TO: Jorge Rebelo, Ministry of Information
Jose Carlos Lobo, Mozambican Mission to the United Nations

FROM: Carole Collins, Chicago Committee for African Liberation
(formerly Chicago Committee for the Liberation of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau)

RE: Summary of activities following visit to the People's Republic of Mozambique, 1977

DATE: June 1978

Introduction

On behalf of the Chicago Committee for African Liberation, I want to express once again our profound thanks to the People's Republic of Mozambique, FRELIMO and the Ministry of Information for their aid and assistance during my visit to Mozambique in February-March 1977. We appreciated the fact that both government and party officials, workers and responsables at all levels sacrificed valuable time from their important tasks within the struggle to share their experiences, knowledge and information so that we could share these with people in the United States.

The assistance of the Ministry of Information in arranging interviews, setting up a tour of Manica and Sofala provinces, and assisting with visa complexities and travel arrangements is greatly appreciated by our committee. Our particular thanks to Daniel Antonio and Marcos Cuerberlo for their help, as well as to the many people we were able to interview in Mozambique. Despite the "luta da linguas," I felt I was able to collect a substantial amount of information and insight into the revolutionary transformation going on today in Mozambique.

Our fraternal relations with FRELIMO and the people of Mozambique were immeasurably strengthened by this visit. It greatly expanded our understanding of the new tasks of the Mozambican revolution and has given us important tools in our efforts to mobilize people in the United States to greater political and material solidarity with the Mozambican revolution and with struggles for liberation throughout southern Africa.

The purpose of this brief summary of activities in 1977-78 is to share, in light of the original purposes of CCAL's visit (listed in our original request for a visa), what we have been able to accomplish. At that time, we had requested an opportunity to learn more about the new institutions Mozambique was developing since independence, to interview members of women's and workers organizations for use in articles and for a slide show, and to meet with members of the Zimbabwe Liberation Army. We were also concerned to explore the question of recruitment of progressive Americans to work in Mozambique.

Before reviewing our recent activities, however, I would like to share some vivid impressions of Mozambique penned to comrades in the United States a few days after leaving Mozambique in March 1977:
"I cannot fully express the profound respect I have gained for FRELIMO and its leadership during the 5 weeks I have just spent in Mozambique. That respect is deepened by the contrast with my experiences during the previous 9 months travelling in Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. The high degree of popular mobilization which Mozambique and FRELIMO have achieved in less than two years of independence stands out in stark contrast to what one experiences in virtually all the above countries (with the partial exception of Tanzania). One senses a creative and disciplined energy growing among the people, an awakening to the full potentialities of building their own future as a people. One sees it in small everyday things (how a Grupo Dynamizadore decides to deal creatively itself with a neighborhood, factory or city problem; the number of people seen studying in offices, in restaurants, at airports; the ease and confidence with which workers and everyday people on the street discuss national and international problems; early morning memories of workers whistling FRELIMO songs on their way to work; the tremendous sense of humor of Mozambicans, even as they struggle with the vestiges of colonial attitudes in themselves and others; the grasp they have of the dynamics of their history, of the struggle against imperialism).

All this is not to deny the many problems facing the Mozambican people which one sees, especially in the battle for production and given the subtle (and not-so-subtle) ways that imperialism will try to sabotage progress on this front. But the high ideological mobilization of the people will greatly accelerate the creation of the material preconditions for the establishment of socialism. Those of us struggling in the United States to create the ideological conditions for socialism and the defeat of imperialism have profound lessons to learn from FRELIMO in the way it approached these tasks, in the process it has undergone in rooting itself ever more firmly among the peasantry and working class. The dialectical and scientific way in which the Mozambicans analyze their tasks is truly impressive. While appreciating the many differences between conditions in Mozambique and the United States, I have begun to grasp how we need to approach an analysis of our contradictions in similar ways. I never knew what scientific socialism meant -- but seeing it in practice in Mozambique makes it much more clear how different it is from the 'bourgeois marxism' of academic leftists, so prevalent here in the United States.

The week spent in Manica and Sofala gave me a new appreciation of the contrasts between city and country, of the difficulties of transforming colonial social and economic relations in such a short period of time. I stayed briefly in a hotel still run by a Portuguese colonialist (soon to depart), which was a microcosm of what colonial relations were like throughout Mozambique before independence. Yet it was clear that situations like this one were on the way out, anachronisms in the unfolding of the Mozambican revolution which would soon be transformed themselves. And contrasting it with my experiences in Sudan, Zambia, Kenya -- it was really impressive.

