

**FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM**



**A STORY FROM ANGOLA**

**POPULAR MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA (MPLA)**

## FORWARD

How do you spread the word? A foreign army is occupying your country. Public meetings are banned. The radio and newspapers are censored. Talk of independence is forbidden and the secret police are everywhere—overhearing conversations, arresting anyone they suspect as a “terrorist”, torturing political prisoners. How can you communicate under those conditions? How can you teach and organize and inspire people to revolt—to fight for their independence?

These were some of the enormous problems facing the independence movements in Portugal's African colonies: Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and the islands of Sao Tome and Principe. In Angola—the largest and richest of the colonies—the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) led a 14-year guerrilla war against Portuguese colonialism. It was not until November 11, 1975 that Angola won its independence. It took years of patient, careful organizing—years of war and sacrifice—to defeat the Portuguese, who had the active support of many European nations, the United States, and the white-minority regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa.

The MPLA was fighting to end one of the most oppressive social and economic systems in the world. Portugal, under a fascist dictatorship until 1974, kept most of its own people in poverty, while it maintained

the most brutal and repressive control in the African colonies.

The Portuguese had exploited Angola for nearly 500 years. Between 1580 and 1913, the Portuguese and their European partners captured an estimated 7 million Angolans and sold them overseas as slaves. Even after slavery was formally abolished, the Portuguese enforced a system of contract labor. Under this system, Angolans who could not pay the heavy taxes, or who were suspected of “vagrancy”, were forced to work for Portuguese settlers under conditions of virtual slavery. Those who rebelled were killed or sentenced to hard labor on the cocoa plantations of Sao Tome—a kind of Portuguese Devil's Island.

The Portuguese colonialists were only concerned with reaping profits from the land and people of Angola. With great natural resources—oil, diamonds, coffee and cotton—Angola had the wealth to become a prosperous nation. But the Portuguese did nothing to develop that potential for the Angolan people. In colonial Angola, the schools and hospitals were built for the Portuguese settlers. As a result, 99% of the Angolan people were kept illiterate, and many died in childhood from disease and poverty.

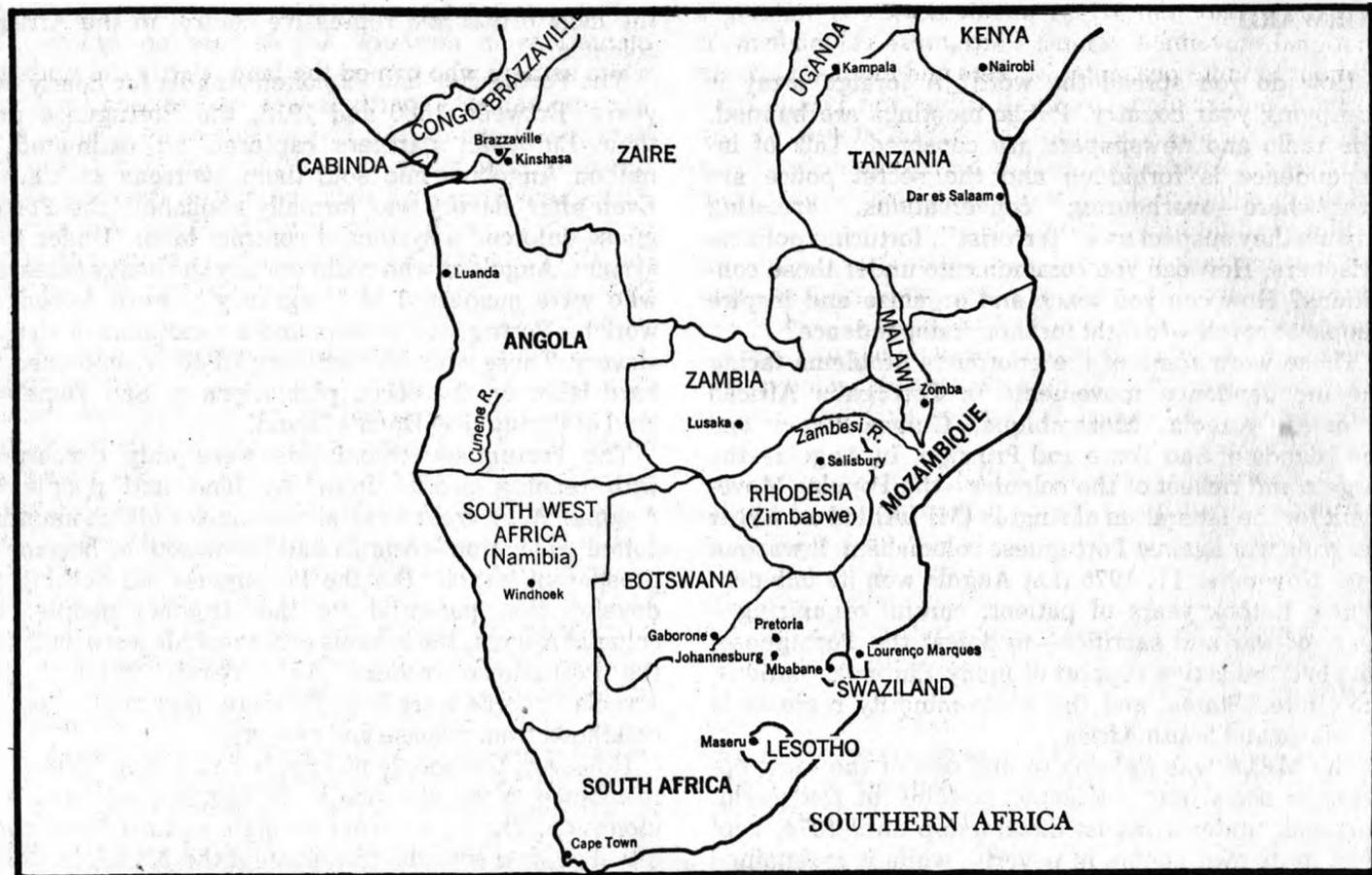
However, the people of Angola had a long history of resistance to the violence of Portuguese rule and exploitation. The most recent struggle against these conditions began with the formation of the MPLA in 1956.

*Special thanks to Allen Francovich for the translation, Steve Talbot of Internews for the introduction and afterword, Spain for lettering the comic, and Gonna Rise Again Graphics.*

ISBN 0-914750-07-0

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Published by Peoples Press, 2680 21st Street, San Francisco, CA 94110



From the start, the MPLA was dedicated to building a national movement against Portuguese colonialism. It set out to unite peasants, workers and intellectuals—to bring together members of all tribes and people from all parts of the country. The MPLA defended the interests of Angola's six million black inhabitants (80% of the population), but it was always open to any white willing to fight for independence.

The first task was education about the struggle for independence. Through leaflets, wall posters, and secret study groups, the MPLA began to explain to the Angolan people what it stood for, who it was fighting, and most importantly, how the people, united and organized, could defeat Portuguese rule and build a new society.

On February 4, 1961, the MPLA launched the armed struggle with an attack on the central prison in Luanda, the capital city. They were trying to free a number of political prisoners whom they feared the Portuguese were about to execute. The attack failed, and the Portuguese retaliation was brutal. In the uprisings that followed, thousands of Angolans were killed—over 3,000 in Luanda alone. The MPLA rebels who survived retreated into the mountains. Although this action was a military defeat, the MPLA assault on the prison was an important turning point in the Angolan struggle. It showed the world that the people of Angola were beginning to fight for their freedom.

One month later, the workers on coffee and cotton plantations in northern Angola rose up against the white settlers who owned the land. Partly the uprising was spontaneous, partly it was encouraged by a tribally-based group, the FNLA. But there was no real organization to follow up and direct the revolt, and the Portuguese army and settlers crushed the local rebellion. That experience convinced the MPLA all the more that the movement for independence needed a solid organization with strong roots among the people throughout the country.

This comic book describes these early days of the fight against Portuguese colonialism. It is one of many books, pamphlets and leaflets produced and distributed by the MPLA to explain their goals and tactics to the Angolan people. For many Angolans, it tells a familiar story. The main character is a 17-year-old Angolan, Paulo. He is the servant of a wealthy white family that works him day and night, pays him poorly, and treats him with contempt. Paulo is driven to rebel by the daily humiliations he must suffer. On his way to work, he is harassed by Portuguese soldiers—a common, demeaning experience. He is searched and must show his I.D. or pass card. Later he is whipped and almost killed by white vigilantes (a Portuguese Ku Klux Klan) and hunted by the police.\* When Paulo fights back, but is forced to run, he is rescued by an MPLA militant in the nick of time. Paulo has shown courage but now he must

4  
learn *how* to fight. The MPLA helps Paulo to understand the nature of his enemy, Portuguese colonialism and its imperialist allies, and how to fight through a revolutionary organization for a better way of life.

Paulo's story reminded me of a Vietnamese I once met who had fought against the French colonial army occupying his country. I asked him what made him first decide to join the resistance against the French. He said that it went back to his school days in Hanoi when the French kids taunted him, calling him racist names and pushing him around. He would fight back and get arrested. But every time, he said, he would grow more committed to the idea of forcing the French out of his country. When he grew up he joined the Viet Minh guerrillas and served as a captain at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, where the French were decisively defeated and forced to pull out of Vietnam.

Like the Vietnamese, Paulo and the Angolan people learned the necessity of taking up arms against a vicious colonial rule. They also learned the necessity of building toward the future. Throughout the war, the MPLA worked to lay the foundations for a radically new society that could develop fully after independence. The MPLA organized under the slogan "People's Power." In the liberated areas they created new political, economic and social institutions to meet the people's needs. They established women's organizations, trade unions and student groups. Thousands of

children and adults learned to read in MPLA schools, where they gained political education as well as practical skills. The MPLA set up medical clinics to provide and teach basic health care. In the rural areas, the people raised crops collectively on shared plots of land, and established "people's stores" to exchange food for other basic necessities. It was this social revolution, being carried out in the midst of the war, that generated mass support for the MPLA—a revolution that would create the conditions for true independence, and in the process, create the new Angolan man and woman.

—Steve Talbot

\* the Portuguese Secret Police (PIDE) were trained by the Gestapo in the 1930's.



5  
*This is the story of the transformation of the Angolan people from slavery into struggle and from struggle to freedom.*

This is a story from the Angola of today. Paulo stands for fighting youth, fighting, arms in hand, against the foreign occupation.

The centuries old colonialist tyranny is already receding before the determined will of the Angolan people to win their independence.

As Angolans become conscious of and act against colonial abuses, they become free. Free in their consciousness which guides the people, free in the mountains and jungles feeding the guerrillas, free in the underground of the cities and neighborhoods.

