[Letter from J. Chipenda (WCC, Geneva) to N. Hart (AACC, Nairobi), with attachment]

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<th>Author/Creator</th>
<th>World Council of Churches (WCC); Chipenda, José Belo</th>
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<td>1974-07-12</td>
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<td>Resource type</td>
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<td>Coverage (spatial)</td>
<td>Africa (region), Southern Africa (region)</td>
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<td>World Council of Churches Library and Archives: Programme to Combat Racism; microfilm created by the Yale University Divinity Library with funding from the Kenneth Scott Latourette Initiative for the Documentation of World Christianity., Yale University Divinity Library, Programme to Combat Racism [microform], 4223.13.58/4; mf. PCR 228 (from frame 923 to 1077) to 229 (from frame 10 to 561)</td>
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Dear Norman:

Thank you for your letter of 8th July. I am pleased that you will be able to use my article "The End of an Era in Portugal" in the next issue of AFRICA ACTS and I thank you for the points which you have raised re clarification of certain phrases I have used in my article.

Please find enclosed my agreement with the clarifications you have pointed out and also a completely new text for page 4, which in the light of the ever-changing situation in Portugal I think is certainly more appropriate.

I agree with your proposal for a new article to be written as a follow-up to this one, and I shall endeavour to submit to you before 20th August the follow-up article which you request, entitled, "The Start of Hard Times for the Liberation Movements."

With every good wish,

Sincerely yours,

José B. Chipenda

Enc.
"THE END OF AN ERA IN PORTUGAL"

by José B. Chipenda

The downfall of the 48 years' old Portuguese regime, started by Antonio de Oliveira Salazar and continued by Marcelo Caetano, came abruptly on 25th April, 1974. It caught friends and foes alike by surprise. Thanks to the movement of the captains, the coup was bloodless. In a concerted action the nerve centres of power in Lisbon were anaesthetized and high in the night on 24th April; the President of the Republic and his Prime Minister received officers who had not had previous appointments. They came with the deliberate intention of forcing Caetano and Tomás to accept death or resignation and to announce the dawn of a new day for people in Portugal and its colonies. The transfer of power was quick and smooth. Caetano surrendered by saying: "I am in a position to hand over power to you so that the street mobs do not take over."

In the morning of 25th April, the 8.6 million people in Portugal woke up astonished to hear banned music played over the radio and to read uncensored articles in the newspapers. The radio and the newspapers explained what happened during the night and published the following day, pictures of returned political leaders from exile. The programme of the Junta was also made known. When the provisional government was formed it became evident that top on the Agenda was the urgency to end the 13-year war in the colonies and to pave the way for independence in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola. Liberation movement leaders were sceptical in the beginning. How could they trust the armed forces under the leadership of Antonio de Spinola, whose father was on the staff of Salazar and who from the inception of the war has been ordering the destruction of villages and the killing of women and children? Liberation movement leaders had heard of the conversion of Paul on the way to Damascus but could hardly believe that Spinola would one day change his mind. The credibility of the Junta among Portuguese-speaking Africans will come from the efforts the socialist leader Mario Soares, 12 times jailed by the Salazar regime, is making to bring a lasting peace in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. The liberation movements are ready to negotiate on condition that their countries are granted independence. Only time will tell whether the initiated negotiations with PAIGC in London and Algiers and with FRELIMO in Lusaka will be continued and brought to a successful conclusion. For indisputable reasons the official negotiations with Angolan liberation movements have been delayed until such time when talks with people in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique have made considerable progress. It has been already...
reported that "the new Lisbon Government appears to hope that Angola, Portugal's largest and richest African territory, will maintain a special relationship with it regardless of what happens in Portuguese-Guinea and Mozambique."

Spinola's book, "Portugal and the Future", is accredited with having precipitated change. Convincing reasons for the coup do not however emanate from this book in which the author shows no guilt and does not refer to the atrocities in Angola and Guinea-Bissao and massacres in Mozambique reported by Father Adrian Hastings. For Spinola the interests of Portugal must be preserved. Portugal, failing to win militarily, should seek a political settlement. Eduardo Mondlane, founder of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, knew that this would happen. "This (war)," he confided to a journalist, "may take 10 or 20 years, and even then the solution is likely to be a political settlement and not a military victory."

(1961-1974)
Throughout all these years/Portugal has been struggling against many odds, some of which are:

1. **Difficulty in fighting in foreign territories**

   The French and the Americans know it from their experiences in Vietnam. Although belatedly the Portuguese, who have kept 145,000 soldiers in the three colonies 23 times the size of their own country, came to realize that it is impossible to defeat determined peoples in their own lands. The swamps of Guinea-Bissao, the dense forests of Angola and the untamed fields and rivers of Mozambique were ideal sanctuaries for the emancipation forces, but created insurmountable problems for the Portuguese troops. 8,000 Portuguese soldiers died and many more were wounded. At least 100,000 Africans were killed. They passed away convinced that the remnants will continue to fight until their countries are totally liberated. Assistance received from neighbouring countries helped but was never enough to offset Portuguese might. In times of struggle the source of strength for the masses is not the military might but the culture. "Culture," said Amilcar Cabral, "has proved to be the very foundation of the liberation movement."

