevertheless remained broad popular fronts, encompassing patriots of different political currents. With independence, the struggle for internal change and independence from imperialism leads to a sharpening of the class struggle. This establishes the need for a new kind of organization, one which can effectively embed the vision of the new society in the structures that are presently taking shape, can give the decisive leadership required. "Our process of national reconstruction demands a strong organism ... which can bring the people to become politicized through this same process, and which can transmit clear directives that the people will respond to," as Angola's Foreign Minister, Paulo Jorge, put it.

To set these countries - technologically backward and with marked



precapitalist social features - on the road to socialism is an ambitious project and will take a tremendous effort by these new parties. They will need at least as much stamina, ingenuity, and commitment as they have demonstrated in the earlier phases of their struggle. On visits to the newly liberated countries, we have often heard movement cadres remark that, "Our problems during the armed struggle were simple compared to those which face us today." But this acknowledgement always comes with a tone of determination rather than of resignation.

The Challenge Ahead

In the past twenty years Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau have significantly advanced in the process that Fidel described, "from near tribalism to socialism." To African nationalists of two decades back, political independence was the goal, the condition that would end their problems of poverty and backwardness. While events in the rest of Africa painfully dispelled this myth, the patriots of the Portuguese colonies entered a struggle which ultimately placed their countries outside the usual pattern of transition from colonialism to neocolonialism. In the process of their fight they found that their efforts were being held back by divisions and negative traditions among their own peoples, as well as by international capitalist assistance to the Portuguese regime. Gradually, their objectives came to transcend the kind of independence that the rest of Africa experienced, and as they were forced to mobilize and organize the full energies of their peoples for the armed liberation struggle, the outlines of a new society became visible in the liberated regions. Within the movements, people of different class and ethnic backgrounds began to overcome their sectional outlook and unite around common goals. The struggle for national independence became the first stage of a socialist revolution. With national independence achieved, the colonial intermediary has been eliminated, and the new regimes now directly confront imperialism.

At present, enormous difficulties face the revolution. To consolidate the new social order and lay the basis for further transformation, the liberation movement governments must turn the victory of the anticolonial strug-

Whilst we tell the workers that they must go through 15,20, perhaps even 50 years of war and civil war, not only in order to alter existing conditions, but even to make themselves fit to take over political power.

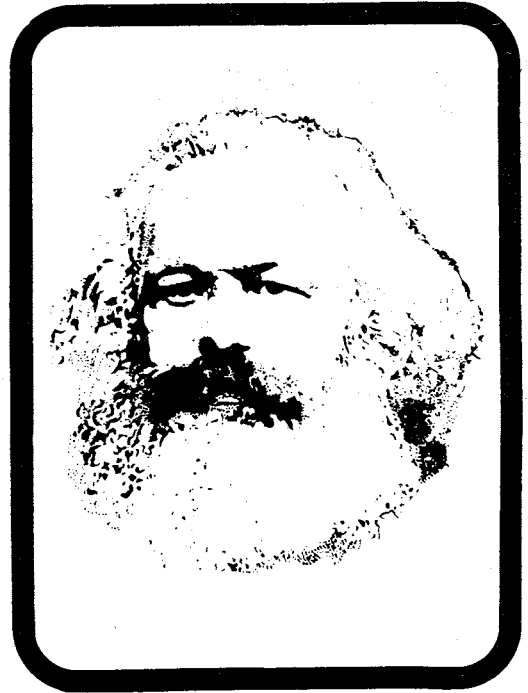
KARL MARX

gle into concrete material gains for the masses of the population. In their daily lives - by their food, housing, and access to education and medical care - the exploited and oppressed majority must begin to see that the new system does indeed serve their interests.

A second challenge, crucial in the African context, is to strengthen national unity across class and tribal boundaries, and at the same time to begin the transfer of political power into the hands of "the most exploited classes" - the workers and the peasants. To accomplish this, tribal and regional consciousness, long cultivated by colonialism and traditional leaders, must first be superseded by a national consciousness. Second, literacy campaigns, technical training, and formation of agricultural cooperatives and workers' factory committees are aimed at raising political consciousness and collective capacity for peasants and workers to play a growing part in running the countries. Third, patriotism and class consciousness must be made to complement each other in mobilizing all possible segments of the population against imperialist aggression and for the construction of socialism. In effect, the class struggle takes place within the framework of a continuing national liberation struggle. The correct leadership of this process is a demanding task, the complexity of which can hardly be overestimated.

Considering the numerous other challenges that face the former Portu-

guese colonies on the road to socialism, we may well ask: Is it possible? Given the predicament of most underdeveloped countries, why should we expect these poor and problem-ridden nations to achieve a breakthrough in Africa now? In fact, this question is often answered in the negative, particularly by socialists and communists within the imperialist metropolises. According to some of these, countries such as Mozambique are economically too backward and have too underdevel-



oped a class formation to escape neo-colonial domination. Socialism in the metropole, these theorists contend, is a prerequisite for the transformation of the Third World. Others, of the Right as well as the Left (and it is often difficult to tell them apart!), argue that the liberation movements represent a foot in the door for a new kind of imperialism, engineered by the USSR, which is today replacing old dependencies with new ones throughout the world.

Anti-imperialists must take issue with such views. Still, we must not drift to the opposite extreme and portray the advance of socialism in the former colonies as a matter-of-course. Despite impressive accomplishments on the economic, social, and cultural fronts, the road ahead is largely uncharted and detailed predictions are difficult.

What does remain certain, however, is that only through socialism can Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique - and all such countries - drag themselves out of the swamp of underdevelopment. Growing recognition of this necessity throughout Africa, Asia, and Latin America has become the driving

force of contemporary history. The national liberation movements represent a critical stage in the socialist transformation of the world and today constitute the greatest challenge to the imperialist system. With national independence and their socialist programs, the ex-colonies fight in the forefront of this battle as part of the world proletarian forces.

This, in the long term, is their fundamental significance for us who, whether in Europe or North America, are inextricably part of the same transformation process. The consequences are clear enough to the Western powers. Thus, while trying to blunt the radicalization of the Namibian, Zimbabwean, and South African liberation movements, they also strive to "destabilize" Angola and Mozambique. Acting through their intelligence services, international organizations, and in collusion with the South African government, the Western governments try to ensure that MPLA and Frelimo do not survive to carry out their socialist projects. How to disrupt this campaign is now the strategic question for anti-imperialists on our continent.

"As foreseen by Lenin, with the appearance of imperialism, the main contradiction has become the one which opposes monopoly capitalism to the superexploited masses of the periphery. As a consequence of this, the center of gravity has changed and anti-imperialist struggles have enabled the masses in the periphery to contribute to the world socialist revolution."

MPLA

"Bush Mama"

Movie Review

Bush Mama is a film made by Haile Gerima before he turned his attention to the lot of the peasantry in his native Ethiopia (*Harvest: 3000 Years*). In *Bush Mama* he probes the drab underside of urban America proscribed for poor black people. Through the character of Dorothy, a strong, sensitive black woman, Gerima casts in human form the daily struggles for survival in our city ghettos as well as the resistance these give rise to. Because of the stark confrontation with reality he employs, Gerima's message and method are both challenging.

The film begins with an everyday scene in Watts, Los Angeles. TC, a black man, is arrested by a legion of police while his friends and neighbors helplessly look on. Among the onlookers is TC's wife, Dorothy, who becomes another victim of his unjust detention. Pregnant, she is left alone to survive and meet the needs of her daughter. Dorothy's only resort is welfare, convincingly depicted as a cold, callous bureaucracy with little interest in human needs.

The story unfolds by reenacting bits and pieces from Dorothy's memory. We learn that TC is a Vietnam vet, torn by violent nightmares in which he relives his role in the war. But there are also glimpses of the short-lived joy which they shared. The image of TC is that of a man who just wants to work and make a decent living

for himself and his family. Then, with brutal suddenness, TC is shown being led down endless prison corridors as a long series of metal gates clang behind him, one after another. In prison he radicalizes while Dorothy, on the outside, gradually comes to understand her own world. This life of police repression, petty theft, cynicism, and downright insanity generates increasing resistance in Dorothy.

