

## THE REVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT OF EDUARDO MONDLANE

by Thomas H. HENRIKSEN\*

As anti-colonial movements swept across Africa in the 1960s, Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane organized the resistance to Portugal's presence in Mozambique. Mondlane's organizing ability and leadership talent were matched by his distinctive revolutionary thought. He creatively adapted ideas and methods to African conditions and was aware of the crucial role of theory in successful guerrilla movements abroad. From 1962 to 1969, his armed resistance movement proved to be one of the most successful in all of southern Africa because he provided it with a tough philosophical underpinning based on his experiences as a student on three continents and as a research officer for the United Nations, but most importantly because he shaped his revolutionary ideology to conform to the present realities and historical evolution of Mozambique.

Mozambique, a long, slender country resembling to some an inverted lion, is located on the southeastern corner of the African continent. About half the territory is coastal lowlands; interior plateaus appear in the west-central and northwestern parts. Although smaller than Angola, Portugal's largest African territory, Mozambique has a greater population. Of the nearly eight million inhabitants the bulk are African, illiterate and subsistence farmers. About 200,000 of the total are Europeans who hold the dominant positions in the army, government, and economy. A small but important Asian population occupies positions as clerks and petty traders. Eight and a half times the size of metropolitan Portugal, Mozambique is bordered by South Africa and Rhodesia to the south and west, and by Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania to the north. With its eastern edge on the Indian Ocean, Mozambique faces India and the Orient. This geographical position placed Mozambique well within the scheme of Portugal's eastern empire, *Estado da*

---

\* Professor Henriksen teaches African history at State University of New York, Plattsburgh; his special interest is the African reaction to European expansion. This article is based on a paper delivered at the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association in November 1971.

*India.* Beginning in the late fifteenth century bays and islands along the Mozambican coastline harbored Portuguese ships bound for India and the East.

Lisbon's interest remained fixed on the littoral except for the fortune-hunting exploits of a few explorers and the weak settlements of Goan and Portuguese immigrants on the Zambezi River. Imperial attention waned during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as the Asian empire passed into French and English hands and interest shifted to Brazil's gold, sugar and tobacco.<sup>1</sup> But the European scramble for Africa in the last quarter of the nineteenth century rekindled Portuguese interest lest their domains fall to alien intruders. To insure control of the regions it claimed on the map, Lisbon initiated a series of military campaigns and pacification programs to gain "effective occupation" of the interior. There had always been opposition to Portuguese rule, yet the level of resistance markedly increased during this phase of Portuguese activity.<sup>2</sup> The pacification of Mozambique lasted until the third decade of the twentieth century—the decade of Mondlane's birth.

### The Making of a Revolutionary

Born in 1920 in Gaza, a province in southern Mozambique, Mondlane came from a traditional background. He attended government and Swiss Presbyterian mission schools before going to Lourenço Marques to enroll in a course in dryland farming and to serve a two-year stint as a farming instructor.

The political conditions of Gaza during Mondlane's youth helped to mould his later career. A quarter of a century before his birth, Gazaland had enjoyed autonomy under its last king and chief, Gungunhana. From 1884 to 1895 Gungunhana had been a thorn in the side of Portugal, just as Mondlane would be. The resistance in the last years of the nineteenth century proved to be a major obstacle to European military and administrative control in southern Mozambique, and a lasting influence for over a generation.<sup>3</sup> The opposition of Mondlane's father, a minor chief, and uncle to the colonial regime also furnished him with examples of resistance.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> For an authoritative source on the Portuguese empire, see Charles R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415-1825*, (New York, 1969).

<sup>2</sup> James Duffy, *Portuguese Africa* (Cambridge, 1959), pp. 230-242.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas L. Wheeler, "Gungunhana," *Leadership in Eastern Africa: Six Political Biographies*, ed. Norman R. Bennett (Boston, 1968), p. 219.

<sup>4</sup> Ronald H. Chilcote, "Eduardo Mondlane and the Mozambique Struggle," *Africa Today*, XII (November, 1965), p. 4. Interview.

Mondlane's response to his insurgent heritage first appeared after securing a scholarship in 1948 that enabled him to register in South Africa's Witwatersrand University. In 1949, at the end of his second year, he was dismissed from the university for being a "foreign native." After this he began to display those qualities that were to shape his life and the future of Mozambique. Back in Lourenço Marques, he was arrested and questioned for his activities in a student group which he helped to organize, the *Núcleo dos Estudantes Africanos Secundários de Moçambique* (NESAM). To cure his "embryonic spirit of black nationalism" the Portuguese colonial government decided his education should be continued in Portugal.

