

Stockholm 25/4/83

To some Solidarity organizations

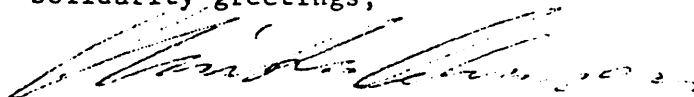
Dear comrades and friends,

in this letter we enclose an interview with Evo Fernandez, MNR:s representative in Lisbon. The interview is done by two scandinavian journalists.

The mayor part of the interview was recorded. (p 1 - 15) The final part is taken from notes (p 16 - 17).

The interview gives a picture of the MNR ideology and how they legitimate themselves. The figures and the information can not be seen as anything else than MNR propaganda. As a such it maybe can be compared with elder MNRinfluenced information and thereby analize the change of the MNR positions from a political point of view.

Solidarity greetings,


Christer Peterson

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07 JUL 1983

Interview with Evo Fernandes, Moçambique National Resistance, in
Lisbon 1983-04-04.

Fernandes: I think that the most important thing is not the economical relationship between the Scandinavian countries - including Finland - and Moçambique, but the political links between those countries and my country. Sweden and Finland are democratic countries and I cannot understand why they are so strongly supporting and sponsoring Frelimo's dictatorship - ruthless dictatorship. In Moçambique there are no rights of criticism of the government; no right of building political parties with the right to have their own beliefs, the traditional customs are completely destroyed in Moçambique. The traditional values are completely destroyed. The right of worship is also forbidden in Moçambique. How can countries with democratic backgrounds like the north European countries support politically a country, a regime like the Moçambiquan regime. What we are doing now is not only fighting against a dictatorship, but we are fighting to build a democratic regime in Moçambique. This is what we really want in Moçambique. We want democracy with a multiparty system, with a president elected by people, with a parliament elected by people in fair and periodical elections. Everything that does not exist now in Moçambique. Why are we fighting in Moçambique? Because when a country and a people loses everything, even the few rights that were respected by the Portugese rulers, a country which loses everything now under the communist dictatorship, people felt that the only way to restore their own rights is to fight against this regime. And we are fighting now against Samora Machel's regime, because we felt that our traditional values were completely destroyed. We had our ~~own~~ own tribal chiefs. They were arrested or they were murdered. Our political leaders were also arrested by Frelimo and they were shot dead by firing squads. We do not have the right to go to another place in Moçambique without an authorization from the government. And we cannot allow this to happen in Moçambique. We fought during 10 years against the colonial rulers, not to change one dictatorship by another dictatorship.

Question: You said that Moçambique lost everything, including those rights which were respected by the portugese. Which rights do you mean?

F: The right of worship, the right to choose a profession, the right to go to another place to live in Moçambique. This is not allowed by the present regime. And even now this is something special. Before, under the colonial rule, we could go to any shop to buy things. But now...

... a black or a white could go to any shop to buy what he wanted - but now we cannot go because there are no things. But the foreigners have their special shops for them, and the Frelimo officers have their own shops but we have not. Now we have discrimination, political discrimination and national discrimination that we did not have before.

Q: What about the background of the MNR? Is this an organization that has any history also during the colonial time or when was it created?

F: During the colonial time Frelimo was the sole political force in Moçambique because we saw Frelimo as the movement against the colonial rule to get an independence. But after 1975 Frelimo became a political party - a communist political party - and through the convention of the third congress of Frelimo, Frelimo was no more a national movement. That was in 1975. Frelimo became a communist party, forbidding or not accepting peoples rights. Then members - commanders who fought under Frelimo against the portugese colonial power - did not accept this change in Frelimo and they wanted to create a new political wing against Frelimo to ~~pursue~~ pursue the first aim Frelimo had in the 60s, to free the country from the Portugese. But to free the country means to create a democracy in Moçambique. And they (rebuked?) against the Frelimo one party system and wanted to create a pluralistic system in Moçambique. This was the reason why they defected Frelimo and they created in 1977 MNR.