The film's strength lies in its dynamic portrayal of Dorothy's interaction with her environment and of her growing political consciousness generated by oppressive conditions. She moves from the depths of demoralization to passive resistance in fantasies to eventual real resistance. The ending is as positive in its expression of this resistance as it is brutal in its consequences.

Bush Mama sees the role of women differently than do some sectors of the feminist movement. Motherhood is not a burden but a critical responsibility through which women, often without the help of men, rear the new generation and thus insure the survival of an oppressed people. Abortion is viewed from the vantage point of black and hispanic people in the US; rather than serving as a tool of liberation, abortion is often deliberately planned genocide initiated by the

state. Dorothy's welfare worker, for instance, tries to force her to give up her unborn baby. As Dorothy's awareness grows, she perceives not just the need for her own liberation but a broader responsibility to her family and people.

Bush Mama is not a Hollywood film. The poverty and alienation which permeates life in urban ghettos are conveyed through many skillfully blended images and symbols. Events are not arranged in chronological order but jump back and forth between past and present. Dorothy's many fantasies are interspersed. Gerima is trying to develop a new cinematic language, refusing, in his own words, "to use the conventional, corrupted way of filmmaking" in which cinema is an escape from reality. He therefore expects that people will have difficulty watching the film.

However, the story also has too many themes and is often confusing,

weakening its impact. Gerima's style may appeal to progressive intellectuals, but the people he portrays will have difficulty in understanding it. The film is also politically weak in its lack of clarity on whether Dorothy's enemies should be defined by skin color or class.

Despite these problems, *Bush Mama* enriches our understanding of US ghetto life and of the potential for revolutionary changes this environment generates. The film parallels LSM's Life Histories from the Revolution series in its representation of a process of repression and struggle from the vantage point of individual members of oppressed classes. *Bush Mama* bridges the gap between a theoretical understanding of class conflict and its human expression.

Bush Mama is available from Tricontinental Film Center, Berkeley and New York.

TRICONTINENTAL FILMS



Luanda Diary

Angola is being cast in a new mold. After centuries of colonial domination and fifteen years of liberation war, tremendous changes are taking place in the daily lives of the Angolan people. LSM member Carol Barnett witnessed this process at close range during her five-month stay in Luanda, the capital city, earlier this year, while working with SWAPO of Namibia on the printshop project. Following are excerpts from Carol's letters home "to all comrades."

FEBRUARY Luanda is still undergoing repairs. Most of the streets are clean and all rubble has been removed, but some areas still bear scars from the war: entire walls torn down and broken concrete lying about, sidewalks ripped up where mortar shells landed.

The dislocations have been many. During the Second War of Liberation more than one hundred bridges were blown up and the truck fleet was reduced by 80 per cent. As a consequence, all kinds of transport have suffered including that of food and other essential commodities. Nobody in Luanda is starving, but the diet is monotonous and it takes time to find enough to get by. Only the newly-formed neighborhood cooperatives sell food, and they have established a quota system to ensure that available goods are shared equally. Sugar,

oil, and salt seem always to be available; sometimes there is canned food. Long lines form outside when the slightest rumor spreads that soap is available. Bread, on the other hand, is distributed at most workplaces. The marketplace is open as usual and is a source of fruit and fish, though the prices are stiff.

With neither the know-how to get food nor facilities for cooking I take most meals at a cafe. Here my diet is no doubt better than that of most Luandans; to me it is nevertheless drab: fried fish and rice or noodles every day. Have you tried to go for a month without the taste of butter or cheese? Or even onions? I try to take it in the spirit of a political lesson - this, after all, is how two-thirds of humanity lives - only to find that my privileged "needs" have really sunk in. It is the same with the other foreigners here; whenever we get together, we seem to talk a lot about food

MARCH The colonial past pops up in many ways. In one of the bigger book shops, scattered around among old inventory, I found a few books in English. There were *The Bride Today*, *World Aflame* by Billy Graham, *Guide to Antiques*, *How to Play Golf*, and a few other similar titles. Well, there is



LSM

Angolan workers celebrating Mayday.

no longer a market for this kind of literature; like other cultural rubble it is simply vanishing.

Not that Angola is closing its doors to the outside world. The radio plays modern European music and even American rock! But most of the music is Angolan, a rhythmic, melodious kind that goes right to my heart. Some is in Portuguese, some in African languages, and nearly all of it has a political message relating to the revolution.

Here, more than ever before, I am made to realize that culture is really political in its essence. For years and years, the emotions and aspirations of a whole people have been suppressed by colonialism with its racist laws and attitudes, its schools and churches. Now that the lid has come off, the expressions of Angola's soul reach everywhere by posters, murals, poems, Anyone can create, everyone participates.

Apart from movies, there is no night life in the city. But once I got to watch a special performance which was first presented at the 1976 Independence anniversary. It depicts 500 years of Angolan history. The first part shows primitive society, people wearing skins, working, getting on well. Enter the Portuguese and the missionaries and things are miserable. The dancers drag themselves through slavery, writhing, contorting across the large, open stage area. The open air "theater" is in an old fort and the suffering is real for those captured and shipped off across the Atlantic. The play shows some tribal differences - including a war dance - and then the unity of the tribes against colonialism. The liberation war is enacted with great zeal, and victory brings flags and a joyous mood. Looking into the future, the

dancers wear medical coats, learn to read, run machines, work the land.

The whole thing is done by a non-professional group; more than fifty dancers with musicians playing guitar and traditional instruments and lovely male singing. Each historical epic was preceded by a short commentary. It was an experience I shall never forget.

APRIL The vaccination campaign is nearly over. It has been a great success, with officials from the World Health Organization saying that they have never seen such a well-organized effort. Early this month they administered polio vaccine to every child under ten and a second dose will follow shortly. Special vaccination centers have been set up all over the country. Just taking a walk through town would convince you of the urgency of this; polio victims whose legs are completely immobile sticks, crawling around on all fours, are a frequent sight. Many, of course, have been reduced to begging. My initial response to these people was to look away, but then I realized that I couldn't simply ignore their existence; they are human beings like the rest of us. So now I frequently meet their eyes and greet them, as is common here when you meet people in the street. The crime, of course, is that this should never have happened. Polio has been controllable for many years now - only not for colonized people.

MAYDAY My first Mayday in a non-capitalist country! The main event of the day is the big parade which passes by the First of May Square where President Neto and a number of MPLA leaders watch from the grandstand. Those in the parade assembled at 7 a.m., but it is almost noon before they start

reaching the square. There must be thirty thousand workers participating, all representing their different areas of work. On the "floats" they pretended to be working at their trades. The health workers have a hospital table on wheels with a bandaged "patient" receiving blood transfusion, cane cutters chop cane, mechanics repair equipment.... While they enter the square, an m.c. leads chants and numerous "vivas," interspersed with recorded music.

On the grandstand, the eight nationally chosen "vanguard workers" receive their honors. They have been selected during the 3-month Socialist Emulation campaign which has just ended. This campaign aimed at increasing production through reorganizing and mobilizing the workers at the factory level, changing attitudes shaped by the colonial past, and developing a new sense of responsibility and commitment which corresponds to Angola's present needs. The "vanguard workers" have shown outstanding contributions to this campaign, shown willingness to work long hours and cooperate with their co-workers to improve the work.

It is obvious that Angola has made a lot of progress in the one year since the country was completely liberated. It is equally obvious that the continuing struggle - the transition toward socialism - is a difficult one. For instance, the number of people who participate in the Mayday event fell far short of the leadership's expectations. And, I've heard, there is not the enthusiasm of last year's event, the first ever to be celebrated in Angola.

Why is this so? I can only offer some ideas. First, the task of politicizing, organizing, and working with the masses of people demands many, many political cadres, many more than MPLA

has at present. While they are needed in the newspapers, radio, etc., doing their political work, this is obviously not enough. Many people cannot read, and many have no radios. Each workplace needs cadres to explain and inspire the workers, by talking to them, by discussing the problems of daily life. We all know that to develop our understanding, we need to struggle; we need somebody to help us understand things that are completely new to us. I have met many very good political people around here, but their energies are consumed by so many different things.

The results of the Socialist Emulation campaign, for example, show the importance of this. In the workplaces that had politically experienced workers, production really improved and other workers were mobilized. But in other places, the question of working extra hours caused conflict. At one school, some teachers only agreed to work the extra 2 hours a day if they were paid for it.

