

# Embassy issues angry reply

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By A. M. Rendel *Times* 11/7/73  
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The Portuguese Embassy in London issued the following statement yesterday evening about the account of the massacre of the village of Wiriyamu. The statement followed a day of active and apparently anguished exchanges between the embassy and the Portuguese Foreign Ministry.

“With maximum prominence”, the statement says, “and total disregard for the most elementary principles of journalistic ethics, *The Times* has seen fit to publish and to comment editorially on an article by Father Adrian Hastings, of the College of Ascension, Birmingham, levelling against the Portu-

guese Government and the Portuguese forces most serious hearsay allegations, at second or third remove, of the ‘systematic genocidal massacre of people in villages thought to have helped Frelimo and, in particular, of the massacre of ‘several hundred people at the village of Wiriyamu last December’.

“To deal first with the question of ethical journalistic standards, it must be pointed out that it is, to say the least, surprising that any organ of the press should have no compunction in providing space for such allegations before taking steps to ascertain for itself, through contact with the Portuguese authorities, whether or not there was even a modicum of justification for them—and this, even

though only recently, a *Times* correspondent, Mr Michael Knipe, was in Mozambique, and only last week the foreign news editor of *The Times*, Mr Jerome Caminada, visited Lisbon and, with a group of British journalists, was received by several members of the Government, including the Prime Minister.

“Turning now to the allegations themselves, the Portuguese Embassy is in a position to state that the Portuguese Government repudiates them most vigorously.”

At the same time, the embassy dispatched a letter to the editor of *The Times* asking that this statement be given the same prominence as the account of the massacre.