

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT FRELIMO

What does FRELIMO stand for? FRELIMO stands for "the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique."

What and where is Mozambique? Mozambique is a country of over seven million people on the southeastern coast of Africa, over one thousand miles long, for 500 years under the colonial rule of Portugal, a small country in Europe.

Why "Liberation"? Portugal does not even agree to discuss independence, but says Mozambique is a part of Portugal. In 1960, at a town in northern Mozambique called Mueda, over 500 men, women and children who were invited by the government to discuss grievances were treacherously murdered in cold blood by the Portuguese army. The African people of Mozambique want their country to be an independent African state, but they have no say in the matter. They are ruled by the colonial government and must serve the small number of white settlers (about 100,000) or go to work in the mines of South Africa.

What is life like under the rule of the Portuguese? The Mozambican economy is founded in part on forced labor whereby Africans have to work on European plantations or migrate to the mines of South Africa. There is a special agreement between South Africa and Portugal whereby Portugal gets \$5.25 per laborer "recruited" from Mozambique to South Africa, as well as collecting half the workers' wages until the workers return to Mozambique. One-third of the total work force in South Africa's mining industry is made up of Mozambicans. "Recruitment" is made easy by a variety of Portuguese laws which make it illegal for Mozambicans to grow food for themselves or support themselves in any way except by being employed by South Africans or Portuguese. Benefits from this arrangement go to the coffers in Lisbon or the pockets of other foreign interests. Little or no education (there is 97% illiteracy in Mozambique), scarce health facilities and no political rights is what the masses of Mozambican people get in return for high Portuguese taxes.

How did FRELIMO get formed? Political parties for Africans are not allowed in Mozambique. But many Mozambicans have left their country for neighboring African countries. In 1962, groups of Mozambicans who had organized there came together in Tanzania (to the north of Mozambique) and formed FRELIMO, a movement to gain for them independence and a just society. Since then, FRELIMO has appealed to the United Nations, has tried to improve the conditions of Mozambican refugees, and has begun to fight a war for the independence of their country.

Why do they have to fight? The Portuguese still refuse even to talk about independence. Anyone who supports it openly is in danger of arrest. FRELIMO already knew that in Angola, on the west coast of Africa, and in Guinea-Bissau, their fellow Africans were fighting against Portugal. The United Nations was passing resolutions, but resolutions alone did not change their situation. They knew that they would have to fight for their independence if they wanted it.

What is FRELIMO doing now? Since 1964, FRELIMO guerrilla forces have gained control over part of their country. As they fight to free the whole country, they have already begun to develop, in the areas they control, the medical, educational, and agricultural services that the Portuguese neglected. They know they may have a long war, and even in the middle of it they are trying to build a better life for their people, even if the villages, or schools, or medical posts they build are bombed by the Portuguese airplanes.

How can Portugal, a small, weak country itself, hold onto its African Colonies so long? Portugal has, in proportion to its population, more than five times the num-

ber of troops in Africa than the United States has in Vietnam, and spends over 40% of its budget on these wars. But it also has help, from the other white-ruled states in Southern Africa (the Republic of South Africa and Rhodesia) who view the Portuguese colonies as important "buffer zones" between them and other independent black African nations, and from the members of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) including the United States. Big companies, such as Gulf Oil, invest in the oil and other rich riches of Mozambique and Angola, and help provide Portugal with the money to carry on.

What interest does the U.S. have in Portugal and her colonies? Portugal, and the other white regimes in Southern Africa are very "anti-communist" and "pro western", and are therefore, by definition, an important part of the "Free World". Since the closing of the Suez canal, Southern Africa has assumed new strategic importance, for the western role in the Middle East and the Indian Ocean. South African gold production is key to the functioning of the International Monetary system, dominated by the U.S. and her allies. The U.S. has an important satellite tracking station in South Africa. Finally, and perhaps most significant, there is already over \$800 million in U.S.-owned investment in South Africa alone and investment is rapidly increasing in the Portuguese colonies. Investors are attracted to all three areas by the availability of cheap black labor, and investment is actively encouraged by the U.S. government. Thus many people fear a Vietnam-type involvement by the U.S.--the excuses, anti-communism, military ties, and economic interests, are already present.

Where is the Walk money going? 32.5% of the funds collected will be sent via the African Fund of the American Committee on Africa to the Mozambique institute, located in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

What does the Mozambique institute do? The Mozambique institute is the primary fund-raising and technical assistance agency which helps finance and assist the educational, economic, and social services of the Mozambican people. The Institute relates to educational programs located at a secondary and a primary school and other facilities located in Tanzania itself. It also helps administer the "Ubush schools" in which 20,000 children are enrolled in the liberated zones of Mozambique. In the health field there is a new hospital, Boavida Hospital, in Tanzania while medical teams and posts function inside Mozambique. Other programs are varied and relate to the training of women and children, agricultural development schemes, and social welfare activities. The Mozambique institute, founded in the early 1960's, is entirely a self-help project. It was recently approved by the American Freedom From Hunger Foundation.

What will the money from the Walk be used for? The money has been designated non-military by the Madison Walk Committee. In the past the Institute has always respected the wishes of donors; we have several people in Madison who have worked at the institute and can vouch for this. Chalk, blackboards and notebooks; medicines, bandages, and methods of building latrines; blankets, sewing machines, pots and pans; agricultural tools, high-yield seed, manuals in how to make cheese; how-to manuals for brick making, mailmaking, cotton ginning; shoemaking; ink and paper for printing books --all of these items and more are needed for the development of the people of Mozambique. Trucks are needed in order to transport these items. The Walk committee has not picked specific items for funding; we may send the money to the institute for whatever developmental efforts it feels are necessary, or we may pick a specific area such as education or medicine for which we want the funds to be used. Your suggestions would be welcomed.

What else can be done to help bring about freedom and development in Southern Africa? There are actually many things which can be done. One of our primary goals must be ending the support given by the U.S. and her NATO allies to the repressive and racist regimes in Southern Africa. We can also work to bring about an end to private investment in these areas. We can educate others, especially our parents, about this topic and get them to join us. For more information on involvement, contact the Madison Area Committee on Southern Africa, 241-1137 or 255-6852.