

movements, not only in Angola but in the other Portuguese colonies of **Guinea** and **Mozambique** as well.

Ten years later the tide of war seems quite clearly to have turned, for the moment at any rate, in favour of the Portuguese. Of course, it is never easy to say what "control" of territory means in a guerrilla war. Where the bush is thick or the ground swampy nobody in Africa has ever really controlled very much. Territorial control is, anyway, of less importance than the control of population. He who takes the taxes, runs the schools, and operates the clinics is the true master. In large parts of Guinea and smaller parts of Angola and Mozambique there have been periods when it was the guerrillas who could claim the ascendancy. But in the past six or eight months they have been, by their own admission, going through some hard times.

ARB(P) 8,2,15/3/71

Internal Security

PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES

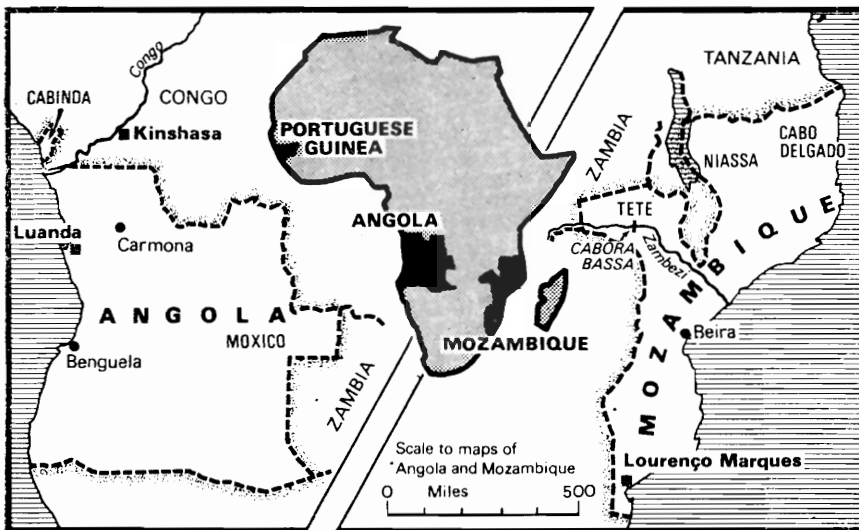
Security Situation

In a review of the security situation in Portugal's African Territories, the *Economist* (UK) said on February 6th that ten years ago this week guerrillas of the Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), armed with machetes and muskets, had attacked a jail in Luanda, the capital of Angola. Their attack, the *Economist* went on, was the first in a guerrilla war that has continued ever since, and which has inspired other

Frelimo's Difficulties

This is particularly true in Mozambique. There the Mozambique Liberation Front (**Frelimo**) was once well organised in Cabo Delgado and Niassa provinces, and in Tete, where its energies were largely directed against the building of the Cabora Bassa dam. But the assassination, in 1969, of Dr. Eduardo Mondlane (p. 1375), Frelimo's leader, and the subsequent leadership troubles (p. 1591) within the movement have encouraged the Portuguese to redouble their efforts.

In June, 1970, they launched a new offensive which continued until the coming of the rains in November. With bombers, bulldozers, and Alouette helicopters, 50,000 soldiers and paratroopers poured into northern Mozambique (p. 1963) and



(Source: *Economist* (UK) 6/2)

B

C

captured at least 16 Frelimo camps, each large enough to have its own system of social services. As a result the Portuguese claim that Frelimo has now all but stopped military activity in Tete and Niassa provinces, having lost 650 guerrillas killed and 1,800 prisoners captured, for a loss of 132 Portuguese (p. 1998).

A hard core of about 1,000 guerrillas is said to be holed up in Cabo Delgado province, and others exist in smaller bands elsewhere. Certainly Frelimo operations are continuing; a Portuguese communique on February 1st reported the rout of between 200 and 300 guerrillas in Tete. But its activities have clearly been curtailed, and will remain so if the Portuguese tactic of building a network of roads along the frontiers with **Zambia** and **Tanzania** is successful.

Changes in Angola

Continuing, the *Economist* says that success has been less dramatic in Angola, but here, too, there have been changes. The most important is that there is no longer much activity in the rich coffee-growing area around Carmona in the north, where the guerrillas pulled back into the mountains years ago. The centre of conflict has shifted to Moxico, in the east. This reflects the ever-diminishing dynamism of Holden Roberto's Angolan Revolutionary Government-in-exile (**Grae**), one of the three main Angolan guerrilla movements. Based in the **Congo (DR)** capital of Kinshasa, it alone has enjoyed President Mobutu's support. But this appears to be on the wane; Mobutu is more than happy to let the front move south-east to Moxico, where two-thirds of the Portuguese forces are now garrisoned. This has taken the heat off his frontiers and has resulted in improved relations with Portugal.

Two other guerrilla groups operate in Angola. But neither Grae nor the Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (**Unita**)—which fights under Jonas Savimbe in the south-east—has gained the seal of approval of the Organisation of African Unity (**OAU**). This is reserved for the **MPLA**, unquestionably the most effective of the three. Led by the poet Agostinho Neto, it has several thousand guerrillas in eastern Angola and several hundred in Cabinda. Like Frelimo, it runs schools, clinics, and other services.

Operations in Guinea

As in Mozambique, the Portuguese have recently made an extra-large effort in Guinea, the territory where, in the past, they have fared least well. There they claim to have captured, last year, almost a third of the active forces of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea

and the Cape Verde Islands (**PAIGC**), led by Amílcar Cabral. General Spínola, the Portuguese commander, will also have received solace from the sacking in November (p. 1933) of the PAIGC offices in Conakry, the capital of neighbouring **Guinea**. But the war is still very much alive, and here more than elsewhere it is fought on both sides not just with bombs and bullets but with medical and social services.

Future Prospects

But, the *Economist* asks, will this success continue? "Optimism is running high in Lisbon, where it is believed that in **Mozambique** at least the guerrillas can soon be crushed. This may be putting it too high; the liberation movements can probably survive, if not very actively, so long as they can use **Zambia** and **Tanzania** as sanctuaries and lines of supply. A lot depends on the degree of support they get from the population. In northern Mozambique, where the tribes straddle the national frontiers, the support may still be there, but farther south Frelimo has made less progress with the local people. The war could intensify further in the next dry season. It is reported that **South Africa** has twice offered ground and air units for Mozambique. So far it seems that these have been refused.

"It is likely that, before it calls for South African support, Portugal will intensify the non-military side of its campaign. The offer in December of greater autonomy for the overseas provinces (p. 1961) should be seen in this context. So should the perennial attempts to emphasise the strategic importance of the overseas territories in the eyes of **Nato**. But the support given to the liberation movements by some sections of liberal opinion in the West (in 1970 the Pope gave an audience to the guerrilla leaders) has caused some concern in Portugal. This is all the more needling because of the argument that is going on in Dr. Caetano's Government about whether Portugal's future lies primarily in Africa or Europe.

The *Economist* concludes that time is not necessarily on the side of the Portuguese. With more than 150,000 troops in Africa, using sophisticated equipment, including chemical herbicides in Angola, between 45% and 55% of Portugal's annual budget goes on defence. Two things make this worth while in their eyes: the civilising mission attributed to the Portuguese by themselves; and the £20 m. trade surplus generated by **Angola**, the main factor in the elimination of metropolitan Portugal's trade deficit. With so much at stake, neither side is likely to give up."

(Observer (UK) 6/2)

Last reference p. 1998B