

# Two American organisations actively promote MNR

By Mike Overmeyer

AMERICAN Freedom International and the rightwing Heritage Foundation - sponsored Mozambique Information Office and Mozambique Research Centre in Washington are in the forefront of a vicious propaganda campaign against the people of Mozambique.

Putting out a constant barrage of vile propaganda against the Mozambican government and its leaders, these American institutions are fighting to raise money and promote the cause of the MNR bandits internationally, especially in Washington.

The MNR bandits created by Rhodesian intelligence to fight against the Zimbabwe liberation movement were taken over by South Africa after Zimbabwe's independence.

The bandits are supplied, equipped, trained, paid, transported, directed and led by the South African Defence Force.

Mozambique's famine is the direct result of Pretoria's destabilisation policy of using mass terrorism through armed bandits.

The MNR lobby in Washington has used Mozambican "defectors" at regular Press conferences to attack the Mozambican government.

Former official of the Mozambican ministry of foreign affairs, Antonio Rocha, told a Press conference late last year how and why he fled to America.

Under the pretext that he feared Frelimo reprisals, Rocha stole money from the Mozambique Embassy in Harare where he was posted to buy airline tickets to send his wife and four children to Portugal to seek political asylum.

He later escaped over the Zambian border with Zimbabwe at Chirundu.

"From there I followed my family to Portugal where I have tried to rebuild my life," he said.

Another Mozambican renegade, Jose Francisco, was invited to testify before the Senate foreign relations Africa sub-committee about the situation in Mozambique.

"If you would like to help or if you would like more information, I invite you to write to the Mozambique Research Centre in Washington," he writes in a letter to rightwingers in California.

Jorge da Costa, the former director of the secret police, also defected to the West in 1982.

In an interview published in the South African *Scope* magazine of February 1983, he also criticised the Mozambican government.

The Mozambique information office, which calls itself "a fledgling diplomatic effort" also puts out propaganda that the Beira Corridor "is viewed as a matter of economic and political survival for the marxist factions in Zimbabwe and Mozambique".

The Washington propaganda office of the MNR is run by Tom Schaaf, who is trying to lure the US administration into providing funds for the MNR as an anti-communist front in terms of the Reagan doctrine of support for proxy groups like the Contras in Nicaragua.

Even Zimbabwe's disgraced politician, Ndalabingi Sithole, was still sailing on the crest of the anti-communist wave in Washington by blaming the Mozambican government for the Homoine massacre in which MNR bandits slaughtered 386 villagers last year.

He called on Washington to get involved in Mozambique "to drive out the foreign forces".

"Zimbabwe has between 15 000 and 20 000 troops in Mozambique, Ethiopia has 6 000, Tanzania 10 000, Zambia 2 000 and Mozambique's national army is said to be 45 000 strong.

"There are about 800 Russian military advisers in that country, about 1 000 Cuban troops, and several hundreds of North Koreans, East Germans and Bulgarians. There are also hundreds of British troops," said Sithole.



CDE Domingos, victim of MNR banditry. They cut off his lips, nose and left hand.

Bandit leader Afonso Dhlakama's visit to Washington last year was made possible by his newly-appointed representative to the United States, Luis Seraphao.

While Sithole and his fellow lobbyists are trying to hide the ugly face of the MNR, the Frelimo government recently found that in Mozambique about 100 000 people have died because of MNR banditry. This did not include the more than 100 000 people who perished in the famine of 1983 to 1984.

But the famine is not caused by bad weather or a misdirected agricultural policy alone. Rather it is the result of the disruption of rural life and food production by the bandits.

The MNR's destruction of Mozambique's ability to raise export earnings as well as buy and distribute food is the cause of the famine threatening more than five million Mozambicans.

Forty-five percent of

the deaths of children under five are a result of armed banditry.

The 42 percent of the Mozambique national budget that goes to defence weakens its efforts to cover the costs of other vital services.

A third of all Mozambicans face starvation, 10 percent are homeless, more than half a million are refugees in their own country, more than a million are refugees in neighbouring states, most schools as well as a third of all clinics and health centres have either been closed or destroyed.

The economic costs of South Africa's war of destruction in the Frontline and Southern African countries is estimated at more than US\$30 billion.

At the moment the United Nations estimates that about five million Mozambicans cannot be fed from domestic production of food and are in grave danger of extreme malnutrition or starvation without high levels of food aid. — Ziana.