



NEWS AND NOTES #2
COMMITTEE FOR A FREE MOZAMBIQUE
DECEMBER, 1970

CABORA BASSA: A CRIME AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF MOZAMBIQUE AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

The key to Portugal's imperialist strategy in Mozambique as well as the focal point of massive foreign investment lies in the Cabora Bassa Dam Project. Located in the very fertile Zambesi Valley in the western province of Tete, the Cabora Bassa Dam, if ever completed, would be the largest dam in Africa, surpassing the U.A.R.'s Aswan dam with a 70% greater output. It would virtually supply all of the countries of southern Africa from Malawi to Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) to South Africa with electricity.

But Cabora Bassa is more than just a dam; it is the key to continued Portuguese domination and entrenchment in Mozambique. It strengthens while economic control in southern Africa through linking more firmly the racist regimes of Portugal and South Africa. Cabora Bassa through economic investment involves Western support and maintenance of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. A recent article in the Christian Science Monitor summed up the potential importance of this project to the future of Mozambique:

(Cabora Bassa's) success could entrench white rule in Portugal's East African territory for the foreseeable future. Its failure would almost certainly signal the eventual victory of African nationalists over the Western World's last colonial state.

"To Speak of Mozambique is to speak of Cabora Bassa" said the Governor of Mozambique who knows well the importance of Cabora Bassa for the political future of Mozambique. The Portuguese have drawn up massive 'development' plans for the Zambesi Valley region of which Cabora Bassa is only the beginning. The Zambesi Valley Development Project involves the settlement of one million Portuguese settlers as a way of countering the activities of the 'guerrillas,' in this area. From Portuguese deserters it has been learned that the Portuguese are trying to lure their own soldiers into staying in Mozambique after their tour of duty by offering them 'free land' and special loans for settlement in the region of Cabora Bassa. In addition

they have been actively campaigning to attract Portuguese emigrants in France and West Germany to settle in Mozambique. 400 Portuguese families are already on their way to Mozambique. The Portuguese government is also campaigning for white emigrant families from the neighboring apartheid regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia.

The Cabora Bassa zone of influence will reach far beyond the four million acres of land which is to be irrigated by it. The electrical power will be used as far south as Capetown, South Africa. Rhodesia also stands to benefit from the electrical power and from a new outlet to the sea through a series of locks by-passing the dam.

"Cabora Bassa is a crime" is the view held by FRELIMO, the Mozambique Liberation Front. Mr. Jorge Rebelo, FRELIMO's Secretary of Information explained in a recent interview with the Committee for a Free Mozambique the meaning of this project for the Mozambican people:

Cabora Bassa Dam is one of the biggest imperialist projects in the whole world. If it is constructed, it would be the biggest in Africa and the fourth largest in the world. Portugal is too poor to build this huge dam by herself, so she is trying to get foreign powers, European, American, South Africa involved in the construction of this dam. But the Cabora Bassa is really a pretext for imperialist powers to enter Mozambique.

The Portuguese government announced a year ago that the contract for Cabora Bassa had been given to the ZAMCO Consortium. As originally established, ZAMCO comprised of five companies with their headquarters in West Germany, and offices in Sweden, France and South Africa. The Swedish firm withdrew participation last year. The Consortium now consists of the above mentioned plus eight new companies of which six are French, one is Italian and one is Portuguese. The Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa is heading the Consortium.

A UN report just published this November states the contracts will be jointly financed by means of export credits from the participating governments: France and the Federal Republic of Germany, 20% each; Italy, 13%; loans from private Portuguese banks, 8%; and the balance to be provided from other private loans and by the Portuguese Government.

Contrary to Portuguese propaganda, Mozambicans will not have more jobs as a result of the Cabora Bassa. The Portuguese have set quotas limiting the number of non-Portuguese nationals (Mozambicans). The Portuguese force many Mozambicans to work on such 'public construction' as a punishment for not paying exorbitant Portuguese taxes. The land to be irrigated by the dam will not benefit the Mozambicans who are being forced off the land to make way for Portuguese settlers. So far 20,000 Mozambicans have been evicted from the north shore of the Zambezi River, and the Development Plan calls for the relocation of at least 5,000 more.

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"A Luta Continua" was the call issued by FRELIMO to the supporters of the Mozambican struggle in Western Europe and America. Two factors exist which could lead to the abandonment of the Cabora Bassa project: 1) public opinion in the West forcing the withdrawal of companies involved, and 2) a successful guerrilla operation by FRELIMO.