Q: Who were those people?

F: They were dissenters from Frelimo.

Q: People who had been fighting with Frelimo?

F: They were fighting with Frelimo during the colonial time and then in 1977... In December 1975, six months after our independence. some commanders tried a ~~coup~~ coup against Frelimo. It was in Maputo. But this coup was destroyed and they ran away and they tried to create a new political movement and it was MNR.

Q: Can you give the names of some people?

F: Yes. Our first commander in chief and the first president was Andrea Matadi Matandeza (?).

Q: Did he hold some kind of position inside Frelimo before or what kind of person is this?

F: The military commanders? These two ran away from Frelimo and they were responsible for the creation of MNR. Andrea Matadi(?) was our first president. He was killed in 17th October 1979 when our forces tried to attack the town of Gorongosa in Moçambique. After that the second commander was elected as our president and he still is our president, Mtoso(?) Dlahkana.

Q: Does MNR have some kind of statutes, some rules for the organization which are possible to receive?

F: Yes, I can send it to you. You give me your address and I can send it to Sweden tomorrow morning. We have our program, our political program, and we have our statutes for the movement.

Q: I only have the experience reading about MNR as a military organisation, but how do you function politically inside Moçambique?

F: There is no military actions without political option. To fight we must know why to fight, what for to fight. Then we have our own political reasons to fight. The first one is the fundamental reason; we think that it is very important to respect our traditional values in Moçambique. We cannot destroy them like Frelimo want to do in Moçambique, to create the new society, the new man. Society and traditional values will evaluate with our economical, social evolution but we cannot destroy that and create a vacuum to build a new society like Machel wants to do. It is not possible. Then we think that we have to respect, we must respect our traditional values. And second we want to create a free society where people can discuss all the problems, because all of them - all of us - are citizens in Moçambique. We have the right to belong to this party or to that party, to accept the government or to criticize the government. And to fight against the government through legal terms inside parties or as individuals. These two aims are our main aims: tradition - the respect for traditions - and the free society. And this means also that we do not want (collective?) systems in Moçambique. We want a free enterprise system in Moçambique. Some sectors of our economy must remain under government hands like harbours, railway systems, (long run?) air system and so on, and the central bank. But everything except this must be under private hands. These two ideas are our main ideas in the political field. We have our political organization and now we already

have our shadow government to replace Frelimo as soon as possible. Now we are some 40 km away from Maputo city. We are in Marracuene north of Maputo. We are in the district and it is not possible now to go from Maputo to Marracuene or from Maputo to (Manisa?), 70 km north from Maputo.

Q: And where does the shadow government sit?

F: If we were a government in exile we should need a seat. But a shadow government does not need a seat. We have exiled people from Moçambique in Europe, in the States, in Africa and we joined them in March to create the shadow government. Now we have people to replace the government. We have people who are studying the problems for the next stage when we win. We do not need to have them together all the time, we have to join them only sometimes to discuss the problems and to create spirits of team.

Q: Do you belong to it?

F: Yes I belong to it, of course.

Q: And what is your "portfolio"?

F: I am just the... in French "pivot"... I am putting the bits and bits together. I am the dynamizer of this shadow government.

Q: And who is the head of it?

F: The dynamizer has all the responsibility in this government. But this does not mean that I am the head. This only means that I am the responsible. I belong to the national committee and I have above me the general secretary and the president.

Q: The president you told about before, is this the political president or is it the military president? You said that those persons had been commandants in Frelimo. But I think that a political strategy is very different from a military strategy, that means something more than military actions.

F: No, we have two different kinds of political actions. The first one is about, nowadays, inside Moçambique, what to do with people we liberate, what to do to control the areas where we are. This is (...?) of political activity. To organize people in the country, we liberate it from Frelimo. But the shadow government is not linked to this stage, it is linked to the next stage, after the liberation. After the (whole?) liberation.

