

### THREE YEARS OF THE ANGOLAN REVOLUTION

The February 15 issue of El Moudjahid, central organ of the Algerian FLN [Front de Libération Nationale] published the text of a most interesting discussion on Algiers radio-television February 4 in commemoration of the uprising in Luanda on that day in 1961.

Josie Fanon, widow of Frantz Fanon, author of Les Damnés de la Terre, the well-known book that passionately voices the feelings and outlook of the Algerian rebels, acted as moderator.

The translation of El Moudjahid's account is as follows:

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The R.T.A. presented a special broadcast on Angola.

This broadcast presented two Angolan nationalist militants and a Portuguese woman anticolonialist. The two Angolan nationalists were Nicolas Vieira, member of the F.N.L.A. [Angolan National Liberation Front] and Viriato Da Cruz, a founder of the M.P.L.A. [Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola] in Luanda.

This is the first time that Angolan militants belonging to movements which violently opposed each other in the past have joined in a panel discussion on the Angolan problem. This is also the first time, to our knowledge, that a Portuguese revolutionist has participated publicly in such a debate and affirmed her active solidarity with the Angolan nationalists in their struggle.

It is important, in our opinion, to bring to the attention of Algerian militants the content of this debate which will contribute, we hope, to dissipate the confusion which reigned for a time on the Angolan problem. Facts or clarifications were brought forward during the discussion with regard, for example, to the true date of the beginning of the armed struggle in Angola; namely, March 15, 1961.

Viriato Da Cruz, for his part, gave an explanation of the crisis which brought about the collapse of the M.P.L.A. and the reasons which led sincere nationalists belonging to this movement to recognize the F.N.L.A. of Holden Roberto as the only representative nationalist party, the only one to lead the armed struggle in Angola.

As for Patricia McGowan Pinheiro, she clearly exposed the present maneuvers of the Portuguese colonialists who may engender confusion about their real intentions in Portugal as well as abroad. This exposé will help the Portuguese left to make a more correct analysis of the situation and to understand that no compromise is possible with Portuguese colonialism.

Finally, and above all through the voice of Nicolas Vieira, spokesman in our country of fighting Angola, the determination of the struggling Angolan people was expressed, and this was the princi-

pal aim of the broadcast.

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Josie Fanon: The national liberation struggle in Angola will soon begin its fourth year. This struggle is an armed struggle. It is a long struggle since it has already lasted three years. In its harshness, in the engagement of the peasant masses in the combat as the main constituent of the National Liberation Army of Angola [ALNA], also in view of the economic and strategic importance of this country for Portuguese colonialism and international imperialism, the war of national liberation in Angola is inscribed in the same context as the war of liberation in Algeria.

The Algerian people, who have always been at the side of the valiant Angolan people, who have given them complete support in their battle -- it is known that the military cadres of the ALNA have been trained since 1961 in the ALN [National Liberation Army of Algeria] -- the Algerian people, today at the dawn of this fourth year of struggle, salute the heroism of the Angolan fighters who, under the shield of the Angolan National Liberation Front, are constantly gaining more and more decisive victories, hastening the day of independence.

We have brought together this evening two Angolan nationalists: Nicolas Vieira who, in the absence of Johnny Eduardo, is the representative in Algiers of the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile; Viriato Da Cruz, founder in Luanda of the MPLA; and a Portuguese anticolonialist, Patricia McGowan Pinheiro, author of the book Oldest Ally, A Portrait of Salazar's Portugal.

What we would like during the discussion which we are going to have with these three comrades is to get our bearings on the liberation movement in Angola and also get some clarification on certain problems concerning this movement.

To do this, we have to go back first of all to the beginning of the year 1961. On February 4, 1961, an uprising broke out in Luanda. Groups of Angolans attacked the barracks, the police stations, the prisons and even units of the Portuguese army. According to official sources, ten Portuguese and fourteen Angolans were killed.

Next day came the burial of the victims. The savage whites attacked the Angolan population. Several thousand people were massacred.

What is the exact significance of February 4, 1961? Where can it be placed in the chronology of the national liberation movement? We are going to ask you, Nicolas Viera, as official representative of the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile.

Nicolas Vieira: February 4, 1961, is one of the historic dates for the Angolan people, since on that day patriots died for the cause of our country and we render homage to their heroism. But the Angolan

people, like all colonial peoples, have had many revolts, because of the social injustices of colonialism, that are not less important than February 4, 1961. Thus, the date February 4, 1961, marks only the beginning of the armed insurrection which has been going on right up to now.