One early victory for FRELIMO was that public pressure forced a large Swedish firm out of the Consortium and President Kaunda of Zambia was successful in getting the Italian government to withdraw export credit and an Italian subcontractor to pull out. The British GEC-English Electric firm which sought to replace the Swedish firm, has just recently decided not to participate.

However, Siemens, a West German Corporation, has rejected Kaunda's plea, and has hired a special public relations man to ward off protests of its involvement in the Cabora Bassa. The French after a visit to Portugal by the French Foreign Minister, M. Maurice Schumann announced that they would continue in their participation. A large movement called the Dambreakers Mobilizing Committee is afoot in Britain to force Barclay's Bank to withdraw financing of the Cabora Bassa through a South African subsidiary.

In Mozambique the Portuguese have enlisted their 'partners in crime, South Africa, to help protect the Dam with four South African battalions against 'guerrilla activities.' While these battalions are well armed, they are still no deterrent to the liberation forces of FRELIMO.

The June issue of Mozambique Revolution, FRELIMO's official publication, reported that 342 Portuguese soldiers were killed in Tete Province between January and March 1970. Tunnels under construction have collapsed 'suddenly' and explosions around the site have occurred. Through continued sabotage activities and infiltration among the dam workers, FRELIMO may well succeed in doing what public opinion so far has failed to do -- stop the construction of Cabora Bassa and prevent the imperialist interests from subverting the struggle of the Mozambican people for a free Mozambique.

CABORA BASSA MUST BE STOPPED. A LUTA CONTINUA. FRELIMO VENCERA.

NEWS FLASH * * * NEWS FLASH * * * NEWS FLASH * * * NEWS FLASH

UCC URGES BOYCOTT OF GULF PRODUCTS

On December 3rd the United Church of Christ Council for Christian Social Action adopted a "resolution" excoriating the Gulf Oil Corporation for its activities in Angola" and urging the two million members of the Church to boycott Gulf products. A day later, the Board of Trustees of the Ohio Conference of the UCC reaffirmed its position of disapproval toward the operation of Gulf in Angola, thus strengthening the original resolution passed in June which declared that Gulf Oil, by playing a major role in the economy of the Portuguese colonies, "provides support for the suppression of the African national liberation movements." (Wash. Post, Aug 15). Gulf had threatened the Ohio Conference with legal action in an attempt to intimidate the Church.

PORTUGUESE FOREIGN MINISTER COURTING U.S. AID

Dr. Rui Patrio, Foreign Minister of Portugal spent two weeks in the U.S. in November. While he was here, he was shouted down by students when he tried to speak at the University of Connecticut in Storrs. A week earlier, Sharfudine Khan, the representative of FRELIMO in the U.S., had spoken at the University and received a very warm welcome.

The real reason for Patrio's visit, however, was not to speak in Connecticut. According to a State Department Release, he, together with other Portuguese officials, had meetings with Vice-President Agnew, Secretary of State Rogers, Secretary of Commerce Stans, and Henry Kissinger. Prior to his arrival, there were other meetings with the U.S. Departments of Defense, agriculture, AID and the National Science Foundation. According to the release, which was reprinted by the Portuguese government's "Casa de Portugal" in New York, the U.S. has made generous offers to provide financing for economic development, and health and educational programs.

PORTUGUESE TROOPS INVADE GUINEA

Although many questions about the late November raid on Guinea remain unanswered, it is at the least clear from the UN fact-finding report that Guinea "was invaded by Portuguese troops under the command of regular white Portuguese officers." (NYT, Dec. 5)

According to the report, the invaders "split into several groups, one group demolished the summer residence of President Sekou Toure, and another made an abortive attempt to assault the Presidential palace." The invaders were said to have attacked the headquarters of Amilcar Cabral." Cabral is the leader of the PAIGC, liberation movement of neighboring Guinea-Bissau or "Portuguese Guinea," from which the attack was launched.

Condemnations of the Portuguese invasion were voiced by many American groups. A demonstration was held on Dec. 4th at the Casa de Portugal, the Portuguese tourist agency, by the Committee for Returned Volunteers, and a rally to "show solidarity with Guinea and Africa" was held on Dec. 12 by the Federation of African Nationalist Organizations. In Newark, N.J. the Congress of African People called for a boycott of all Portuguese products such as sardines, tomato paste, olive oil and wines (Wash. Post 11/26).