At the University of Lisbon (1950-51) he began a new phase in his activist career. While concentrating "on talking at closed meetings of students, faculty members, and some more liberal Portuguese, describing Portuguese colonial policies,"<sup>5</sup> Mondlane associated with African students from the territories, some of whom became future nationalist leaders, among them Agostinho Neto who today is the President of the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) and Amílcar Cabral, late Secretary General of the *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde* (PAIGC). Subject to official harassment, Mondlane resolved to continue his studies in the United States, graduating from Oberlin in 1953 with a B.A. and earning a Ph.D. at Northwestern University. He accepted a position in 1957 with the United Nations, after a year spent in research at Harvard.

Mondlane entered a second phase of activity by serving as a United Nations research officer from May 1957 to September 1961. The heady air of nationalism that swept Africa during the fifties and early sixties proved infectious to Mondlane, who had long realized the part he should take in the independence of Mozambique. A return to Mozambique with his American wife, Janet, in 1961 with U.N. passports convinced him that the colonial policies could only be ended with total independence and that he must play a predominant role in the drive for self-rule.<sup>6</sup> So as to disengage himself from U.N. commitments, he took an assistant professorship at Syracuse University. It became apparent at this point that a single, unified party was the first step toward independence.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Eduardo C. Mondlane, "The Struggle for Independence in Mozambique," *Southern Africa in Transition*, ed. John A. David and James K. Baker (New York, 1966), p. 205.

<sup>6</sup> John A. Marcum, "A Martyr for Mozambique," *Africa Report*, (March-April, 1969), p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Eduardo Mondlane, "Our Chances," *The New African*, IV (July, 1965), p. 105. An interview with the Swiss journalist, Hans Dahlberg.

The evolution of Mozambican national parties, though meager by comparison with many African states, represented a growing national consciousness. Resistance to Portuguese conquest existed from the initial encounters between African and European forces and characterized an early form of Mozambican nationalism. In the twentieth century, nationalism became rooted in the pattern of continued resistance by Mozambican newspaper writers, striking dockers, and angry laborers who, as recorded by African nationalists, on some occasions paid for their opposition with their lives. The 1920s saw politically interested Africans form regional, linguistic, civic and mutual-aid organizations, which among others included the *Centro Associativo dos Negros de Moçambique*, *Associação Africana*, and *Instituto Negrófilo*.<sup>8</sup> Even though the concept of nationalism evolved from several sources, none of these groups developed into a national party. Rather Mozambican nationalists established in the early 1960s three main, although fragile, organizations in neighboring countries beyond Portuguese control.

The first party was the *União Democrática Nacional de Moçambique* (UDENAMO) formed by Mozambican workers in Southern Rhodesia on October 2, 1960. A combination of several small groups organized the second nationalist movement, the *Moçambique African National Union* (MANU), in Mombasa, Kenya, in February 1961. It received support from similar African unions in Tanganyika (TANU) and Kenya (KANU). A third party, *União Africana de Moçambique Independente* (UNAMI), was established in Malawi. During 1961, all three parties moved to Dar es Salaam where they received strong pressure to merge from other Mozambican refugees, and from such African state leaders as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.

Realizing that the newly granted Tanganyikan independence would provide him with a base for future operations, Mondlane entered the most active phase of his revolutionary career by going to Dar es Salaam to assist in the formation of a united front. On June 25, 1961, UDE-NAMO, MANU and UNAMI merged, forming the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (FRELIMO), with Mondlane as president. A party congress drafted a program in September. Then three years of political organizing and military preparation preceded guerrilla warfare. From the beginning Mondlane knew the importance of patience, of following his own timetable and of unhurriedly constructing a revolutionary base from which to launch the struggle.

Soon after formation, personal and ideological rivalries burgeoned and led to the establishment of competing movements. By 1965 several

---

<sup>8</sup> Ronald H. Chilcote, "Les Mouvements de Libération au Mozambique," *Le Mois en Afrique*, No. 7 (July, 1966), pp. 31-39.

of these groups formed the still existing *Comité Revolucionário de Moçambique* (COREMO) which ultimately came under the leadership of Paulo José Gumane.<sup>9</sup> Since the initial splintering, Mondlane's movement succeeded in avoiding further fragmentation, and FRELIMO not only continued its preparation for guerrilla war but also its growth and success surpassed other resistance movements south of the equator.

On September 25, 1964, FRELIMO began the military phase of its revolution by attacking Portuguese outposts in the Cabo Delgado district of Mozambique. Later the struggle was extended to the districts of Zambezia and Niassa, and finally to the Tete region in 1968 to disrupt the Cabora Bassa dam project along the Zambezi River. Before the death of its first leader, FRELIMO laid claim to substantial territory in northern Mozambique and won the loyalty of its population.<sup>10</sup> So striking was its progress that FRELIMO held, with advance publicity, the second party Congress within Niassa province of northern Mozambique in July, 1968.