That is where things stand today, and a lot of struggle is yet to come. Developing socialism is never easy. But the accomplishments that I have witnessed from the eighteen months of independence leave me very encouraged.

THE COUP ATTEMPT 27 May I woke up at five this morning from the noise of heavy arms fire. It lasted for about an hour and left me wondering whether it had been a military exercise or what. I finally went back to sleep - and almost slept through a ten o'clock appointment. Rushing out of the house, I noticed the neighborhood kids playing on the veranda. Why aren't they in school? The streets were unusually quiet, almost deserted. In the distance, I saw a roadblock manned by armed soldiers. Two truckloads of

young people went by, but no busses were running, nor were any stores open. I met the SWAPO comrades who had closed their office early though they, too, were wondering what was going on.

We are at the end of a tense week. Last weekend the MPLA's Central Committee expelled Nito Alves and Jose Van Dunem for factionalism. Since then there have been political rallies and messages from the movement leaders warning of the dangers from those trying to take over the MPLA and create divisions among the people. But still I don't know what is happening outside, why the radio is off the air.

Finally, just past noon, the radio comes back on. Music is followed by appeals to everybody to remain in their homes; the "situation is under control." Then there are slogans in support of President Neto and against factionalism. At about three, the President himself comes on the air, explaining that factionalist elements have tried to seize power but have been routed. They wish to destroy what is being built in this country; they have also killed several of MPLA's leaders. The President sounds terribly tired, like he hasn't slept for days.

MID-JUNE For ten days after the coup attempt the Luanda streets were strictly controlled by FAPLA troops, many with bayonets fixed. Roadblocks were set up at major intersections and nobody could enter important buildings, such as the newspaper or armory, without special documents. Since then, however, they must have rounded up most of the leading factionalists, because now I hardly notice the troops, though they are still around.

During the past two weeks, the plot

has also been revealed to the public. Media coverage has been very good, especially on TV which has been showing many of the plotters giving testimony. None of it was prepared or edited in any way; they just stood there and talked. After news like this, there have been films on Cuba and Chile, drawing parallels and lessons to be learned from other struggles.

Bit by bit, we have also seen what the "nitists" did to sabotage the government and create discontent among the people. Food was secretly stored before it reached the co-ops, army wages were held back by officers aligned with the factionalists, people were duped and organized on the basis of racist and "ultra-left" ideas against the government which was supposed to be moving to the right! Then, in their last drive for power, they slaughtered those who stood in their way, acting no less barbarously than colonialism did before them.

These revelations are a shock to many. But they also tell us something about the seriousness of the revolution, about what kind of forces we are up against. And even if life is now returning to normal, it will take some time to get used to the thought of how close the counter-revolutionary forces really were, right here among us! It is to stamp out such lust for power and all the corruption and degradation that come with it that I shall continue to devote the best of my energies. I hope that in some small way, my being here and teaching vitally needed skills will help in this process.

I am very impressed with the way the government and MPLA are handling the situation. There is no hysteria; just the plain hard facts and the good political education that comes along

with this lesson. And they have started to "clean up," too, abolishing ineffective and bureaucratic posts and dismissing people who have not carried out their tasks.

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES - Late June

Yesterday I went with 3 SWAPC comrades to the Cuba/Angola soccer match - an historic event! The first time for Angola to participate in international sporting competition. There was a tremendous turnout! Over

tries where the money goes to individuals and big companies. The tickets cost 50 kwanzas, about \$1.70.

Last week MPLA's Action Committee appealed for volunteer labor to work at the port on Sunday to clear medicines and food for distribution throughout the country. Over 3,000 workers came and between 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. they unloaded 900 tons of food and 200 tons of medicines. At first I thought the "call" was directed to dock workers but later found that work-



SWAPO/LSM

Carol with SWAPO comrades.

50,000 people. That was some experience in itself, being part of a crowd that big and being nearly crushed trying to enter the gate. And Angola won: 1-0. There are two more games.

I read that the money from the sale of tickets will be used to develop sports here, build more facilities, etc., and not as in capitalist coun-

ers came out from various sectors along with students and intellectuals. Next Sunday they are doing it again as part of an attempt to clear out goods which have been sitting around because of sabotage on the part of the factionalists.

Another interesting campaign underway is being launched by UNTA (Nation-

al Union of Angolan Workers). They hope to mobilize thousands of volunteers to harvest the coffee crop and want 170 brigades from Luanda Province. There will be 30 people to a brigade and one health worker for every 3 brigades. The target is for each person to pick a bag of coffee daily (I think a bag is 100 lb.). The campaign will last 2 months beginning on 15 July. Some brigades will go for the whole period, some for 15 days, and some for 1 week. Others, recruited only from coffee-producing areas, will volunteer on weekends.

Each worker will receive his/her normal salary from their regular place

of employment but will have their room and board taken care of at the picking site. Transport is also being provided.

This is seen as helping to develop the critical alliance between the workers and peasants. Coffee is crucial to the national economy and allows the purchase of machinery (tractors, for instance) as well as food with which to feed the population. This mobilization shows the peasants that the workers are not parasites on their labor and thus helps the unity that Neto talks about quite frequently in his speeches.

FROM the STRUGGLE



ONE NAMIBIA ONE NATION
(SWAPO Freedom Songs)

and **A VITÓRIA É CERTA**
(Angola)

AFRICAN MUSIC
and **RHYTHMS**

each record \$5.00
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CHE

Like us

He was searching
For a path.

A path for now
Which countless multitudes of marching feet
Will widen into a road.

But he did not only search.

The path he sought
Was the road he paved.

This path led

From Argentina
To Mexico
To the Sierra Maestra.

From Cuba
To the Congo
To Bolivia.

This path
Can take us

To Vietnam,
Angola,
Mozambique,
Guinea-Bissau.

To Timor,
Oman,

And everywhere
Oppression cries out
With loud voice and soft step
On the jungle path at night.

He was not the first
To blaze a path
Nor will he be the last.

A path has wound its way
Past our door.

And though
He has laid down his rifle,
Two of us were there
To raise it again

And carry it down the path
Until it becomes

A highway of revolution.

S.G.

Internationalism on the Waterfront

What kind of image is conjured up by the stevedore's hook? Some may remember the pro-war longshoremen and hard-hatted construction workers who fought anti-war demonstrators in New York City several years back. Yet in San Francisco, longshoremen and their union, International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Local 10, participated in and helped finance many anti-war demonstrations. More recently a group of San Francisco longshoremen has been playing an active role in mobilizing support for the liberation movements in Southern Africa. In this way these ILWU members are working to move their union and community in a progressive and internationalist direction, setting an example from which others can learn.

