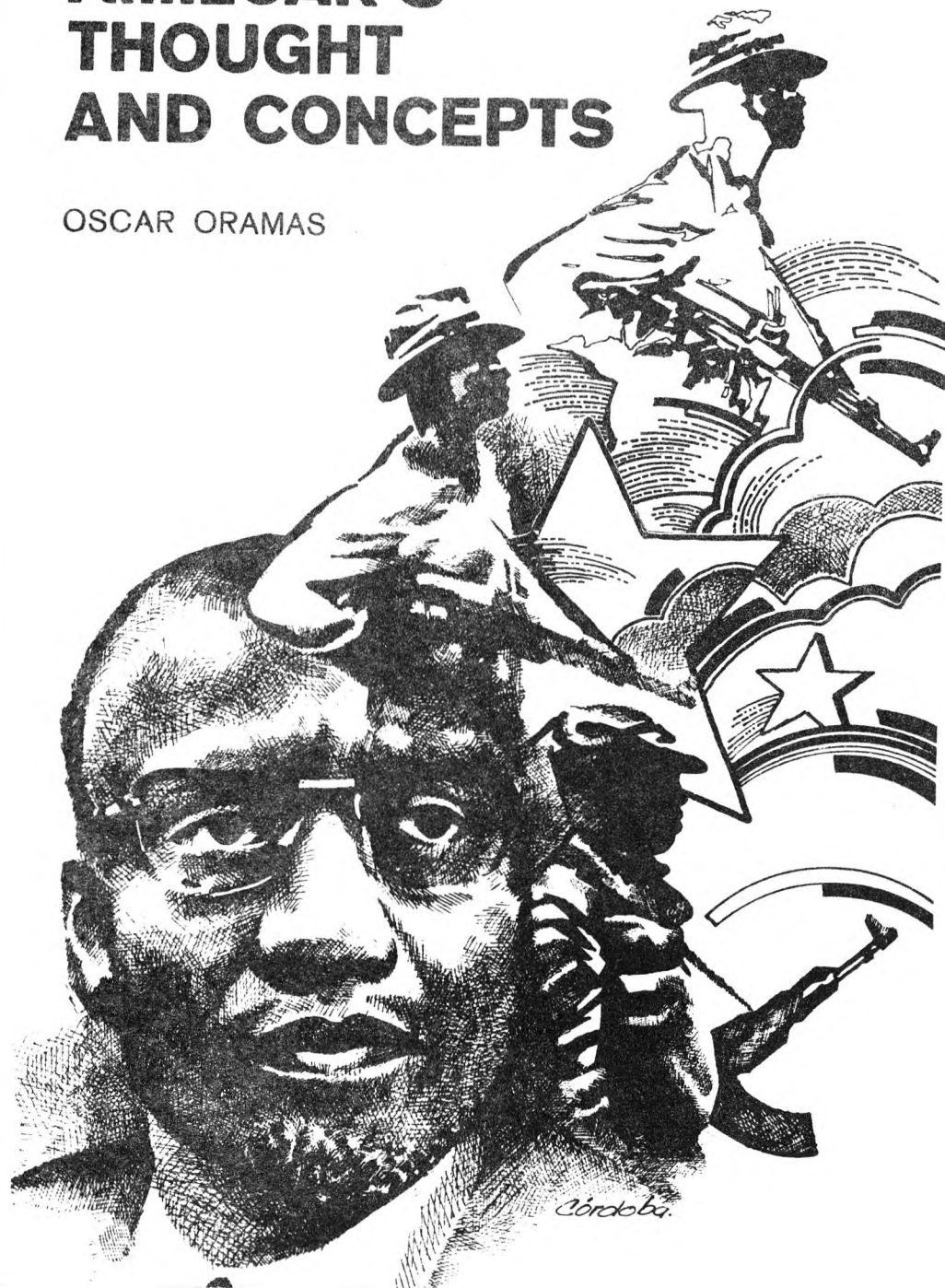


# AMILCAR'S THOUGHT AND CONCEPTS

OSCAR ORAMAS



**Man, the most valuable asset.**

**Amilcar Cabral**

**Some revolutionary leaders and the  
struggle of other peoples**

He valued the experience of other revolutionary processes so highly that he recommended — insistently — that his subordinates study them in order to extract all that might be useful for the struggle they were waging. Little is known of this side of Amilcar. He was very jealous of any interference in the internal affairs of the PAIGC or in the way the struggle was carried out. We recall the time he told us, with bitterness and irony, that a certain chargé d'affaires had visited him and offered to help his Party — if it took a certain position in the international field. He said that both the offer and the insinuation were immediately and energetically rejected, for, although their country was small, they could not allow anyone to come and tell them what stand to take, much less accept aid with strings attached. This shows Amilcar Cabral's dignity as a leader.

