

# Now Brazil hits out at Portugal

**RIO DE JANEIRO.** - Prompted by concern over oil supplies and fear of jeopardising closer commercial ties with African nations, Brazil's military Government has given the first signs of taking a more critical stand on Portugal's African policies.

The change was first reflected in the strictly censored Press. Editorials - which frequently precede official policy changes - urged Portugal to adopt a more liberal policy towards its African territories and repeatedly pointed out that Brazil, with commercial aspirations in Africa, cannot afford to create a hostile climate.

From indications leaked to newspaper editors by the Foreign Ministry, it appears that Brazil favours two important first steps to ease tension in the areas Portugal seeks to hold against African nationalists seeking independence - Angola, Mozambique and the smaller territory called Portuguese Guinea by Lisbon, but claimed as the Republic of Guinea-Bissau by nationalists.

One step is to implement a gradual timetable of self-determination and then second to create an Afro-Luso-Brazilian commonwealth with Lisbon and the African territories based

on self-determination and the common language of Portuguese.

Brazil's long-established traditional ties with Portugal are based on the centuries for which it was a Portuguese colony.

In the first open warning to Lisbon that Brazil may no longer shelter in a policy of neutrality, the influential Daily Journal Do Brazil said: "We have the obligation to tell the Government of Lisbon without inhibitions, that it would be contrary to our interests to see a purely military political evolution in Angola from which could emerge a government of a political and ideological nature not friendly in its relations with Brazil."

Despite growing pressure from African leaders for Brazil to act as an intermediary with Portugal, Brazil's able Foreign Ministry has managed for years to navigate in neutral waters, relying on the policy pillar of non-intervention and special "Luso-Brazilian" relations. At the same time, the country has actively fostered closer commercial ties with African nations.

This "middle of the road" policy, buffeted by recent events, might be on its last legs.

Diplomatic sources in the capital, Brasilia, said the Government was in fact pressing Lisbon for concessions to a greater extent than it was prepared to admit. - Reuter