Because now, what we have to do is to distribute books to the students, to create our hospitals, to organize people to give us the help we need, like to recruit people - new soldiers, to recruit people to carry the ammunition and weapons from one side to the other side, to hide our people to receive information and so on. This is one kind of political activity, because people will only help us if they understand very well what MNR's aims are. And the next stage is not this - it is how to organize all the country after the victory. The shadow government has nothing to do with the situation just today but they are preparing the government of tomorrow.

Q: Do you mean that you have liberated areas?

F: We have liberated areas, yes.

Q: Where?

F: We have liberated areas in Gaza, in Inhambane, in Sofala, in Manica, in Tete, in Zambezia... (Points out at the map.) We are fighting in these areas... These are the areas where we are fighting now. All these zones. And Frelimo cannot go from here - Maputo, the capital - to there, (Barrou?) or to Xai Xai or to Inhambane. It is impossible. The main roads are completely under our control. And they cannot fight there. What Frelimo is doing now, they are trying to defend this area. Because they understand that who (owns?) the capital is the legitimate government of Moçambique. Like in Cambodia ten years ago, Lon Nol was the last of Phnom Penh but all the country was under the Khmer Rouges, the Red Khmers' control. But he was accepted as the legal government because he got the capital. And now they are trying to defend Maputo and we are going against Maputo. And we (will enter into?) Maputo. And in these areas we have our completely liberated areas.

Q: But they are not equal to the whole provinces? Like in Gaza, you don't mean that you hold the whole of Gaza?

F: Like in any guerilla war there are some (access?) where the government can go and can go up and down. They can try to go from Maputo to Xai Xai but in military convoys. But they are (ambushed?) by us. But they cannot stay in these zones. They can go into these zones but they cannot stay there.

Q: So you mean that (....?) if of Gaza is under your control?

F: Yes, of course the towns are not under our control but we do not want the spots. We don't want specific areas under our control. We prefer that Xai Xai, the ~~xxx~~ capital of Gaza, is under Frelimo control, because they are forced to go to Xai Xai with military convoys and we are ready to attack the convoys when we want. A guerilla war never wants to conquer the towns, the towns belong to the government. But we are in the bush, we are around the town and the town cannot work, because we are around it, (seizing?) the town.

Q: From Frelimo's point of view I suppose they should not say that this is liberated area, they would say that it is maybe affected area. Isn't that right?

F: Yes, they say that these are affected areas. But why does not Frelimo invite foreign journalists to go there and visit the areas? Frelimo says that we are terrorists, but how could we be terrorists? If we were terrorists people could not give us support. Frelimo accuses us to kill villagers, to cut the ears and the lips and the noses and we are terrorizing people. But this is completely against a guerilla philosophy. To get people's support we have to be kind to the people and we must be understood by people. We cannot do anything. We cannot harm people, we must rely on people's support.

Q: In Sweden we have seen pictures in the papers of what you are telling about; cut-off noses and lips and so on. But you mean that this is false?

F: Yes, it is completely a fake. It is not true. And if it was true, why are they not interviewed by foreign journalists? Frelimo could do it. And Frelimo sometimes say that they arrested some terrorists. Why they do not allow them to be interviewed by foreign journalists? They always keep them without connection with foreign journalists. Why? Because they know that they could say the truth.

Q: But what are your methods of warfare? For example when you attack a convoy. What do you do? Do you take prisoners of war? What do you do with the people who are going with that convoy?

F: Frelimo soldiers don't want to fight. This is one of the reasons why we spread so fast our activities. In 1981 we were only affecting Sofala and Manica provinces, but in the last two years we are affecting Zambezia, Tete, Gaza, Inhambane and even Maputo provinces. Because Frelimo soldiers

do not believe in the government. They have no moral to fight against people, because MNR is really people with weapons.

Q: But that is not an answer to my question...