**In regard to the prospects for  
the struggle in South Africa  
and Rhodesia, he said:**

Our main task is, in the first place, to free our country. For us, this is a sacred commitment. However, we're in Afri-

ca, and, in our opinion, as long as there is racism, colonialism, apartheid in South Africa and the rule of a minority of European origin over an African majority, Africa will not be free and the danger will remain that the former system of domination will be imposed again. It is the task of all the independent countries in Africa to do everything in their power to help our brothers and sisters in South Africa and Rhodesia to develop their struggles and free themselves. Obviously, we consider that our case is different from those of Rhodesia and South Africa; their prospects for evolution are different, and the brothers there must decide what the best solutions are. Our case is different and requires, first of all, very serious political work inside the country; a very broad political mobilization; a solid organization; and, naturally, the determination of a generalized, hard-fought struggle.

If we achieve independence before our brothers in South Africa do, we will always respond to any requests for cooperation that they may address to us. We are convinced that they have a very difficult struggle before them, but political work is essential as a base for action, which will assume the necessary forms against the minority of European origin.

South Africa has helped Portugal to maintain its defense of the islands; thus, they are an important base not only for Portugal but also for South Africa itself. Therefore, both are anxious to keep the islands under their domination. We, however, consider Guinea and Cape Verde to be one people, one country.

**Concerning the struggle of the heroic Vietnamese people, he said:**

We feel that, in Vietnam, not only the future of that people, but the future of all peoples that struggle for their national independence and national sovereignty is at stake. We are in complete solidarity with the people of Vietnam and deeply admire their heroic struggle against US aggression, against the aggression of the reactionaries of South Vietnam, who are no more than the puppets of imperialism.

Amilcar appreciated in all its magnitude the incomparable heroism of the Vietnamese people in their courageous resistance against the aggression of the largest imperialist power on earth, the United States. He knew that the inevitable Vietnamese victory would hasten the collapse of imperialism, in Asia in particular and in the Third World in general, and he said how stupid, stubborn and

criminal the attitude of the US Government was in continuing to defy the universal conscience, which demanded an end to that barbarous aggression. More than once we heard him say that the Vietnamese people also struggled for the cause of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, because, in keeping the hands of US imperialism tied, they prevented the latter from giving greater help to fascist Portugal.

**The PAIGC leader also referred to the revolutionary situation in Latin America, as follows:**

We consider that, among the peoples of the world, the Latin Americans have suffered immensely, as they never enjoyed true independence, and the governments they created submitted entirely to imperialism — especially US imperialism.

More than once he pointed out that the struggle in Latin America would be a long one, since it was attacking the economic and political interests of the United States — imperialism's base of support. He said, however, that Washington would gradually lose its hold over Latin America. He commented that, back in the '50s, no one would have thought it possible that the United States would receive the blows it has been dealt and that the Vietnamese people's struggle was proof of the empire's decline. He wound up by saying, "The United States is repeating the cycles of the Roman Empire, and one day the new generations will live in a different world."

**On Guinea and the 8th DPG Congress, he said:**

We feel that the events of September 28, 1958, have the same significance for Africa that the October Revolution had for the whole world. The Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG), under the leadership of our comrade and brother Sékou Touré, has enriched the history of its people while contributing to the evolution of our continent, and its has courageously rejected the maneuvers and threats of imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism.