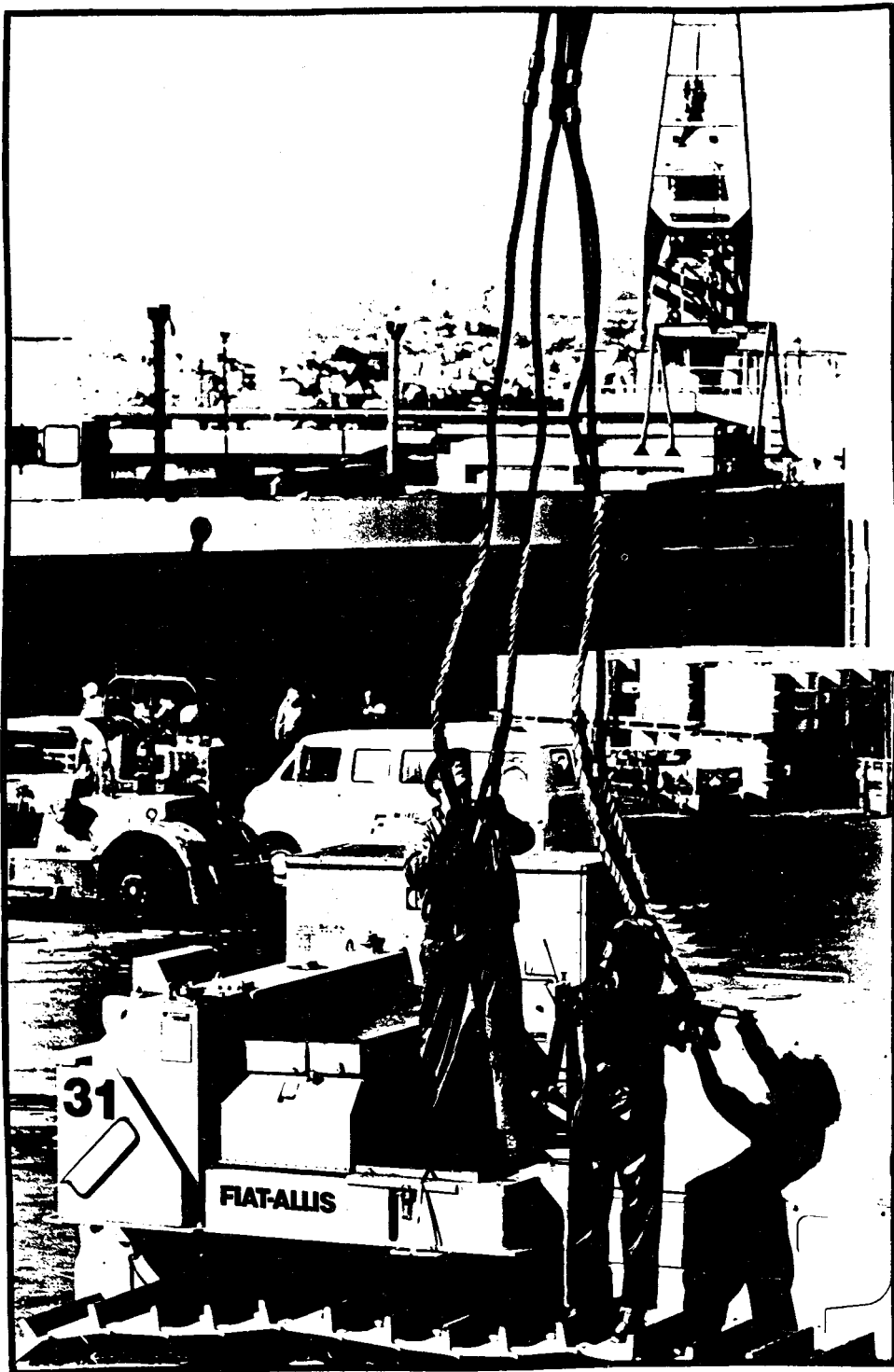
Just how great is the potential for anti-imperialist work among rank-and-file longshoremen? Are they a revolutionary sector of the working class? These questions are raised in the following article by LSM member Larry Wright, a longshoreman since 1969 and an active member of Local 10's Southern Africa Liberation Support Committee. Here Larry discusses both the basis for advancing anti-imperialism among longshoremen and the contradictions the Committee faces in doing this work. He also discusses the important material and social factors which shape the class outlook of this

group of workers.

This critical examination of ILWU workers is based on personal experience and study. It is a small step toward developing an objective, non-dogmatic study of classes within the "center" of the imperialist system. To develop an accurate and useful class analysis, we must examine the facts about each segment of the proletariat, as well as the other classes in capitalist society.

Just after the 1976 Soweto uprising in South Africa, a number of men in my union formed the ILWU Local 10 Southern Africa Liberation Support Committee. To a large extent, they were moved to do something by the South African government's brutal suppression of the student revolt. About 60% of the union members are black, so there's sentiment in support of African liberation struggles and, particularly, outrage and anger about the apartheid regime. The Committee is also largely black with an active membership of ten, though five or six of us end up doing the bulk of the work. When major events come up, more guys get involved.

Politically, our Committee is a diverse group, but we are all in support of peoples' struggles for self-determination and independence from imperialism. We all want to learn more



about the liberation movements. Some identify strongly with the struggles of black people in Africa against racism and oppression. A few consider themselves socialists or communists and see the liberation movements as part of the socialist revolution. However, there's little identification with socialism within the Committee as such or in the union at large; there's little understanding of the need to replace the capitalist system with socialism. Still, because of the ILWU's particular history and the nature of longshoring, there is potential for solidarity work. A committee such as ours therefore has to focus on the anti-imperialist struggle and support for the liberation movements, or most members will just become alienated and not participate at all. Before I go into the limits and contradictions of our solidarity work, let's look at what the Committee has been able to accomplish.

Clothes for Zimbabwe

Our first project was to work jointly with left organizations in the Bay Area on a clothing shipment for Zimbabwean refugees in Mozambique. This shipment was a concrete way for people in the Bay Area to express their solidarity with the liberation struggles and many different people and groups participated. The Third World Fund, ZANU Support Committee, Bay Area Namibia Action Group (BA-NAG), and National Anti-Imperialist Movement in Solidarity with African Liberation (NAIMSAL) all played a big role. Through the union we were able to get two 20-foot-long container vans and fill them with 12 tons of clothing. The ILWU was also able to arrange free shipping of these vans from San Francisco to Mozambique, something which saved us several thousand dollars.

The union hall was one of the places used to sort and pack the clothes. For several months when the men came down to the hall they'd see all these people, as well as other longshoremen, working and often they'd join in, too. Guys would join us because they could see something concrete was being done in sending material directly to Southern Africa. Even the ILWU Drill Team, which is a parade team of longshoremen and their sons, came down to help. This work helped get the Committee known within the union. This will help us to organize more such shipments.

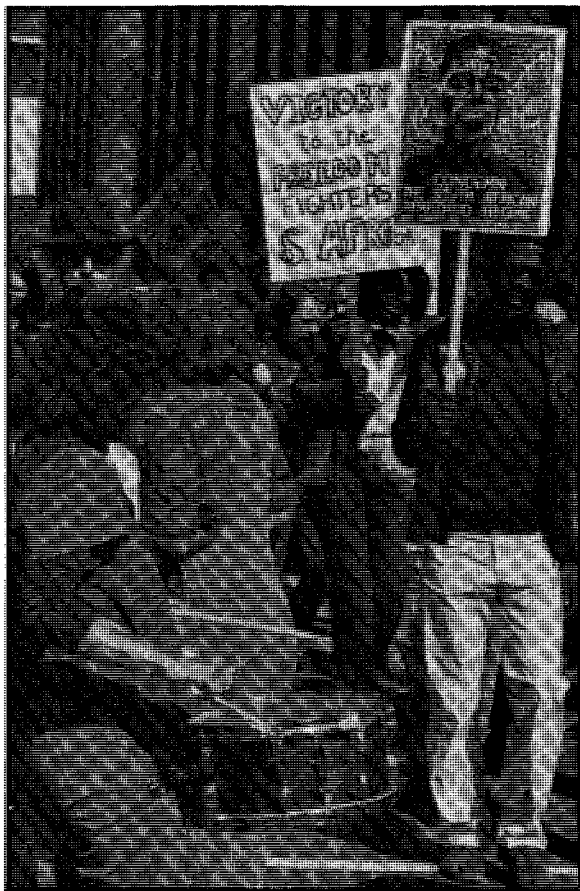
Education among the longshoremen is a large part of our work. We showed the film "Last Grave at Dimbaza" to a union meeting of 400 and it was well received. In the days following the film showing there was discussion about fascism in South Africa, the conditions of black workers under apartheid, and what we could do to help change the situation. This was the first time in the seven years I've been in the union that a film has been shown at a meeting. Clearly, there had to be a lot of interest for it to get put on the agenda. We've also shown films and talked to smaller groups of longshoremen and their families. We have been generating support for the liberation struggles that way: educating, raising funds, and getting other people to work with us on projects like the clothing drive.

Our Committee has also been involved in starting the boycott campaign against Bank of America's investments in South Africa. We see that it is important in our educational work to expose the role of different corporations which support the South African government by investing there. We try to show that their support is a consequence of the tremen-

dous profits they make off "slave labor."

"Boycott, Embargo; Don't Unload the Cargo!"

