

of Africans by whites and, in a broad sense, on the elimination of capitalism. All of them were — in varying degrees — supported by the Eastern-bloc countries, by leftist movements in some Western countries and by many governments and humanitarian organizations in Western Europe.

Except for the MLSTP, all of them, while claiming that their only quarrel was with Portugal, had to fight against rival nationalists who did not have the support of the U.S.S.R. Except for the MPLA, they were all able to neutralize the military capabilities of their local rivals well before the April 25, 1974, *coup* in Lisbon. And since, generally speaking, they were all of the same cultural background — one that isolated them somewhat in Africa —, they felt united against a common enemy they saw as the archetype of ultra-colonialist fascism. This attitude enabled them to ignore the fact that in Angola and Mozambique the hated Portuguese regime had appeared liberal in comparison with the intransigence of certain colonials.

Misgivings

However, when the Alvor Agreement in January 1975 established a quadripartite transitional government in Angola formed by Portugal, the MPLA, the FNLA and UNITA, the common ground began to weaken. It was learnt that the most important territory was to become independent without the MPLA's being in sole command. Worse yet, for FRELIMO and PAIGC, the latter had no guarantee that the party of Dr. Agostinho Neto would win the elections that were to be held before the date of independence — November 11, 1975. For these parties, which consider political ecumenism to be heresy, this was an insufferable setback. We need only remind ourselves how the PAIGC took power in Bissau in 1974 without the slightest semblance of popular consultation in the zones in which the majority of the population lived, which remained under Portuguese control until Lisbon withdrew. FRELIMO also dispensed with this formality in Mozambique — which probably enabled it to avoid numerous setbacks. It was only on the islands that the PAIGC and the MLSTP took over after calling for elections they were reasonably sure of winning.

The Angolan civil war (1975-1976) and the risk of seeing two parties hostile to the U.S.S.R. (the FNLA and UNITA) wipe out the MPLA appear to have been sources of great concern to FRELIMO and the PAIGC. Granted, this concern arose for legitimate reasons of solidarity, but

in the back of their minds there was also the fear of a backlash in Mozambique if the white extremists fighting for the FNLA and UNITA should emerge victorious. The PAIGC, of course, had nothing to fear from an invasion from Luanda, but it is conceivable that the new regime in Maputo might with good reason have felt some apprehension at the possibility of the thousands of former Portuguese colonists near its border taking heart if the whites should win in Luanda.

Range of attitudes

A detachment of a few hundred men was sent by Mozambique to fight beside the MPLA — a large number for a regime that was still uncertain of the strength of its own position. The PAIGC, which occupied a strategic position on Africa's Atlantic coast, refrained from making a total commitment. Guinea-Bissau did, in fact, send a small detachment to Angola, but it should be noted that the PAIGC was careful to avoid leaving itself vulnerable to its enemies inside and outside the country. It would not allow — at least, not openly — the Cape Verde ports and airfields to be used for the landing of Soviet materials and Cuban soldiers.

Bissau, on the other hand, was used as a stopover-point for these supplies and reinforcements. There appears to be a gradation in attitude towards the MPLA between the PAIGC on the islands and the continental PAIGC, a trend that was reinforced by the few thousand Cape Verde refugees who were the first to flee the disaster in Angola and who posed a problem to the PAIGC as a whole. These people were victims of hostility and even hatred in Angola. They were accused by the Angolans of being the forerunners of the Portuguese and of exploiting them as the Portuguese did. This is probably only a minor factor in the PAIGC's attitude towards Angola, but it is significant just the same.

In mid-March of 1976, with the MPLA victory assured, the Conakry meeting of Luis Cabral (Guinea-Bissau), Sekou Touré, Agostinho Neto (Angola) and Fidel Castro gave the appearance of a family gathering, and it seems plausible to say that any rough edges were smoothed off by proletarian internationalism. It is, however, noteworthy that Aristides Pereira, Secretary-General of the PAIGC and President of the Republic of Cape Verde, was not mentioned as being among the participants in the meeting. Furthermore, the repatriated Angolan islanders were allowed into drought-ridden Cape Verde but not into Guinea-Bissau, a land

*Gradation
of attitude
between islands
and continent
toward MPLA*