It is the fighting Angolans who are hastening the arrival of a radiant future for all human kind. They have discovered themselves as a valid part of humanity, conscious of their place in life and the world. Conscious of what they have contributed so that each man, each woman, each child can feel free in their country, so that every human being can feel capable of serving the

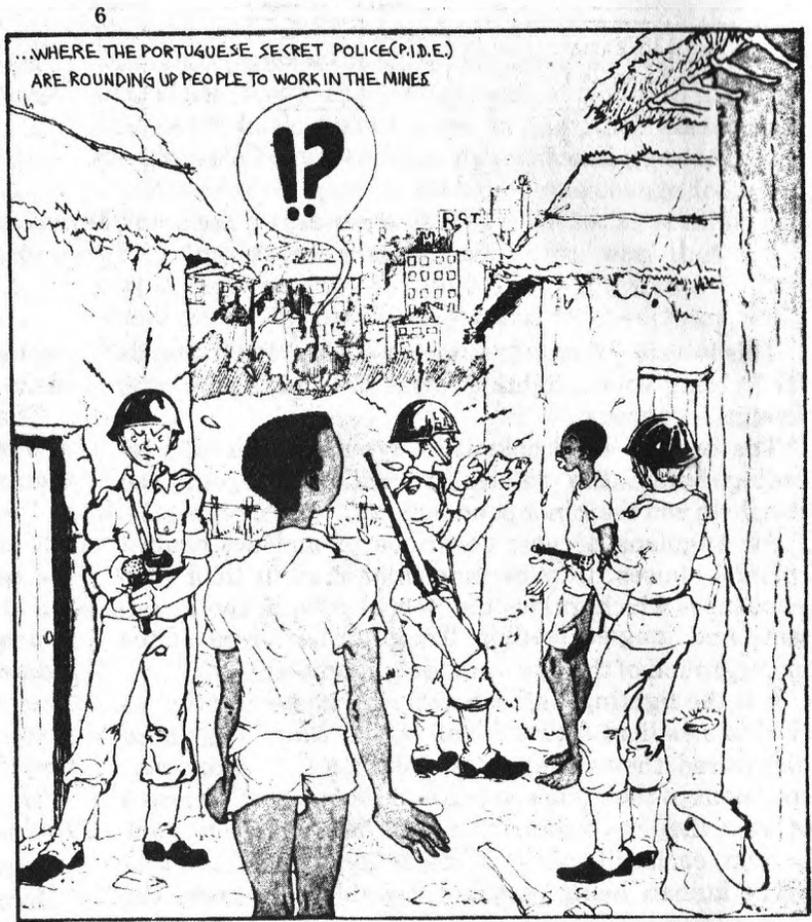
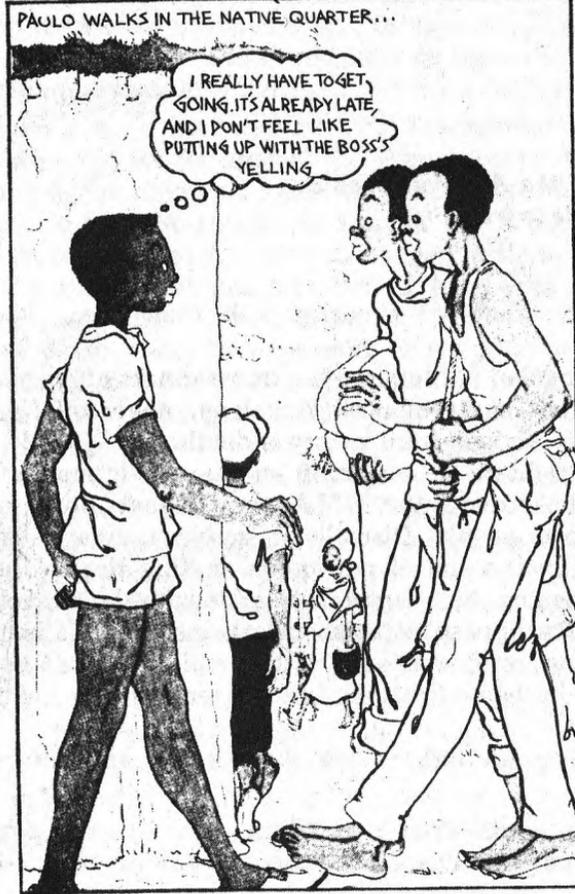
people in whatever capacity with their ideas and feelings.

The Angolan fighters are the transformers of Angola into a free country for all Angolans, nobly offering themselves to fight until victory or death.

These fighters do not act in an anarchistic manner, but are linked with the MPLA, the vanguard force of the Angolan people. Disciplined, active, they are illuminated by the sun of patriotism, setting fire to the plains, making the mountains tremble with their revolt against Portuguese colonialism, against imperialism. They do not confuse friends with enemies; they do not preserve in their spirit tribalism, regionalism, or racial prejudice.

The Angolan fighters are the present and future Angola.

In their hearts—Victory or Death!  
In their sight—Victory!



WELL, THESE PAPERS ARE IN ORDER  
TAKE YOUR I.D. AND SEE THAT YOU BEHAVE  
GET MOVING BEFORE I CHANGE MY MIND

HEY, YOU  
OVER  
THERE!  
COME  
HERE!

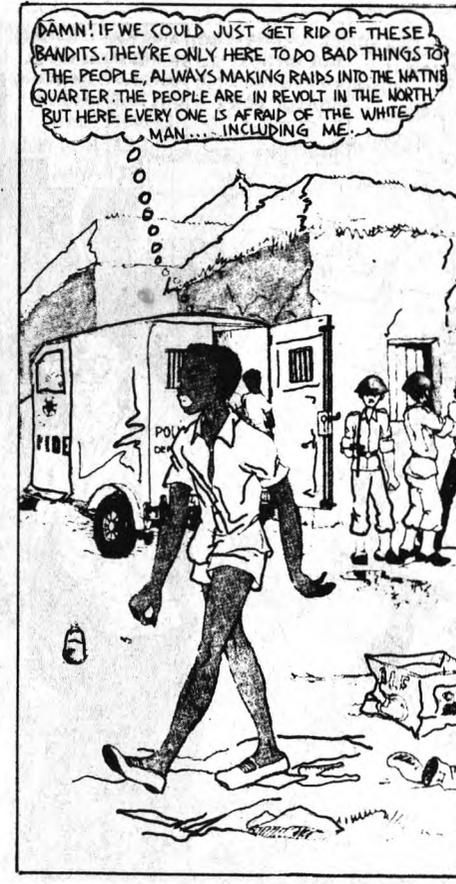


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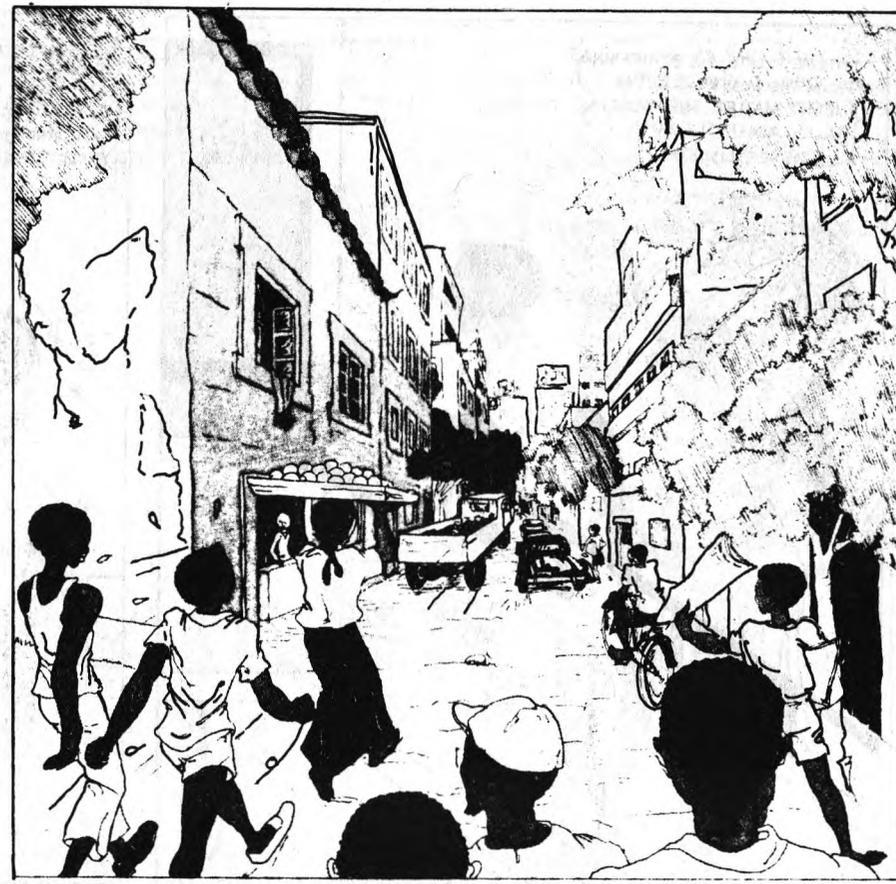
START WALKING BOY, AND DON'T  
LOOK BACK. YOU'LL BE SORRY IF I  
CATCH YOU TELLING ANYBODY WHAT  
HAPPENED HERE, UNDERSTAND?

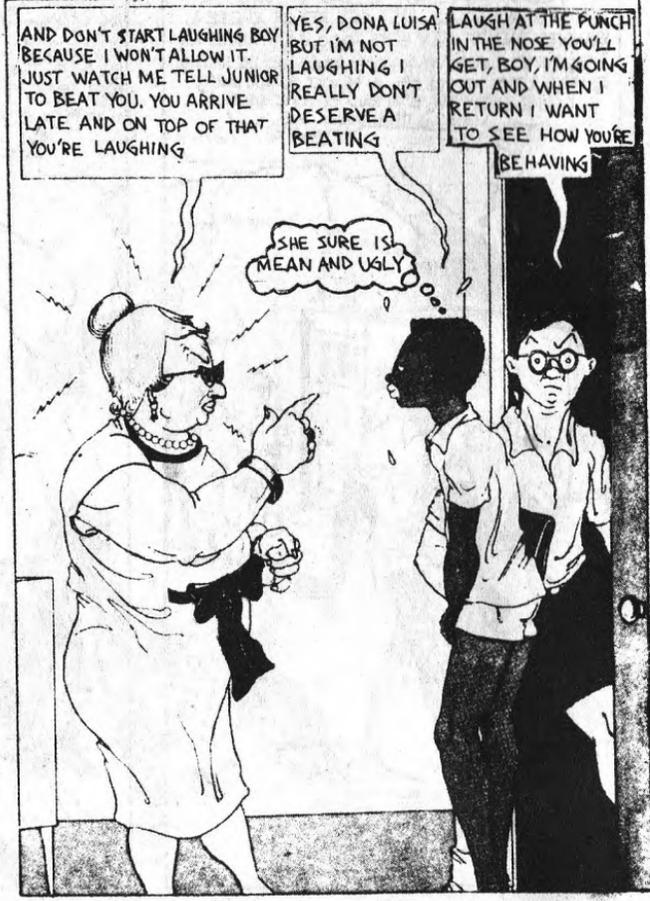
YES, SIR



DAMN! IF WE COULD JUST GET RID OF THESE  
BANDITS. THEY'RE ONLY HERE TO DO BAD THINGS TO  
THE PEOPLE, ALWAYS MAKING RAIDS INTO THE NATIVE  
QUARTER. THE PEOPLE ARE IN REVOLT IN THE NORTH!  
BUT HERE EVERY ONE IS AFRAID OF THE WHITE  
MAN... INCLUDING ME.