What was the revolutionary thought behind this transformative achievement? What, indeed, enabled Mondlane's FRELIMO to capture wide swaths of territory and to win the allegiance and support of large numbers of Mozambicans within and without their homeland? The answer to much of FRELIMO's success lies in Mondlane's understanding of the realities of Mozambique's history and his conception of revolutionary warfare.

### Mondlane's Revolutionary Thought

Insurgent leader, political activist, guerrilla fighter, Eduardo Mondlane was also a man of significant revolutionary ideas. Possessing a firm grasp of revolutionary doctrine, he insisted that the struggle would be a mixture of political and military action involving guerrilla operations with nation building and political education. His revolutionary thought was channeled toward four goals: formation of a political movement capable of military conflict; independence from Portugal; fostering national consciousness among Mozambicans; and the restructuring of society to insure true equality with an end to exploitation.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> For a more detailed account, see Ronald H. Chilcote, *Portuguese Africa*, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1967), pp. 119-120; Eduardo Mondlane, "La Lutte pour l'Indépendance au Mozambique," *Présence Africaine*, XX (1963), pp. 14-20.

<sup>10</sup> Estimates vary widely concerning the land and people wrested from Portuguese control. Depending on the source of information, claims of territory range from one-fifth to only eight percent of Mozambique under FRELIMO control. The population within this zone is reckoned between 200,000 to nearly a million. For easily obtainable records showing the various estimates, see *Africa Report*, specifically January, 1969, p. 29; and March-April, 1969, p. 40.

<sup>11</sup> Mondlane, "The Struggle for Independence in Mozambique," *op. cit.*, p. 206.

He defined the "first condition for success" to be the building of a political and military movement capable of "regaining power" for the Mozambican people. With this in mind Mondlane, who had been associated with UDENAMO, worked for unification of the three principal groups in Dar es Salaam. Once this goal was attained in the formation of FRELIMO, Mondlane concluded that an armed struggle would be necessary to obtain independence from Portugal.<sup>12</sup>

The insistence on the use of violence in the early 1960s was indeed revolutionary. Under the influence of Gandhian concepts of non-violence, most African national and independence movements from the forties into the sixties sought to achieve their goals by peaceful means.<sup>13</sup> Kwame Nkrumah's success in winning Ghanaian independence in 1957 by a "combination of non-violent methods with effective and disciplined political action"<sup>14</sup> not only enhanced non-violent methods but also presented a working model of African Gandhism for widespread adoption. The conflicts raging in Angola and Guinea-Bissau and the reported killing of over five hundred Mozambican demonstrators at Mueda in 1960, convinced FRELIMO's first president of the futility of peaceful decolonization.<sup>15</sup> In fact, early attempts at discussion with Portugal through the United Nations failed even to receive a response.<sup>16</sup>

From the start he cautioned his followers that they were embarking on a lengthy struggle that would not bring quick victory: "Liberation from Portuguese rule may take many years and many lives."<sup>17</sup> Despite the obstacles, Mondlane remained confident that "where there lies a popular war, people's victory is certain. History testifies it."<sup>18</sup> The belief in protracted conflict to achieve political aims is now among the accepted precepts of African revolutionary warfare.<sup>19</sup> Mondlane put

---

<sup>12</sup> Eduardo C. Mondlane, "Race Relations and Portuguese Colonial Policy with Special Reference to Mozambique;" a paper given at the United Nations International Seminar on Apartheid, Racial Discrimination and Colonialism in Southern Africa (Lusaka, Zambia, 24 July-4 August 1967), p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Kenneth W. Grundy, *Guerrilla Struggle in Africa: An Analysis and Preview* (New York, 1971), pp. 30-31.

<sup>14</sup> Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York, 1957), p. xiv.

<sup>15</sup> Mondlane, "Race Relations and Portuguese Colonial Policy with Special Reference to Mozambique," *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>16</sup> United Nations General Assembly, 20th Session, Addendum to Agenda Item 23, A/600/Rev. 1 (1965), p. 181.

<sup>17</sup> *Boletim Nacional* (Dar es Salaam), XIII (October, 1964), p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Eduardo C. Mondlane, Press Conference in Dar es Salaam, March 25, 1968, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Grundy, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

little hope in clear-cut military victory, but held that economic and military costs to Portugal would force her to negotiate with FRELIMO.