F: And this is the reason why they do not fight us. When we attack a convoy some Frelimo soldiers die during the operation and others join us. We do not kill people because we think that Frelimo's soldiers, they are not in the army to fight against us but because they are forced to join the army. Differently than in Sweden where you have a volunteer army, in Moçambique there is a... a draft army. They are forced to join the army for two or three years, and we understand that. They are not against us, but to live they must join the army. Then when we have prisoners they join us against Frelimo and this is the reason why in a short period we have now 13 000 soldiers in Moçambique. Did I answer you? If you have more questions about it please do it.

Q: When you say that the Frelimo picture about what is happening in Moçambique is a propaganda picture, do you also mean that all those cooperantes - there are many cooperantes in Moçambique, as far as I know - are joining Frelimo in the view of what is happening in the country?

F: There are two kinds of cooperantes. You have Swedes in Manica province. They are in (Bandula?) near the Zimbabwe border. We never made anything against your presence in Bandula. You are constructing the factory. But when Sergio Vieira, who is now the Minister of Agriculture, said that he wanted to distribute weapons among the people to fight against us, then we (expelled?) the Swedes from Bandula. But we never made anything against the Swedes. This is one kind of cooperantes. People sponsored by their own governments to industrialize the country or help the economical fields in the country. But there are other cooperantes who are only individuals, And they want to earn more than they earn here in Europe for instance. And they go there, And we have nothing against them too. Sometimes we detain some cooperantes in Moçambique, but not because we are against them, because after a short period we release them in Zimbabwe or in Malawi or in Zambia, release these people without negotiation because they are not... we do not kidnap people and we do not want to make anything bad against these people.

Q: But why do you detain them?

F: We detain them because the war is not only a military war, it is a general war and this means that the political field, economical field, social field and propaganda field is included in any war now. When we make a war we make a (whole?) war against the enemy, and if we allowed Frelimo to keep its economy going on they could get money to fuel their military actions. If we destroy the economical activity, then Frelimo is not able to support the war against us. This is (....?). And this is a good way to avoid Frelimo to have the resources to keep the war going on.

Q: So you mean that your organization does not want to see cooperants in Moçambique?

F: Not now. We do not want cooperants in Moçambique. We do not kill them but we take them to the border and release them on the border.

Q: There have been military activities also in the north of Moçambique, in Zambezia province, as you said. But there I know that there is an organization called Fresamo, that has given interviews. I do not remember the name of that person but he meant that this is activities of Fresamo and not activities of MNR. And also that they are not at all collaborating with MNR.

F: Of course not. And we are not collaborating with Fresamo because Fresamo is Frelimo's puppet. Frelimo created Fresamo only to divide the Moçambiquans, because Fresamo does not exist. They have no actions. If they had actions they could say where they have actions. But MNR is able to say any time we did this action, that action, in this period in this place. We did it. And we can say where we did it and when we did it. Fresamo never say that, We have the army, the fighting and they give to me all the informations to release to the press. But Fresamo never was able to do it. Because they have no army, they have only propaganda. But why are they doing it? Because they are supported by Frelimo, they want to divide the Moçambiquans to make confusion, they want to destroy the idea that MNR is the sole unifying organization in Moçambique. Because we unite all the Moçambiquans and our (...?) to fight against Frelimo. And for Samora Machel it would be very nice to see another movement that is also fighting against Frelimo. Only to make confusion. They do not exist. What they have done until now - nothing. I can say, and I did it many times in less than 24 hours, we did it, we did that we did this and so on. They never were able to do it.

Q: When you say that you are working as guerilla, what do you mean then in the sense of mobilize people politically? We have the information of MNR as making terrorist actions, sabotage actions. But a guerilla normally also work with political organizing and what kind of evidence do you have that you are mobilizing people?