9







BUT MA'AM THIS CAN'T BE THERE'S SO MUCH TROUBLE IN THE STREETS WITH THESE CRAZY WHITES. LEAVING AT 10:30 IS TOO LATE AND I STILL HAVE TO BUY UNCLE JOAO'S WINE. HE'S SICK

WHAT?! SAYING BAD THINGS ABOUT WHITES! I'LL HAVE YOU ARRESTED, YOU INSOLENT THING YOU'RE NOT GETTING WINE. FOR UNCLE JOAO, BUT FOR YOURSELF, YOU DRUNKARD AREN'T YOU ASHAMED TO BE GOING OUT LIKE THE OTHER NIGGERS TO DRINK IN THE BARS? AT YOUR AGE

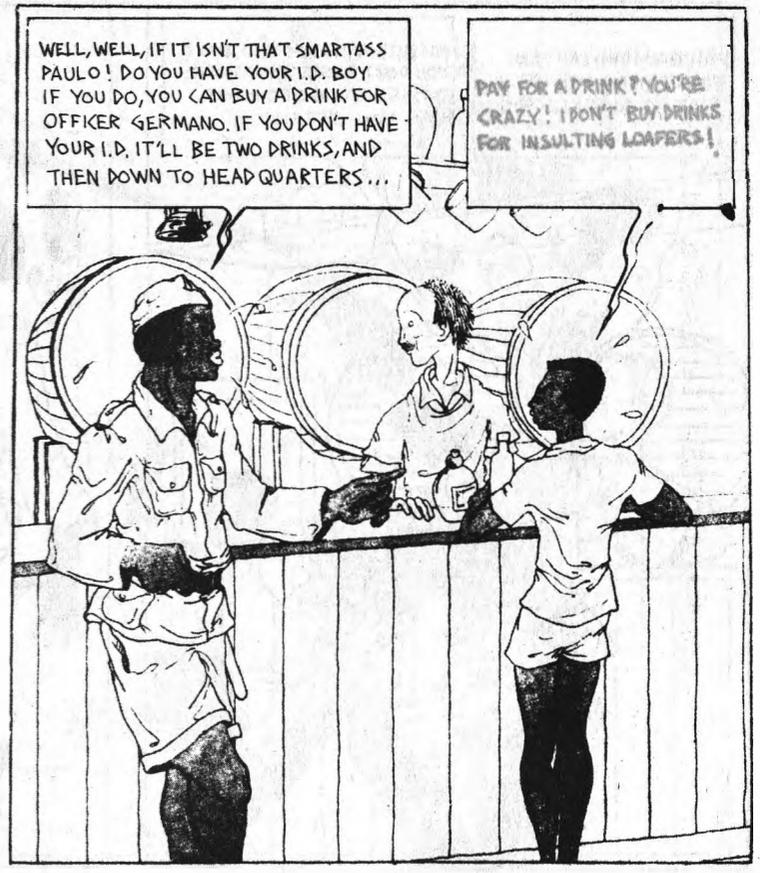


THIS IS REALLY INSULTING! ME, A BIG DRUNKARD! OH! THESE PEOPLE ARE REALLY INSULTING!



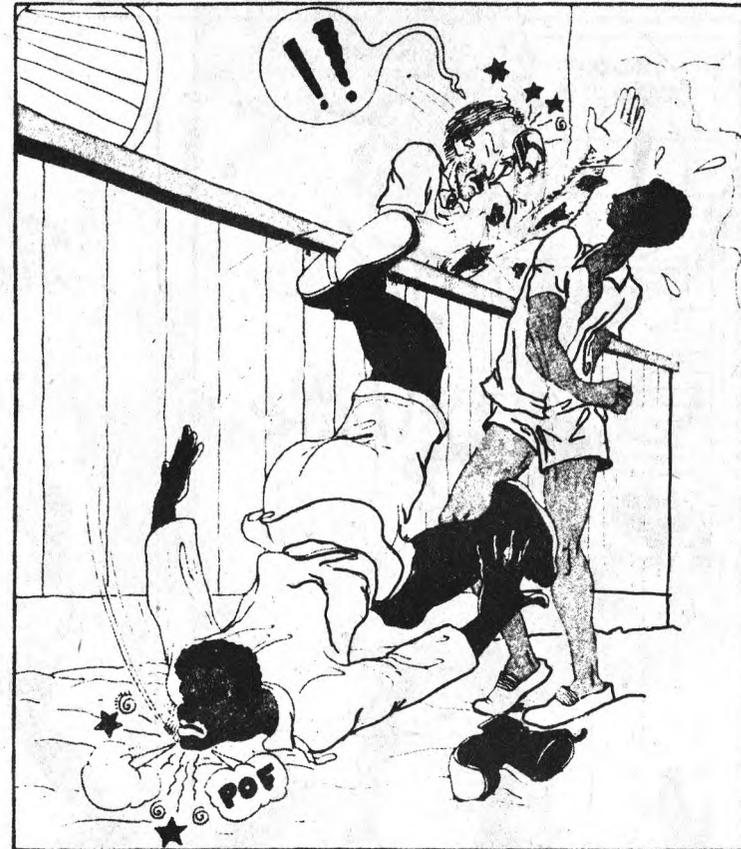
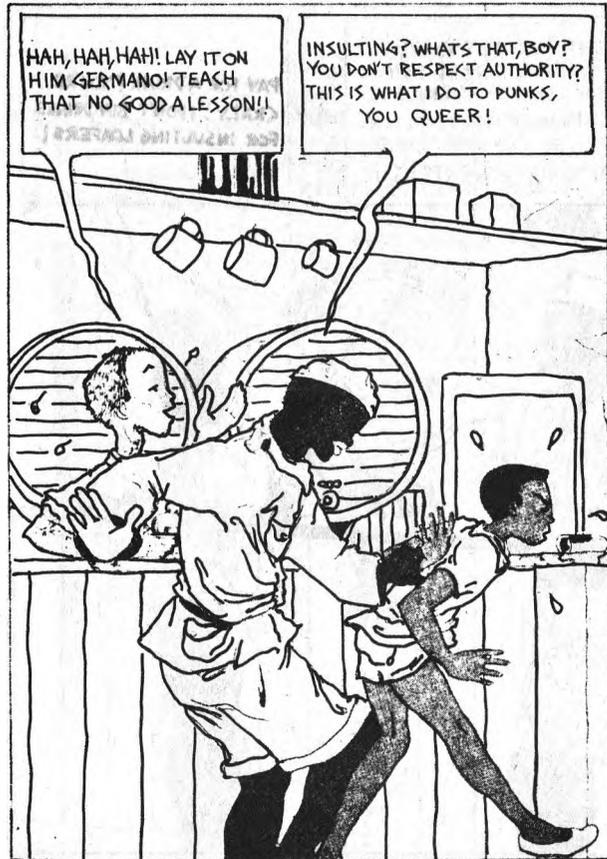
HEY, LOOK! THAT RASCAL PAULO! WELL, GOOD EVENING

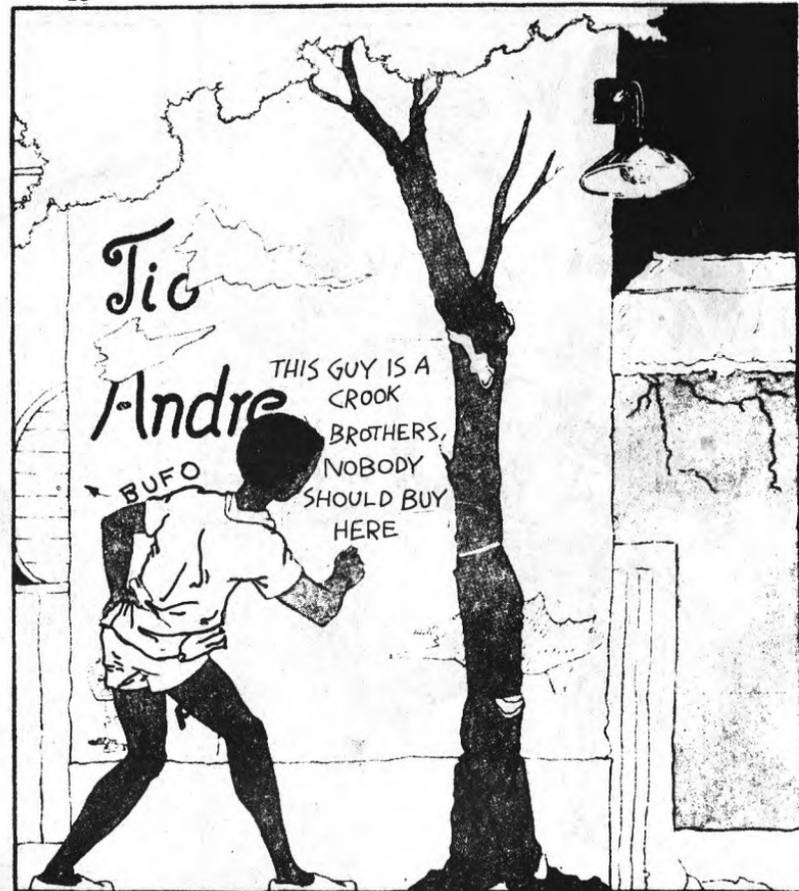
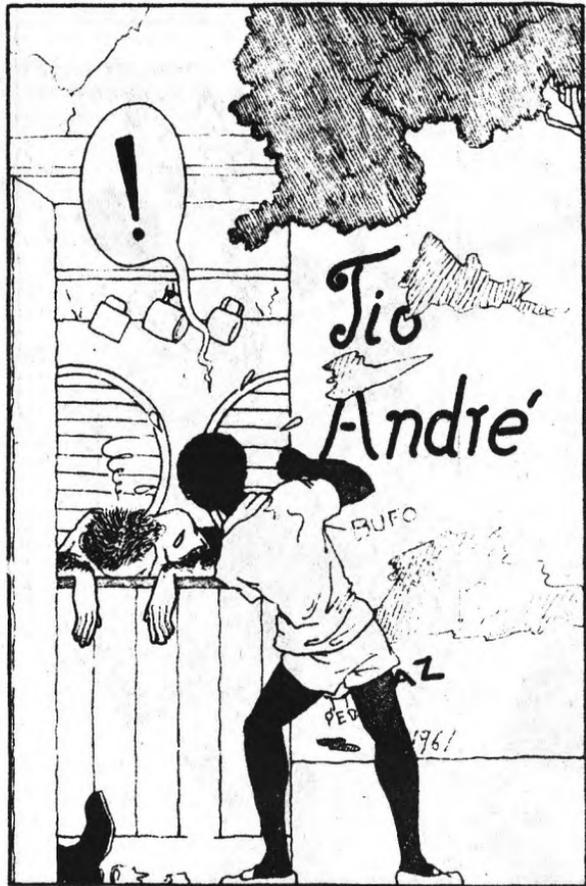
GOOD EVENING MR. ANDRE