Negotiations entailed the recognition of Mozambique's independence—his second goal. Before many of his plans for restructuring society could be fully implemented, independence for Mozambique had to be attained. He asserted that independence from Portugal's rule encompassed economic as well as political self-determination and that "the struggle against Portuguese colonialism is also a fight against imperialism."<sup>20</sup> Foreign support to Portugal, itself an underdeveloped nation, increased the odds against which FRELIMO fought. This collusion of nations, mainly South Africa and Western powers, that aided the Portuguese war efforts in Mozambique either unilaterally or through NATO, helped radicalize Mondlane's ideas toward imperialism and made him identify FRELIMO's cause with independence movements around the world. By fighting against Portuguese colonialism "the Mozambican people will be giving a great historical contribution to the total liberty of our continent and to the progress of Africa and of the world."<sup>21</sup>

As a third goal for FRELIMO Mondlane stressed its role in fusing the various ethnic and regional elements of Mozambique into a unified and politically conscious nation able to determine its own fate. He judged that ethnic divisions were often the result of Portuguese policy; the aim of Portuguese "colonialism, moreover, was to pervert all traditional power structures, encouraging or creating authoritarian and elitist elements."<sup>22</sup> These "elitist elements," in order to maintain their privileged position in the colonial hierarchy, have a vested interest in perpetuating colonial rule and furthering divisions between members of their own ethnic groups and FRELIMO.

Aware of the danger of ethnic fractures during the struggle and after independence, Mondlane aspired to make FRELIMO a truly national party, and used it and the guerrilla force to weld the disparate peoples together. Mondlane came from the Tonga people of southern Mozambique, but the recruitment of guerrillas took place by necessity in the north among the Makonde and Nyanja. The reliance on these peoples, who straddle the borders of Mozambique and her northern neighbors, sparked hostility with groups to the south, particularly the Makua, who have been long-time enemies of the Makonde. The dependence on certain ethnic groups for the bulk of guerrillas did not

---

<sup>20</sup> Eduardo C. Mondlane, "Mensagem do ano novo: radiodifundida em 1 de janeiro de 1964 numa emissão directa para Moçambique." *Dar es Salaam: Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*, December 28, 1963, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup> *Boletim Nacional* (Dar es Salaam), XIII (October, 1964), p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> *Information Bulletin* (Cairo), II (June-July 1966), p. 8.

impede the universality of the leadership, which under Mondlane's guidance remained ethnically and regionally balanced. The former Vice-President, Reverend Uria Simango, a Protestant pastor, came from the Beira region, and Samora Machel, military commander under Mondlane and now head of FRELIMO, was born in the Gaza province of southern Mozambique. Through the example set by the party and army and the solidarity generated by the wartime situation, Mondlane envisioned a united Mozambique.<sup>23</sup>

The fourth and perhaps most sweeping goal with which Mondlane charged FRELIMO concerned the political, social and economic reconstruction of Mozambique. "The struggle for independence constitutes only one phase of our revolution."<sup>24</sup> The liberation consisted of more than "merely driving out the Portuguese authority;" true liberation required "constructing a new country."<sup>25</sup> The president of FRELIMO envisaged a "society directed toward economic progress, where all Mozambicans will have the same rights, where the power will belong to the people."<sup>26</sup> In the era of post-independence strong central planning was advocated to develop Mozambique's resources and to prevent the concentration of wealth by privileged groups. FRELIMO's role, as planned by Mondlane, was to act as a "guide to the people to end the exploitation of man by man."<sup>27</sup> Therefore, he proposed a radical departure from those traditional political structures based on the absolute power of a few, and from the colonial structure based on the power and privilege of Europeans.

### The Application of Theory

When the Portuguese evacuated large areas in northern Mozambique, Mondlane partially carried out his political, administrative, and social goals. FRELIMO filled the void left by Portugal's retreating military and administrative forces. He insisted, however, that FRELIMO's political structure was not a "dictatorship of the party," because "there is no deep distinction between party and population: the party is the population engaged in political action."<sup>28</sup> To insure active

---

<sup>23</sup> Eduardo Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique* (Baltimore, 1969), pp. 147-165.

<sup>24</sup> *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), IV (March, 1964), p. 8.

<sup>25</sup> Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique*, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

<sup>26</sup> *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), XXIII (December, 1965-January, February, 1966), pp. 2-3.

<sup>27</sup> *Boletim Nacional* (Dar es Salaam), XX (May, 1965), p. 20.

<sup>28</sup> Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique*, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

participation by the people, he initiated "people's management committees" to supervise whenever possible the "general tasks of life in FRELIMO zones."<sup>29</sup>

The organizational pattern of FRELIMO resembled other single-party structures. At the lowest level the local committee, or cell, executed the basic mobilization tasks of the party. Next up the organizational ladder, the District Committee comprised several cells, and these district units in turn were incorporated into the Provincial Committees, which were directly below the Central Committee. The second party Congress in July 1968 expanded the membership of the Central Committee from twenty-four to about forty to provide positions of responsibility for younger members and particularly for those within Mozambique, but the Congress restricted its function to the legislative. The Executive Committee—a type of politburo—composed of the President, Vice-President and secretaries of departments, performed executive duties. This body, along with the political and military committees, dealt with urgent problems between meetings of the Central Committee.<sup>30</sup>