F: We have the evidence of fighting in 9 of 10 provinces of Mocambique. It is impossible to fight without a political mobilization. We could speak in Swedish terms. How can you have a military resistance against anybody in Sweden if you did not believe in something. It was not possible, Tomorrow the Russians or the Americans invade Sweden, and I believe that you will fight against them because you have political feelings to join all the Swedes together against an invader or against a dictatorship. But if you did not have this common idea you could not fight. This is the reason why we are fighting in Mocambique. And in a guerilla war more than in a classical ~~xx~~ army you need very very much a common political idea without this political idea, people have different tribes... like in Mocambique we have different tribes - they could not join MNR to fight against Frelimo, because it would be impossible, A guerilla war needs places to hide material, to hide people, to place the military barracks. They need people to recruit, to join the army. They need food, they need water and everything is given by people. If we did not have political aims, if we did not have a political status? then it was impossible to fight.

Q: I suppose that still the main part of the population in Mocambique is not (liberated?). So what is the message you give to people? Do you have any slogan, for example, that unite the people who are supporting your organization?

F: This is not a problem of slogans, it is a problem of understanding. I don't think that we need to be literate to understand that we really have the right to live in our own houses and not in communal villages. We don't want to be forced to live in communal villages, we don't need to say slogans, we only need to explain this to people. People understand that they have their own tribal chiefs and these tribal chiefs are part of our culture, and they are the first defences of the tribe, and they understand it very well. They understand that if they want to go to a different place, they are able to do it and with Frelimo they are not able to do it. It is forbidden to live in a different place even to go for a short period to another place. We have to ask for a special authorization.

We want to remain with food after the harvest. Frelimo wants everything from the harvest. But we don't want it. We don't want the communal villages because the communal villages are something like a robbery, a public robbery, against people. People produce food, produce harvest, and then Frelimo comes and say that this is for the state. And people do not understand this. And ~~xxx~~ are against it- and they understand that we want to give them freedom.

Q: How is this program communicated? Do you have some kind of political cadres, political educators?

F: We have political commissars. In the army we have two bodies. One is the body with guerilla fighters, the other one is the political body. And the political body is commissioned to talk to the people to explain to the people what our aims are, how can people give support to MNR and what are our long run aims. Before a (unit is coming?) to a new area to fight against Frelimo, the political commissars go there to prepare the political conditions. This means they go there to explain to the people what we are fighting for and what they can do to support this fight against Frelimo. This is the first (trench?) to any military activity in any area of (MNR?).

Q: What about the political and material support inside Moçambique? Who is supporting MNR in the country?

F: In the country I think that everybody is supporting MNR. Even Samora Machel... He is making so many mistakes that he is supporting us... But everybody is supporting us. And I would like to say that we accept any elections in any place Machel wants, because we are completely sure that we will win any fair election in Moçambique. We are not afraid of this. But Machel is afraid of this, this is why he never accepted elections. But we offer this, any place, in Maputo or in any other place Machel chooses we will accept elections there.

Q: I do not understand. Don't you want elections in the whole of Moçambique?

F: No... If Machel chooses a place to make elections - fair elections - ~~xxx~~ any place, a district, town - anything, any spot of the country we are able to run against Machel and we are sure that we will win the elections.. And this is the reason why I say that everybody is with us. And our material -

some parts of our material - comes from inside because Frelimo doesn't fight against us, abandon their weapons and we get the weapons and ammunition for us. When we attack Frelimo's military barracks we take all the material for us and this is one source of material, to fight against Frelimo. The other source comes from outside. Because we do not have factories to produce weapons then we must get weapons from outside. But all our material comes from the eastern bloc states. Our weapons are Soviet made weapons or Soviet-licensed made weapons.

Q: But how do you mean that you can get weapons from outside?
I suppose that the eastern countries are not supporting you actually by weapons?