Last April, after the clothing drive, the Committee initiated a demonstration at one of the San Francisco piers where South African cargo is regularly loaded and unloaded. Frequent shipments of strategic materials, especially asbestos, come through our



port and so far little has been done to stop this flow of goods. At several of its recent conventions our union has passed resolutions condemning apartheid and calling on the US government not to trade with South Africa, but union officers have only paid lip service to these. With the growing understanding of apartheid and the ILWU's connection with it, we felt that this was a good time to call attention to the fact that we are handling these cargoes even though many longshoremen oppose this. Our committee therefore decided to begin generating support for a boycott of South African cargo within the ILWU. To accomplish this would require a process of struggle and education within the union; we would also have to rally the community to back us. Many progressive groups responded to our call for a demonstration on the docks. We formed a coalition with BA-NAG, LSM, Northern California Alliance, Southern Africa Solidarity Coalition, NAIMSAL, the Guardian Bureau, Bay Area Gay Liberation, People's Food System and others.

In the Committee's view, the demonstration was a successful event. More than 500 people turned out at 7:30 AM on Easter Sunday for a spirited demonstration on the docks.

This brought up the issue of South African cargo that morning at the longshore hall where we got a mixed response. Most of the workers agreed that we shouldn't be handling South African cargo. They don't like to work it. But, on the other hand, work has been very slow in our port. Refusing to cross the picket line meant losing the day's pay at Sunday overtime rate. About half of the men refused to cross the picket line set up by the demonstration, but eventually a crew was put together to unload the

cargo. This demonstration did have a great impact, however, and generated discussion in the union over what we should do about South African trade.

The Committee has also been working for the union to get the contractual right to refuse to handle South African cargo so that it can't be charged with an illegal work stoppage. We realize it will be difficult to get the membership to give this demand the same weight as economic issues. Therefore, part of our strategy will be to join with community forces to put pressure directly on the companies which ship to or from South Africa.

After all the discussion of US - South Africa trade links following our demonstration, we were able to pass a resolution at the ILWU bi-annual International convention which called for a "no trade with South Africa" clause to be negotiated into future contracts. Unfortunately the resolution was watered down somewhat before it was passed. The phrasing was changed from "the convention *instructs* all locals to put language in their contracts calling for no trade with South Africa" to the "convention *urges*" this. Nevertheless, we felt that passing the resolution gave us a stronger basis to struggle for a boycott of South African cargo within the ILWU locals.

An encouraging sign is that committees like our own are being formed in other ILWU locals. Several members of Local 6, the Bay Area Warehouse division, came to one of our meetings to find out how to set up their own committee. The longshore local in Los Angeles is forming a group to carry out similar work. So, on a small scale, we see that there is potential for solidarity work within the ILWU in support of the liberation of Southern Africa.

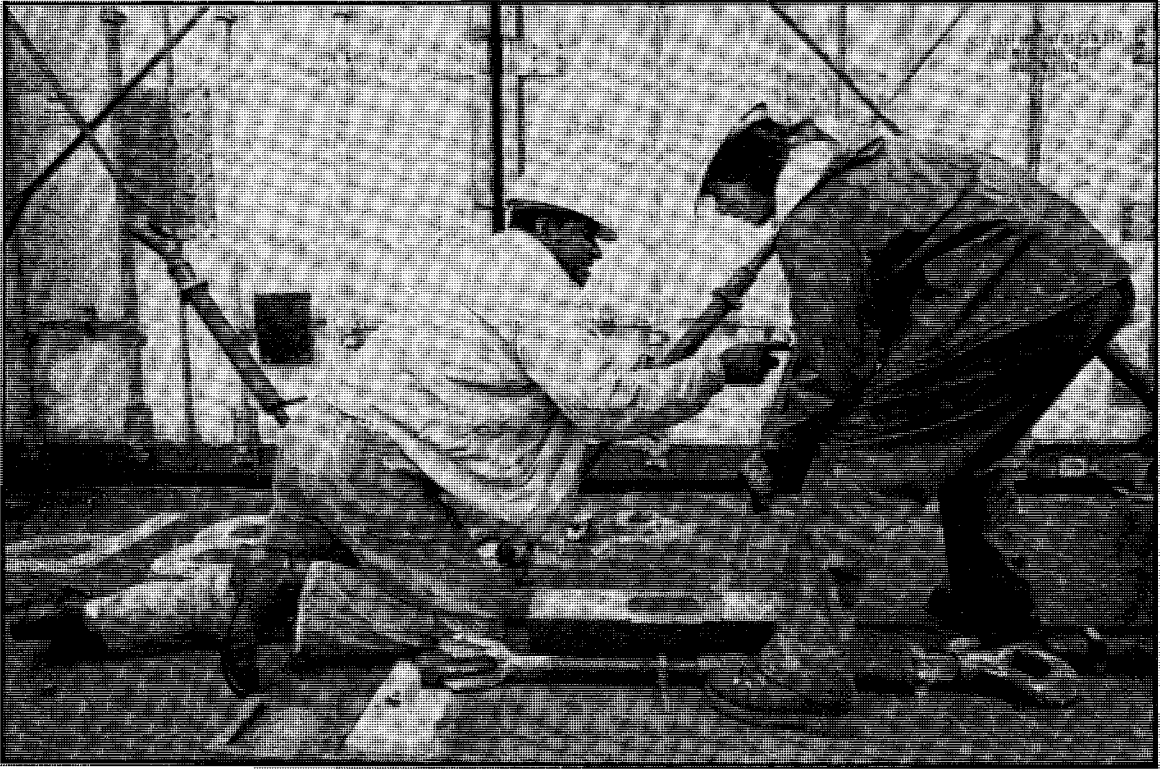
Why the Receptivity?

The ILWU has been known as a radical union since the 1930's. It has had a history of progressive militancy on the waterfront and a record of support for other strikes and struggles. It opposed the use of US troops in Korea, the Dominican Republic, and Vietnam and US collusion with the fascists in Chile. There was opposition to the Vietnam war at both the national and local levels. The union made many statements and resolutions urging the government to get out of Vietnam. More recently the union has gone on record in support of the people's struggle in Chile; the membership feels strongly that the US-organized coup was a very bad thing for peoples struggling for their right to self-determination. They clearly see that they would not like to be in the position of the Chilean people! Many times the members have militantly supported people who are being hurt by a shipping company or an oppressive government.

The basis for this solidarity both within and beyond the union lies in the nature of longshoring work.^{1*} It has been a highly socialized form of work, requiring both group cooperation and individual initiative. The men work in gangs and have to pull together to get the work done. Problems with any one worker affect the whole gang. This promotes an attitude of cooperation and the desire to work together.

Brotherhood on the job has contributed to more equality within the union. For example, in 1934 the ILWU established the hiring hall to guarantee equal work for union members. This forced the shipping companies to

*Notes are at the end of the article.



hire, without favoritism or bribes, from a pool of workers organized by the union. A social sense of sharing what was available grew in the union. The socialized nature of the work, the union organization, and the sense of a shared, common oppression have led within the ILWU to a strong solidarity and class consciousness not common to most North American workers.

The union has many black and other minority workers such as Mexicans and Portuguese, who identify with people's struggles around the world. Working

on the docks and ships brings longshoremen into contact with crews of many different nationalities - Japanese, Filipino, Indonesian, Indian, and different Europeans. We exchange stories when language permits, and sometimes socialize after work. All this counters the national chauvinist attitudes prevalent in the US and contributes to the internationalist outlook of longshoremen, which is one reason they tend to side with struggles in other countries.

Contradictions & Limitations

We shouldn't get the impression, though, that the ILWU is a revolutionary union most of whose members have a strong sense of proletarian internationalism. Many contradictions exist which influence our solidarity work, and we have to look at these too. For example, while the union took a formal position of opposition to the Vietnam War, all of us recognized that the war was providing a lot of work. The ports of San Francisco and Oakland handled enormous quantities of war supplies, much of it at the Oakland army and navy base. The "good years" of the sixties were a direct result of the war, and the union members didn't want to lose the work.

This contradiction would come out when longshoremen were talking about the war. They knew the US was not "saving the Vietnamese from communist aggression" but acting in the interests of big business. Yet, it was not unusual to hear: "Yeah ..., but there's always been wars. I don't like it, but boy, we're sure getting a lot of work out of this." In principle many were against the war but could see it was in their self-interest to keep on loading military cargo.