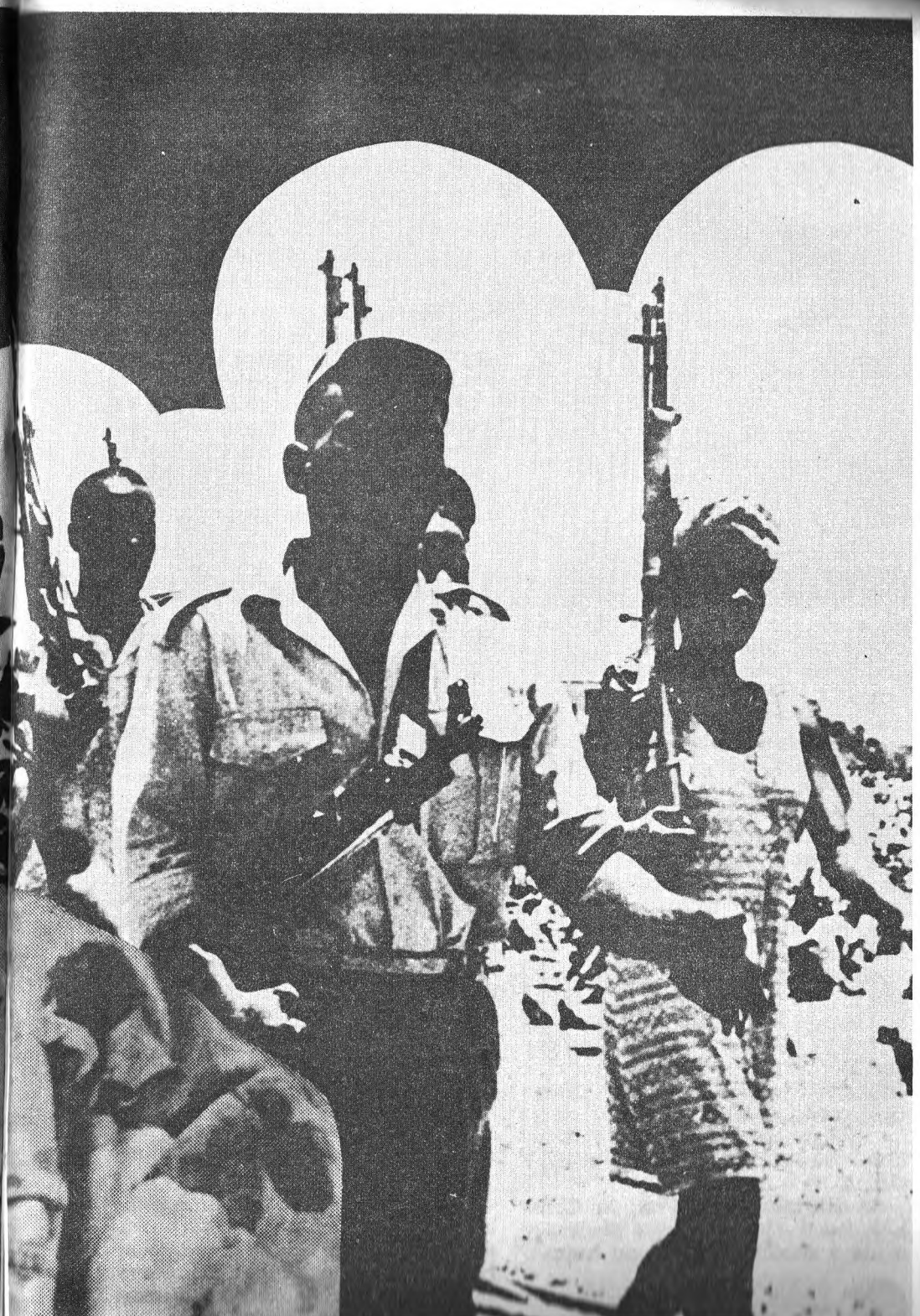
We often talked of Sékou Touré and of the difficulties he faced in carrying forward his enormous, generous work. Amilcar, who considered him as a father and teacher, always said that Sékou Touré should be helped, since he had always helped them in the most difficult times of the struggle — helped them without interfering in their decisions (although, when required, he would give them helpful advice).

He said that Africa had known few men who had fought as much for her as Sékou Touré and that one day his great work of forging a nationality from Guinea's mosaic of tribes would be recognized for the titanic effort it was. He stated that Sékou Touré had struggled to give his people a personality and feelings of dignity, showing his generosity and making a serious contribution to the revolutionary struggle. This was also shown in his attitude toward Guinea-Bissau. Amilcar knew that the enemy was pressuring Sékou Touré, even with the invasion of November 28,

yet he had given more encouragement to the PAIGC, both moral and material. Amilcar knew of the difficult conditions under which Sékou Touré did this; he knew that the country was having economic difficulties; and he suspected that not all the members of Sékou Touré's team shared his views in this regard. He also knew that the world revolutionary movement was morally obligated to support the Republic of Guinea so it could continue to be a bulwark against the plots of the French, in complicity with some Africans.

