

*Radio Truth 19/10/87*

ZANU (PF) directed all its Party organs around the country to hold special rallies yesterday to commemorate the death of SAMORA MACHEL in an air crash on October 19th last year. The tone for all the meetings and allied activities was set by NELSON MAWEMA, who told a Press Conference that the drama had to mark the day Mr MACHEL perished at the hands of the enemy. Simply put, this means that the lie had to be perpetrated that the air disaster was deliberately staged by the PRETORIA regime. President CHISSANO has been beating the same false drum on his recent overseas tour in order to try and generate sympathy and support for his own lost cause. In a nasty display of hypocrisy, our ruling body also appealed to our Churches to hold special Services on Peace, Freedom and Security in SOUTHERN AFRICA, knowing full well that a day of virulent, anti-SOUTH AFRICAN rhetoric and war mongering would promote precisely the opposite effect. As we have said so often, we have no affinity with the Government in PRETORIA, but we are concerned with the truth.

In this case, the truth, as established by a panel of independent and world-renowned experts, is that SOUTH AFRICA was entirely blameless for the air crash in which the late President SAMORA MACHEL

lost his life. The independent Inquiry was set up by the SOUTH AFRICAN Government in accordance with the rules of the INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY. This action was dictated by the fact that the crash occurred just, but only just, inside SOUTH AFRICAN territory. As we said, the Committee of Inquiry included specialists of unimpeachable character and expertise from BRITAIN and the UNITED STATES. Both MOZAMBIQUE and the USSR were invited to participate but declined to do so, despite the fact that the aircraft was a RUSSIAN-built TUPOLEV with a SOVIET Air Crew and was on loan to FRELIMO as a VIP transport. Apart from experts opinions, the Committee had full access to the Plane's Flight Recorder and Cockpit Voice Recorder, which had been recovered from the crash site.

The KREMLIN disinformation campaign, faithfully echoed by HARARE and MAPUTO, played up the false story of a decoy Beacon, which was alleged to have lured the aircraft to its doom. This claim was thoroughly examined by the experts, who found that, even if such a decoy had existed, although there is no evidence to support such a contention, it could not have forced the plane to descend, nor compelled the Crew to ignore the warning signals of ground proximity from their own instruments. This Committee's ultimate findings listed 26 points in terms of which the Committee determined that the responsibility for the accident lay entirely with the incompetent RUSSIAN Air Crew.

In our programme of 21st July this year, we stated that we had been fortunate enough to obtain a copy of an AMERICAN-produced Television Documentary on the air disaster and the Committee's report. From this we brought to you the relevant sound recordings which we repeat for the sake of truth and honest reporting. The Documentary began with pictures of the ill-fated crew of the TUPOLEV aircraft during the crucial period of the flight and their actual voices in RUSSIAN taken from the Cockpit Recorder. It demonstrates the utter confusion and inefficiency on the Flight Deck.

.....Voices.....Noises.

That sound was the warning system in the Cockpit, telling the Crew that the plane was flying dangerously below the safety levels, and was far too close to the ground. If the Pilot had then reacted according to International Flight Procedures, the TUPOLEV would have been saved from disaster. Instead, and regardless of the precious

human cargo on board, the Pilot ignored the warning and responded with the RUSSIAN equivalent of 'Damn it'.

Here is the voice of the AMERICAN Commentator, together with a brief comment by a distinguished Aviator and opinion of Arnold DUBOKA (?) a renowned Journalist and Political Analyst who is an authority on SOVIET Affairs.

'Only days after the crash, a fact finding Tribunal was convened by SOUTH AFRICA in terms of the INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION practice. In a valid attempt to reinforce the impartiality of the Commission, SOUTH AFRICA invited several recognised International experts to participate in the hearing - they included Colonel FRANK BORMAN, a former APOLLO Astronaut, celebrated Test Pilot and lately a highly successful Airline President; Sir Edward EVERLEIGH, a former Lord Justice of Appeal in the UNITED KINGDOM and JUSTICE ROBINSON, CBE, a retired Chief Inspector of Accidents in BRITAIN's Department of Transport. Mr JUSTICE CECIL MARGO, a SOUTH AFRICAN Supreme Court Judge and specialist in Aviation matters,, Chaired the Tribunal or Commission of Inquiry.

Members of the Commission painstakingly sifted through technical evidence. Their task was complicated by the flurry of rumours and speculations which had followed the crash.

There was full cooperation between SOUTH AFRICANS, MOZAMBICANS and SOVIET investigators during the initial period which followed the crash, but once investigations began to reveal that President MACHEL's death may have been caused by Pilot error, both MOZAMBIQUE and the SOVIET UNION withdrew from the official proceedings. They began orchestrating attempts to discredit the SOUTH AFRICAN -convened Commission of Inquiry. However, despite efforts by the SOVIETS to challenge the Commission's integrity, strict adherence to the International Aviation procedures and protocol were maintained.