In 1972 there was a moratorium day against the war; people were asked not to work on that day to show their opposition to American aggression. Our local had a big debate, and lots of statements were made against the war. When it came down to a vote, however, the guys voted to work. Then we even voted to "flop" the workers who observed the moratorium and missed work. (A "flop" is a penalty for not working when you're called.) When it came down to action, the union handled the cargo all through the war and the ma-

ajority of members weren't even willing to take one day off to show solidarity with the Vietnamese. In practice the ILWU supported the war even though they opposed it in words.

Shifting Work Conditions

Changes in the industry are causing the ILWU to lose some of the progressive militancy of its early days. The highly collective nature of our work has been eroded by the modernization and mechanization of longshore work.² Containerized cargoes, larger equipment, and many other changes of the last two decades have had their effect within the union and on the views of longshoremen. Now the work requires less cooperation and initiative; it's more like an assembly-line operation, more routine, and carried out by individuals rather than groups. Thus there aren't the same kinds of relations between the workers that led to feelings of collectivity and brotherhood in the old method of work.

During this same period the shipping companies have offered higher wages in exchange for less union control over work conditions, speed-ups, and automation. Instead of all workers being dispatched from the hiring hall, the companies can now hire "steady men" who do particular tasks for one company. The result is a "company mentality" - wanting to work hard and satisfy the boss in exchange for more money and steady work. This has undermined the sense of brotherhood and is carried over into the politics of the union which has become more concerned with itself and less with support to other struggles.

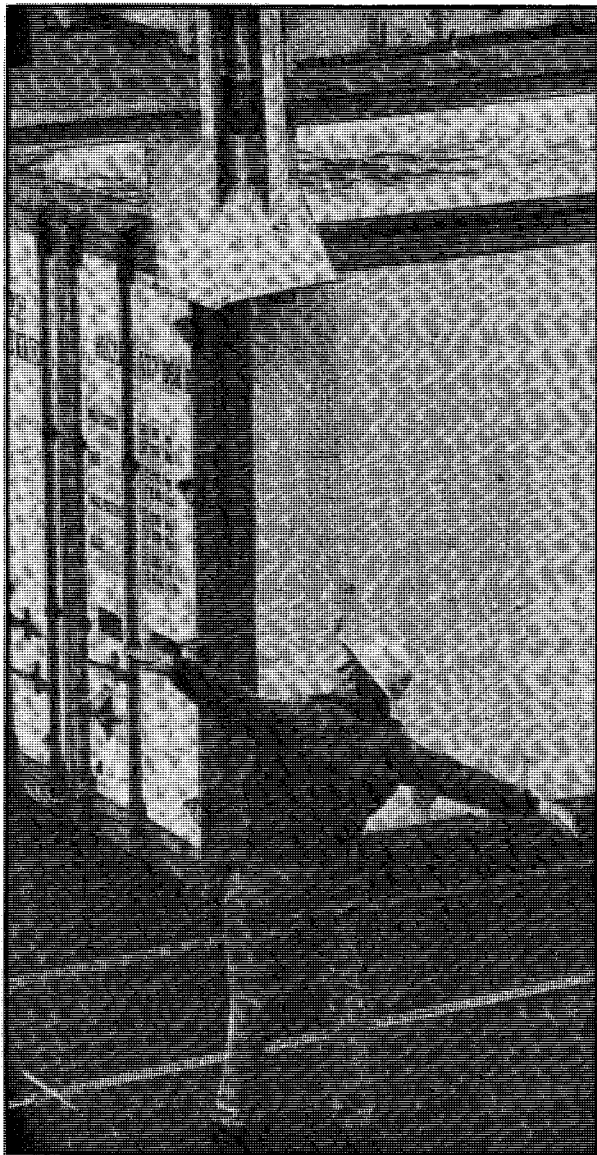
Through the "pay guarantee" the companies also have greater control over the workers. The pay guarantee is part of our contract which ensures

at least four days pay per week regardless of actual days worked. This amounts to a total of about \$200,000 to be shared coast-wide among the longshoremen every week. But if there's an illegal work stoppage in any one port - for instance in the port of San Francisco for refusing to handle South African goods - the employer can refuse to pay the Local its part of the guarantee for that week. The majority of members are not willing to sacrifice their \$300 weekly share by refusing to handle South African cargo. This threat by the companies to the economic interests of the workers undermines whatever progressive feelings they might have.

Solidarity Work: What Prospects?

The Committee has worked with and spoken to many left and anti-imperialist organizations about Southern Africa. Because we are longshoremen, we gain a certain amount of respect from others; they see that workers, too, can express their solidarity with the liberation struggles in a positive way. Although we are only a small committee, and we make this clear, others are encouraged to find workers engaged in anti-imperialist activity. Sometimes I feel people give us too much significance as a group of workers; they see more political development in the union than actually exists and start generalizing that workers are starting to move in a radical direction. It's natural for others to be encouraged by our work, but it's also important to be realistic about what's possible.

I think the potential of our Committee is pretty limited. There are 2,000 longshoremen in Local 10, and there have never been more than 12 ac-



tive members in the Committee. Because of our work, there is now more understanding of Southern Africa and at least a sense of solidarity at the level of passing resolutions. But so far there has been no groundswell of support. At first some of the guys thought we could attract 200 members; now they see that we're going to remain a small committee.

The reason more longshoremen don't get involved in our committee is probably that they don't see how the struggles of the people of Southern Africa affect them directly. We are a highly paid and materially well-off group of workers compared with workers and peasants fighting in places like South Africa or Indochina. To a great extent, longshoremen, as well as other workers in this country, have received high wages and better conditions as a result of imperialism's exploitation of other peoples.

Today, longshoremen are beginning to see the erosion of our own job conditions and security. Yet, even where our own "pork chops" are threatened, it is difficult to organize the ranks in a serious fight against the employer. The new methods of work and the creation of "steady men" has affected the class outlook of many and created divisions within the union. However, as conditions on the waterfront get worse, I'm sure we will unite and put up a strong fight - exactly because it affects us all directly. And as imperialism declines and our living standards suffer qualitative changes, maybe it will be easier for us to see a real and direct connection with the struggles of oppressed peoples in other countries and our own daily lives. Until then I don't think we can expect a large-scale radical solidarity movement to take root among longshoremen or in the North American

working class as a whole.

In the meantime, some workers are outraged by the oppressive nature of imperialism around the world and a few are willing to join and work in committees like ours. We are encouraged to hear that recently a furriers union in New York and locals of the steelworkers union and the Amalgamated Meatcutters and Butchers Union have all taken concrete actions against apartheid in South Africa. East and Gulf Coast longshoremen have many times refused to unload Rhodesian chromium and cargo from South Africa. Such actions do make a real contribution to the revolutionary movements in Southern Africa. At the same time they help to counter the extensive racism and national chauvinism in our society. People are constantly surrounded and bombarded by right-wing propaganda from the capitalist media. Through work like ours, progressive workers begin to understand that internationalism is in their real interests.

Many left organizations appeal mainly to workers' economic interests, those which often tie them to the capitalist system and can easily lead in reformist directions. These acts of solidarity show ways that we can promote links between workers of different countries. Problems such as runaway shops, for instance, must be fought with international links between workers. The only real way to stop corporations from going abroad in search of cheap labor is to fight the conditions that force foreign workers to accept low wages and to support those workers' struggles. This is one example of a material interest of US workers that does conflict with capitalism and which could lead to increasing internationalism. The examples I mentioned show that some workers are



BOX 2077

Prisoner's Appeal

I have just been released from maximum security confinement after 14 months of living in darkness and everything else that goes along with it. I couldn't do any reading in there because I didn't have money to buy any books nor did I know of any place to write and ask for some, so I spent most of the time counting from one to a million, playing mind chess, anything I could think of in order to let these racist people know that I will not let them break me mentally.

I was placed in maximum security for writing an underground newspaper exposing the racist moves that were being done to us at Huntingdon prison which is run by the KKK for real. I'm still struggling and I will never stop until these racist people understand that I'm a human being and a man. ...

I need to read but I can't afford it. Can your organization help me by sending me some books? ... In addition I have been out of contact with what is happening to my brothers and sisters in Angola. I feel bad about that because those are my brothers and sisters over there fighting for their freedom and the ones over here should be helping. ...

