



Mozambican soldier guarding a railway line near the border with Rhodesia

DURING the early stages of the Lancaster House Constitutional Conference on Zimbabwe, a dapper and mysterious figure with Lusitanian features lurked behind the delegation of Bishop Muzorewa. So in was he on the Salisbury delegation that with the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, invited the Bishop's team to a party that he was also included. His name is Domingos Arouca, a lawyer who leads the Mozambican Resistance Movement (MRM). Formed in Lisbon in 1976, the MRM groups together elements dedicated to the subversion of President Samora Machel's government. The movement operates from both South Africa and Rhodesia from where it infiltrates armed gangs into Mozambique and has a radio station, *Voice of Free Africa*, which broadcasts vitriolic anti-Frelimo bulletins.

Domingos Arouca has links with Jorge Jardim, a wealthy businessman in colonial Mozambique who now lives in London. Arouca left Mozambique in 1974 in a fit of pique after he was not appointed Prime Minister in the transitional government of which Frelimo was a component; he was, however, offered another post which he turned down. A rich landowner who had vast

Mozambique's Fifth Column

coconut plantations in Mozambique's Inhambane Province, he works with another man called Orlando Cristina who was once personal secretary to Jardim and commander of his private forces.

After Mozambique's independence, Cristina, with the support of South African military intelligence services, launched a recruitment drive using contacts in Mozambique. His task was made easier because when he fled Mozambique he took with him files containing all the names of the Mozambicans who had served in the Special Parachute Group, a 10,000-strong detachment that operated from a base at Ndondo near Beira during the colonial time. The files were in an apartment belonging to the Malawi consulate in Mozambique which was used by Jorge Jardim

when he was the plenipotentiary representative of Malawi's President Banda in colonial Mozambique. Using blackmail and heavy financial inducements, Cristina was able to put together some 1,000 people from Mozambique who now constitute the fighting force of the MRM.

Under the command of one Andre Matade Matsangai, whose claims to have been a former Frelimo guerrilla are generally unsubstantiated by the Mozambicans, the MRM rebel forces act essentially as an extension of the Rhodesian Army. They are based in Rhodesia along the country's eastern borders, they are financed and armed by the Rhodesians and are under the direct command of Salisbury's military apparatus. Because of their intimate knowledge of Mozambican

languages and terrain, they have proved invaluable in providing logistic information for Rhodesian raids into the country, more often than not actually leading the invading forces to specific targets in Mozambique.

According to informed sources, the MRM rebels have led Rhodesians from 1976 when the Zimbabwean refugee camp at Nyazonia was attacked up until the most recent invasions this year. In October and November, they claimed to have taken and occupied Macossa and other small towns in the Gorongozo area of Mozambique's Sofala Province. Mozambican sources say that the force, which was supplied by Rhodesian helicopters on a daily basis, comprised White Rhodesian officers as well as mercenaries. When the FPLM dislodged them from the area around Morongope, a few miles from Gorongozo town, they captured MRM rebels and several Rhodesian soldiers.

Their support for invading Rhodesians apart, it is difficult to assess the impact that the MRM has on its own. Certainly, they appear to have been successful in blowing up bridges, destroying granaries, shops and schools in the isolated areas of Manica and Sofala provinces. To

date, they have avoided direct contact with the Mozambican Army and their activities have always been carried out under the umbrella of Rhodesian military missions into the country. Their broadcasts, from a station in the Rhodesian border town of Umtali, often contain military communiques from the 'Mozambique National Defence' claiming huge successes against 'Machelist communist forces'. These claims are invariably larger than life; perhaps the only useful purpose they serve is in misleading White Rhodesians and South Africans, who listen to them attentively, that the government of President Machel is in imminent danger of collapse.

The possibility of a political settlement in Zimbabwe naturally means that the MRM will be deprived of an important base and support. A high ranking official of Bishop Muzorewa's government furtively admitted that the MRM operated within the ambit of the Rhodesian army but refused to say what would happen to them in the event of a settlement. It is understood from other sources, however, that Arouca was in consultations with South African military authorities last month and was given the green light to move his men as well as the radio

station to north-eastern Transvaal.

Without doubt, the MRM will remain an important instrument in the new war in southern Africa in terms of South Africa's overall strategy of destabilising African governments which support the liberation struggle in the sub-continent. According to information available to AFRICA, a force known as the 'Mozambique Intervention Command' has recently been established by the MRM with South African and Rhodesian support. It is composed of two groups of 200 men each and is being trained in Rhodesia. It is understood that two Israeli military advisers, who until last February were in Malawi training the first batch of paratroopers, are involved in the establishment of the force. With them is Major Figueredo, a Portuguese national who is closely linked with Jorge Jardim. It is highly likely that the Mozambique Intervention Command will play a vital role should South Africa find it necessary to intervene in Zimbabwe militarily. By intervening in Mozambique, the force would make it difficult for the Mozambican forces to come to the aid of any Zimbabwean forces resisting the South Africans.