The SOVIETS, who manufactured the aircraft and whose Crew were flying it, had already realised the disastrous threat to their own strategic interests. Soon after the crash, SOVIET masterminds had begun designing and effecting an intricate disinformation strategy to counter potentially negative repercussions. Their operation was to have several purposes. A primary object however, was to immediately allay any suspicion regarding

the inefficiency of their equipment or personnel. Loss of confidence in SOVIET Technology and training by AFRICAN host States had to be countered at all costs. Since August 1983, the Western media had recorded 9 separate SOVIET Air disasters. Of the total, 6 crashes involved TUPOLEV aircraft similar to the one in which President MACHEL died. Also, seven months prior to the MACHEL crash, another SOVIET-manufactured and manned plane went down in NORTHERN MOZAMBIQUE. The disaster claimed the lives of 48 passengers and Crew. This received little attention in the Western media, despite the fact that those who died included a group of top level MOZAMBIKAN POLITBURO members, as well as the wife of the Defence Minister, General ALBERTO CHIPANDE.

A secondary SOVIET aim was to manufacture false evidence which would support charges of SOUTH AFRICA's alleged premeditated involvement in causing President MACHEL's death. In doing so, they hoped to encourage the country's further international isolation. At this point, it is of importance to highlight the priority attached by the SOVIETS in President MACHEL's death. Highly placed MOZAMBIKAN Intelligence sources reported that within 24 hours of the crash, the SOVIET SUPREME HIGH COMMAND, the STAVNA (?), had urgently assembled for an Emergency Session. The 11 member STAVNA is normally presided over by the General Secretary in his capacity as Commander in Chief of the SOVIET Armed Forces, and includes a host of RUSSIA's most powerful Defence Chiefs. They urgently decided to activate an immediate RED ALERT as a direct result of the crash. This again underscores the intensity of the SOVIET Imperialistic ambitions in this region.

Soon after the meeting, SOVIET Commanders ordered an immediate movement of non-uniformed advisers into MOZAMBIQUE. These advisers cover a wide variety of specialities, and they come primarily from the USSR, EAST GERMANY, BULGARIA and CZECHOSLOVAKIA. Informed examination of the regional political and Military dynamics before and after President MACHEL's death defines MOSCOW's strategic printing. This dictated the terms of their decision to mount one of the boldest strategic deceptions yet to be effected in the sub-SAHARAN region'.

'Now, in-depth analysis of the voluminous propaganda spurred on by the MACHEL crash, revealed that the SOVIETS initiated, coordinated and conducted the entire disinformation operation. Research has

produced strong evidence that MOSCOW co-opted the assistance of SOVIET agents of influence within the MOZAMBICAN Government agencies. The MOZAMBICAN media in particular, participated fully in the campaign and served to give momentum to the entire operation through the MOZAMBICAN News Agency, AIM, and other quasi Governmental Radio Stations'.

These are the views of that celebrated Astronaut and member of the Investigating Committee, COLONEL FRANK BORMAN.

'I think that the cause of the crash, I believe quite succinctly and accurately in the findings of the Commission where allegations made by the USSR and MOZAMBIQUE, that perhaps the aircraft had been lured by a phoney , or a beacon designed to lead it to its destruction, clearly holds up to no substance, because now a beacon, even if there had been a beacon, which I'm convinced there was not, now the beacon would not foretell or cause the aircraft to descend to a minimum of such Altitude. So, I have very great confidence in the findings of the Commission and I'm quite convinced that the cause of the crash was Crew error, and I would like to point out that Crew error is not uncommon. ....fade.....the Crew of the TUPOLEV had to find out their Altitude without having reference to the ground or about being on a higher level'.

Finally, the Chairman of the Committee, Mr JUSTICE MARGO, spoke on more controversial issues.

.....transmission very faint.....

I am completely satisfied that the correct result has been arrived at and that the cause of the accident was human factors, as the expression goes in the field of air accidents. In other words, poor.....fade.....on the part of the Crew and a succession of blunders which led to the fatal decision to continue a descent in total darkness and under blind flying conditions, an attempt to see the airfield under poor visual and meteorological conditions'.

SO THERE YOU HAVE IT, INCONTROVERTIBLE PROOF FROM A PANEL OF EXPERTS THAT THE CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT WAS THE APPALLING AND INCOMPETENT BEHAVIOUR OF

THE SOVIET AIR CREW. DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGNS  
COME AND GO, BUT IN THE END THE TRUTH ALWAYS  
PREVAILS. ALL THE RALLIES IN THE WORLD WON'T CHANGE  
THE FACTS SURROUNDING MACHEL'S DEATH. THEY MERELY  
SERVE TO HEIGHTEN TENSION AND FOUL THE ATMOSPHERE,  
WHEN WHAT WE ALL TRULY PRAY FOR IS PEACEFUL  
COEXISTENCE.