**About Nkrumah, he said:**

I had the privilege of knowing this exceptional man, exemplary revolutionary and comrade in struggle who always encouraged us in the battle we were waging against Portuguese colonialism. I am fully convinced that, if President Nkrumah hadn't been overthrown, the strategy of economic development adopted by his government would have provided Ghana with a flourishing economy today, thus proving that the African states that have won their political independence can build up their economic independence, as well. Is this plot linked to the problems of the class struggle, to the contradictions in the social structure, to the role of the Party and other institutions — including the armed forces — in the framework of a new independent state?



Is the success of treason in Ghana linked to the problem of correctly defining this historical entity — the people — that makes history and to its daily actions in the defense of its attainments in the framework of independence? Is it the large problem — that of choosing the men to lead the revolution — that permits this treason?

Meditating on these questions will perhaps lead us to understand the greatness of Nkrumah's work and the complexity of the problems he had to face, often alone. This will surely allow us to come to the same conclusion Nkrumah did: that, as long as imperialism exists, the only independent states in Africa will be those of liberation movements in power.

We feel sure that, when Amilcar made these reflections on the reasons for the fall of the President of Ghana, he also thought of his Party and of the struggle, trying to extract experiences useful for that struggle.

His friendship with Nkrumah often led Amilcar to visit him at his home in Conakry. When the visitors thinned out, Amilcar would be there. Undoubtedly, friendship was one of the things this revolutionary treasured most — as may also be seen in his actions toward Nkrumah and Bakary Ghibo.

At Nkrumah's funeral, in Conakry, the PAIGC General Secretary made a speech of profound human,

patriotic and revolutionary content, from which we quote the following:

We fighters for freedom do not bewail the death of a man, a comrade in struggle and an exemplary revolutionary. We weep, yes; we shed tears of hatred against those who, following imperialism's ignominious dictates, betrayed Nkrumah.

For us, the fighters for freedom, the most beautiful flowers with which we can honor Kwame Nkrumah are the bullets, shells and all other missiles we shoot against the colonialist and racist forces in Africa.

We feel sure — absolutely sure — that, clustered in the eternal green of the African woods, flowers as red as the blood of martyrs and as yellow as abundant harvests will bloom on the tomb of Kwame Nkrumah, for Africa will win.

His friendship for Bakary Ghibo, leader of the Niger Sawada, was very deep; they were friends who frequently exchanged opinions on the struggle or on the African and international political situations. Each deeply respected the other, and they had tremendous discussions on anything and everything. The friendship between these two men lasted for many years, and Bakary rightly said that Amilcar was showing signs of becoming one of the most outstanding African leaders. For Amilcar, Bakary was an experienced and discreet comrade to whom confidential observations concerning doubts or worries might safely be entrusted.

## ON LENIN'S HOMELAND

With regard to Lenin's homeland, we must say that Amilcar always fully appreciated the multifaceted assistance which the Soviet Party and Government offered his struggle. He used to tell us that he couldn't forget that the weapons and bullets they were using against the Portuguese colonialists came from the Soviet Union, without any strings attached. Amilcar appreciated the way he was received by the Soviet leaders each time he went to Moscow, their concern in the development of the struggle and their interest in studying together ways and means for cooperating with it.

For this reason, Amilcar said:

Every day, our people, like all the other peoples of the world, get a better understanding of the eternal importance of the October Revolution in the development of mankind. We see and are daily more convinced that the first perceptible changes in our advance toward freedom and progress were made thanks to the Revolution which the incomparable genius of Lenin prepared, directed and led to final victory over the bourgeoisie and feudalism.

On the hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birth, Amilcar said:

Even one who has only the most elementary knowledge of the main points of modern historical development knows, without any doubt, that our struggle was made possible because Vladimir Ilyich Lenin — that great man, internationalist, patriot and conscious and

