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Accra

UNIÃO DAS POPULAÇÕES DE ANGOLA  
THE ANGOLA DRAMA

1 met and talked to one of your fellow-countrymen from Angola at the Conference. This is a paper he circulated to the Delegates.

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The subjugation of the former sovereign and independent African States has more often than not been the logical conclusion of fraudulent trade transactions, or the assertion of the right of the strongest over the weakest.

One of the most characteristic cases of this diabolic colonisation of an African people is undoubtedly the Portuguese Colony of Angola.

Angola, the largest of Portuguese African possessions, with her 1,246,700 square kilometers and her 4,145,184 inhabitants of whom more than 300,000 are white, is a festering sore crying for prompt and effective treatment from the world at large.

In Angola, as elsewhere, the abominable domination by a handful of men of evil inspiration, of peoples formerly noted for their love of freedom and solidarity, has come about after her discovery by explorers followed by Christian Evangelists, unscrupulous traders and the army.

Whatever the basis of justification used, the suppression by the so-called civilizers and their abettors is an all too familiar phenomenon.

Colonisation has always been, is and will remain undoubtedly the negation of the human personality of its rights and liberties, the emasculation of national consciousness. Thus the confiscation of private property, barbarity, oppression, force, deculturizations, dishumanization, exclusive economic regime, commercial enterprise, forced labour, whipping and lashing "les chicottes, les palmatoadas," terror, forced exodus, systematic extermination, obscurantism, people ill without hospitals, women without maternity homes, abusive taxation, unemployment, are the evils which are perpetuated by Portugal's presence in Angola.

But because, apart from precolonial historical realities of a given country, colonisation engenders de facto nationalism, the breath of the liberation of peoples has wafted over Asia. The accession to independence of Liberia, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana and recently Guinea, proves uncontestably that Africa has not remained indifferent to that deep-seated movement which tends towards anti-colonisation and anti-imperialism.

Despite the cruelty which colonisation entails, the peoples of Africa persist in their firm resolve to exterminate right from the very roots, all traces of colonisation, condemned by the universal conscience of all mankind.

1. ANGOLA - A NATIONAL HISTORICAL ENTITY.

Angola, entirely composed of Bantu tribes, has its origins deeply embedded in history.

It is indispensable, today, to recall the past history of Africa in ancient times. Ethnologists and archeologists have incontestably established the fact that at the time when Egypt of the Pharaohs blossomed throughout the world with her science and wisdom, other states also flourished along the valley of the Nile and the Zambezi, while the rest of Africa, notably the valleys of the Congo, Niger and Senegal were covered with forests teeming with pygmies.

After numerous invasions of the Nordic barbarians into Africa, the upheavals occasioned by the birth of Islam, Senegal African peoples (in the Nile Valley) came down to the forests of Central Africa. Such was the case of the "Bacongos" a branch of the "Punta-Ponda" or Phoenicians who formed a powerful empire named "ManiCongo" in the hinterland of the African shores of the South West Atlantic, stretching from the Congo to the Zambezi. This vast and powerful empire was discovered by the Portuguese Diogo Cao in 1482.

Like other multi-national units of ancient Africa, the "ManiCongo" Empire enjoyed sound political organization, and was in fact an agglomeration of kingdoms: "Luango," "Caongo," "Ngoio," to the North of the River Zaire or Congo, "Angola," "Matamba" further to the south, "Gabon" or "Pongue" in the north - (Cameroon Frontier.)

MANICONGO

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Though economic and family ties placed Angola under the tutelage of the "Manicongo" Empire, it is nevertheless an incontestable historical fact that Angola fully enjoyed her national sovereignty and independence.

From 1509 to 1520, Catholic missionaries, Portuguese and Spanish, established themselves in the "Manicongo" Empire.

The importance of the foreign politics of the "Manicongo" Empire and the Angola kingdom was such that Portugal was obliged to enter into diplomatic relations, and thus, the Portuguese Paulo Dias de Novais, was accredited Ambassador to the Court of the Emperor of Congo and to that of his nephew, King N'Gola (Angola.)

Diplomatic relations between the two states were soon to reach their highest point. The break of diplomatic relations between Portugal and King N'Gola (Angola) and the event in 1520 of the Portuguese Ambassador Barthazar de Castro, only freed upon the intervention of the Emperor of Congo, testifies to the independence and power of the Angola Kingdom.