Fearing the development of an "internal-external" feud like that which hampered the Algerian Revolution, the Central Committee required party leaders outside Mozambique to make frequent visits into FRELIMO-controlled territory. Mondlane theorized that only by insuring close contact between leaders and people and their active participation in leadership could a people's revolution succeed. The party was to structure the people's actions, not to dictate them.<sup>31</sup>

Mondlane exerted authority as president of FRELIMO, but the party reflected his belief in "collective leadership." Delegation of authority was as much a part of Mondlane's revolutionary methods as the necessity imposed by guerrilla warfare. The assassination of FRELIMO leaders, such as the July 1966 murder of Jaime Siguake in Zambia, impressed party officials with the danger of a small hierarchy.<sup>32</sup> Within the Central Committee the procedure of democratic centralism was used to decide policy. This allowed members of the Central Committee to express their viewpoints before a vote, after which they were to adhere steadfastly to the decision of the majority as party

---

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

<sup>30</sup> *Africa Report*, October, 1968, p. 42; *Anti-Apartheid News* (London), October, 1968, p. 2.

<sup>31</sup> Eduardo Mondlane, "Mozambique War," *Venture*, XX, 7 (July-August, 1968), p. 10.

<sup>32</sup> Paul M. Whitaker, "The Revolutions of 'Portuguese' Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, VIII, 1 (1970), p. 29.

policy. Notices, resolutions, articles and editorials in various FRELIMO publications were almost always signed by the Central Committee, not Mondlane. He entrusted Samora Machel with the discharge of military matters, and often Vice-President Uria Simango represented FRELIMO abroad. Efforts to extend participation in policy-making to lower levels of the party often foundered on the lack of sufficiently trained members.<sup>33</sup>

Despite the concept of democratic centralism, Mondlane faced at times bitter internal disputes and squabbling factions that surfaced with his assassination in early February, 1969. After the murder, he was succeeded by a presidential triumvirate composed of Uria Simango, Marcelino dos Santos and Samora Machel. By November, 1969, Simango, who had long been pressured by party militants, resigned in anger and was expelled later by the Central Committee. Soon after Machel became president of FRELIMO. Although FRELIMO underwent a brief period of leadership instability, it is a credit to Mondlane's organizational ability that the Mozambique Liberation Front continues to persevere.

In the economic sphere, Mondlane envisioned a society without exploitation in which all Mozambicans would share equally. Within insurgent zones, FRELIMO began to implement its plans by providing for the inhabitants, and this demanded the increase and diversification of agricultural products. Under his direction, FRELIMO instituted farming cooperatives as the best means to raise food production and to "put an end to the exploitation of the peasantry by any privileged group."<sup>34</sup> The agricultural collectives mobilized rural workers to expand production and helped transform elite attitudes by the sharing of income among the members. But Mondlane also encouraged farmers to work individual *shambas*, or plots, so as to stimulate production and foster personal initiative. His ideas concerning agricultural development reflected a pragmatic approach rather than a doctrinaire application of collectivist theories. Success came by 1968, when FRELIMO managed to export large quantities of nuts and seeds enabling it to finance, without a total reliance on outside aid, guerrilla operations while furthering educational and social programs.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> *Anti-Apartheid News*, p. 2.

<sup>34</sup> Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique*, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

<sup>35</sup> In the World Council of Churches' information bulletin on FRELIMO (November, 1970, p. 14), the 1969 export figures in kilograms of main products for Cabo Delgado District alone are recorded as: cashew nuts, 53,041; sesame seeds, 414,782; groundnuts, 530,159; see also United Nations General Assembly, 22nd Session, Addendum to Agenda Item 23 (Part II), A/6700/Rev. 1 (1967), pp. 101-102.

Education occupied a high position on Mondlane's list of priorities. In fact, the first party Congress in September 1962 planned an education program, while at the same time considering military preparation. It emphasized the need of education for two reasons: the development of political awareness among African people to gain their adherence, and the training of Mozambicans to direct economic and social development.<sup>36</sup> Education for a national liberation struggle and an accompanying social revolution required more than a straight combination of the colonial curricula with traditional teachings. Mondlane offered no magical solution, although he thought some of the traditional moral values coupled with political education would aid in building a new social order.

As with its other goals, FRELIMO began its educational programs early in the struggle. Founded in 1963, the Mozambique Institute in Tanzania prepared Mozambican students for higher education abroad and taught badly needed skills such as nursing and primary school teaching. Along with literacy campaigns and primary schooling for men and women in Niassa and Cabo Delgado, Mondlane began a program of political education to spread revolutionary consciousness. As a matter of necessity, FRELIMO approved Portuguese language instruction to provide a common medium among Mozambicans, yet urged its followers to learn more than one African language to facilitate understanding among ethnic groups and to build a united nation.