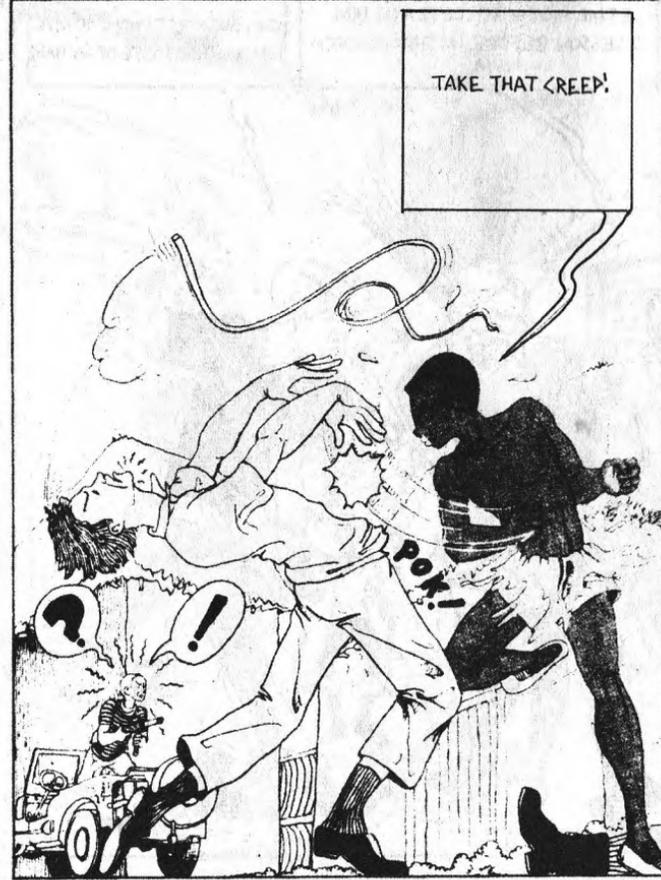
WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T THAT SMARTASS PAULO! DO YOU HAVE YOUR I.D. BOY IF YOU DO, YOU CAN BUY A DRINK FOR OFFIKER GERMANO. IF YOU DON'T HAVE YOUR I.D. IT'LL BE TWO DRINKS, AND THEN DOWN TO HEAD QUARTERS...

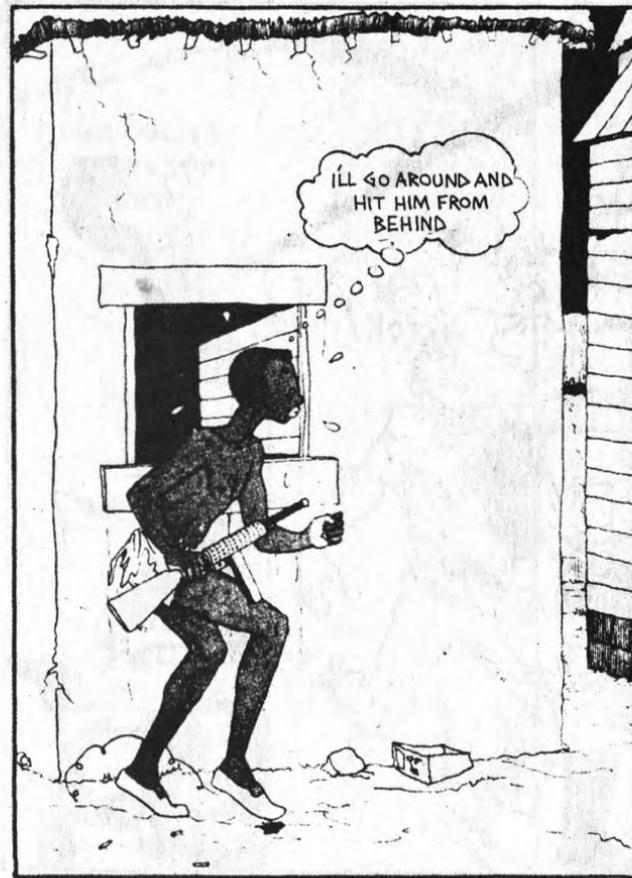
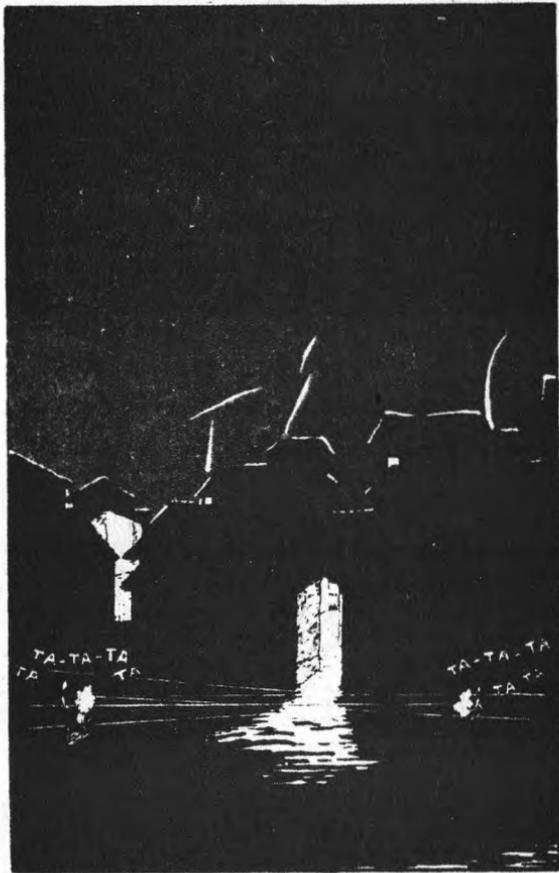
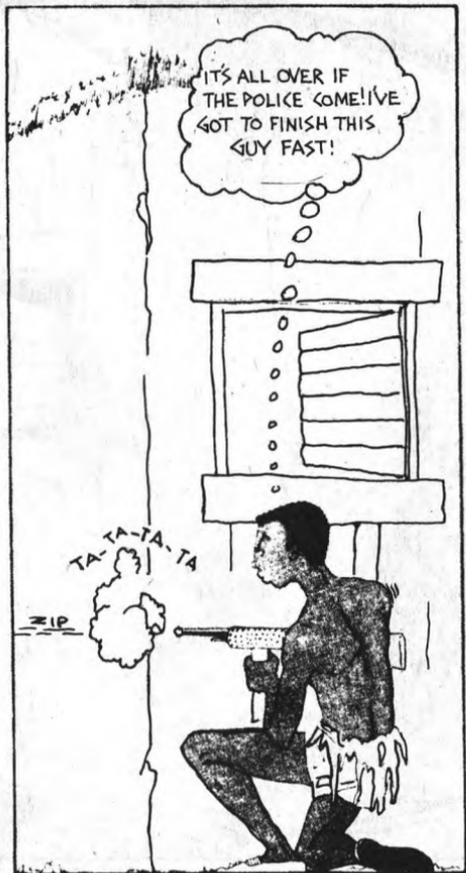
PAY FOR A DRINK? YOU'RE CRAZY! I DON'T BUY DRINKS FOR INSULTING LOAFERS!

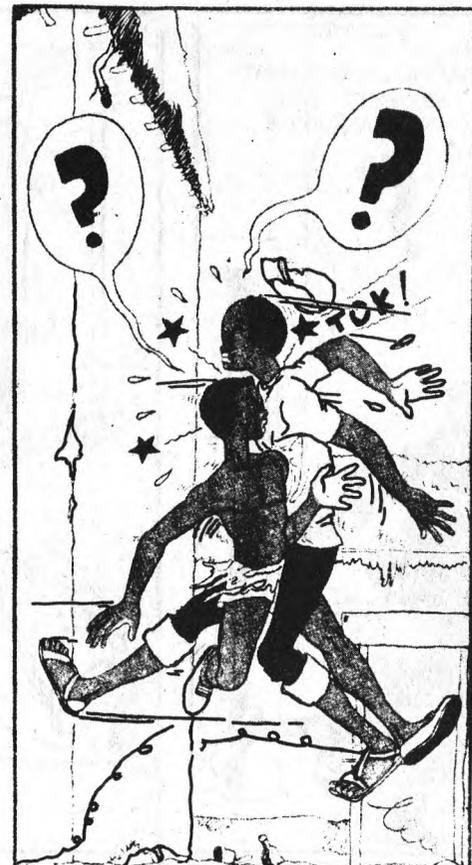
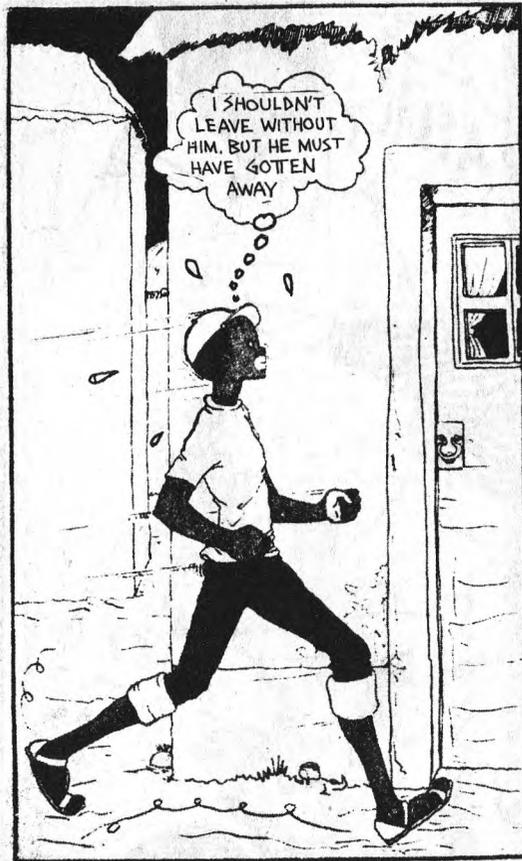
















DO YOU HAVE ROOM HERE FOR THESE COMRADES JUST FOR TONIGHT?

OH SO IT WAS THESE KIDS MAKING ALL THAT NOISE! DON'T YOU KNOW THERE WILL BE RAIDS NOW? DID SOME ONE ORDER THIS? WELL I'LL GIVE THEM SOME CLOTHES.