Year by year relations became more and more fruitful within the same framework. Duarte Lopes in 1588, seconded by the Italian scientist, Pigafetta Filippo, was accredited Ambassador of the Emperor of Congo to the Vatican.

But the state of international affairs and the Portuguese anxiety to obtain strongholds in Africa, faced by the threat of Dutch competition, occasioned the occupation of Angola in 1575 by Paulo Dias de Novais. The King of Angola became subject to the King of Portugal, whilst his uncle, the Emperor of the Congo, continued to treat with Portugal as between equals.

When Angola became effectively a Portuguese Colony, the Governor of the city of San Salvador, (capital of the Congo Empire) took care to entertain friendly and neighbourly relations with the Emperor of the Congo.

Portugal even neutralized the Congo Empire by a pact of non-aggression and mutual assistance in 1659 between the negro emperor and the King of Portugal.

In 1885, when the Berlin Conference decided upon the carving up of Africa like a birthday cake, the Portuguese definitely set their hearts upon Angola and whilst a fraudulent transaction, as dishonest as it was diabolic, allowed them to colonize part of the Congo Kingdom. The rest of the Empire then passed under Belgian and French domination.

Despite the new geographic delimitations resulting in the enlarging of ancient Angola, the new Angola Territory through its belonging to the Angola nation of former times was a national historical entity. Hence the urge for both national independence and Federalism in what is commonly called Angola.

## 11. PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM

A prime factor in the evaluation of a people, especially colonised people derives from the contradiction colonialism entails, which give rise to an awakening of man's consciousness. That is to say the economic, political, cultural, religious and social manifestations of Portuguese colonisation have greatly influenced the Angola nation in its present form. What are these manifestations?

### a) ECONOMIC MANIFESTATIONS

Every colonization is above all an exploitation of the national resources and soil of the colonized country to the advantage of the colonizer. The economic policy practised by Portugal in Angola is governed by what is now universally called the "Colonial Pact," whatever its outward manifestations.

Produce of the soil and sub-soil of Angola feed the Portuguese consumer market and reciprocally the products of Portugal have priority access to Angola markets. Industries are not nonexistent, they are even encouraged, such as cotton spinning and weaving mills, sugar and cement factories, large plantations of coffee and cocoa, and the massive and abusive exploitation of copper, diamond and gold mines.

This is to say, industries are only established in Angola in so far as they do not duplicate Portuguese home industries (INDUSTRIA NACIONAL.) It is nothing more than the exclusive colonial system.

There exists between Portugal and the Portuguese settlers in the various African territories of Angola and Mozambique, close solidarity, as evidenced by the preferential customs tariffs.

Portugal invites foreign capital for the exploitation in commerce of Angola's resources but she does not tolerate any foreign initiative which could bring about the development of the colonial territories.

#### b) POLITICAL MANIFESTATIONS

The consequences of such an economy in the field of politics can be summed up in the following terms: Political unification and departmentalization of Angola. Portugal, in effect, is a unitary state with one territory and one government. Angola is consequently considered part of the Portuguese national territory. But the population of this so-called unitary state is not homogeneous, for judicially it comprises in effect the following five categories.

Portuguese born in Portugal

Portuguese born in Angola or Mozambique who cannot do national service.

Mulattoes enjoying the same privileges as the whites born in Africa.

Assimilated Africans "Assimilados" whose wives are exempt from forced labour and whose children enjoy the privilege of continuing their education in the all too rare secondary schools.

Besides these "Assimilados" paid like the last category of Angola people have the privilege of paying taxes like the whites. (The calvary in the flattery.)

And quite naturally, in the last instance come the millions of black aborigines of Angola. This last category is separated from all the others by the colour barrier with all its entails of racial emasculation.

#### c) CULTURAL ASSIMILATION

In the inevitable interpretation of Portuguese and Angola cultures, Portugal has always sought to make Portuguese culture predominant and it would be no exaggeration to assert that Portugal practices the spiritual assimilation of the indigenous population no doubt to cement Portuguese national unity, but most certainly to stifle the national culture of the Angola people. Roman Catholicism remains the state religion and missionary zeal seeks to destroy the traditional culture and to render brutish the colonized with the pretext of making them identical to the colonizers.

Interracial education and social life does not exist since racial segregation is rife and altogether Angola boasts of 68 African pupils in secondary schools according to the celebrated author, J. Gunther.

