

Zimbabwean 'dissidents' in Manica

Details emerged this week of a large band of alleged Zimbabwean 'dissidents' operating in the central Mozambique province of Manica.

The reports were taken seriously enough for the Zimbabwean defence minister to admit last week they were being investigated (*SouthScan* v8/11 p86).

According to the Beira daily *Diario de Mocambique* the thousand-strong group is known as *chimwenie* and operates in Dombe, and area in Sussundenoa district. The paper says that Zimbabweans used to operate out of the Renamo-held Manica provincial base at Mupunqa, which was under the command of Gen Issufo Momade, one of the Renamo of-

ficials now living in Maputo.

The paper said Renamo provided the Zimbabweans with food, but since the signing of the peace agreement last October, the 'chimwenie' have been removed from the Mupunga base and have been left to fend for themselves. For the past five months they have been looting food from Dombe peasants.

The paper also claimed the group was trying to recruit Mozambicans to fight inside Zimbabwe against the government of President Robert Mugabe. There was uncertainty about the political allegiance of the group with speculation that they could be remnants of supporters of Ndabaningi Sithole's Zanu-Ndonga party.