The fact is some Angolan patriots, having learned that some political suspects imprisoned in Luanda were going to be deported to an island, took advantage of the presence of some foreign journalists who were in Luanda at the time in order to attack the prisons with the intention of freeing the political suspects and, at the same time, demonstrating to the world the climate of insecurity that reigned in Angola. But this uprising was spontaneous since it had not been organized. On this I can cite the testimony of a Methodist missionary in Angola:

"It is interesting to observe that the impulsion for the first direct action of the nationalist movement arose from the desire of the whites for a more liberal government. I am referring, of course, to the affair of the 'Santa Maria' which was a spark for the Portuguese opposition against the Salazar regime.

"Shortly thereafter, the African nationalists attacked the Luanda prisons with the aim of freeing the political prisoners. . . . This action was followed by a brutal repression in the African quarters of Luanda in the course of which dozens of innocent Africans were killed by the Portuguese soldiers and functionaries. This act was widely reported in the international press due to the fact that many foreign correspondents were in Angola awaiting the arrival of the 'Santa Maria.'

"When the foreign correspondents began to send reports unfavorable to Portugal, they were expelled and their films were confiscated. . . . It is interesting to observe that the first attacks in Luanda were not directed against the whites as such. It was a tragedy of enormous proportions to see these first attacks met with such violence, such irresponsible reprisals, in place of sincere recognition of errors and the necessity for reforms. I say that it was unfortunate because these reprisals strengthened the opinion among the Africans that peaceful reform was impossible in Angola."

Josie Fanon: That's what the Methodist missionary said then about February 4, 1961?

Nicolas Vieira: Yes, and the confusion that reigned around the date February 4, 1961, and the true date of the beginning of the armed insurrection, that is, March 15, 1961, has been disseminated by certain unscrupulous, power-hungry adventurers with the aim of building up the myth which they created abroad about their so-called political personality.

As for the armed struggle, which has continued up to now without interruption, it began March 15, 1961, after preparations for an up-

rising made at a congress which took place in a forest in Angola under the UPA [Union of the People of Angola] which included forced laborers, hereditary chiefs from all regions of the country, some intellectuals and a few women. This date was set to coincide with the debates in the U.N., since on that date, that is, March 15, 1961, the Security Council was to take up the question of the situation in Angola.

Josie Fanon: Yes, I remember that date extremely well because at the time, that is, a few weeks before, President Holden Roberto came to Tunis and he told my husband Frantz Fanon and me: "Pay close attention to March 15, the day of the debate in the U.N.; some very important things are going to happen in Angola." Some very important things did actually happen: the beginning of the insurrection.

And now that you have spoken about the beginning of the insurrection, would you like to tell us, Nicolas Vieira, about the development of the movement for the liberation of Angola during the past three years?

Nicolas Vieira: After the unleashing of the armed struggle, we occupied ourselves organizing the struggle inside Angola. Clearly, at the beginning, the work was not easy for us due to the fact that at the time we had only very meager resources. But after long organizational work and the awakening of mass consciousness, we are able to say that the situation has evolved a lot inside Angola, since we have been able to establish administrative structures under the leadership of political commissioners in the regions which we control. And we have the complete support of the people.

Today, the people are only asking for arms so that they can fight. The armed struggle itself has evolved a lot also. Thus, for example, during the month of last December, more than 100 Portuguese soldiers were killed in ambushes and skirmishes undertaken by elements of the National Liberation Army of Angola in many parts of the country. On December 25, 1963, on the Noqui-Saô-Salvador road, a column of the Portuguese army was caught in an ambush by the nationalists. After a hard battle of more than four hours, the enemy forces retreated, leaving on the field of battle, twelve dead and six gravely wounded and a considerable amount of matériel. On the side of the ALNA we mourned three dead and several wounded. Again on the Noqui-Saô-Salvador road, from December 27 to December 30, 1963, a number of skirmishes took place between the forces of the ALNA and those of the enemy, causing the death of sixteen Portuguese troops. The ALNA lost seven men during these skirmishes.