2. **Dependence upon foreign capital**

   Fighting in Africa dwindled Portuguese economy. After finding it insufficient to allocate 42% of the national budget to the army, the Portuguese attracted investments from multi-nationals and borrowed large sums of money from other countries. From 1969/71 direct foreign investments amounted to 3,165 million escudos and money borrowed reached 4,888 million escudos. Money from investments and from borrowing did help for a while but did not solve Portugal's financial problems. Provisional figures for last year show that Portugal had a trade deficit of 27,222 million escudos. Early in
the 60's the colonies were ideal places to invest. With increased nationalist activities, slowly but steadily foreign investments have been transferred from the colonies to the metropolis.

Figures available point out that while foreign investments in the colonies had attained 1,128 million escudos in 1969, they were reduced to 646 million escudos in 1971. In the metropolis foreign investments increased from 580 million escudos to 1,621 million escudos within the same period of time.

3. Lack of manpower

For nearly 50 years, Portugal has been dictatorially ruled by a small but powerful oligarchy. They developed a system that protects their own interests at the expense of the poor. Upward social mobility is absent. This has frustrated many young people with higher dreams. In a country of self-fulfilling prophecies, where children of poor families are ascribed to the poverty of their parents, the son of a fisherman can only expect to become not more than a fisherman and the son of a small farmer, condemned to die in his plot. Migration is the only way out. Portugal has been drained of its manpower. Migrants have come mainly from the densely populated areas of the North where the land has been divided up into small lots thus becoming economically unviable. In the last 10 years many Portuguese have left the country. On average 200,000 Portuguese crossed the frontier every year. France alone received 80,000 Portuguese in 1972. Included in the number of Portuguese abroad there are about 100,000 army deserters. Portuguese migrants in Europe at the moment total 1,680 million. These people left their country in search of freedom, food and a future for their children.

4. Radicalization of the Army

1968 marks the turning point in the Portuguese colonial war. In that year for the first time students and workers in western Europe joined hands. The impact of what happened in Europe permeated the Universities of Lisbon and Oporto through students who participated in international student meetings and workcamps. Radical ideas might have also gone to Portugal with some migrant workers on holiday. The process of radicalization in Portugal moved from students and the workers to the army. In Portugal University students or graduates once drafted became officers in a short period of time. Many of the ex-students in the army were sent to Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola. Once there they realized that the war they were asked to fight was absurd. There was disparity between what they had hoped for and what they found. Over the years the number of dissatisfied and disloyal officers increased to the point of forming a movement of their own. Fortunately this coincided with the protest of families whose children had died in the war, the high cost of living at home and the building up of international pressure from governmental and non-governmental organisations.
These factors combined forced Portugal to open a new chapter in its history. The book of Spinola's was only instrumental as far as expressing the dissenting voice of a key supporter of the outdated regime. It was well timed and provided the needed moral support for the movement of captains. With the removal of Marcelo Caetano and Americo Tomas Portugal has come to the end of an era. Salazarism is dead and may not be resurrected again. The question is whether emerging Spinolaism will bring solutions to the problems created under the former regime.

In Portuguese-Africa (Guinea-Bissao, Mozambique and Angola), it can be rightly said that the end of an era is the start of hard times.
Clarification for Mr Norman Hart re his letter of 8th July 1974

First paragraph, line six, should read:

"... power in Lisbon were anaesthetized and late in the night of 24th April the President of the Republic ...." etc.

Page 3, under "Loss of Hannover" should read:

"Portuguese migrants in Europe at the moment total 1.6 million".

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NEW CHANGES TO UP-DATE ARTICLE

by José B. Chipenda

As it was announced that Spinola dismissed a whole cabinet and is about to form a new one, we do not know yet if Mario Soares, Minister of Foreign Affairs, will be appointed. My guess is that he will be.

If so, please take out the sentence which refers to him on the first page, second paragraph, namely:

"The credibility of the Junta among Portuguese-Speaking Africans will come from the efforts the socialist leader Mario Soares, 12 times jailed by the Salazar regime, is making to bring a lasting peace in Guinea-Bissao and Mozambique."

Page 4 - new paragraph which starts with "These factors ...." please change so it reads as follows:

These four factors combined forced Portugal to bring the Salazar era to a close and to open a new chapter in its history. The book of Spinola's was only instrumental as far as expressing the dissenting voice of a key supporter of the outdated regime. It was well timed and provided the needed moral support for the movement of captains. The Portuguese are breathing fresh air. The Spring of 1974 brought democracy to Portugal and freedom to form political parties. More than 50 of them are actively working thus preparing the ground for the first promised free elections, which will put to the test the new political system and show whether the emerging Spinolaism will be supported by the people.

No matter what may happen in the coming 12 months, things will never be the same again. Portugal has been shaken to its foundations, but the people in Angola, Guinea-Bissao and Mozambique should not be over optimistic. The end of an era in Portugal is the start of hard times for them.
Mr. Jose Chipenda,
Programme Unit on Justice and Service,
World Council of Churches,
150 Route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland

AFRICA ACTS
Sender's name and address:
Box 20390
NAIROBI, Kenya.

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