F: If you are interested to buy eastern countries' weapons I can do it for you. If you want, OK, I can do it for you. It is not very difficult, because they want hard cash. And we can get hard cash to buy the weapons. And we buy it. Never a G3 or a (FGN?) weapon was found with our army, because we have not western weapons with us, only use eastern bloc weapons. Because if we capture ammunition inside Moçambique we have a special sort of material, then we must have weapons with which we can use this ammunition. We do not want to have different sorts of material.

Q: There must be (other?) sources to get eastern bloc weapons?

F: Yes there are the ways to get eastern bloc weapons. And we have these ways and we use them.

Q: To buy weapons is a question of money. And there must be funds outside Moçambique. I don't think it would be possible to supply an army with 13 000 soldiers if you don't have this.

F: Of course. This is something I cannot answer completely and you must understand it. Some governments which are supporting us give this support discretely and we cannot make any leak about this, we cannot discover all these ways unilaterally if they don't want to do it, because they give their support under discrete and secretive conditions. We cannot release it without their authorization. But of course we have outside support.

Q: If I say that South Africa plays a big role in this supply, what is your answer then?

F: Yes... Maputo is receiving all the support they need from South Africa, and just now the harbour in Maputo is runned by South Africans. The

railway is runned by South Africans, 80% of the foreign exchange Maputo receives comes from South Africa. Food comes from South Africa and even (SNASP?), Machel's secret police, has periodical meetings with South African officials. This is an open secret. I think that the most important ally Maputo has now is Pretoria. Even in colonial times, never Maputo was so much dependent on South Africa as now.

Q: What is the South African policy about MNR?

F: We do not like the internal policy of South Africa. We are against apartheid. We cannot accept apartheid as a policy. Apartheid is not a policy, it is stupid and ununderstandable thinking. We cannot accept it today and we cannot accept it in the future. Our people is black people. How could we accept apartheid in South Africa? And by this reason we have no relationship with South Africa. Even South Africa needs power from Cabora Bassa. It is very cheap power. But we destroy it, we have destroyed the power line since 1980. And until now the power does not go to South Africa and I know that South Africa is angry with this. And even the prices of power in South Africa increased 7 % in November-December last year and we know that we are (harming?) South Africa with power. And in the future we will harm South Africa more because we will destroy the railways from Maputo to South Africa. But we want peace in Moçambique. We have been in war since 1964 in Moçambique, 19 years of war - of permanent war - in Moçambique. Our country is a mess now. We have nothing in Moçambique. We have no food, people are starving now. We have no (clothes?), we have no roads. We have no economical future in Moçambique. Then we do not want to pay the bill for developing a situation for racial accommodation in South Africa. Our first aim is not South Africa, it is Moçambique. What we want to do is to improve the conditions inside Moçambique. We do not want to teach other peoples what to do in their own countries if our own country is completely a mess, like it is now.

Q: There have been sabotage actions in Beira port, sabotage actions against the pipelines to Zimbabwe and against the railway to Zimbabwe. This kind of actions is a pattern that could be made by South Africa, economically. Because if you destroy those kinds of things this will give Moçambique more dependence on South Africa, as far as I understand?

F: Not made by South Africa, but there is a coincidence between MNR's interests and South African interests. Is that what you mean? It is true that (Veloso?), the minister of Security, said one year ago - used to

say - that South Africa was making the war against Frelimo. But during all these years never any South African soldier was captured by Frelimo. Never any evidence of South African presence along MNR's ranks was found out. Never. And never any South African box, ammunition box or something like this, was discovered there. But what is true is that since 1980 the power line from Cabora Bassa has been destroyed and the South African interests have been harmed by our activities. And the (...?) is, what is the coincidence between MNR and South Africa. As I said to you before, when we make an economical war it is because this economical war is better, we have less bloodshed with destroying the pipeline than fighting against soldiers. And when we destroy the economical sources in Moçambique we avoid Frelimo to get money to buy in weapons and more ammunition to fight against us. This is not because we are against Zimbabwe. The problems in Zimbabwe are not our problems. Nkomo or Mugabe - it does not matter to us, it is Zimbabwean problems.