BRAVE BOYS! THEY ONLY HAVE TO LEARN

THE OLD MAN IS RIGHT. YOU SHOULD HAVE SPLIT RATHER THAN GET INTO A GUNFIGHT. YOU WANTED TO KILL COLONIALISTS. BUT KILLING TWO OR THREE COLONIALISTS DOES NOT FREE OUR PEOPLE. THEY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE KILLINGS TO COME DOWN ON US HARDER. YOU MUST NOT WORK IN ISOLATION DOING THINGS THAT ONLY YOU HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO WORK WITH OTHER STRUGGLING ANGOLANS. TO DO THAT YOU MUST BE PART OF AN ORGANIZATION, OF A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT. IT IS THE MOVEMENT WHICH MUST DIRECT YOU BECAUSE ONLY THE MOVEMENT UNDERSTANDS THE STRUGGLE IN THE WHOLE COUNTRY



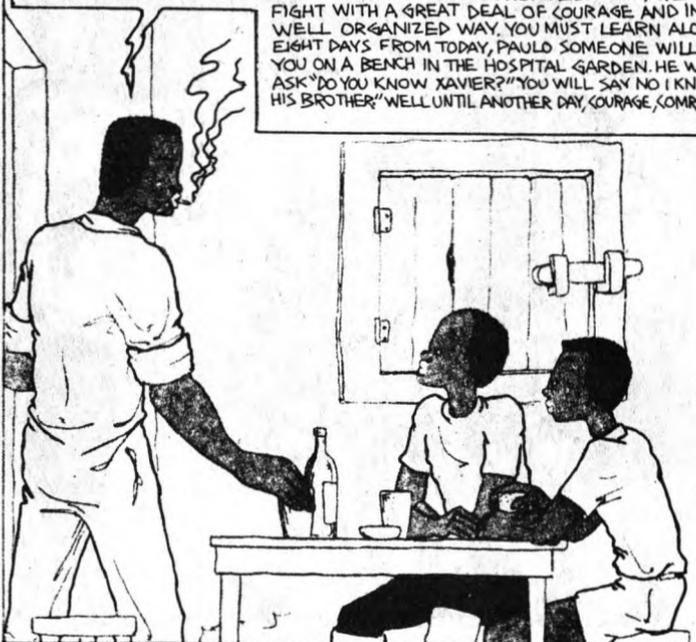
BUT, WHAT IS THIS MOVEMENT? WHERE IS IT?

YOU MUST HAVE SEEN THE NAME WRITTEN ON THE WALLS, THE MPLA. THE MPLA IS THE ONLY ORGANIZATION FIGHTING FOR THE COMPLETE LIBERATION OF OUR COUNTRY. IT FIGHTS AGAINST THE PORTUGUESE COLONIALISTS AND ALSO AGAINST IMPERIALISM. BECAUSE IT IS NOT ONLY THE PORTUGUESE WHO ARE STEALING FROM OUR PEOPLE. THERE ARE ALSO THE AMERICANS, THE ENGLISH, THE FRENCH, THE BELGIANS, THE GERMANS AND OTHERS. THEY ARE THE IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES. THEY STEAL FROM US ANGOLANS THROUGH THEIR COMPANIES, THEIR MONOPOLIES AND THEIR AGENCIES. THEY GIVE MONEY AND ARMS TO THE PORTUGUESE. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO DEFEAT THE IMPERIALISTS SO OUR COUNTRY CAN BE FREE, SO THERE CAN BE FOOD AND CLOTHING FOR EVERYONE. SCHOOLS HOSPITALS AND FACTORIES. FIRST DEFEAT THE PORTUGUESE COLONIALISTS WHO ARE LIKE THE FOREMEN. THEN THE IMPERIALISTS, WHO REMAIN IN THE BACKGROUND -- THE BOSSES, GIVING ORDERS AND ROBBING AND STEALING



THE MPLA FIGHTS FOR COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE. THE COLONIALISTS ARE SOMETIMES FORCED TO GRANT POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE, TO PUT A BLACK IN THE GOVERNMENT. BUT THE FOREIGN COMPANIES CONTINUE TO EXPLOIT THE PEOPLE, THE ARMIES REMAIN IN THE COUNTRY, THAT AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IS JUST THE FOREMAN. THAT IS NEOCOLONIALISM. ON PAPER THE COUNTRY IS INDEPENDENT, BUT ONLY ON PAPER. THERE ARE OTHER MOVEMENTS IN ANGOLA BUT THEY ARE JUST FIGHTING SO THEY CAN BECOME FOREMEN. THE MPLA IS THE ONLY ORGANIZATION STRUGGLING FOR COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE. COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE MEANS THE PEOPLE ARE IN CONTROL OF THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE CONTROL THE ECONOMY: THE BANKS, THE MINES, THE INDUSTRIES. THAT THE PEOPLES MONEY GOES TO THE PEOPLE. TO ACCOMPLISH THIS, WE MUST

FIGHT WITH A GREAT DEAL OF COURAGE AND IN A WELL ORGANIZED WAY. YOU MUST LEARN ALOT. EIGHT DAYS FROM TODAY, PAULO SOMEONE WILL MEET YOU ON A BENCH IN THE HOSPITAL GARDEN. HE WILL ASK "DO YOU KNOW XAVIER?" YOU WILL SAY NO I KNOW HIS BROTHER." WELL UNTIL ANOTHER DAY, COURAGE, COMRADES





MOTA & IRMÃO  
EXPORTERS  
OF COFFEE  
LUANDA-NEWYORK

# DIARIO

KRUPP -  
Representante - MINEIRA DOLZ

## IN ANGOLA PORUGUESE TERRITORY PEACE REIGNS

LISBON 24th  
THE MINISTER FOR OVERSEAS TERRITORIES HAD A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY WHERE HE DECLARED "ALL THOSE WHO SPEAK OF WAR OR REVOLT IN ANGOLA ARE ACTING IN BAD FAITH AND ARE AT THE SERVICE OF FOREIGN POWERS THERE IS NO WAR IN ANGOLA THERE IS NO REVOLT ANGOLA PORTUGUESE TERRITORY IS A LAND OF PEACE"

## LAST NIGHT A BAND OF TERRORISTS ASSAULTED THE NATIVE QUARTER

YESTERDAY AROUND MIDNIGHT A LARGE BAND OF TERRORISTS, ARMED WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIAN AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, ATTACKED THE NATIVE QUARTER WITH THE INTENTION OF INTIMIDATING THE NATIVE POPULATION, AND OF CARRYING OUT THEIR USUAL CRIMES AGAINST THE INHABITANTS. THEY ALSO INTENDED TO ASSAULT THE SHOP OWNED BY MR. ANDRE, A LONG-ESTABLISHED AND RESPECTED BUSINESSMAN OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD. FOUR EUROPEANS WHO HAPPENED TO BE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD SEEING THE TERRORISTS' INTENTION ATTEMPTED TO STOP THEM. THEY CALLED THE PIDE PATROL. THE TERRORISTS GREETED THIS ACT WITH GUNFIRE, WOUNDING MR. MANUEL DE SILVA IN A COWARDLY FASHION. WHEN THE PATROL (COMANDED BY INSPECTOR LONTRAO) ARRIVED THE TERRORISTS TOOK A HUT BY ASSAULT, FORCING THOSE INSIDE TO HIDE. THEN THE POLICE CONDUCTED A CAREFUL SEARCH BUT IT WAS THE LOCAL PEOPLE ONCE AGAIN SHOWING THEIR PORTUGUESENESS, WHO FINALLY HANDED OVER THE TERRORIST LEADER TO THE POLICE. WITH PRECAUTION, A PIDE PATROL ARRESTED SOME OTHER SUSPECTS. FIVE OF THESE, WHO GAVE THEIR LEADER DOWN, THE

## IN THE UN ATTACKS O PORTUGU CONTINU

PORTUG  
BEBA  
PEPSI  
COLA  
CHEC  
O EM  
AMER

OH, OH, OH! LOOK AT WHAT THE COLONIALISTS SAY. A BAND OF TERRORISTS! HUM! THESE NEWSPAPERS ONLY LIE, THEY ONLY LIE! IT'S TO FOOL THE PEOPLE



ALL THE COMPANIES ARE FOREIGN. THAT MECHANIC COMRADE WAS RIGHT! THIS IS IMPERIALISM!

THIS IS THE PLACE WHERE WE AGREED TO MEET



IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME... I DON'T SEE ANYONE

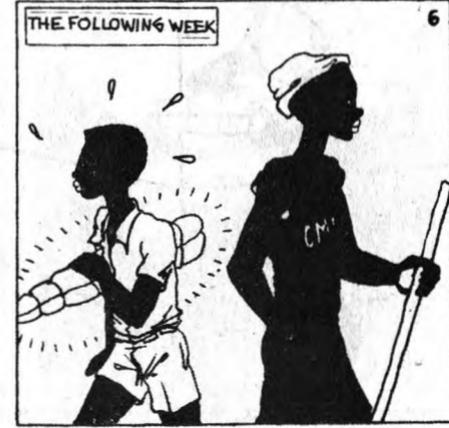
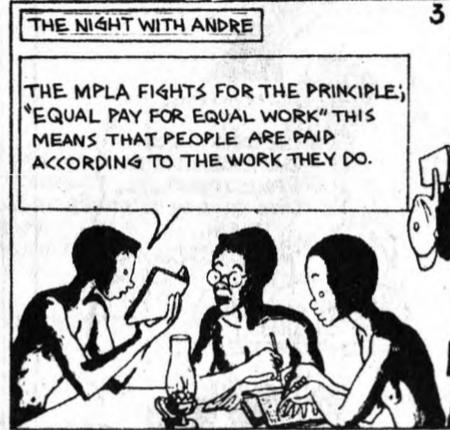


DO YOU KNOW XAVIER?