It must be mentioned that 15% of the children of school age can attend the rudimentary primary schools which exist, the remainder are marked out as victims of the scorched earth policy.

#### d) SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Far too much could be said on this score, the opulence of the colonizers and settlers triumphing besides the latest misery of the colonized, but we content ourselves with only recalling briefly that forced labour, massive exodus and systematic extinction of the Bantu race, constitute the essence of the social policy of the Portuguese in Africa.

In effect, there is applied the system of forced labour which consists in recruiting men, women and children, called "CONTRATADOS" in villages through

African supervisors called "REGEDORES" under the direction of the "Chefes Dos Postos" and supplying them to the concessionary settlers who employ this labour to work on coffee and cocoa plantations. Oftener than not, members of the same family toil away in different plantations and very often at the end of their term of forced labour, which sometimes lasts 24 months, they are not reunited, some of them having been killed or died, in the course of their work.

Working hours are from 5 o'clock in the morning to 7 o'clock in the evening, that is 14 hours a day, Sundays included. Each worker is allotted a fixed task which he is expected to finish by the end of his working day or else runs the risk of persecution.

The stipend allocated is not only ridiculous, since it hardly amounts to £ 12 for 24 months, but an amount is deducted for tax fixed by the authority entrusted with payment. This deduction operates automatically without the worker daring to discuss it, under pain of deportation.

Another category of workers comprising both men and women is allotted to building and maintaining roads and bridges, without stipend. And to crown it all, they must use their own tools.

The Labour Code, whose existence the Portuguese claim, is only to save their face. Thus the Governor General of Angola, Colonel de Sa Vianna Rebello, affirms without shame or care for the most elementary of truths that there exists a Labour Code as from 1928 which protects the native in Portuguese African territories, while the reality which hits you in the eyes, proves abundantly that the "CONTRATADOS" toil away in slavery conditions in contravention of the Anti-Slavery Convention of 1926. There results from this, besides, a mortality rate in excess of the birthrate.

Most of the time the villagers take refuge for months in the forests in order to escape conscription.

In the villages, people are searched and the natives are compelled to pay extra taxes on their possessions.

For over twenty years, the Colonial Administration of Angola has been depriving the natives of their plantations, forcing them into the arid unproductive areas, and has built up for itself large estates where liberty does not exist, because the administration itself exploits a large portion of them and allows companies and individual colonists whom it fancies the right to exploit them. It has completely restricted freedom and has set up a preferential system operating against the interests of the natives of Angola whose plight can be imagined.

Several European "colonies" have been already created which are entirely closed to the African, particularly at CELA, MATALA, LIBOLO and AMBOIM. (Southern Angola.)

In an interview with a Belgian journalist, Peter Davister, the Governor-General of Angola, Colonel de Sa Vianna Rebello, declared without any sense of shame:

"Angola is very large and we mean to stay in it. We respect what is said and done elsewhere, but as far as we are concerned, questions of autonomy and emancipation do not arise and we are very vigilant to see that they remain so. As soon as the colonist establishes himself as has so far been the case, we always win through."

"Now this is precisely what matters, that we should win through by bringing in more Portuguese."

It is revolting to hear a man of such culture, whose religious piety is unquestioned, make such allegations.

Masses live in the most abject poverty. This gives rise to mass emigration of the frontier people, who in large numbers pour into the Belgian Congo and French

Equatorial Africa, where living conditions are better.

Nearly 1,000,000 people from Angola are living outside their native land.

An unwarranted harsh form of pressure is exercised in the collection of taxes. There is no age limit. Only death releases the taxpayer. The worst of it is that even emigrants have to continue to pay taxes because if they don't their relatives will be persecuted and drafted to the coffee plantations or road works.

e) HEALTH

The health services are negligible. There are several black spots, the worst of which is sleeping sickness. There is one doctor to 80,000 people.

With malnutrition as a contributory factor, tuberculosis takes grievous toll and about 75% of the hospital patients suffer from it. Since the building of lavatories is subject to a tax, it follows that few Africans have any. And so, there are hardly any. Naturally the bush is used as a place of convenience and the rains wash away these deposits towards the streams and the ponds from which the natives drink at the risk of contracting every imaginable type of disease, and this is so because there are no fountains.

It must be emphasised once more that such colonisation is not in any way a philanthropic undertaking and still less a work of civilisation.