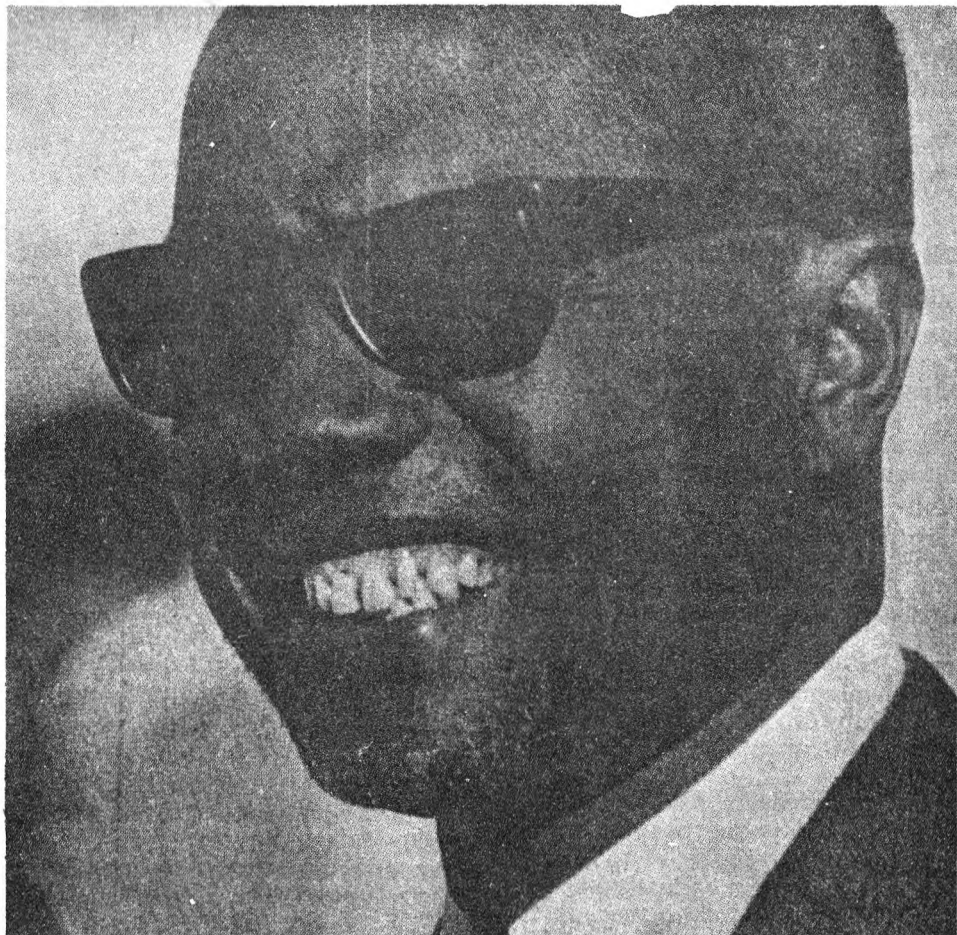
incomparable fighter who, with his talent and revolutionary ideas, opened the way to the revolution for all oppressed peoples — lived and did his duty.

On celebrating the hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birth, we feel that the best way to honor him is to create and strengthen the unity that is indispensable for final triumph in the struggle against imperialism; to follow his militant example; and to imitate his steadfast faithfulness to principles, clarity of ideas and tireless daily work.

## ON CHE

The African hero's first meeting with Major Ernesto Che Guevara took place in stirring circumstances. Che was visiting Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana and expressed the wish to visit the rebel territory of Guinea-Bissau. When Amilcar Cabral learned of Che's presence and wish, he walked for two days to make the meeting possible. Concerning that meeting, Amilcar said to a journalist: "It might be interpreted as my wishing to ascribe to myself Che's standing, so I won't talk about it."

When Che died Amilcar was one of the first to arrive at our Embassy in Conakry to tell us, "It is a great loss for the revolutionary movement, but Che's example and work will live on; he is one of the most devoted revolutionaries of our times. The Latin-American peoples will honor him by making the revolution."



These opinions on revolutionary leaders and processes show where Amílcar Cabral's interests lay. In addition, they are proof of his progressive, Marxist, internationalist thought. With them, he wished to stress that his people's struggle should be considered a part of the struggle waged by all mankind for definite independence. It is also evident that these ideas show serious respect for the experiences of other peoples that, in different conditions, chose the hard and noble road of revolution and social justice.

In October, 1965, at the Conference of the Portuguese Colonies'

Nationalist Organizations, Amílcar stated that the most steadfast allies in their struggle were the socialist countries, and he pointed out that the correlation of international forces was constantly changing in their favor. As a result, he felt that the days of colonialism were numbered and that final victory would surely come. The revolutionary leader learned to distinguish quickly between friends and foes; but, at the same time, he appreciated the need for dialogue in order to divide the enemy camp and show the peoples of the capitalist countries the justness of the struggle that was being waged — and, therefore, the need to contribute to it. He attained certain success in this direction.