

# The Angolan People Forge Ahead Along Road of Armed Struggle

**Studying Mao Tsetung Thought in the course of fighting, they have won tremendous victory, and guerrilla operations have spread to nine of Angola's 15 provinces.**

**S**UFFERING under ruthless imperialist and colonialist oppression, the Angolan people rose in arms with bitter hatred on February 4, 1961, and launched a vigorous offensive against Portuguese colonial rule to open the prelude to their armed struggle. With the support of the people, the Angolan patriotic armed forces have persevered in struggle and grown in strength in the past nine years. The Angolan people's armed struggle is now developing in depth in the vast countryside.

## Where There Is Oppression There Is Resistance

The five-century-old bloody rule of the Portuguese colonialists in Angola has long kindled the flames of hatred in the hearts of the Angolan people. Slaughtering the Angolan people with hideous barbarity, the Portuguese colonialists put Angolan patriots in wooden boxes and threw them into the sea or herded them into aircraft and pushed them out while in flight. They tied Angolans to their jeeps and dragged them to death or poured gasoline on them and burnt them to death. The savage Portuguese colonialists even murdered their "prisoners" by poisoning the food in prisons; they also chopped off the feet of Angolans and gouged out their eyes.

The Portuguese colonial authorities have bled the Angolan people white through numerous exorbitant taxes. The Angolan people are forced to pay a so-called "sovereignty tax" in acknowledgement of Portuguese colonial rule; they have to pay taxes when they go hunting or change their residence and even if they want to grow a beard or moustache.

But the heavier the oppression, the stronger the resistance. Pushed to the end of their forbearance, the Angolan people launched a fierce attack on the police headquarters and prisons of the Portuguese colonialists in northern Angola on February 4, 1961. They seized

the enemy's weapons, stormed the prisons and set a large number of patriots free. The attack dealt a heavy blow to the enemy's arrogance and started the revolutionary flames of the armed struggle for national independence against the Portuguese colonial rule in Angola.

## Persevering in Struggle and Forging Ahead

Supported by the people, the Angolan guerrillas have achieved tremendous victory after nine years of arduous struggle. Guerrilla operations by Angolan freedom fighters have spread to nine of the 15 provinces in the country. The vast rural areas in eastern, northern and central Angola are now under guerrilla control, while the Portuguese colonial authorities can only dominate the cities and towns, communication lines and a number of so-called "strategic hamlets." About half the inhabitants in these areas refuse to pay any tax whatsoever to the colonial authorities.

Persevering in struggle and dauntless in the face of difficulties, the Angolan people are forging ahead along the road of armed struggle. One instance is UNITA (the National Union for the Complete Independence of Angola). When it began guerrilla operations in 1966, it only had 11 fighters with one machine-gun, two rifles and bows and arrows. Now, its military organization, FALA (the Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola), has more than 3,000 well-trained guerrilla fighters who are highly disciplined and are capable of not only destroying bridges and highways but also in conducting battalion-size campaigns on a relatively large scale.

Why were the Angolan guerrillas able to grow? As summed up in a recent interview with a Hsinhua News Agency correspondent by Tony Dacosta, UNITA representative in Cairo, there are two main factors contributing to the rapid development of the Angolan revolution: first, the barbarous rule of the Portuguese colonial authorities which drove the people to rebellion, and second, the study of the great truth of

Mao Tsetung Thought by the revolutionary Angolan people, especially Chairman Mao's teachings on people's war and self-reliance.

### Arouse and Rely on the People

In the course of protracted struggle, the Angolan people have come to understand that they cannot achieve emancipation without waging a people's war. J. Savimbi, President of the Central Committee of UNITA, said that the liberation war must be a people's war waged by the people and for the people. UNITA has been working hard for a long time to arouse the people by its own example and by means of political education. The general line of UNITA, reaffirmed at its Second Congress held inside Angola at the end of August last year, is to carry out a protracted people's war for national liberation and steadily develop guerrilla warfare in Angola by relying on its own efforts.

The Angolan guerrillas have forged close ties with the people. Local administrations have been established in the guerrilla zones to lead the people in production and in fighting. Producers' co-operatives, primary schools and make-shift clinics have also been set up. The guerrillas pay attention to doing political work among the people and helping the militia in military training. At the same time, the people also actively support the guerrillas, providing them with food, clothes and information about the enemy. The Angolan guerrillas have studied and applied the Three Main Rules of Discipline and the Eight Points for Attention formulated for the Chinese Red Army by the great leader of the Chinese people Chairman Mao Tsetung. In ordinary times, they engage in productive labour together with the local people. When the enemy comes, they fight side by side with the militia. The guerrillas not only have thick underbrush to take cover in but even more important, they are protected by the people who wholeheartedly support the revolution. Samuel Chiwale, a young commander of the guerrillas under UNITA, said: "We could not operate without the support of the people. With their support, we cannot be beaten."

### Portuguese Colonial Authorities in Dire Straits

The triumphant development of the Angolan people's armed struggle has thrown the Portuguese colonial authorities in a very difficult position. Besides the mounting casualties inflicted on the Portuguese troops, the African freedom fighters have forced the Portuguese colonialists to spend almost 50 per cent of their military budget on their colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique,

Guinea (Bissau) and other colonies. A small nation with a population of 9 million, Portugal had to maintain more than 180,000 men on a military budget of 302 million U.S. dollars in fiscal year 1968-69. There are now more than 60,000 Portuguese colonial troops in Angola, a 31 per cent increase compared with 1968.

What warrants attention is that U.S. imperialism has supplied the Portuguese colonial authorities with huge financial and military assistance to back their dirty colonial wars in Angola and other colonies and has established a military base in Azodes, central Angola. The permanent U.S. military mission based in Portugal plots and plans for the Portuguese colonial troops. From the very beginning of their armed struggle, the Angolan people have realized that U.S.-led imperialism is their enemy.

Although there will be many difficulties in their way forward, the Angolan people are determined to carry on their armed struggle till they win independence. In a recent statement, the General Command of FALA said: "Political power will not come to us on a silver platter, nor can it be won by demagogic phrases as some of us imagine. Political power will come only through blood and iron." The statement declared: Despite all the hardships and difficulties that will emerge in our struggle, we are firmly determined not to rest until the Portuguese colonialists are eliminated.



Angolan guerrillas ready for combat.