

ULTRA-COLONIALISM IN MOZAMBIQUE

By Franz J. T. Lee

PORTUGUESE colonisation of Mozambique began at the beginning of the 16th century. In 1505, on his voyage to India, Almeida had set up a factory at Sofala on the east coast of Africa. He also built a fortress at Kilwa. In 1507 a fortress and factory were built on Mozambique island. In 1531 and 1544 Sena and Quelimane were founded, respectively. Portugal hoped to discover important sources of gold and silver in the African interior. However, neither metal was ever found in substantial quantities, hence Portuguese penetration of the hinterland was limited and ephemeral.

By 1700 only the Zambezi valley as far as Tete had been occupied. Portuguese population along the coast did not exceed 1,000. With the collapse of the spice trade and the Asian empire, the Portuguese lost interest in the East Coast. The whole area declined, the interior and the coast of Sofala became deserted. By 1810 the Portuguese coastal occupation was the same as in 1600, consisting of forts and trading posts from Ibo to Lourenço Marques.

GREAT SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA

Only in 1885—scarcely 80 years ago—with the “Great Scramble for Africa” by the great imperialist European powers did Portugal become seriously interested in Mozambique again. Below, we are analysing what happened in these 80 years thereafter and the events that led to the present terror and slavery.

From 1895 to 1896, a campaign under Antonio Enes and Mousinho de Albuquerque reduced Gazaland in Southern Mozambique. In 1897 Coutinho occupied the coastal area north of Quelimane. In 1902 to 1904, the Zambesia Company “pacified” the area from Tete to Nyasaland frontier. In 1906 the northern sector opposite Mozam-

bique Island was subdued. In a series of campaigns from 1908 to 1912 the Yao tribes off Lake Nyasa were brought under control. This ends the period of military conquest.

Till 1890, the major vector of the new imperialism, the chartered company, was almost non-existent in Portuguese Africa. From 1891 onwards concessionary companies did exist in Mozambique. By 1900 the Mozambique Company (1891), the Niassa Company (1891-93) and the Zambesia Company, between them controlled two-thirds of Mozambique's economy. These companies were very small in comparison with their English or German counterparts in Africa. At this time the Portuguese economy was archaic and bankrupt. It was scarcely touched by the commercial and industrial expansion of Western Europe in the 19th century.

It could not convert an extractive to a transformer imperialism. This factor is the root determinant of the present Portuguese colonies.

About 1930, the white and mestizo population of Mozambique were 17,800 and 8,350 respectively. The total population was about 3,500,000. From 1940 onwards emigration figures began to show a major increase: 1940—27,500; 1950—48,000; 1960—80,000.

From 1950 onwards some 5,000 families have been settled at Guiga in the Limpopo valley. These settlers received up to a total of 10 acres per family and some 60 acres of non-irrigated land for grazing purposes from the Government, in order to raise the living standards of the Europeans. At present there are about 12,000,000 Africans in Mozambique.

Missionary activity was carried on mainly by Portuguese Dominicans. Despite intensive campaigns, proselytisation was wholly ineffective and ephemeral. In 1825 there were just 10 priests and of these seven were Goans. By 1850 there

were just four along the coast and not a single missionary in the interior. Towards 1900 there was an influx of foreign missionaries—mainly German friars, French Montfort and Salesian fathers, and Italian Consulate friars. These missionaries were supported by Portugal in their campaign of bringing the Christian religion to the natives and “barbaric races”. The African had to be civilised to become an obedient slave, at the same time making sure that he does not become competent or initiative. Today the Salazar regime, under the official rubric of “Faith, Family, Toil”, is intensely Catholic.

In 1950 Mozambique had 210,000 Catholics and 60,000 Protestants (census figures). A third of the Christian community is thus heretical, despite the non-existence of any Protestant minority in Portugal. In 1957 there were 310 Catholic and 200 Protestant priests (or ministers).

Missionary activity is a symptom of a wider clan. At the dawn of European Imperialism Vasco da Gama said: “I seek Christians and spices”. Ever since, missionary activity has always been one dimension of the total colonial enterprise and as such suggestive of all the others.

EDUCATION

In 1956 out of a total population of 6,000,000 (census figures, although this figure was probably much higher) only 284,000 (including whites) received education. In 1945 there were 183,092 pupils in rudimentary schools, being reserved almost exclusively for Africans only. Of these just 3,595 took the final examination (after three years) and of them 2,774 passed. In 1955 there were 212,428 pupils in Catholic rudimentary schools, of these only 2,761 passed to continue their education in the primary schools.

In 1954 there were 120 Africans in commercial, industrial and secondary schools in the whole of Mozambique. In the elite Liceu—the preparatory school for university level—there were 5 Africans and 800 white students; no African has ever completed the whole Liceu course. There is no university in Portuguese Africa. All higher edu-

cation have to be acquired in Portugal or in other countries. The outcome is that less than 1 per cent of the Africans is officially reckoned to be literate. (1950 census). This is an important factor to explain why political organisation and revolutionary work are of such a low level in Mozambique.