Q: But you must supply this guerilla army from somewhere? From South Africa, from Zimbabwe, from Malawi? (.....?) of these countries evidently are (linked?) to Moçambique. So do you mean that all those supplies are done secretly?

F: This is done secretly. And we have the borders to Zimbabwe or to Malawi or to Zambia open to our interests. We have good relationships with all our neighbours except Tanzania. But all our neighbours, Zambia or Zimbabwe, are with us because even our cells in Zimbabwe never were touched by Harare's government. They never harassed anyone of MNR's representatives in Zimbabwe, they are still there.

Q: Where are they? In the capital?

F: In Harare or in other parts of Zimbabwe - they are there. And the Zimbabwean government knows it very well and everybody knows it.

Q: In South Africa there is quite a high Portuguese population. I suppose that many of them should have an interest of a political change in Moçambique. Is there any kind of political cooperation or material support from those interests?

F: We are fighting in Moçambique. But (not) because the Portuguese people in South Africa or elsewhere want this change in Moçambique, we want this change because our own people in Moçambique want it. Then what the Portuguese people think about the (revolution?) in Moçambique, it does not matter, it has nothing to do with us. If they have revenge

feelings against Machel it is with them not with us. But we receive from anyone who wants to give us support, we receive it. Because we are a poor country, we need financial support, we need any kind of support from any kind of people. If they are not against our main interests - tradition and democracy in Moçambique.

Q: My knowledge about african society is not very big, but as far as I am learned in social anthropology etc, I cannot really find (those pieces?) of democracy inside the chief community. Is this what you mean by the traditional form?

F: There is democracy in the traditional societies. As you know a tribal chief is not a dictator. He cannot order the people what he wants. He must rely on the council. There is a council and this council is very important. And this council is respected by everybody. But in Africa we must have two different societies. There is one traditional society and we must respect this traditional society. And we will have, with the social evolution, a new society, if we want a most modernized society. And this more modernized society is not linked to traditions. They are linked to political patterns like yours. And we have to balance these two kinds of societies together without harming anyone. We must balance them. But it is impossible to take a Moçambiquan citizen from the bush and discuss with him the problems that we have in the towns. There are different problems, there are different solutions. But at the same time we cannot say that who is right is the urban citizen, the citizen from the town, or who is wrong is the citizen from the bush. No, they are together citizens from the same country and with the same rights. And they have their rights to have their own political ways to express their feelings and to discuss the political problems.

Q: In a book written some years ago, Inside BOSS, there was something about a person who said that BOSS in some ways have had their hands with Moçambiquan refugees and with the creation of MNR.

F: There are many things they tell about us. Like they say that I was a former PIDE agent, PIDE is the Portugese security police, in the 50s. - In the 50s? I was born in 1944. How could I be a police agent at that time? I say that they can see the files in Portugal if I was an agent. They say that Dhlakana, our president, is a colonel in the South African army. If he was a colonel in the South African army then I must say that South Africa was not an apartheid regime - with a black colonel. And how

can they say it? This is only propaganda, this is only lies against us. I ask only this - prove this. I want a proof of this. (...) They say that they are humane people, with humanitarian feelings. Now in Moçambique more than ever firing squads are shooting people, the dissenters are killed by Frelimo. And now a new law appeared just two days ago about the punishment to beat people. It is a new public punishment in Moçambique. What kind of regime is this? (Hundreds of times?) they say that they are humanitarian and that we are killers, we are terrorists and so on. But they are (publicly?) terrorists. If you want to visit us, I may be going to send you a ticket to Moçambique, to visit our free areas, you can do it.

Continued

Q. Do you get support from the Portuguese from Mozambique who took refuge in South Africa?

Fernandes: What they think do not matter to us, we are not a Portuguese movement, but a nationalist Mozambican movement. But we ~~take~~ receive support from anybody who is for us and for our aims: tradition and democracy.