What has impressed me the most is my own personal growth in the short time I spent in Mozambique. It is, in fact, the greatest gift I have gotten from my experience in Mozambique and what I hope to be able to share with you and others on my return.
have found new energies, a new sense of my own potential and the potential of the American people. Despite our commitment to the radical transformation of the United States, to the creation of socialism, there is too often a sense in which we don't feel that we can really win. We unconsciously reflect the cynicism of capitalist conditioning and alienation. But in Mozambique— you see a people transforming themselves, and you begin to see the possibility of transforming yourself. I've sensed this phenomenon not only in myself but in others who have come to Mozambique from Europe or North America. Although the Mozambicans would deny that they have yet created or established socialism, you come away feeling 'socialism works.' In fact, in my discussions here in Tanzania about my Mozambique experience, that's the phrase people use to sum up what they've gotten from my descriptions."

Summary of Activities 1977-78

May-July 1977
- Developed initial slide show with CCAL's help
  (in final form, it focuses on women's and worker's struggles and organizations; also has a
  sub-section on Zimbabwe which focuses on Mozambique and Zimbabwe, which makes an effective
  linking up of Mozambican and Zimbabwean struggles)
- Five articles written for Guardian (New York) and
  Southern Africa (New York) — see attached.
- Undertook job as coordinator of national
  Council for the Liberation of Southern Africa,
  which involved travel during year
- Presentation to Long Island Community College/class
  on the role of the Mozambican peasantry in the
  liberation struggle
- Slide presentation at New World Resource Center (Chgo)

Aug. 1977
- Chicago: presentation to local activists

Sept. 1977
- Chicago: program with Bob Van Leijen on Mozambique
  - Slide showing at bookstore
  - Slide presentation to national meeting of agencies of United Methodist Church,
    Board of Global Ministries
  - Day-long workshop for Illinois Methodist
    Federation for Social Action
  - Several slide presentations for local high schools and a community college

Bloomington, Ill.: Slide presentation, speech
  at Ill. State University sponsored by
  3rd World Students Committee

Chicago: meeting with Chicago Tribune editorial
  board about coverage of southern Africa,
  along with representatives of churches,
  black community

Portland, ORE.: Slide presentation for Black Studies workshop on Africa at Portland State College; two radio interviews, including church program.

Chico, CA.: Slide presentation sponsored by people's health clinic; two presentations to Chico State Coll. classes.

San Francisco: Slide presentation for local southern Africa and Latin American groups.

Los Angeles: Slide presentations for Pasadena American Friends Service Committee, two local southern Africa support groups, and a group of ad hoc activists; slide presentations at University of California (Los Angeles) and University of Southern California, two senior citizen groups and classes at a Latino high school.

Houston, TEX.: Slide presentation as part of African Studies Association conference; participated in panel on Africa and Brazil, speaking on dynamizing groups.

Nov. 1977: Wisconsin tour representing national Coalition.

Milwaukee: Three newspaper interviews on Mozambique; two TV interviews (WBC affiliate); slide presentations to six high school classes and senior citizen groups; meeting in black community; two presentations (using slides) at local universities.

Madison: Main speaker (using slides) at Mozambique Solidarity Evening, sponsored by African Student Organization; slides shown to 6 high school classes; interviewed for local radio/TV station; interview videotaped for cable TV.

Nov. 1977: Pittsburgh: showed slides to American Civil Liberties Union, AFSC, NAACP, New American Movement (NAM) representatives.


Grand Rapids: Home of Gerald Ford; slide presentations to American Friends Service Committee group, Christian Reformed Ministers meeting; interview with daily newspaper (printed with some anti-community letters to the editor elicited in response); slide presentations at two local high schools and Kalamazoo State University.

Ann Arbor: Slide showing to local southern Africa grp.

East Lansing: Evening slide program on Mozambique; talk to Michigan State University class.

Boston, MASS.: Slide presentation to Boston Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa.
Jan. 1978: Montreal: discussion of Mozambique with Catholic group doing anti-imperialist work; meeting with Haitian exile group to discuss Mozambique.

Toronto: slide showing to Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa (TCLSA)

Chicago: presentations to senior citizen/community health clinic groups; spoke on Mozambique at University of Chicago panel discussion; slides used for graphic artist project at University of Illinois; panel discussion at Northwestern Univ.

Feb. 1977: Detroit: slide presentation at Wayne State University (sponsored by NAM); public radio interviews with Amnesty International; TV interview (Black Journal on WTOL).

Ann Arbor: slides shown to independent socialist group, Univ. of Michigan class.