Any observer can attest the most flagrant and classic type of discrimination in Mozambique. Hospitals have black and white wards; restaurants have notices stating: "Admission Reserved"; the hotels employ an all-white staff; in buses and trains, in parks and gardens, all over there is a strict discrimination. A bus-ride in Lourenço Marques costs the quarter of an African daily wage. Price-levels seal Africans off from white commercial, social and entertainment centres. Specially designed rents impose separate white and African townships.

In Lourenço Marques, just like in Cape Town or Johannesburg, there is a permanent curfew for Africans after nine o'clock in the evening. The African is required to carry a pass—a "cadernato"—in order that he can be controlled and efficiently enslaved. One sees the whole Apartheid and Baasskap policy of the Herrenvolk of South Africa here at work.

FOREIGN CAPITAL

The panorama of foreign capital in Mozambique is impressive, but due to lack of 'truthful' figures and inadequate research on this matter by modern writers, the following may suffice to give us a picture of this 'covert condominium'.

In 1959-60 Mozambique exported mainly: cotton, cashew nuts, tea, sugar, copra and sisal. *British* capital owns two of the large sugar concessions (the third is Portugal), including the famous Sena states. The Matola Oil Refinery—Procon is controlled by **England** and the **United States**. In 1948 the petroleum concession was given to the Mozambique Gulf Oil Company. At Maoitze coal is mined: the industry is chiefly financed by **Belgium**. 60 per cent of the capital of the compagnie de Charbons de Mozambique is held by the Societe Miniere

et Geologique Belge, 30% by the Mozambique Company and the remaining 10% by the Government. Of the three banks in Mozambique, only the Babco Nacional Ultramarino is Portuguese, the other two are *Barclays' Bank, D.C.O.* and the *Standard Bank of South Africa*. Nine out of the twenty-three insurance companies are Portuguese. 80% of life-insurance is still in the hands of foreign companies. Lately the Lourenço Marques Oil Refinery is established by the Sociedade Nacional de Refinacao de Petroleo (SONAREP)—a *Franco-Portuguese* syndicate. In the sisal plantations *Swiss* capital is invested. In copra concerns, a combination of Portuguese, *Swiss* and *French* capital is invested.

Judged from the above, it is quite clear what a stake most of the countries of the "free world" has in the continuation of exploitation and oppression of the millions of toiling African masses under Portuguese slavery.

TERRORISM:

The *Freedom Fighter* (Ghana newspaper) of November 21, 1963, published the following: "People are being drowned alive; people are being buried alive; people are being burnt alive; people are being skinned alive;—all in the 20th century. In Mozambique! Slavery is Rampant." To show that this is no exaggeration, I wish to repeat the acts of which the Liberian delegate at the United Nations accused Portugal lately: (i) Drowning Africans in her territories. (ii) Burying Africans up to their shoulder in the ground and crushing their heads with bulldozers. (iii) Selling people from Mozambique to South Africa and Southern Rhodesia at 2 pounds sterling a head. She produced first hand evidence that 10,000 African workers were being sold each year to South Africa. And Portugal belongs to NATO!

Mozambican freedom fighters who have fled to South Africa or Southern Rhodesia are being kidnapped and maltreated by the Portuguese secret police (PIDE). Some examples are: the kidnapping of Edward Ngubeni and Philip Sebral

from South Africa, and of Jaime Sigauke from Salisbury, in April 1962, to Mozambique. Lately Filipe Madzozere and Alfred Amargo were kidnapped from Salisbury. In June, 1963, Peter Balamanja—founder of the Mozambique African National Congress—was again kidnapped. The Dennis Brutus and Dr. Abrahams incidents are again examples of kidnapping and expatriation to South Africa from neighbouring territories.

National Liberatory Movements:

Due to the above-mentioned factors, social, political and economic, the Africans are forced to organise themselves and find avenues of how to break the chains of slavery.

Some time ago, the two major political organisations united at a conference in Tanganyika to form the Mozambique Liberation Front—FRELIMO, under the presidency of Dr. Mondlane. However, due to neo-colonialist manoeuvres and the influence of his American wife, Janet, he became a traitor to the movement. Another popular organisation is Uniao Democratic Nacional de Mozambique (UDENAMO), which fights for the democratic-socialist system of government in Mozambique.

Due to Mondlane's treachery, FRELIMO was forced to work underground. Thereafter delegates from the Mozambique African National Union (MANU), UDENAMO, Mozambique African Association (MAA) and Mozambique African Farmers Association (MAFA) met in Kampala and formed a new "United Front"—the FUNIPAMO. Many members of FRELIMO joined this united front also.

However, due to poor communications, high illiteracy rates and rigorous control by the authorities, political organisation inside Mozambique is very difficult. Portugal is busy cutting off any contact with comrades and leaders in neighbouring states. However this is all in vain. With the progress of the Angolan Revolution, and the forward march of the African Revolution, Portugal has soon to roll up her map in Africa.