FRELIMO also pioneered social changes soon after seizing Mozambican soil. Mondlane envisaged a "new society where all Mozambicans will have the same rights;"<sup>37</sup> a multi-racial state to include Europeans who renounced war against FRELIMO. He repeatedly stated that war was directed toward Portuguese colonialism and not Portuguese settlers. FRELIMO resolutions also provided for religious freedom and equality for women. The party established medical and health centers in territory that fell under its control and provided rehabilitation of war disabled, care for orphans, and aid to widows and the aged.<sup>38</sup> Mondlane argued that social progress was related to the economic and political changes inherent in the revolution and would increase with its intensification.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> United Nations General Assembly, 22nd Session, Addendum to Agenda Item 23 (Part II), A/6700/Rev. 1 (1967), p. 103.

<sup>37</sup> *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), XXIII (December, 1965-January, February, 1966), p. 3.

<sup>38</sup> United Nations General Assembly, 22nd Session, Addendum to Agenda Item 23 (Part II), A/6700/Rev. 1 (1967), pp. 102-103.

<sup>39</sup> Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique*, *op. cit.*, pp. 185, 219-220.

Mondlane carried the struggle with Portuguese colonialism into the sphere of diplomacy. Under his leadership, FRELIMO attached importance to diplomatic relations with independent states and followed a policy of non-alignment toward East and West. It established relations with nationalist organizations in other Portuguese territories and African countries not yet independent. With nations outside of Africa, it sought relations with "all socialist countries and with progressive countries of the West."<sup>40</sup> Believing that FRELIMO's efforts were part of "the world's movement for the emancipation of the peoples, which aims at the total liquidation of colonialism and imperialism,"<sup>41</sup> Mondlane obtained membership in international organizations of the Third World.<sup>42</sup> For aid FRELIMO depended on Tanzania, Zambia, Cuba, Algeria and the United Arab Republic,<sup>43</sup> yet Mondlane remained pragmatic in seeking support from many sources including those in the Western bloc.<sup>44</sup>

Mondlane expressed doubt as to the efficacy of appeals to the United Nations, but he attended its committees and commissions. As part of his revolutionary philosophy he believed that the organization was a useful assembly to inform world opinion about Portuguese colonial practices, about aid given to Portugal by Western powers, and about the social programs and military advances of FRELIMO.<sup>45</sup> The support outsiders can render a guerrilla movement and the pressure they might exert on a colonial regime are not inconsiderable. But he

---

<sup>40</sup> *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, Resolutions on Foreign Policy*. Reprinted in Mondlane's *The Struggle for Mozambique, op. cit.*, p. 195.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Under Mondlane's leadership FRELIMO belonged to the following organizations: *Conférence das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portuguesas* (CONCP); Organization of African Unity (OAU); Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (OSPAA); Afro-Asian-Latin American Peoples' Solidarity Organization (OSPAAAL); and World Council of Peace (WCP).

<sup>43</sup> *Africa Report*, May, 1967, pp. 29-30.

<sup>44</sup> Individual contributions and funds from private organizations, such as the Ford Foundation's temporary financing of the Mozambique Institute, constitutes the bulk of the aid from the United States. With the exception of scholarships for a few years from the Agency for International Development (AID), the United States Government has not provided support to the African nationalists in Portuguese territories. For an account of U.S. policy toward Portugal and African nationalist movements, see John Marcum, "The United States and Portuguese Africa: A Perspective on American Foreign Policy," *Africa Today*, XVIII (October, 1971), pp. 23-31.

<sup>45</sup> Mondlane's numerous trips away from his Tanzanian headquarters gained him a wide circle of friends in the United States and Europe and made him Africa's best-known nationalist leader. Although these efforts brought recognition and aid to FRELIMO, some elements within the movement became disgruntled at what they viewed as their President's frequent cocktail junkets. *The Standard* (Tanzania), February 6, 1969.

knew the hard lesson of self-reliance for liberation movements. Shrewd revolutionary thinker that he was, Mondlane maintained that "the main source of support for our struggle is our own people."<sup>46</sup>

\* \* \*

An analysis of Mondlane's revolutionary thought suggests that varied influences shaped it. Indeed he was something of an eclectic in drawing ideas from various contemporary doctrines and thinkers. His conception of Portugal's relationship with Africa was usually expressed in economic phrases that manifested an unmistakable, although not exclusive, Marxist approach. His understanding of Portugal's conquest and retention of African lands was normally couched in terms of economic exploitation, even though he was aware of other reasons for Portugal's continued presence in Africa. He wrote that the colonies "add to Portugal's consequence in the world," and also "since the fascist government has eliminated democracy within Portugal itself, it can scarcely allow a greater measure of freedom to the supposedly more backward people of its colonies."<sup>47</sup> Nor did he define exploitation solely in economic terms. Cultural imperialism, the denial or suppression of indigenous customs and cultures, was to him a part of Portugal's legacy in Mozambique.