East Lansing: slide presentation at Michigan State University sponsored by NAM and national Coalition group; three slide presentations at local community colleges; two newspaper and one radio interview.


(Some material on Mozambique incorporated in article on SWAPO women’s role in the liberation struggle, published in earlier issue.)

Washington, DC: slide showing at Howard University.

Midwest tour sponsored by New American Movement.

Baltimore: slide showing at community coffee house; presentations at Morgan State Univ. and Johns Hopkins Univ.

Philadelphia, PA: slide presentation sponsored by local groups; presentations at nearby colleges (Hryn Hwr and Haverford).

Pittsburgh, PA: slide presentation to 200 high school students; Univ. of Pittsburgh forum on US foreign policy; Allegheny County Council on Civil Rights; Black Student Organizations at Point Park College and two community colleges; community forum on women in southern Africa; 3 TV and 3 radio interviews; two newspaper interviews.

Morgantown, W. Va.: slide presentation at local college.

Dayton, OH: slide showing to local activists

Yellowsprings, OH: radio interview and slide presentations at Central State College (predominantly black college).

Oxford, OH: two slide showings at Miami Univ.

Earlham, Ind.: slide presentations to Quaker college groups and classes.
May 1977: Chicago presentations to two small groups of educators
(high school and university;
slide presentations at Univ. of Illinois,
and Illinois Institute of Technology
slide presentation at women's conference,
Governor's State University

Forthcoming activities:

- workshop on southern Africa, including Mozambique,
at national New American Movement Conference, July
- presentation at celebration of Cuban revolution
  in Madison, WI (July)
- article for Latin American Perspectives (special
  issue on Africa--Latin America) on dynamizing groups
  in Mozambique
- slide showing in New York

All the above presentations/ interviews were focused on Mozambique
or included major portions of the presentation focused on
Mozambique. In most cases, some or all of the slide show developed
was utilized. We are currently developing a short and a long
version of the slide show. We have gotten about 5 requests for
purchase of the slide show and several requests, in particular,
for the slides on the Doloari refugee camp.

Summary assessment

Presentations have been well-received by general audiences.
Journalists from the commercial media have been pre-disposed
to be critical of Mozambique, often anti-communist and drawing on
South African sources for their prior knowledge of, and ideas on,
Mozambique.

People have particularly responded in the following areas:
- requests for information on working in Mozambique (almost
everywhere I have gone; requests from tool and die makers,
mesh and English teachers, agriculture students, medical
students, professors, among others)
- tremendous interest in the Mozambican women's movement
- tremendous interest (and questions) on workers organizations,
especially among rank and file workers at community showings
- tremendous response to pictures of Doloari, interest in
  material aid projects (we have given information on
  Patriotic Front and IAU Liberation Comm. addresses for
  sending aid, as well as information on how to ship
  materials directly to Mozambique c/o Ministry of Interior
  for use in Mozambique, at Doloari)

The commercial media have been the most consistent obstacle (with
a few exceptions) to developing more positive consciousness
around the progress of the Mozambican and southern African struggles.
Interviews have often been hostile, though this is less a problem
with media in small towns than in major cities where national
networks predominate.

Most effective in doing mass educational outreach have been
the 'personalized accounts' of the Mozambican revolution --
presentations of aspects of the Mozambican experience in the
words of everyday Mozambicans themselves. This was most difficult to get when in Mozambique because of the principled de-emphasis of the individual. But it is most effective in de-mystifying socialism and revolutionary situations, as people see the revolution in a personal context which allows them to accept it more easily. These are the most effective parts of the slide show and of interviews I have given.

Most important, we feel, is a clearer sense of what would be useful demands Americans could make on their government to improve relations of a beneficent sort between the American and Mozambican people. We have stressed, in our presentations, that people need to pressure the American government to give assistance to Mozambique on a principled basis, including assistance in resisting Rhodesian government attacks on Mozambican sovereignty. It would also be helpful to know how people in the United States could contribute directly to the Solidarity Bank in Mozambique.

We find the publication of the Mozambique Information Agency invaluable in keeping us up-to-date on events in Mozambique. What would be important is developing ways to give it much broader distribution among the media in the United States.

We hope that this has conveyed a little of what we have been doing to continue our support for FRELIMO and the people of Mozambique. What we also want to convey is the extent to which the struggle of the Mozambican people has lent us courage for our struggle here in Chicago and in the United States, as well as concrete lessons and alternative models which, despite varying material conditions, are proving useful to ourselves and many others. We hope to be able to continue this educational work and develop even more concrete forms of solidarity with the Mozambican people in the months and years to come.

A luta continua! A Vitoria e Corta!

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