In the course of combats which took place in the Dondo region on December 27, 1963, a good many Portuguese soldiers were killed, including two ranking officers, Antonio Martins de Lemos, number 988-62 and Faustino Clemente de Almeida Leal, number 1382-62. On January 2, 1964, at Carmona, a relief convoy composed of two truckloads of workers and twelve escorting soldiers was attacked by a commando of the ALNA at the exit of a plantation. All the occupants of the two trucks were killed.

During the week of January 5 to the 11, 1964, in the Beu zone, a barracks of enemy forces was attacked by means of rockets and completely destroyed. The balance sheet on that attack was forty-four Portuguese troops killed, the one on guard being captured.

At Bembe a reconnaissance plane was brought down. The pilot along with two Portuguese soldiers who were on board the plane were killed. In the same region of Bembe on the Bembe-Toto-Beissa-Monteiro road, a number of skirmishes took place, causing the enemy very heavy losses.

During the period going from January 4 to the 12th on the Saô-Salvador-Cuimba route, very violent combats took place and the enemy forces after having suffered a number of dead and wounded had to abandon a number of positions and fall back to camp Mavoyo. Finally, in the Cabinda district, operations conducted during the period from January 1 to January 14 ended with twenty-eight dead on the enemy side, the seizure of considerable quantities of arms and the occupation of an administrative post by ALNA forces where the colors of the Angolan revolution were hoisted. During the course of these skirmishes, the nationalists lost nine men and several wounded.

Josie Fanon: One can thus appreciate the ground covered since March 15, 1961; but this was due to the organization of the movement inside Angola.

Without doubt you can tell us now about what happened outside Angola.

Nicolas Vieira: I believe that before telling you about the organization abroad, I ought to first speak about the formation of the Angolan National Liberation Front which was constituted March 27, 1962. A government has issued from this -- the present Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile.

Only, when we tried to extend our activities abroad, we ran into difficulties. These difficulties, as I told you at the beginning, were caused by other Angolans. But, quite fortunately, as you know, in 1963 in the month of July, a commission met in Léopoldville -- the Commission of the "9" -- to conduct an inquiry on the Angolan problem.

Josie Fanon: Yes, and this commission did recognize that the Angolan National Liberation Front and the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile were sole representatives.

Nicolas Vieira: That's it. But you see that was not always the case. If the commission came to Léopoldville it was due to the difficulties that we encountered abroad. Thus it was decided at Addis Ababa that a commission would go to Léopoldville to make an inquiry as to the realities of the Angolan problem. Since the decisions taken by this commission, we are able to say that the situation has been very good abroad, inasmuch as today ten African countries have officially recognized the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile and

others are about to do so.

Josie Fanon: You have told us about the difficulties that you encountered abroad. I would like you to give our listeners, who are obviously less up to date on the problems of the Angolan Revolution than all of us around this mike, some facts about these difficulties.

Nicolas Vieira: With regard to the difficulties I just mentioned, since Brother Viriato Da Cruz is here at my side, I think I am going to give him the floor so that he can explain things to you.

Josie Fanon: Viriato Da Cruz, you founded the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola in Luanda in 1958. You were its general secretary. You are thus in the best position to tell us about this party, since it is the MPLA which Comrade Nicolas Vieira just alluded to in referring to the difficulties which the FNLA and the Angolan Revolutionary Government encountered abroad. Before giving you the floor, I would like to tell our listeners that these difficulties arose due to the irresponsible behavior of members of the MPLA entrusted with relations abroad. They considered any means worth using to reinforce their prestige to the detriment of that of the nationalists who were conducting the armed struggle -- slander of the FNLA, lying declarations about the work of the MPLA within Angola, growth of their party, and the inclusion in it of small Angolan political groups openly compromised with the Portuguese. All this with the aim of sowing illusions about their real representativeness. A grave crisis followed within the MPLA, then the collapse of this party. Viriato Da Cruz, this is what we are going to ask you to clear up for our listeners.

Viriato Da Cruz: To really understand the situation, it's necessary first of all to determine the causes, the aims and the character of the Angolan Revolution.

In my opinion, the Angolan Revolution is the result of the irreversible blow dealt to the traditional African structures by the market economy introduced under the Portuguese colonial domination. This Revolution is above all the uprising of the Angolan masses who were brought to the worst degradation, who were submitted to the most scandalous servitude, who bore on their shoulders all the burdens of the society.