His ideas of revolution showed less reliance on Marxist-Leninist doctrine than his interpretation of imperialism. Marx preached revolution by an urban proletariat; Lenin viewed the peasantry as only a useful ally to his cause. Mondlane, however, based the success of armed struggle and revolution on an African peasantry. This was, of course, dictated by the situation in Mozambique where the vast majority of Africans are peasants, and by Mondlane's admiration of the Chinese Revolution. His visit to China in 1963 deeply impressed him. The giant strides made by the Chinese and their widespread use of manpower as a way to industrial and agricultural development undoubtedly inspired FRELIMO's head. The December 1963 issue of *Mozambique Revolution* recorded that: "He [Mondlane] left China convinced that the historical struggle of the Chinese peoples has relevance to the present struggle of the peoples of Africa."<sup>48</sup>

It would be incorrect, nevertheless, to emphasize only non-African influences on Mondlane's revolutionary thought. He held that a single-party state, like Tanzania, furnished the mode of government with the most sanguine possibilities for Mozambicans and indeed all Africans

---

<sup>46</sup> *Boletim Nacional* (Dar es Salaam), XV (December, 1964), p. 12.

<sup>47</sup> Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique*, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

<sup>48</sup> *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), I (December, 1963), p. 9.

south of Sahara. When asked once to visualize what form of government an independent Mozambique would take under FRELIMO's leadership, he replied, "Our model is the neighboring state of Tanzania."<sup>49</sup> Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere's emphasis on cooperatives to increase agricultural production as a means of national development also provided an attractive experiment. Mondlane first proposed and then carried out the establishment of agricultural cooperatives to sustain the guerrilla army and civilian population in FRELIMO-controlled zones. But after independence he resolved not to neglect mineral extraction or heavy industry in the rapid development of Mozambique, despite Nyerere's "theory about the primacy of agricultural development."<sup>50</sup>

His ideas were grounded in the practicality of a man of wide experiences. He realized that an African peasantry would not fight solely for an intellectual's ideas, but for material benefits and peace. Although the goals remained fixed, Mondlane's revolutionary approach contained a measured dose of pragmatism, as shown by the non-dogmatic encouragement of individual land holdings together with cooperatives, and by the willingness to accept aid from Eastern and Western countries alike.

In this as in everything, Mondlane was very much his own man, with his own theories. Two months before FRELIMO's assault on Portuguese military posts in northern Mozambique, Mondlane predicted that the war would follow the pattern set in Algeria.<sup>51</sup> In 1966, a little more than a year after the war began, he reported that FRELIMO had derived its own conception of the struggle.<sup>52</sup> He was among the first African revolutionaries to advance the idea that protracted conflict afforded possibilities of forging a common national consciousness and implementation of rapid social reordering. Mondlane put it clearly: "... the fact that the war will be drawn out in this way may in the long run be an advantage to our ultimate development. For war is an extreme political action, which tends to bring about social change more rapidly than any other instrument.... This is why we can view the long war ahead of us with reasonable calm."<sup>53</sup> Thus, his thought reflected the concept of guerrilla warfare as a means of social and

---

<sup>49</sup> Helen Kitchen, "Conversations with Eduardo Mondlane," *Africa Report* (November, 1967), p. 51.

<sup>50</sup> Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique*, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

<sup>51</sup> Eduardo C. Mondlane, "Message du Congrès du FLN, Alger." Algiers: *Front Révolutionnaire de Libération du Mozambique*, July 22, 1964, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> Eduardo Mondlane, "Editorial," *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), No. 23 (December 1965, January-February 1966), pp. 2-3.

<sup>53</sup> Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique*, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-220.

political change, and not just a military tactic to defeat an opponent who is stronger in conventional warfare technology. Here his theory corresponded closely to the pattern suggested by Mao Tse-Tung.<sup>54</sup>

Just as Mondlane's thought developed in its understanding of the subtle intricacies of revolutionary warfare, so also it evolved along a more radical path. The commitment to revolutionary and military means to achieve Mozambique's freedom from Portugal radicalized his political ideas. Mondlane did not content himself with saying that justice would reign when the colonial abuses disappeared. The goal went beyond a colonial war for political independence, to a significant transformation of colonial and traditional society. At the root of the revolutionary philosophy lay the objective of restructuring Mozambican society, using the intense solidarity of the revolutionary struggle to obtain an independent state free from foreign or traditional exploitation.

Despite the vigor with which he pursued this far-reaching goal, Mondlane was considered moderate and pro-American by some journalists and a few dissident Mozambicans. Mondlane's policy of multi-racialism and his connections with the United States through his American education and wife contributed to this faulty assumption. One of his severest critics was Father Mateus Gwenjere, a young African priest from central Mozambique, who accused Mondlane of being a "traitor" because he "moves too slowly and speaks too softly."<sup>55</sup> Students inflamed by Gwenjere disrupted the Mozambique Institute in March 1968, resulting in the suspension of activities until the following January.<sup>56</sup> In fact, criticism of Mondlane's policies, of the time he spent overseas, and of the decreasing military progress of FRELIMO has produced a questioning as to whether the Portuguese political police,

---

<sup>54</sup> *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare* (New York, 1961), pp. 86-91.