Brother BA 2#, Pennsylvania

(LSM tries to fill such requests from prisoners. However this strains our resources. Readers can help by making donations to support this effort.)

Sino-Soviet Split

I haven't had a chance to get involved in political work since there are few political groups here and I don't like their political standpoints. I really support you people and I also strongly support the Angolan people and MPLA. Some groups here are too fanatic toward China; ... they don't even admit to the mistakes of the Chinese government's foreign policy. I think China is a good socialist country but I don't like her foreign policy. I'm a Vietnamese student. I hope to go back home to help my people, to rebuild the country. I'm glad the war is over. We achieved our goal, our hope to defeat US imperialism. Actually there is still a revolution in Vietnam but it is the revolution of the inside of our people's heart, the revolution without blood, killings and violence. Our people are trying to change South Vietnam into a really good socialist country, however North Vietnam and South Vietnam is ... one country. ...

I am neither pro-Soviet Union nor China politically. I accept the fact that everybody can make mistakes, every revolutionary can make mistakes, even every socialist country can make mistakes. I totally disagree with anybody who keeps telling me that Soviet Union is a capitalist country.

...
NTD, Oregon

Since November 76, you were sent no less than six separate editions of our monthly newsletter, each packed with information, references and quotations designed to keep our readers from making the horrible mistakes in policy you have made, specifically in regard to the alignment of world forces for freedom, peace, justice and progress led by the East European socialist nations on the one hand, and for reaction, imperialism, fascism and nuclear catastrophe on the other.

There is little if anything more we can do for those readers who do not choose to follow these leads. There are only two ways of learning: the hard way from one's own bitter experience often fatal, or the easy way from those who've been in the belly of the beast and lived to write about it. Those who will not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

Sanity Now, California

Don't tell me we have *finally* produced a left leadership mature enough to make up its own mind!!! Have you really broken the umbilical cord to Peking or Moscow? I can hardly believe it.

Enclosing \$5 (be more but I am not working) for three more copies of your mag (#13) containing your analysis of Soviet-China split. First common sense report on it that I have seen! Couldn't agree more. Want them for

my friends. ...

An end to infallibility!!! ... Support honest to God people's struggles, when we understand the situation in a given country, and the *honesty* to admit ignorance when we don't!!

...
RC, Seattle

The criticism I have on the Sino-Soviet split article is that I believe you took a very liberal approach to the activities of the USSR. While you correctly stated that the Soviet Union has lent a progressive hand to the revolutionaries in Southern Africa (materially, as well as politically) you did not analyze *why* they are taking such a progressive position. Is it because of "proletarian internationalism" as you appear to assume, or is it a more sinister reason - Soviet self-interest? I believe the latter to be closer to the truth. ...

You ignore the USSR's massive military strength. While I don't believe the USSR is militarily superior to the US, I do believe its military might is qualitatively superior to every other country in the world. I personally believe the USSR is an imperialist nation, although because having a state-capitalist economic system it is different than the US and other imperialist nations. And because of its military might, I believe it is a super-power, although certainly not the danger to the world's peoples that the US is. ...

I believe that as anti-imperialists, we are duty bound to support the self-determination of all national liberation struggles which are supported by the masses within that particular country, regardless of where they get their support. This does not mean we should not be critical when our comrades make errors, but we should

not let secondary issues (like where revolutionaries get arms and support) interfere with the principal issue of freeing countries from the oppression and exploitation of US imperialism and its partners. ...

As you suggested in the Soviet-Sino split article, we must analyze internal conditions within both the USSR and China if we are to understand their particular behaviors on the world scene. I hope you will continue to investigate this issue, and will present additional analysis in the future. ...

SS, California

Before reading your Sino-Soviet split analysis, you had two counts against you as far as I was concerned. I *had* felt you were "Maoist," a situation you have definitely rectified. Also, the left in America is still at a very low political level which is partly due to the fact that it is most difficult for Americans to transcend a *strong* imperialistic mentality - even as Marxists and Communists. Because of this tendency, I tend to stay away from propaganda that comes my way from both the left and the right in your country. Every once and a while, I try another group's work to see if it provides something useful. Well, your last issue provided such a direction. It was, in fact, an excellent issue especially for your analysis of the Sino-Soviet split and your (and mine and many others) inability to analyze China from political, not emotional grounds. China has too long and too often been faultless in our eyes because it has provided so much to the world ideologically and as a model. It is almost refreshing to hear Albania denounce China for exactly the same reasons you do! The result of this ar-

ticle was for me to renew my subscription and I look forward to more such articles!! ...

DE, Alberta, Canada

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LSM Notes

SWAPO Printshop

Since many *LSM NEWS* readers are also supporters of the SWAPO Printshop Project, we are pleased to be able to report to you that the fund-raising part of the project has been very successful. Substantial contributions have been received from Oxfam-Quebec, the United Church of Canada, the People's Food System, and some individuals. These and smaller donations have boosted the project's total income to date (mid-September) to \$34,000. Expenses have so far totalled \$22,000. Thus we have reached our minimum goal! Our aim now is to support the shop with supplies in its initial period of operation. Further contributions as well as sales of the SWAPO poster will be used for this purpose. More fundraising events are scheduled in the upcoming period. We wish them success!

Now that all the equipment has been purchased and sent to Luanda, only the training of SWAPO members and set-up of the shop remain to be accomplished. Conditions in Angola have made it difficult to complete these phases as planned. The port of Luanda, for instance, is quite clogged and this has slowed delivery of printshop equipment. Present plans are to conduct training elsewhere and return to Luanda to finish setting up the shop.

Exact details are being worked out so that training can begin as soon as possible.

Of the many contributions to the SWAPO Printshop Project which continue to come in, we would like to mention some which may suggest ideas to others. In the San Francisco Bay Area, there is a network of community food stores, a warehouse, and some producers called the People's Food System. In October of 1975, the San Francisco Cooperative Warehouse, hub of the system, began selling Mozambican cashews soon after Mozambican Independence in June.

Because of the remnants of colonial underdevelopment in Mozambique, these cashews sell more than fifty cents below market price. In addition, Mozambique has imposed severe economic and military hardships on itself by cutting off trade with Rhodesia, permitting its territory to be used by Zimbabwian fighters, and encouraging Mozambicans to contribute one day's pay per month to different liberation movements.

The Warehouse therefore decided to channel some of its surplus to liberation movements in solidarity with Mozambique. To date over \$1,000 has been contributed to the SWAPO Printshop Project. Uprising Bread, a group of progressive bakers who also

belong to the Food System, inserted small flyers on the project with their loaves of bread.

We recently heard the expression: "Imperialism gives no refunds." But the Warehouse and Uprising have demonstrated that we can oppose imperialism by ourselves funneling some of its superprofits into revolutionary liberation struggles. There are undoubtedly other ways to do so.



Books for Mozambique

A fund has been established to support education in Mozambique by purchasing books in Portugal and Brazil and shipping them to Mozambique. Tax exempt donations can be sent to:

Mozambique Education Fund
MPO, P. O. Box 83
Minneapolis, MN 55440 USA

Books on international organizations, diplomacy, political economy, dialectical and historical materialism, liberation movements, contemporary international problems (such as the Indian Ocean, disarmament, Law of the Sea), public and private international law, civil law, and trade law are needed by the Mozambican Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a basic library for diplomatic training. Books in those categories *only* may be sent to:

American Committee on Africa
306 E. 46th St.
New York, NY 10017 USA

Resources

Many of our readers will be interested in a beautifully done photo-essay book on Angola, *With Freedom in Their Eyes*, published by Peoples Press and available from LSM Information Center for \$2.95.

LSM NEWS is among the 150 publications indexed in the *Alternative Press Index*, a quarterly subject index of the radical press. It covers such topics as alternative culture, the black movement, feminism, gay liberation, Marxism, national liberation, native Americans, socialist movements, the women's movement, and the workers' movement. It is available for \$60 per volume to libraries and \$25 to movement groups from:

Alternative Press Center
P. O. Box 7229
Baltimore, MD 21218 USA

The Clearinghouse for All-Liberian Literature (the CALL) is a non-profit collective of Liberians in the US which assists in the development of a popular, progressive Liberian litera-

ture and culture. It was formed following frequent incidents of repression against progressive Liberian writers. The CALL reproduces and distributes the works of patriotic writers and organizations. They also hope to channel funds and technical assistance into the production of original Liberian works and to donate any profits to writers and journalists whose democratic rights have been violated by the Liberian government.

