

The Problem of the *Assimilados*

MPLA

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The Portuguese have artificially divided the Angolan population into 'natives' (99% of the total) and *assimilados* (1%). From these figures it is evident that the 'assimilation' phenomenon has been quite limited.

The 'assimilation' policy, which is not the invention of Portuguese colonialism, was pursued by other colonizers, who favoured the creation of a restricted privileged class able to serve as an intermediary between them and the popular masses.

This policy was bound to fail, in Angola and elsewhere, because the 'assimilated' were the first ones to lay down the theoretical and practical basis of the fight for national independence.

The problem of the *assimilados* must be seen in terms of social classes. It is the problem of the participation of the petty bourgeoisie, including the relatively important sector of intellectuals, and of the middle bourgeoisie where it exists. Naturally, all social classes and strata should participate in the fight for national liberation. The problem is to know whose interests must have priority, those of the masses or those of a small minority which would like to replace the colonizers.

The MPLA, as has been stated in its programme, has taken upon itself the task of 'constantly defending essentially the interests of the peasant and working masses'.