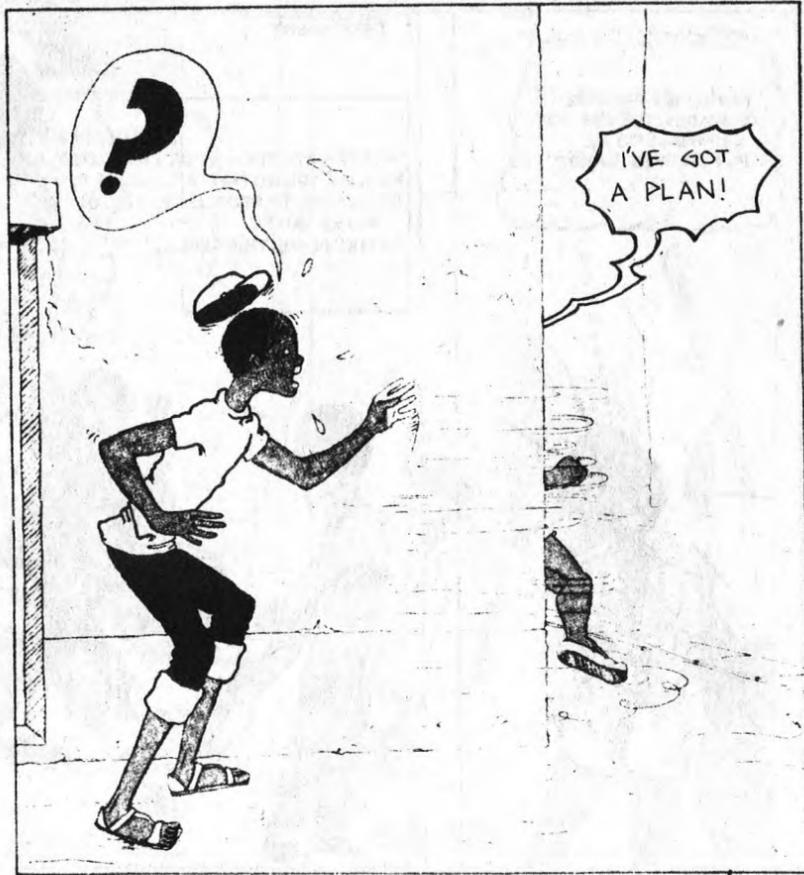
A CONTRACT LABORER? IT CAN'T BE!

NO... I KNOW... -UH-HIS BROTHER!





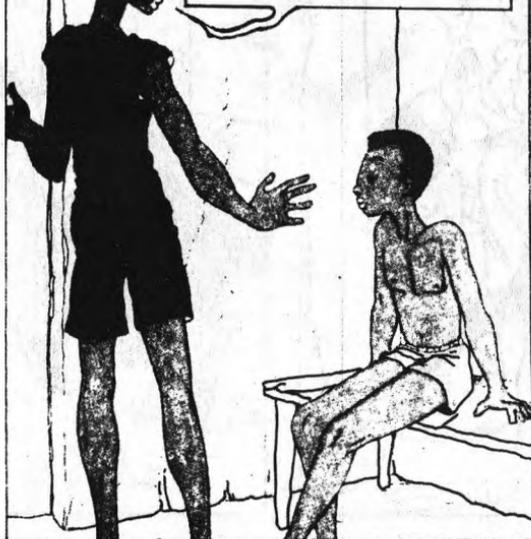




YES, YOUR PLAN LOOKS LIKE A GOOD ONE. I'M GOING TO TALK TO THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR SECTION BUT I ALSO WANT TO TELL YOU THAT YOU DID SOMETHING VERY BAD TODAY. YOU ATTRACTED EVERYBODY'S ATTENTION THE P.I.D.E. KEEPS ITS EYES ON THE PEOPLE. YOU ARE A MILITANT AND A MILITANT HAS THE OBLIGATION TO BE VERY CAUTIOUS. A MILITANT CANNOT DO ANYTHING IN A LIGHT-HEADED WAY. THE P.I.D.E. IS VERY STRONG, IT IS STILL STRONGER THAN WE ARE. SO PEOPLE CAN DO ONLY ONE THING. BE TOGETHER AND BETTER ORGANIZED THAN THE P.I.D.E.



YOU WERE A FOOL TODAY, YOU WERE NOT TOGETHER. I HOPE THAT YOU LEARN SOMETHING FROM THIS, THAT YOU LEARN TO DO THINGS WITH BETTER JUDGEMENT. NOW, AS FOR YOUR PLAN, I'M GOING TO SPEAK TO THOSE RESPONSIBLE. YOU CAN BEGIN TO STUDY THE OPERATION. TELL THE COMRADES ABOUT IT AND TALK IT OVER. THEY'LL FIGURE OUT A LOT OF THINGS THAT COULD BE BETTER. YOU SHOULDN'T PLAN IT ALL BY YOURSELF. I WILL GIVE YOU AN ANSWER AND HELP YOU.



THAT NIGHT



ONE WEEK LATER

I HAD DRAWN UP A PLAN TO FREE THE PRISONERS, BUT TODAY I GOT SOME NEWS. THEY ARE GOING TO THE PRISON OF SILVA PORTO THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW. SO I HAVE ANOTHER PLAN, BUT WE HAVE TO SEE IF IT'S GOOD. WE ARE GOING TO FIGHT LIKE OUR COMRADES IN THE BUSH, WITH ARMS, IF WE CAN GET THEM



THE ONLY THING MISSING IS DYNAMITE

AND A BLOWTORCH



A BLOWTORCH IS EASY TO ARRANGE. I WASH CLOTHES FOR A MAN WHO OWNS A METAL WORKS SHOP. TOMORROW I CAN GET A BLOWTORCH





THE NEXT DAY

THIS IS IT!

SERVAL LIBRO



THERE'S THE BLOWTORCH! NOW JUST BE COOL!

PSSST! COME HERE, MR. COSTA, IF YOU WANT TO SEE SOMETHING NICE...

OH GOOD! SO YOU FINALLY WANT A LITTLE LOVING, EH?

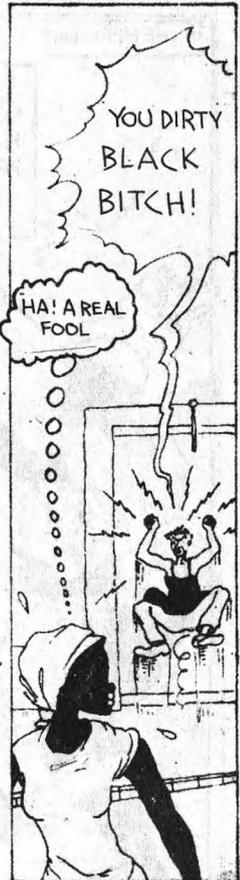


WAIT A MINUTE, WHITEY, NOT SO FAST!

COME HERE, MY ROSE! DON'T FOOL AROUND...

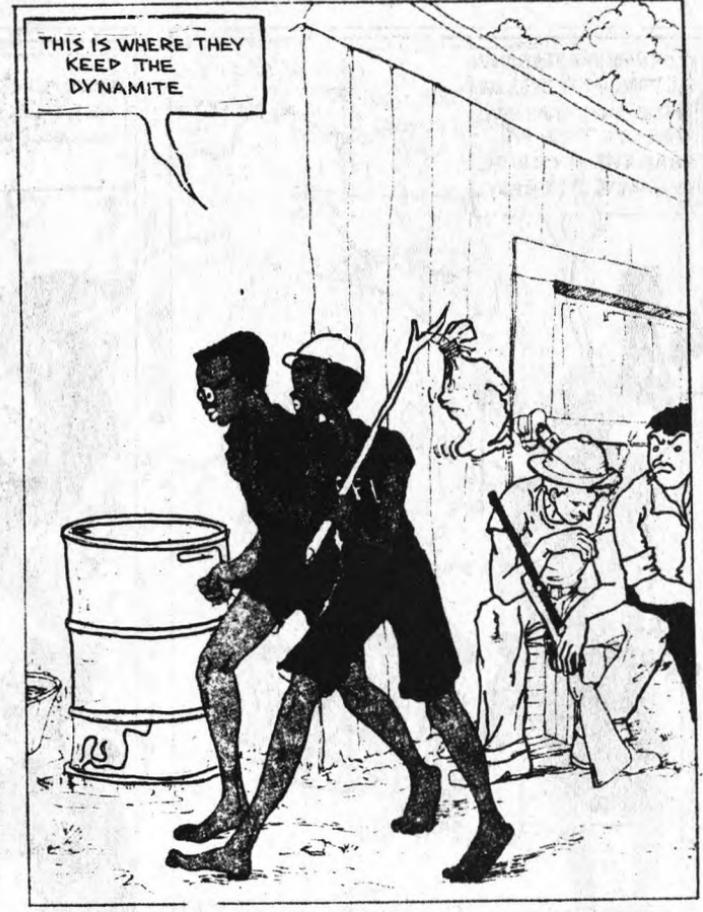


PAF!



YOU DIRTY BLACK BITCH!

HA! A REAL FOOL







GOOD. NOW THAT WE GOT ALL THE THINGS WE NEED, WE WILL LEAVE TONIGHT AT KILOMETER 3, A COMRADE IS WAITING FOR US.



WE'LL HAVE TO ALWAYS STAY IN THE BUSH BECAUSE OF THE SOLDIERS. DON'T MAKE ANY NOISE



THIS IS KILOMETER 3 THE BRIDGE IS BACK UP THERE.



LET'S GO SEE IF COMRADE DAMIAO HAS ARRIVED...



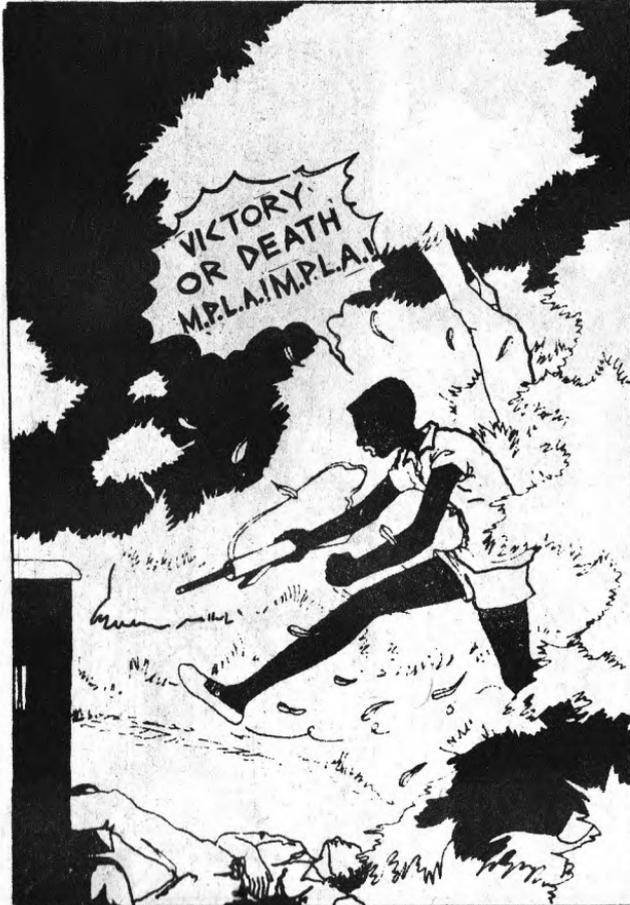
WELL, COMRADE, IS EVERYTHING O.K.? DID EVERYTHING COME OFF AS PLANNED? DID YOU GET THE STUFF?

EVERYTHING IS OK, COMRADE. IT'S ALL HERE!



GUNS? GOOD WORK! WHEN THE JEEP IS ON THE BRIDGE, I'LL LIGHT THE DYNAMITE. YOU ATTACK THE TRUCK. THERE ARE COMRADES ON THE ROAD TO STOP ANY OTHER CARS... COMRADES, THE MOVEMENT KNOWS YOU WILL FIGHT WELL. VICTORY OR DEATH!









