

African Background

MOZAMBIQUE

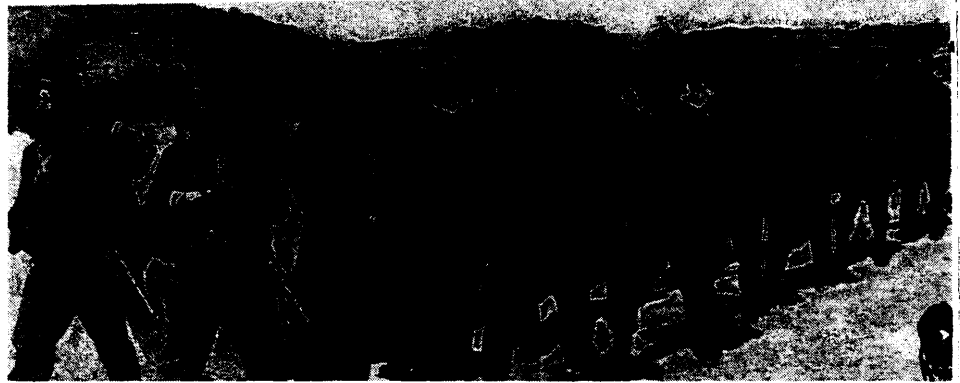
Resistance fights for freedom from Frelimo

By Jose Ramalho

They have been reported almost everywhere in Mozambique. Striking hard at strongly garrisoned towns, freeing prisoners from concentration camps, blowing up vital installations. Even top Frelimo leaders such as Antonio Thai, governor of the harassed Tete province, admit they have become a major threat. Motorists on the roads to Maputo are stopped by armed men to be given a curt message: "Tell people in Lourenco Marques we are here."

These are the highly trained commandos of the Mozambique National Resistance waging a devastating guerrilla war on President Samora Machel's Marxist regime. Frelimo has by now reluctantly given up blaming every enemy action on "Ian Smith's racist soldiery". Like UNITA and FNLA in Angola, the Mozambique Resistance is now recognised for what it is - a force to be reckoned with in the struggle against the Marxism in former Portuguese territories.

Indeed, the new Mozambique freedom fighters form a strange underground army where Frelimo defectors are accepted only if



Resistance fighters armed with captured Russian AK47 assault rifles and rocket-launchers: each must have his own weapon



Resistance director of operations

they bring their own weapons. Recruits are told to go out and steal a gun from Machel's men before graduating as Resistance soldiers. Ironically, Frelimo is being hit by the same weapons the Soviet Union has so prodigally dumped in vast quantities all over Africa. Adding insult to injury, the Resistance fighters scorn Russian tactics - which many of them learned in Moscow and the Ukraine - and stick strictly to Mao Tse-tung's teachings in their guerrilla warfare.

In a statement especially prepared for TO THE POINT, the Resistance director of operations (who asked not to be named for security reasons) says: "Condition number one to win is to be with the people. Second condition is to activate rebellion by stopping the population from sliding into defeatist apathy, a certain fatalism common to Africans as a whole."

He goes on to say: "After a few years of Frelimo's mental colonialism, people lose their personality and dignity to become dogs barking or biting at their master's command."

The Resistance is pledged to show the Mozambique people "the Machelist forces are not invincible and can be defeated". Explaining their position in the African context, the director says: "By resistance we mean the armed struggle against Machel's communist regime without any alignment with politically motivated parties or movements. In the OAU's framework, the Mozambique Resistance would stand ideologically beside Kenya, Gabon, Senegal, Egypt, the Ivory Coast, Tunisia, Mauritania and Morocco."

In the Resistance leader's view, "the quantities and types of Russian war matériel delivered to Frelimo far exceed the defence needs of Mozambique and the requirements of the Zimbabwe Peoples' Army (ZIPA)". He believes Mozambique has become a huge depot for a much larger operation and singles out the Nacala Russian stronghold (TTP August 12, 1977) which is used as a sanctuary by Machel and his aides "if and when retaliation against massive terrorist infiltrations in neighbouring countries makes life in Maputo difficult."

"In that case, our struggle will evolve from a straightforward national rebellion to a full-scale war against imperialist forces mustered in Mozambique for the conquest of other countries", he said. But he sees an escalation of "mercenary forces" in his country as "a spark igniting serious conflicts with an already starving population forced to share its meagre food with foreigners".

The Resistance leaders believe the first stage of the struggle against Frelimo is being successfully accomplished and are preparing for a stepping-up of military operations to be started soon. But their hopes "that the so-called Free World will realise the Africans, too, wish to be free" may prove an illusion.

Enemy hierarchy

Some of the Resistance commandants leading the anti-Frelimo fighting inside Mozambique:

- Orlando Macamo, former inspector of the Frelimo Police (PIC).
- Afonso Mariseta Jacamo, former Frelimo top official in the northern province of Nyasa.
- Andre Matadi, former Frelimo commander of the Cabora Bassa operational zone during the war against the Portuguese.
- Matsangaise, former Frelimo provincial chief in Sofala (Beira).
- Zeca Antonio, former battalion commander in the Frelimo Army.
- Lapison Manuel, former deputy commandant of the Namaacha garrison (Maputo).

Commandant André Matadi: one of Frelimo's top men, now leading the national resistance against Machel's regime.



Attack from within

Successful operations notched up by the Mozambique National Resistance fighting President Samora Machel's Marxist regime from within include:

- Sinking of Frelimo boats in the Cabora Bassa lake.
- Five-man commando raid on the Sakudz concentration camp near Gorongosa (Beira).
- 25 Frelimo soldiers killed, 1200 prisoners freed.
- Attacks on the central Mozambique towns of Vila Gouveia, Guro, Chioco and Inhaminga.
- Four Frelimo army vehicles blown up on the Mocuba/Quelimane road junction.
- Frelimo Army platoon wiped out outside the Chimoio barracks.
- 12 Frelimo soldiers shot dead while manning a road block near Maputo.

Main sabotage actions carried out by Commandos:

- Maputo ore wharf destroyed. R2,5 million damage, 6 months out of commission.
- Chicualacuala telecommunications centre blown up.
- Bomb explosion at Vila Pery railway station.