

ARMED MNR BANDITS POUR OUT OF MALAWI

Herald Reporter
REPORTS reaching Harare say there has been heavy infiltration of MNR bandits from Malawi into Mozambique following the recent discussions between three Frontline leaders and President Kamuzu Banda of Malawi when the Malawian Life President was warned against harbouring the bandits.

The Herald understands that several thousand bandits were recently "expelled" from Malawi back into Mozambique. They carried with them their arms of war. Officials have pointed out that the bandits were not handed over to the Mozambican authorities, an action that would have conformed with the demands that Malawi cease supporting the bandits.

The bandits were said by official sources to be wreaking havoc in Mozambique's border areas. Infiltration following the expulsion has apparently been going on for several days as some of the bandits have built up a large force near the town of Zumbo on the northern headwaters of Lake Cahora Bassa, near where Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique meet.

Mozambican sources have told The Herald that there has been heavy fighting between Mozambican and bandit forces in Zumbo.

Neither Mozambique nor the other Frontline States know how many MNR bandits have been operating from Malawi. That country has all along denied the existence of MNR bases and military facilities on its soil despite hard evidence collected over a long period in operational areas by the joint Zimbabwean and Mozambican forces.

At the recent meeting in Malawi, the chairman

of the Frontline States, President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, with President Samora Machel of Mozambique and the Prime Minister, Cde Mugabe, confronted President Banda with this evidence during a heated meeting.

Sources said the three Frontliners virtually read the riot act to the life president.

It was agreed at that meeting that Mozambique and Malawi would form a joint military commission to study the situation and consult over the action to be taken. There have been a number of visits of relevant person-

nel between the two countries of late.

Meanwhile, Harare sources say that Dr Banda's government decided to "expel" some of the bandits across the border. This large contingent has joined bandits already operating in Mozambique and the combined force has been responsible for the latest clashes, described by the sources as serious.

Other sources say that they believe there are still many more MNR bandits in Malawi and that Malawi could have "expelled" the group it did in order to claim that it was conforming with the Frontline demands.