
**INTERVIEW WITH
PAULO JORGE,
FROM THE MPLA**



Comrade Paulo Jorge, from the MPLA, has recently been named head of the CONCP (Conference of the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies) representation on the OSPAAAL Executive Secretariat. Jorge replaces Comrade Abilio Duarte, who is now doing other work, for the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC).

Tricontinental took advantage of Paulo Jorge's arrival to ask him a few questions on the development of the armed struggle in Angola, the MPLA's decision to transfer its Leadership Committee to the combat zone, and the opinion of Angolan revolutionaries on OSPAAAL activities.

"At present, the evolution of our armed struggle," Paulo Jorge tells us, "can be characterized by the following facts:

"On the northern front (first politico-military region) the fighting zones are now spreading to the districts of Luanda, North Cuanza, Zaire, and Uige. On the Cabinda front (second politico-military region) guerrilla operations have become increasingly numerous. The southeast front (third politico-military region), after having covered the Moxico district, spread to the

Cuando-Cubango district and is at present spreading to the Bie district, following an east-west course. Recently it has also spread to the Lunda district, with the creation of a fourth politico-military region. Thus, of Angola's 15 districts (the total area of the country is 1 246 700 km²), nine are covered by the politico-military activities of the MPLA.

"At the same time, in the zones controlled by the MPLA, organizations of people's control are being established: people's militias, work brigades to increase production, people's stores, primary schools, and centers for political instruction and medical care; moreover, studies are being made of means for the economic development of these regions. To answer to the requirements of the national liberation struggle, the MPLA has created complementary organizations such as the Revolutionary Instruction Center, the Angolan Voluntary Corps for Refugee Aid, the Organization of Angolan Women, and the MPLA Youth Movement, all of which carry out appropriate work.

"The following summary can give a more precise idea of the politico-military action carried out by the MPLA during the past year: more than 2000 politico-military cadres formed; 1160 enemies killed, among them several traitors and agents of the PIDE (Portuguese political police); nearly 1500 wounded; more than 300 Angolans freed from 'strategic hamlets' and more than 150 Angolan workers freed from forced labor; 4 planes brought down (three DC-4s and one B-27); 9 boats and 2 rafts destroyed; 70 military vehicles destroyed; 10 bridges destroyed; 10 military garrisons attacked; 1 military garrison attacked with howitzer fire; 3 tractors recovered; and a considerable amount of West German-, US-, Belgian-, Israeli-, and Italian-made arms and ammunition seized."

Referring to the MPLA Leadership Committee's decision to transfer its headquarters to the

interior of the country, Paulo Jorge referred us to the words of MPLA President Comrade Agostinho Neto, who said: "This measure means that our leadership considers that the time has come for our leaders to work permanently among the people, closer to their problems, so as to contribute in a more immediate way to raising the level of struggle, to giving it a more defined political content in all regions, and to carrying it forward into its decisive phase.

"This is why, starting this year, our headquarters will function within our country, and it will be from within the country that we will direct all activities on both the domestic and international planes..."

"As can be seen, we have made great progress in our struggle," said Paulo Jorge. "But, in spite of this," he added, "it seems to us that some groups have still not realized the breadth of the armed struggle in Angola. The MPLA forces — especially from mid-1966 up to the beginning of 1968 — have made great progress in the development of the national liberation struggle; however, at times we find that there is a tendency to compare the relative degrees of development of the armed struggle in Angola and those in other African countries. We believe that such comparisons should not be made. However, for those who wish to make them, we believe that it is necessary to bear several factors in mind: geographic location, size, the positions of bordering countries, and the economic and political importance of these countries in both the African and the international contexts."

Turning to the analysis of the character of the struggle being waged in Angola, Comrade Paulo Jorge noted that, although the direct enemy of the Angolan people is Portuguese colonialism, the Angolan people's struggle at present goes beyond the framework of anticolonialist struggle, becoming a fight

against imperialism. "Portugal, with its own economic and military means alone," he observed, "could not deal with the armed struggle that is developing at present in three different countries, and it maintains its control thanks to the military, economic, and political aid granted to it by the imperialist powers, either through bilateral agreements or under the cloak of NATO. This means that while we are seemingly fighting only against the Portuguese, we are really pitted as well against all the countries that, with the aim of guaranteeing the exploitation of our resources for the imperialist powers, help Portugal to maintain its colonial domination.

"Taking into account the fact that we are engaged in a national liberation struggle, the leaders of the MPLA are devoting themselves to developing revolutionary consciousness among its members. To better contribute to forming this revolutionary consciousness, the MPLA has created the Revolutionary Instruction Center where cadres are prepared both politically and militarily so that, once they are in the countryside, in contact with the masses of the people, they will be able to mobilize them and raise their political level, make them understand the meaning of the revolution in Angola, and call upon them to play the role that is theirs — a revolution cannot be made without the support of the masses.

"The people must also be given a new mentality in this process. Tribal spirit must be combated and a concept of nation instilled, making the people aware of the origin, nature, and aims of colonialism, neocolonialism, and imperialism.

"The development of the liberation struggle of the Angolan people," continued Comrade Jorge, "is creating confusion in the ranks of the Portuguese Army. At present we observe that the Portuguese

press is publishing what it calls communiqués of the Armed Forces in Angola. Through these reports it may be seen that Portuguese casualties in Angola have reached an all-time high.

"Moreover, the Portuguese colonialist regime sees its interests to be seriously threatened by the simultaneous development of armed struggles in Angola, Guinea, and Mozambique. In view of this, it has requested massive reinforcements to counter the simultaneous development of our struggles."

Finally, Comrade Jorge took up the topic of the activities of our Organization.

"The development of the work of the First Tricontinental Conference," he pointed out, "gave rise to the constitution of the Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL, on which the liberation movements of the Portuguese colonies are represented. The Angolan revolutionaries, the fighting people of Angola, see OSPAAAL's activities as one of the most effective means for publicizing the political, economic, and social situation in which the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America find themselves, and the development of the national liberation struggles on the three continents.

"Another aspect that we observe — and this should be stressed — is the importance of the Organization as a nucleus uniting the representatives of the revolutionary and other progressive organizations that constitute a common front, a barrier to the imperialist offensive on the three continents.

"Moreover, we consider that OSPAAAL's activity as far as the national liberation movements are concerned is positive, through its constant mobilizations of international opinion, through its appeals for concrete and effective solidarity with all the peoples engaged in struggle. We have often — on various occasions — witnessed the fulfillment of this task, which corresponds to the resolutions of the First Tricontinental Conference."