

Frelimo ... OPPORTUNIST POLICIES DEFEATED

In a fine direct analysis Frelimo explains the changing pattern of their struggle and the resulting contradictions in their movement. Policy changes for the creation of a new life in the base areas have been resisted by some members holding reactionary ideas leading to their exposure. This article which appeared as an editorial in Mozambique Revolution is republished here as a contribution to the enrichment of the theory of national liberation.

Contradictions are inevitable in any liberation movement engaged in a protracted armed struggle. They are particularly inevitable when the movement has already defined a clear ideology, and even more so when that ideology is a revolutionary one. Without this definition it is always possible to conceal contradictions beneath the cover of "differences of opinion". But when a clear and inflexible revolutionary ideology has been drawn up and there are militant comrades to ensure that it is followed, then contradictions are inevitable.

This is the lesson we have learned over seven years. We started with a heterogeneous group of people remotely linked by the idea of independence and the philosophy of "nationalism". This idea was not present with the same intensity in all of us and varied in substance. As the Chief of the Army in his message to the fighters on the occasion of 25 September said:

"We come from a society where the mentality of the colonialists dominated. We came to the revolution loaded with vices and defects. Some Mozambicans came to the revolution led by ambitions, in order to have high positions in an independent Mozambique. Others came because the Portuguese did not allow them to freely exploit the work of their fellow-Mozambicans. The Portuguese wanted to be the only people to exploit. So these people came to the revolution to expel the Portuguese and take their place in the exploitation of the people . . . These Mozambicans came to the revolution with this spirit. And when they saw that the revolution does not allow the satisfaction of their personal interests, that responsibilities are given in accordance with the abilities of each person, that exploitation is completely banned, that discipline is strict and rigid – when they saw all this, these Mozambicans start vacillating, they formed



groups of discontent, ready to act against the truly revolutionary forces as soon as the first opportunity appeared. And when the enemy agents arrived and started looking for elements to organise against the revolutionary leadership of FRELIMO, they found a fertile field among these discontents. This is the explanation of the difficulties that FRELIMO has had to face during the last two years; contradictions even at the top level of FRELIMO . . ."

A new Situation in the Liberated Areas

Thus, at the beginning we had no ideological line; it was impossible to formulate an ideology broad enough to encompass all the different tendencies represented by the various social, political, economic, religious, cultural groups. The idea of independence and nationalism was the only thing they had in common – and in the beginning this seemed sufficient to ensure the struggle's advance. But with the evolution of the struggle there developed a new situation. We started having liberated regions: we had to plan the work of national reconstruction – production schools, hospitals.

This gave rise to certain problems: How to structure the economy in the liberated zones? How to organise the school services, the hospitals? Should we copy the colonialist – capitalist model which had just been removed, or should we adopt a system based on the needs and will of the people? The contradictions now came to the surface. Those who had come to the revolution to become wealthy, motivated by their personal interest, wanted the system to remain the same – we should just expel the colonialists, reestablish the structures created by the Portuguese, and take their place in the positions of control. The revolutionary comrades took a diametrically opposed position. They knew that if this happened there was no justification for the struggle. Why fight if everything will continue as before? They wanted a completely different system where all the vestiges of colonialist and capitalist influence would be eliminated. They wanted a system that would really serve the interests of the people and which could never resemble, not even vaguely, the system of the exploiters and oppressors.

An internal Struggle Developed

After this the division became more acute. A struggle began, between the groups representing the two lines. And all the problems, all the difficulties we have had since then are the result of this division.

But it was not admitted and openly discussed until the last meeting of the Central Committee. In that meeting we finally identified the existence of two ideological lines. The elements opposed to the interests of the people, the corrupt, the opportunistic, were unmasked and criticised. Those who had made themselves completely unacceptable to the revolution were expelled. Those who indicated regret for their activities, and for whom there seemed even the faintest possibility of reintegration were not expelled for it was believed that there should be a unifying spirit in the movement strong enough to lead misguided comrades, through education and discussion, back to the true revolutionary path. Some who were known to have taken part in subversive activities were disciplined and removed from their posts of responsibility, while others were severely criticised and subsequently promised to follow closely the policies laid down by the Second Congress.

At the end of that meeting of the Central Committee, we declared that a certain unity had been achieved. But we had certain reservations that "we do not deceive ourselves with the hope of an easy path". And indeed, shortly afterwards, several of these people showed their true colours by deserting and running away to the Portuguese, thus proving what the true militants were already well aware of – that Position meant more to them than the Revolution. We knew that someone who is basically ambitious, op-

portunistic, exploiter, does not automatically correct himself by the mere fact of saying that he recognised his errors. That same idea was stressed in the message of the Chief of the Army mentioned above: "This does not mean that all the counter-revolutionary elements that we have characterised have been neutralised completely. No, the struggle in our midst continues. It is a long and difficult struggle, almost interminable which must start with ourselves because the vices we brought from the colonial society will not disappear if we do not fight strongly, if we do not try to correct ourselves at every step within a revolutionary perspective".

There is no Crisis, only Contradictions to be Resolved

Thus the contradictions did not finish. Certain elements of FRELIMO, even with positions of responsibility, continue to desert the struggle inventing varied justifications. They give themselves up to the enemy, they choose to live as simple refugees, they try to form parties following the line that they preach. Others will presumably desert in the future: as long as the struggle is being fought, the desertions will not stop. And even after independence: the example of certain independent-African countries shows us that when a truly popular ideology is adopted and implemented, the reactionary elements cannot conform and run away – they "ask protection" from the capitalists, their spiritual mentors. Thus, to those that say that the desertions in FRELIMO means that there is a crisis, we answer: **No, there is no crisis.** These are contradictions which are solved by the struggle itself; **the revolution itself ensures the rejection of the impure load it carries.**