

MACHEL'S

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REBEL 79

PROBLEM

By Our Diplomatic
Correspondent

THE Mozambique government, which was brought to power by guerrillas, is now itself faced with increasing activity by rebels in its central provinces.

A new anti-Marxist group calling itself the Mozambique National Resistance Army has claimed responsibility for a number of recent ambushes and terrorist attacks.

Its most spectacular raid was an attack on a fuel depot near Beira on March 23. It was estimated to have caused £1,500,000 worth of damage.

Office in Lisbon

President Machel's Marxist government reacted with the execution in the past three weeks of 20 men on charges of high treason, "mercentary activities" and espionage. The men included a Portuguese and six black Rhodesians.

The resistance army maintains an office in Lisbon and until last year was known as the United Democratic Front of Mozambique. It is led by Domingos Arouca who claims the support of six former Frelimo commanders.

Rhodesian aid

The group, which tried to buy arms in the West, is undoubtedly aided by Rhodesia and the disturbed economic and administrative situation in Mozambique should provide it with fertile soil for its anti-Frelimo campaign.

Its latest communique said that during March it killed 48 Mozambique government soldiers, captured "several tons" of arms and destroyed a number of military lorries and government cars.