Q. But was the tribal chief system democratic?

Fernandes: The tribal chief is not a dictator, he has to rely on the council. We must balance the tribal chief system and the multi-party system. The problems of the countryside and the cities are completely different, and the solutions are also different. The multi-party system is most fit for the urban areas.

Fernandes: They x say so many things. For example they say that I was a PIDE agent in the 1950's. But I was born in 1944, how could I have been a PIDE agent in the 1950's? Dlakhamax is said to have been a colonel in the colonial army, but if that was so, then it was not an apartheid army. These are only lies, we demand clear evidence.

Q. What is the relation between Ken Flower and the MNR?

Fernandes: When we started our war, Rhodesia gave us support. Ken Flower (Flowers?) from the CIO (?) assisted in the contact.

Q. Orlando Cristina?

Fernandes: He is our general secretary, although he is not born there in Mozambique but here in Portugal. He fought against FRELIMO in colonial times, and still does.

Q. What is your relationship ~~in~~ to FUMO?

Fernandes: FUMO does not exist any more, and only existed in Portugal.

Q. What is your relationship with UNITA from Angola?

Fernandes: We have a relationship with UNITA, but we do not cooperate for practical reasons, since we are fighting so far apart. We discuss with them, but for us it is impossible to help our Angolan brothers. They are fighting the same struggle, they want a democratic and free society in Angola. And they are fighting against the Cubans, and we are also against Cubans in Mozambique.

But there is one big difference. UNITA is a tribal movement, based on the Umbundu. The MNR is not a tribal movement, but recruit from all groups. Therefore we are closer to victory than UNITA.

Q. What is your personal background?

Fernandes: I was born in ~~Rio~~ Beira in 1944. Studies in Mozambique and the last 3 years of gymnasium in Lisboa. Then I went back to Mozambique, and worked as crime inspector (polícia judiciária) in Louraço Marques, then to Nampula and in the beginning of 1974 I became director of Notícias de Beira in Beira. In June 1974 I was expelled by FRELIMO journalists, and started to work as a lawyer (this he pronounced as "liar") in Beira. In July 1975 the law practise as a profession was abolished by Machel as "commerce of justice". I then worked as

a teacher in gymnasium, and in September 1976 left for Lisbon in order to organize our refugees here, on MNR's behalf with the cooperation of FUMO.

FUMO was headed by Domingos Arouca, but I soon realized that he was not a strong man. He wanted to lead the fight against FRELIMO from Lisbon. Our commanders did not accept this, nor did I. Therefore we created MNR on the 1st of May near Chimio in the Manica province. There we had our first meeting. We had very few weapons then. The commanders first recruited some relatives. It is a ~~xxx~~ miracle that we have come as far as we have today in these few years.

Q. How could you have commanders before you had an organization?
Fernandes: Our commanders were those who had escaped from FRELIMO.

Q. What kind of work do you do in Portugal?

Fernandes: We are not interested in Portugal, it is the poorest country in Europe. I am Portuguese not because I want it but because I need a passport to travel.

I am here because there are many from Mozambique here, many skilled Mozambicans that we will need in Mozambique live here. If we include the children there are perhaps 300,000 Mozambicans living in Portugal.

We have a paper that we distribute to Mozambicans in Portugal. Every day Mozambicans living here call me to get in contact with MNR.

We have had no difficulties in working here. The Portuguese government has a double standard. The FRELIMO government every now and then tries to put pressure on the Portuguese authorities ~~xxx~~ to make them take actions against me and our activities. But the Portuguese government only starts an "investigation", and this is a pure fake. On the one hand they want relations with the present Mozambican government, ~~h~~ for trade and other purposes, but on the other hand they know that we are the future leaders, and they do not want to harm us, but want good relations with us, too.

Q. Where do you have representatives?

Fernandes: In Paris, West Germany, and the United States (except for Lisbon).