111. THE NATIONAL PROBLEM OF THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA

The stark conclusion is that there is no one in Angola to dispute its claim to being regarded as a historically established State in the light of these facts. It is also evident that no one can deny to Angola its position as a Nation with a certain degree of social development.

If history has served as a buttress to this nation, the nation itself was forged as a result of Portuguese colonisation and the Angola Nation demands with resolute determination immediate political independence.

Indeed the Portuguese colonial economic system which makes Portugal the sole beneficiary of the products of the surface soil and the sub-soil of Angola, with an oppressive internal protectionist policy is fundamentally opposed to the interests of the indigenous masses who are fleeced and made to wallow in the most abject misery.

Portuguese policy which forces large masses into the channels of integration, in utter contempt for their aspirations towards liberty and justice, clearly leads to a political awakening and a craving for independence.

The breaking-up and destruction of the rich and age-old tradition of Angola in favour of an imported culture lead the masses to claim more urgently every day a re-estimate of their national culture.

As colonisation expanded and unified Angola, which in actual fact enjoyed unity before the European conquest, as it developed interchange and gave rise to the movement of population within the territory itself and the constant emigration of the workpeople of Angola, it promoted in spite of itself the development of a national consciousness that goes beyond the bounds of the original Bantu tribes.

At the same time the most barbarous forms of oppression and the scorched earth policy that Portugal practises in Angola have proved to be additional unifying factors and have automatically made the patriotism of the people of Angola wider and stronger.

There is no point in failing to recognise the difference between what Angola is in 1958 and what it was in 1509.

We are in the presence of a unique people with their own specific qualities, a people who have been stamped with special characteristics as a result

of the establishment in their midst, since the 15th century of people from Portugal.

It is clear that this particular condition has for a long time compelled the Angolans to develop a certain attitude of revolt.

The movement of "emancipation" at first consisted in an attempt to create family and civic ties among the Portuguese settlers who had established themselves in Angola and regarded Angola as their native land, while they looked upon Portugal as their country of origin.

Later this movement admitted the masses of Angola's aboriginal population, and tended to seek the right to develop a separate Angolan entity, but it did not however claim an independent Angolan. This explains the creation and evolution of the African National League (Liga Nacional Africana) since 1929. But what exactly is this "Liga Nacional Africana" which reflects the real anomalies of Portuguese colonisation.

This League is a pseudo-cultural Association classifying the Angolan Portuguese who by law, are considered as Africans, mulattoes and "Assimilados" (African Negroes) all bearing the name of "Africans."

But it is not surprising to note that only whites and mulattoes form the Steering Committee, the African Negroes being in the position of poor relations who have no choice but to remain where they are.

It is clear that the consciousness of belonging to a nation, the existence of an Angolan national consciousness could have turned the movement for emancipation into a plea for an independent Angolan State, as happened in America. But if the history of Angola has strengthened the patriotism of the aboriginal Bantu people, the Angolan elements of Portuguese origin have on the other hand, by looking constantly to their ancient native land, postponed the birth of a new feeling of Angolan nationhood.

The historical movement for emancipation which was exemplified in the creation of the "Liga Nacional Africana" could not lead to independence, particularly as the numerical strength of the original Bantu people and the people of European origin played a decisive part. In this country, as in Algeria, the European section of the population is slow to appreciate the national consciousness, because they are faced with an indigenous people who have some knowledge of a higher social standard and because the harsh repression has not succeeded in whittling them down to a minority as was the case with the "Red Indians" in America.

In 1928, the High Commissioner NORTON de MATOS, in agreement with a certain section of colonial middle-class opinion in Angola, asked Portugal to grant independence to Angola. But his dismissal coupled with the harsh reaction of Portugal have proved that these events are in fact the real cause of the extreme indifference of those settlers who might have attained the real level of national consciousness that the historical movement requires.

It is a fact that the vast majority of the native Angolans of Bantu origin have realised the existence of the national consciousness, but could only sketch a programme for the Angolan National Liberation Movement.

Thus arose the Union of the Peoples of Northern Angola (l'Union des Populations du Nord d'Angola) in 1954.

Taking into consideration Angola's history which is quite different from that of any Portuguese province, it was inevitable that the Union of the Northern Angolans should very quickly exceed the limits of its constitution.

Indeed by forcing its way North, South, East and West, into every stratum of the Bantu section of the population, even the mulattoes, the National Liberation Movement, through secret organisation, converted itself into Angola Peoples' Union (U.P.A.) in 1958 and its objective is unequivocal. The U.P.A. makes a strong plea for:

Complete and immediate independence for Angola, dignity as against alienation.