<sup>55</sup> Stanley Meisler, a correspondent, published an analysis of Father Gwenjere's role in FRELIMO's internal difficulties. *Los Angeles Times*, June 30, 1968.

<sup>56</sup> Mondlane also faced criticism in 1967 from Mozambican students studying in American universities, which suggests that the party was not functioning as smoothly as from 1962 to 1966. In turn Mondlane accused his student critics of allowing their "egotistical tendencies" to obstruct their "total participation in the struggle." The complete answer to his detractors has been translated and annotated by Douglas L. Wheeler, "A Document for the History of African Nationalism: A FRELIMO 'White Paper' By Eduardo C. Mondlane," *African Historical Studies* II, 2 (1969), pp. 319-333. Mozambican students in the United States reacted by mimeographing and distributing a reply in May 1968 in which they attacked Mondlane as a "puppet of American interests" and as a failure, see Professor Wheeler's "A Document for the History of African Nationalism: The UNEMO 'White Paper' of 1968: A Student Reply to Eduardo Mondlane's 1967 Paper," *African Historical Studies*, III, 1 (1970), p. 169-179. I am indebted to Professor Douglas L. Wheeler of the University of New Hampshire for calling my attention to these documents.

Some Mozambican students still hold Mondlane in low regard, interview with Luís B. Serapião, the Publicity Secretary for UNEMO, the Mozambican Student Union, on November 5, 1971.

PIDE,<sup>57</sup> killed him. While Mondlane met some opposition from a few of his followers, he was also a wanted man by Portuguese authorities. By early 1969 he received several threats to his life from Portuguese as well as African sources, but to date no conclusive proof has resolved the identity of the assassin.<sup>58</sup>

By outward appearances—a booming, friendly voice, amiable smile, and academic air—Mondlane misled many as to his radical aims. His charismatic appeal and advocacy of a multi-racial society gained him support from all races before his violent death by an assassin's bomb on February 3, 1969. Beneath the moderate exterior was a man of iron will who welded the divergent Mozambique splinter groups into a national movement and who provided it with a revolutionary ideology for success. Against heavy odds he not only led an insurgency that captured territory in northern Mozambique but also operated it as an independent state with external trade, diplomatic relations, and services to the inhabitants.

Contrary to some opinion and the detriment of a myth, Mondlane was not pro-American nor moderate when it came to independence or social justice for Mozambicans. Although he was the antithesis of an epithet-hurling demagogue, Mondlane demonstrated his radicalism when it was especially dangerous to do so—in southern Africa as a youth, in Lisbon as a student, and in the final plunge to form a resistance movement which still fights today in Mozambique with the revolutionary philosophy of its principal founder.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> The official state police with components in Portugal and Africa, PIDE (*Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado*), was formed in 1961 after the outbreak of the insurgency in Angola. The new Premier of Portugal, Dr. Marcello Caetano, abolished it and replaced it with the *Direcção-Geral de Segurança* (DSG). *New York Times*, November 20, 1969.

<sup>58</sup> One of the latest explanations to surface appeared in the *The Observer* (London), February 6, 1972. The reporter, David Martin, wrote that the Tanzanian police have revealed that they completed their investigation three years ago with the help of Interpol. The results of their investigation, according to Martin, are that the bomb concealed in the Moscow-postmarked package mailed to Mondlane was assembled in Lourenço Marques and that it was carried to Dar es Salaam by two dissident FRELIMO members—Silverio Nungu, who reportedly died from a hunger strike while in Tanzanian police custody; and Lazaro Nkavandame, who defected to the Portuguese. Simango stated at the time of his resignation that Nungu had been executed by FRELIMO. Both men came from the Makonde people, some of whom have shown strong dissatisfaction with bearing the burden of the fighting in Mozambique.

<sup>59</sup> Since Mondlane's death, FRELIMO has stepped up the fighting in Tete province, attempting to block construction of the giant hydroelectric and resettlement scheme of the Cabora Bassa dam on the Zambezi River. Rather than attacking the project itself, which is well protected, FRELIMO has concentrated with success on mining and ambushing the roads and railway leading to Cabora Bassa. Although Samora Machel is much less concerned with publicizing FRELIMO's cause than Mondlane, there is little substantive change in the revolutionary ideology of FRELIMO's program. For example, see Samora Machel, "A Message from the President of FRELIMO to the Fighters and People of Mozambique," *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), No. 48 (July-September, 1971), pp. 2-5; *The Standard* (Tanzania) April 10, 1972; and *Africasia* (Paris), July 19, 1971.