These masses comprised around 800,000 workers in the rural zones, subjected to forced labor, around 350,000 Africans living in conditions of underemployment and joblessness in the urban zones, and around 1,000,000 Angolan émigrés, who were submitted in their turn to super-exploitation by the Belgians, the English and the South Africans.

In brief, more than 2,000,000 Africans torn from their social and geographical surroundings by the disintegration of the traditional societies, by violence and by the theft of their land, vegetating outside the traditional framework of their lives, in zones of insecurity and despair, deprived of their old ties.

This mass of 2,000,000 Africans thus constituted the central nucleus of the tensions and conflicts affecting Angola. The geo-social area of the revolutionary unfolding of these conflicts inevitably came to embrace, in addition to the Angolan territory itself, those of the Congo, the Rhodesias and South West Africa.

The common aim of the Angolan people as a whole is the liquidation of foreign domination and the creation of an independent, united national state. But the mass of more than 2,000,000 Angolans, which I have mentioned -- supported by the peasant masses -- add to this common goal the liquidation of exploitation.

Within Angolan nationalism in general there thus exists in reality two currents, each one aspiring to one of these aims, each one seeking to lead the revolution toward its own aim. The truth is that up to this moment, no Angolan party has monopolized either of these currents. On the contrary, these two currents enter into all the Angolan parties. This is what, in my opinion, characterizes the Angolan revolution.

Josie Fanon: In the month of July last year the MPLA broke up. You yourself made a report to the commission at Léopoldville which recognized the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile.

How do you explain this crisis of the MPLA?

Viriato Da Cruz: In my opinion, the crisis of the MPLA was not due to anything peculiar to the MPLA. It was, on the one hand, the result of the passionate, violent clash, within the narrow dimensions of a party, of the differences, the contradictions existing within the Angolan society itself; and, on the other hand, the result of the singling out and the separation of the currents which I just spoke about.

The collapse of the MPLA was due to the fact that the leading group, which was at the head of the party at the time of the crisis, sought to resolve it with petty-bourgeois methods.

Josie Fanon: In your view what are the perspectives of the Angolan revolution?

Viriato Da Cruz: The Angolan Revolution will win. The independent national state will be created through the heroic struggle of the Angolan people. But, in my opinion, the Angolan Revolution, the revolution of the broad masses of Angola, will be long and difficult.

At present, it is the Angolan National Liberation Front, the FNLA, which corresponds in the circumstances to the national liberation movement.

Within the masses, however, questions like the following are raised:

"Will the FNLA succeed in uniting all the Angolan revolutionary

forces?

"Will it transform itself into a big organization that is solid from the political, ideological and organizational point of view, functioning well and serving as an efficacious base for the development of the armed struggle?"

"Will it succeed in raising the revolutionary level of the peasant masses?"

"Will it resolve in the course of the armed struggle itself, the vital problems of the peasantry, this inexhaustible source of soldiers for the Liberation Army?"

"Will it extend the armed struggle throughout the national territory?"

"Will it place at the service of the Angolan people international revolutionary support?"

As an Angolan nationalist, I can only hope for a successful solution to all these problems.

In any case, the genuine solution of these problems can come only from the Angolans themselves. It cannot come from outside the revolutionary Angolan movement.

I take the opportunity to salute the Algerian people who have not ceased to manifest their active solidarity with the fighting Angolan people.

Josie Fanon: Mr. Viriato Da Cruz, I thank you very much.

Patricia McGowan Pinheiro, you have written a book entitled, Oldest Ally. A Portrait of Salazar's Portugal. You speak, among other things in this book, about the terrible repression of the Angolan people by the Portuguese army.

Patricia McGowan Pinheiro: Yes, but I prefer today to quote a Portuguese witness who was present during the repression, the doctor, Mario Moutinho de Padua, a deserter from the Portuguese colonialist army.

In his book The War in Angola, he says: "Two different persons told me on different occasions that at Dondo, of the three thousand natives who lived there before the revolt, two thousand according to one and one thousand according to the other were thrown into the river, hacked to bits, tied together; some of them, still half alive, being bound to sections of corpses. . . ."

"The soldiers were transformed: Their former simplicity and a certain purity, an unstained joy, a proletarian capacity for tolerance, disappeared almost completely. They wanted to kill. Without



remorse, without hesitation, as if it were a game. They joked among themselves on the subject. Some of them wanted to bring an ear of a black person back to Portugal. Full of interest they asked the oldest ones how many blacks they had already liquidated and this figure for them was a matter of pride or shame -- if the figure was a small one.