WELL COMRADES, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? THIS WILL ONLY TAKE A MINUTE.

WE CAN WAIT, COMRADE, THE ATTACK WAS WELL PLANNED, VERY WELL DONE!

HE'S NOT DEAD, IS HE, ANDRE? HE'S ONLY WOUNDED IN THE LEG, ISN'T HE?



IT CAN'T BE DONE WITH THIS BLOW TORCH! WE NEED AN ACETYLENE TORCH. PASS ME A PISTOL QUICKLY! IT'S THE ONLY WAY!



GET AWAY FROM THE DOOR, I'M GOING TO SHOOT AT THE LOCK. WE'LL SEE IF THAT WORKS...



ONE MORE SHOT WILL DO IT!

**PAM!  
BUM!**



AT LAST, FREEDOM! WE CAN BREATHE! THANKS, COMRADES!

BRAVO, COMRADES, THE MOVEMENT IS GOING TO BE PLEASED WITH YOU.



TAKE IT EASY, BROTHER, GIVE ME A COMRADE'S EMBRACE!

**A WHITE!  
GET HIM!**

YES, AN EMBRACE, JOSE! JACINTO IS A COMRADE WHO WAS TAKEN PRISONER BECAUSE HE WAS WITH THE PEOPLE. HE'S NOT LIKE THE OTHERS

EMBRACE A WHITE MAN? WHAT'S THIS?! SOMETIMES KILL THE WHITE MAN, OTHER TIMES EMBRACE HIM?! OH!



WE AREN'T FIGHTING AGAINST THE WHITES. WE'RE FIGHTING THE COLONIALISTS. IF WHITES ARE AGAINST COLONIALISM THEN THEY ARE OUR FRIENDS, AND FIGHT AT OUR SIDE. IF WE ARE RACIST WE WILL ONLY BE DIVIDING OUR FORCES, IT'S LIKE TRIBALISM. JUST BECAUSE I'M A BAILUNDO AND YOU'RE AN OVAMBUNDO DOESN'T MEAN WE CAN'T FIGHT TOGETHER. THE COLONIALISTS AND IMPERIALISTS ARE THE ONES WHO PROFIT FROM RACISM AND TRIBALISM.

WELL, DON'T YOU FEEL BETTER, PAULO? YOU AND JOSE COME WITH US TO FIGHT IN THE BUSH. ANDRE AND DOMINGA STAY WITH JACINTO. HE CAN'T HIDE IN THE BUSH



IN THE CAMP YOU'LL FIND ADAO, THE GUIDE. JACINTO AND ANDRE WILL STAY IN THE SECTOR IN THE CITY. DOMINGA WILL BE THE SECTOR'S LIASON WITH THE GUERRILLAS. OUR SUPPORT WORK FOR THE GUERRILLAS MUST BE VERY WELL DONE

YES, THAT'S VERY IMPORTANT



AWHILE LATER, IN THE BUSH



KEEP ON KOMRADES!  
IT'S ONLY A SHORT  
WAY.

GEE! THIS  
BUSH IS  
SCARY!

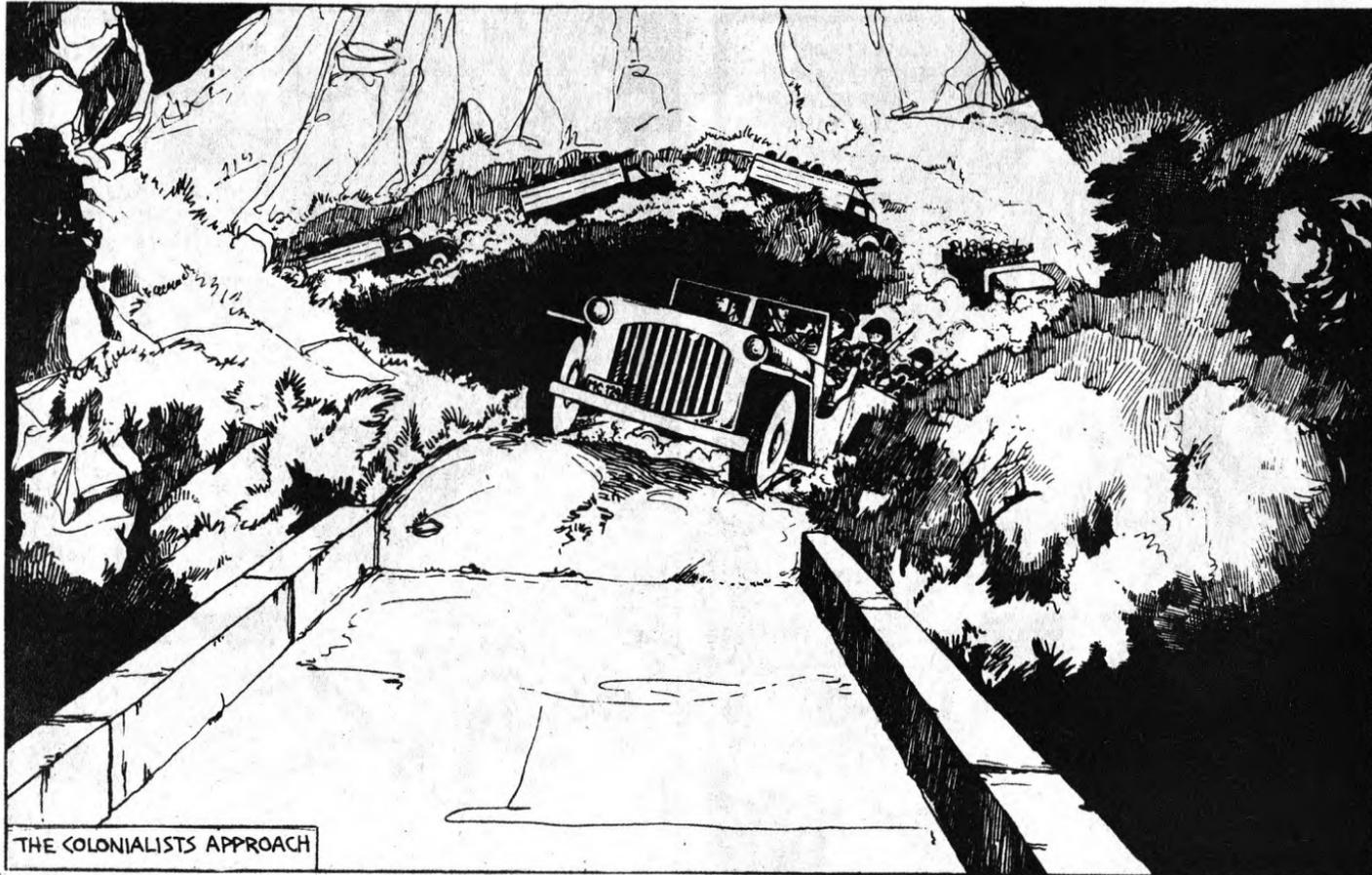
IS'NT THAT  
A PLANE  
THERE?



WHILE PEDRO PUTS  
THE DYNAMITE ON  
THE BRIDGE WE WILL  
TAKE OUR POSITIONS.  
PAULO, YOU COME  
WITH ME BEHIND  
THAT ROCK.

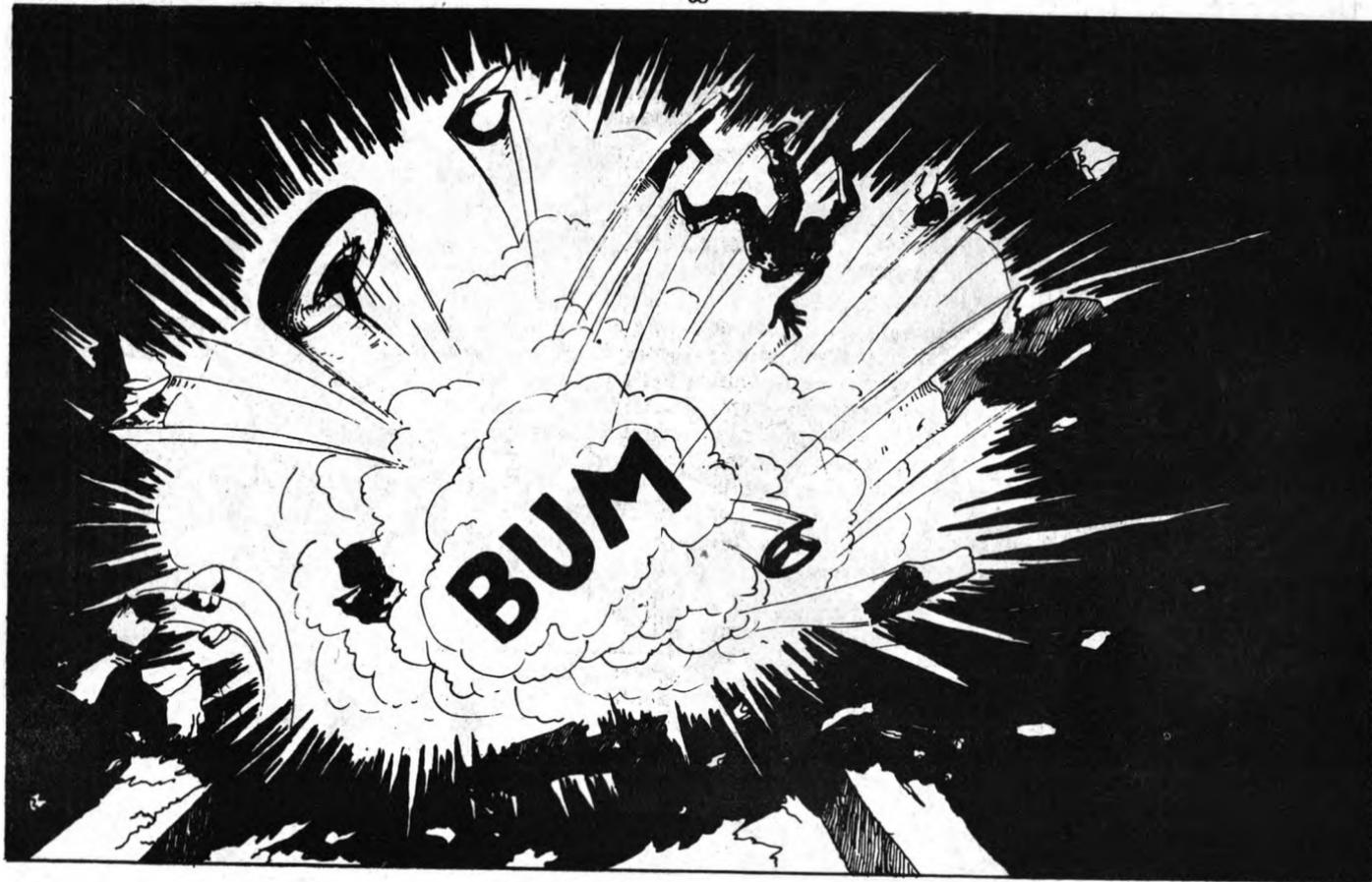


LISTEN! I CAN HEAR THE  
KARS OF THE  
COLONIALISTS!