Strengthening of Afro-Asian solidarity, honour as against racial segregation and inhuman treatment.

IV. INTERNATIONAL OPINION

Any African Negro who attempts to raise his voice to put forward any claim whatever is imprisoned, beaten or sent into one of the concentration camps that Portugal has set up in the island of Sao Tome and in Angola (Foz de Cunene, Forte Rossada, Baia dos Tigres, Silva Porto).

A quick glance at the number of revolts that have been stifled is enough to convince those who in their "naivete" still imagine that the Portuguese colonists are choir boys.

The 1914 revolt that occurred in the North of Angola as a result of nationalist activities by Buta and his associates to put the brake on deportations to the islands of Sao Tome and Cape Verde meant a series of punitive expeditions which lasted 2 years and a State of Siege which has actually consumed 10 years.

In fact from 1888 to 1929, the number of workers deported to the island of Sao Tome rose to more than 200,000 men. And when the scandal was uncovered only 10,000 were liberated and sent back to their village, leaving many villages in Angola depopulated. Then it was seen that the Portuguese of 1929, in spite of the march of time, was still the slave dealer who depopulated Africa to satisfy the needs of the Americas. At present the system has changed and the people of Angola are slaves in their own country.

The uprising in Luanda in 1926 ended with the deportation of many militant nationalists among, whom was the patriotic leader, Espirito Santo, of blessed memory.

This means in effect that in Angola the liberty of the individual, freedom of expression, worship and association do not exist.

Consequently a National Liberation Movement like the Union of the Peoples of Angola cannot attain its full measure and force unless it becomes a strictly underground movement abroad, with help from outside aimed at enlisting international opinion in support of the nationalists of Angola.

In point of fact since its inception in 1964 the U.P.A has maintained a constant struggle with zeal and determination.

In December 1958 the general discontent of the people was shown by the public scenes in the month of December when the North systematically took a stand against the system of forced labour and constant abuses.

In February 1956 Portugal reacted, making a series of arrests and deportations. Ambrosio Luyanzi was among the leaders who were martyred, while patriots such as Lello Figueira, Liborio Nefwans were exiled to the concentration camp of Silva Porto.

On the international plane, the real iron curtain which separates Angola from the rest of the outside world has hardly encouraged any systematic campaign in connection with the tragedy of Angola. However, the visit of a Ghana Mission to Angola warmed the hearts of Angolans who interpreted the gesture as a mark of active solidarity. The masses benefited from this visit of brother Ghanaians, although it was followed by dreadful instances of the arrest of men, women and children. People are still asking for the whereabouts of the patriotic leaders, Julio Afonso, Isaias Kamutuka, Cunha, Alfredo Benga, Loureiro Joao Sequeira and their families.

But patriotism will express itself and it is no use failing to recognize as just the stand taken by so many members of the Angolan resistance movement, the people of Angola will not give in. In August 1968 the famous manifesto entitled "African Manifesto" saw the light of day. This document condemned the horrors of 500 years of portuguese colonisation and exhorted the people of Angola as one man-

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to assert with all dignity their right to self-determination, so that Angola may recover freedom, justice and prosperity.

Since the tragedy of Angola is already well known the people of Angola deplore the attitude of silence adopted by the most competent International Bodies.

It is a pity, however, that in international affairs, Portuguese territories in Africa are considered as an integral part of Portugal without, of course, the Africans having the least means of expressing their wish to be Portuguese or not.

And yet no country that loves justice and freedom can fail to see that this conspiracy of silence is a contributory factor to the shameful crimes of the Portuguese, since it unquestionably creates the impression that the greater part of mankind holds sacred the most retrograde form of colonialism as practised by Portugal.

In the name of the countless pleas from the voices of children, women, men, victims of the past and of the future, in short for all human beings who have been handled like beasts who aspire to legitimate freedom and flatly denounce opportunism, the UNIAO DAS POPULACOES DE ANGOLA (U.P.A.) appeals strongly and urgently to all the democrats, all philanthropic organisations of the world, and to all freedom-loving peoples to contribute at once towards the achievement, in tranquility and dignity, of political independence which is the deliberate choice of 4.145.184 Angolans and is in fact the only guarantee by which their interests, a workable plan for African Unity and lasting peace in the world can be safeguarded.

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