The Clearinghouse Collective
P. O. Box 6237
Syracuse, NY 13217 USA

Workers' Unity is the new organ of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) published bimonthly since January 1977. It contains reports and analyses on the struggles and conditions of working people of all colors in South Africa. Each issue reports on workers in one industry. John Gaetsewe, General Secretary of SACTU, notes: "To cover the costs of getting the paper into South Africa, where it has been declared an illegal publication, we are asking for minimum donations of £5 (about \$8.75) per annum for a year's subscription." Checks should be made payable to SACTU, 49 Rathbone Street, London W1A 4NL, England.

People's Power, number 7-8, contains many documents from Frelimo's Third Congress as well as articles on Guinea-Bissau, Angola, and Mozambique. One year subscription (6 issues): \$5.00. Order from MAGIC, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC2AH 7JJ, England.

LSM Responds to Former Members

In the last issue of *LSM NEWS* we commented on a recent struggle within LSM which had resulted in a number of members leaving our organization. These ex-members have since issued a statement of their own. Some of you may have read this statement or heard about it through the "grapevine." Since it represents a distorted view and contains direct lies about LSM and our practice, we see a need to respond to some of the major charges.

To summarize their view: Rank-and-file members were concerned about LSM's theoretical and strategic development but were thwarted by inflexible leadership that suppressed their questioning and suggestions, manipulated LSM's structure, and abused its powers to retain absolute control of the organization. The "largely college-educated male" leadership had developed "a subjective and careerist stake" in certain areas of LSM's practice and was opposed to considering changes that would have enabled the organization to overcome the fundamental theoretical and strategic weaknesses that were undermining LSM's contribution to the anti-imperialist revolution. Consequently, the only correct thing for politically concerned members to do, having been "disenfranchised" by leadership, was to terminate their commitment to LSM. Retaining its stubbornness, the remaining "faction" of LSM has since tried to gloss over the political differences of the "split." While the work of LSM contains progressive aspects, there is every reason to believe that the organization remains incapable of resolving its fundamental contradictions.

The image of LSM that emerges from the ex-members' statement is essential

to the rationalization of their departure, but it falls far short of reality. Both before and since this struggle, those who have remained in LSM have been vitally concerned with the organization's theoretical and strategic development. We have not found this concern stands in contradiction to our support for elected leadership and a democratic-centralist mode of operation but rather is entirely complementary to it. The view that LSM needs theoretical strengthening has long been accepted throughout the organization. Following this recognition (1975-76) the organization implemented various programs of study and other theoretical work. Among the areas we have studied are: Angola, World History, Sino-Soviet Split, North America, Southern Africa, and Imperialism. These programs have been regularly reviewed and updated according to the changing needs of the organization and are now directed to preparations for our Congress later this year. Readers can judge some of the results for themselves in recent issues of *LSM NEWS*.

The disagreement with those who left concerns how weak we are in our theoretical development relative to our immediate tasks. Consequently we differed on our ability (or inability) to continue with our practice during the process of theoretical development, and on the nature of the measures we are taking to develop our theory. To state that the difference arose between those for and those opposed to theoretical growth is simply a fabrication to strengthen their own case. The central question in the struggle was whether or not we would utilize our existing structure to plan and implement theoretical development and to continue our practice. The alternative was to abandon our

structure, remove existing leadership, and severely curtail our practice. LSM is advancing the process of theoretical development through our Congress preparations while maintaining our other practical work.

Another line of argument presented in the statement is that critical members were "disenfranchised" by leadership and therefore could not continue the political struggle in LSM. The only member deprived of political rights was expelled by the Central Committee. The rest unilaterally terminated their commitment to the organization. Now they refer to the "stacking" of votes in a Congress in which those who agree with leadership get two votes and those who disagree get one. The division of our membership into "members" and "trial members" (two and one Congress votes respectively) is based on the level of commitment, experience, and agreement with LSM's basic political outlook. This division has been our general policy for several years. The determination of previously unclassified members was to be done in our work units. The agreement expected was with our basic political line not with specific decisions on tactics and strategy made by a Congress or Central Committee. Members are obliged to implement such decisions, however, though they need not agree with all of them. The charge of conspiracy and manipulation in Congress voting procedures remains an unfounded assertion.

The statement also charges that LSM placed its reputation above the needs of MPLA and held out on MPLA's request for assistance pending their acceptance of a criticism we had made of them. The only request we received from MPLA during the period in question (late 1975) was a copy of an appeal, made to several organizations, for several hun-

dred thousand dollars to help set up a truck repair and maintenance depot. We did not ignore the request; we simply lacked the capability of filling it. The cause for LSM's delay in acting on events in Angola was weakness in analysis and organization, not to put "its own concern about its reputation" ahead of its duty to mobilize support for MPLA. Though we had raised a criticism of MPLA in 1974, we consistently supported the movement through publications and in public forums during 1975 and 1976. In particular we published several articles on MPLA including an interview in early 1975. In the fall we participated in Angola support coalitions and conducted an extensive pro-MPLA tour in Spring 1976.

Finally, is LSM a male-dominated organization in which women have not been given the opportunity to do more than menial work? This assertion in their statement is an insult to women in LSM. Women have contributed substantially to LSM's work as public speakers, writers, representatives here and in Africa, and in *all* levels of leadership. We are certainly affected by the sexism that pervades capitalist society; sexism is inevitably reflected in our organization. We try to recognize and deal with it openly as it hinders our ability to advance revolutionary work. For these former members to voice such a major "criticism" only after leaving (it was never an issue during our struggle) is an opportunistic play on legitimate concerns with sexism on the Left.

We will not deal here with the many other allegations in the statement. Those with unanswered questions are welcome to contact us. Ultimately, LSM's practice will be the best evidence of our strengths and

weaknesses. Short of that, any assessment of our organization must be based on correct information - not on the sum total of the "gripes" and fabrications of ex-members who left for a variety of reasons and thus have gone in many different directions.

continued from pg. 44

ready to act on those interests. These actions are the beginnings of a larger movement that will eventually challenge the capitalist system as a whole.

¹Mills, Herb, "The San Francisco Waterfront," in *Urban Life*, V, 2 (July 1976), pp. 221-250.

²Mills, *Ibid.*, VI, 1 (April 1977), pp. 3-32.

Rediscover History

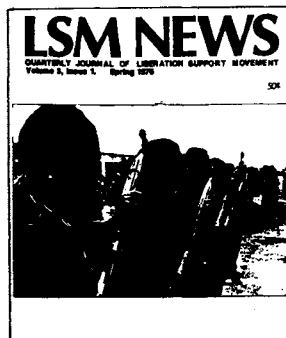
LSM News Back Issues



ANGOLA: PEOPLE'S POWER!



AN ARTIST'S GLIMPSE
OF REVOLUTIONARY CUBA
Zimbabwe: Untangling the Web



#5 (was Volume 2 Number 1)
Spring 1975

Final article of Don Barnett's series on "LSM: Problems of Theory, Strategy, and Practice." Class analysis of divisions in international working class in "Types of Proletariat."

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#8 (was Volume 2: Number 4)
Winter 1975

Background to Angola's Second War of National Liberation, led by MPLA. Factual expose of UNITA and FLNA as puppets of imperialism. Also articles on socialist development in Mozambique and women in Guinea-Bissau.

\$1.00

#9 (was Volume 3: Number 1)
Spring 1976

"Proletarian Internationalism: in Africa" is our critical evaluation of our work and relations with liberation movements in Africa in 1975-6. Discusses some important contradictions encountered in solidarity work with national liberation struggles. This issue also includes an MPLA chronology to 1976 and an introduction to the struggle in Namibia.

\$1.00

#10 (was Volume 3: Number 2)
Summer 1976

This issue features art and Cuba, with "An Artist's Glimpse of Revolutionary Cuba" and "Portrait of a Revolutionary Artist." Many fine drawings by Selma Waldman, illustrator of LSM publications. Also includes "Zimbabwe Untangling the Web."

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