"The soldiers at times forced the blacks to eat the ears of their brothers.

"Here, these things are common, normal, and leave the great majority of whites indifferent; they even find them cause for satisfaction. They feel it's their right.

"My greatest hope is that they (the colonialists) won't succeed in their project to totally eliminate the black race. . . they pass the time telling about the dozens of deaths to their credit. They admire each other. And only by accident do they mention in a factual way, in a descriptive way, the extraordinary resistance of the black men and their heroism under torture. It is very rare for a black to give up his comrades."

Then Padua talks about the brutalization of the Portuguese soldiers: "It is horrible to see the way in which the people of my country are being transformed. . . .

"I sincerely hope anyway that the rebels will annihilate us, crush us in order to bring about the downfall of these fascists who are bringing our people into dishonor, into moral death.

"Almost all the young officers, except the former students of the military school, are more or less anti-Salazarists; but the quota salary, especially the bonus pay, social security, etc., have calmed their political ardor. They say nothing; unconsciously they are selling out.

"For decades the fascist regime has borne down on the Portuguese people and brought about a depoliticalization of the masses, inertia, absence of a class organization to struggle sincerely for the interests of the workers, the peasants, the small craftsmen. Our people have become imprisoned by the spirit of competition. They are accustomed to the absence of a collective life, of sacrifices, of struggle for a better life. They will leave there still worse, trained to kill, trained to turn against or to drown in blood the revolts of their fellow countrymen."

Josie Fanon: These things are familiar to us. What you have just said reminds us, line for line, of what happened during the war in Algeria within the French contingents and the French people. Now I would like you to tell us, after speaking about the effect of the colonial war in Angola on the army of repression, what have been the effects on the Salazar regime itself?

Patricia McGowan Rinheiro: After three years of colonialist war, Salazar is still obstinately repeating the myth that Angola is a Portuguese province and that you can't speak of independence. But among the Portuguese colonialists, there are some who are seeking the road to a so-called reconversion of colonial policy. To understand the thinking of this current, it is necessary to underline that in their colonies, the Portuguese have always been the watch dogs of international imperialism.

Portugal, with its repression, with its fascism, has served the big international trusts as an instrument in profiting from the forced labor in the plantations and mines of Angola.

Today, hated by Africa and by all people devoted to freedom, Salazar is no longer an efficient instrument and no longer serves the interests of the Portuguese colonialist bourgeoisie. Salazar's policy threatens ruin for them. So we see growing differences within Salazarism. Men like Graveiro Lopes, president of the republic before 1958, Homem de Melo, deputy, Manuel Vinhas, a big industrialist, have publicly condemned Salazar's colonial policy. In books and speeches, these men propose a policy of liberalization in the colonies. They admit the right to self-determination -- but in the distant future. They talk about reforms, the creation of an African elite. But most of them have no answer to the question: "How can Portugal, a poor country, underdeveloped itself, pay for such reforms?" Only two have offered an answer: Manuel Vinhas, a Salazarist, and Cunha Leal, an anti-Salazarist. Both of them say that Portugal can keep its colonies through liberalization and a certain amount of self-determination. The only way is to open the doors of both Portugal and its colonies to foreign investments, particularly American investments.

Thus it can be seen that this liberalization would be nothing more nor less than a neocolonialist road for Angola within the framework of a Portuguese community. We must denounce these attempts with firmness and put the consistent anticolonialists on guard against the danger of such a maneuver.

Josie Fanon: I think that thanks to these three comrades, we have made a rather full survey of the Angolan problem. We must now come to a conclusion. I am going to ask you, Nicolas Vieira, to make this conclusion.

Nicolas Vieira: To conclude, I will say that despite the material and financial aid of the NATO to Portugal, we will win. Here is what one of our commandants of the ALNA inside Angola said recently: "The war here is like the one in Algeria. We don't expect to defeat the Portuguese on the field of battle, but we can exhaust them until they are compelled to leave. It's a decisive war. The Algerians fought for seven years until the French gave up. We have the same determination.

- At present our forces are growing larger and larger. They have gained great experience. We have increased armaments available thanks

to the support of friendly socialist countries, Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union and People's China. This enables us to face the Portuguese colonialist army with greater efficiency and to visibly come closer to the liberation of our country and of the whole African continent.