THE COLONIALISTS APPROACH





FROM VICTORY TO VICTORY THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE ARE MARCHING TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE. THERE IS NO LIBERTY WITHOUT STRUGGLE! THERE IS NO HAPPINESS WITHOUT STRUGGLE!

**VICTORY OR DEATH  
VENCEREMOS!!!**

#### EPILOGUE

There were many more ambushes, many more acts of sabotage before the Angolan people won their independence. There were setbacks, defeats, times when the movement looked like it might be destroyed from outside pressures and internal disputes. Portuguese agents tried to kill Agostinho Neto, the leader of the MPLA. (He escaped, but the Portuguese did arrange the murder of Amílcar Cabral in Guinea-Bissau and Eduardo Mondlane, the first president of FRELIMO in Mozambique). In spite of all this, the MPLA grew stronger, and Portugal became more desperate.

The United States government tried to shore up Portugal's crumbling empire. It sent direct military aid to Lisbon and supplied arms for the colonial wars through NATO. The Portuguese used U.S. planes, napalm, helicopters and other weapons in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. This stream of aid kept the war dragging on, but it could not bring victory.

The Portuguese soldiers knew this. They began to tire of the war, to ask why they were fighting it at all. They came from impoverished Portugal, where the unemployment rate

was 25% and a million Portuguese were forced to look for work elsewhere in Europe. The wars were draining Portugal's treasury and maiming a generation. The number of soldiers in Angola alone grew to over 70,000, with no end in sight. The troops began to refuse orders, to rebel, and some even deserted and joined the MPLA.

Finally, when the fascist Caetano regime in Portugal ignored this warning and refused to stop the colonial wars, the Portuguese military staged a coup in April, 1974. They toppled the government and put an end to the colonial wars themselves. The Portuguese called it the "flower revolution" — its symbol was a red carnation in the barrel of a gun.

The coup took most of the world by surprise, including the government of the United States and the CIA. The liberation fighters in southern Africa and their friends and foes around the world watched to see what the new government would do.

On September 10, 1974 the Portuguese government recognized the independence of Guinea-Bissau, which had already declared itself independent the year before. On June 25, 1975, Mozambique became independent. The next month Sao Tome and Principe won their freedom.

Angola was a different story. It had long been "the prize of the Portuguese Empire." Portugal, South Africa, the U.S. and many European countries were not prepared to give up their stake in Angola's oil and other resources. Gulf Oil Corporation was pumping 150,000 barrels of oil a day out of the northern province of Cabinda. U.S. banks and corporations had offices and plants in Luanda, the capital city. South Africa had over a billion dollars invested in Angola in diamond production and hydroelectric plants. Companies of many countries ran extensive plantations and mines.

Beyond these immediate economic interests, the Western powers recognized that Angola was in a key strategic position in turbulent Southern Africa. For years, an "unholy alliance" of racist, white-minority regimes dominated this area. The Portuguese controlled Mozambique and Angola. In Rhodesia (which Africans call Zimbabwe), 250,000 whites held political and economic power over almost six million blacks. South Africa's four million whites kept 18 million blacks under the domination of the apartheid system—the world's most vicious system of racial separation and exploitation. South Africa illegally occupied Namibia (Southwest Africa)—the mineral-rich desert nation of 800,000 people on the border of Angola—despite repeated UN demands for that country's independence.

This network of white-dominated states, which Secretary of State Kissinger described in 1969 as "here to stay", began to crumble after the coup in Portugal. The independence of Mozambique under FRELIMO, a fraternal organization of the MPLA, troubles Rhodesia and South Africa no end. A look at the map shows why. Black nationalist guerrillas from Rhodesia have recently established new base camps in Mozambique and have already begun raids across the border into northeastern Rhodesia. South Africa has tried to reach a

temporary accommodation with the militant Marxist government in Mozambique. But in the long run, the leaders of the apartheid regime know that FRELIMO will not be satisfied until there is a representative, black majority government in South Africa.

The victory of the MPLA in Angola could only add to South Africa's problems. Angola shares a long border with Namibia. If the Namibian liberation fighters from SWAPO, the South West African People's Organization were able to freely cross this border, they could wrest Namibia from South African control much more quickly. No doubt this would hasten the downfall of the South African regime itself.

For all these reasons, the United States government did not intend to let the MPLA take power in Angola. It helped coordinate a Western strategy of trying to block the MPLA by promoting two rival, pro-Western groups in Angola—the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola). Kissinger hoped to supply enough aid and arms to make these weaker groups strong enough to challenge the MPLA's power; and he backed the Portuguese in insisting that power be handed over to a coalition government. It was a losing strategy.

Nathaniel Davis, who held the top U.S. State Department post for African affairs, argued against this approach to Kissinger in a frank memo: "Neither Savimbi (UNITA) or Roberto (FNLA) are good fighters—in fact, they couldn't fight their way out of a paper bag. It's the wrong game and the players we got are losers."

The difference between the MPLA and its two rivals is a longstanding one. FNLA began as a secessionist movement in the North among the Bakungo tribe. It lacked a coherent political program. Under President Kennedy, the CIA began giving

\$10,000 a year to Holden Roberto, FNLA's leader, because he posed less of a threat to U.S. interests than the MPLA. Roberto also received U.S. aid through his brother-in-law, President Mobutu, of neighboring Zaire. Mobutu himself had come to power with the help of the CIA after Patrice Lumumba, the radical nationalist, was killed in the early 60's. Mobutu opened Zaire for Western investment, and Roberto promised to do the same in Angola. The FNLA never developed a national base in the country, and had weakened as a force in recent years.

UNITA was founded in 1966 by Jonas Savimbi as a split-off from FNLA. It, too, was tribally-based, but among the Ovimbunda people of Southeast Angola. Its program was not much more developed than FNLA's. It fielded a small army and made attacks on the Portuguese from inside neighboring Zambia. In 1975, Savimbi was added to the CIA payroll.

In January of 1975, Kissinger's elite "40 Committee"—the same group that coordinated covert warfare against the Allende government in Chile—approved \$60 million to be spent on weapons and military supplies for the FNLA and UNITA. Kissinger did this when it became clear that the Portuguese government intended to grant independence to Angola on November 11, even though the anti-MPLA forces were still weak.

The MPLA responded to the Portuguese announcement and the U.S. escalation by stepping up its organizing and base-building efforts throughout the country. When the extent of the American aid to the UNITA/FNLA forces became clear, the MPLA braced for the seemingly inevitable showdown. As attacks on its militants and strongholds increased, it moved to strengthen its own forces. The MPLA asked for increased arms and material aid from the Soviet Union, which had given such assistance to the liberation

fighters over the years. The MPLA also sought advisors from Cuba to help train the many new recruits who wished to defend their revolution from attack. The Cubans, who had won their own freedom from U.S. domination and underdevelopment only sixteen years ago, had been a long-time supporter of many African independence struggles. They sent over two hundred advisors and technicians in solidarity with the Angolan struggle.

Fighting raged on for the rest of the year between the MPLA and the other groups. As Davis had predicted, even with immense aid and assistance from the U.S., the intervention of hundreds of British, U.S. and Portuguese mercenaries, and the support of Zaire and Zambia, the FNLA/UNITA forces were no match for the MPLA.

By October, South Africa decided to intervene openly and massively in Angola. Moving from base areas in Namibia, thousands of South African troops invaded Angola and fought with the FNLA/UNITA troops to prevent the MPLA from coming to power on November 11. South African officials later claimed what many suspected at the time: that they had acted with the knowledge of the U.S. government and with promises of its full support.

Faced with a massive invasion and fighting on several fronts, the MPLA requested that Cuba send troops to help expel the South Africans and their allies. Cuba responded immediately. Within weeks, the South African advance was stalled.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress had become increasingly critical of the nature and the extent of U.S. involvement in Angola. Many people in Congress expressed fears of another Vietnam. At a time of economic crisis and budget cuts, with daily revelations of new CIA atrocities and suspicion of the administration's covert operations, many in Congress and

most of the American people were not prepared to support another war—especially when it meant the U.S. would be fighting on the side of South Africa and that Gulf Oil would be one of the few beneficiaries of such a victory. In December, the Congress voted to cut off any further covert aid to the anti-MPLA forces. Kissinger and Ford reacted hysterically, but Congress—and the American people—have not rallied to their side.

Since then, the MPLA forces have won a major victory. They have defeated the South African troops and have military control of most of Angola. The People's Republic of Angola, which the MPLA proclaimed on November 11, 1975, has been recognized by an overwhelming majority of the

nations of the world. It has been admitted to the Organization of African Unity. But the dangers confronting the MPLA have not yet passed. As they begin the difficult task of rebuilding their country, unifying its people and developing a new economic order, many obstacles remain. Just because the major fighting has ended, it does not mean that those who have intervened over the centuries will suddenly abandon their schemes. The MPLA's watchword remains: "A Luta Continua"—the struggle continues. Our task here remains the continuing struggle against U.S. intervention in Angola, in any form.

←Peoples Press

#### RECOMMENDED READINGS & RESOURCE CENTERS

##### BOOKS

**Basil Davidson, *In the Eye of the Storm: Angola's People.*** Anchor/Doubleday, 1973; \$2.95 ppbk.

**Africa Research Group, *Race to Power: The Struggle for Southern Africa.*** Anchor/Doubleday, 1974; \$3.95 ppbk.

##### SUPPORT & RESOURCE CENTERS

**LSM (Liberation Support Movement),** P.O. Box 756, Berkeley, CA. 94701. LSM publishes many pamphlets on the peoples' struggles in Africa. Some of these are:

*Angola: Five Centuries of Portuguese Exploitation,* by Americo Boavida, \$2.50.

*With the Guerrillas in Angola,* by Don Barnett, \$.75.

*Making of a Middle Cadre, Story of Rui de Pinto, Angola, MPLA,* edited by Don Barnett, \$1.75.

**CCLAMG (Chicago Committee for the Liberation of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea),** 1476 W. Irving Pk., Chicago, Ill. 60613. CCLAMG publishes various materials on the African liberation struggles, such as:

**OMA: *Organization of Angolan Women,*** new edition.

**MPLA Solidarity Committee,** 825 West End ave. #14F, N.Y., N.Y. 10025. Recently formed to build support for MPLA and provide information on the struggle in Angola.

For continuing coverage of events in Angola, as well as background information;

**LNS (Liberation News Service),** 160 Claremont Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10027

**Guardian Newspaper,** 33 West 17th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011

**InterNews, Box 4400, Berkeley, CA. 94704**

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