

# The freedom Bomba chose

SHORTLY after reports had been received of the defection to South Africa by Lieutenant Adriano Bomba of the Mozambique Air Force, tongues started wagging in the black townships.

Around every fire, in the shebeens, at schools, in the sports grounds, in taxis, in buses, in trains and everywhere the discussions centred on Lieutenant Bomba and his jet-fighter and his intentions to apply for asylum in South Africa.

There were many suggestions about possible reasons for his defection. They all sympathised with Bomba and many of those "in the know" offered valuable advice to him — but unfortunately he was not there to hear. Unfortunately, I said.

"I think Bomba has not heard or read about the 1976 school uprisings. Well, he could lend a helping hand in our struggle for equal per capita expenditure on black and white pupils. Only if he knew that from now on his descendants would be subjected to 'Bantu' education," said a 17-year-old high school pupil.

"I hear Mr Bomba says there is no freedom of worship in his country. In our country there is freedom of worship provided, of course, he does not dare pray to a white God in a

queue once. You queue virtually from the cradle to the grave," said a social worker.

The social worker continued: "You queue to be born in overcrowded hospitals, you queue to board a bus or train to work every day, you queue to get a 'pass' and queue to have a permit to remain at home, you queue to collect your pension money after every two months, you queue . . ."

"Bomba complains of lack of political freedom in Mozambique. He has a problem because he does not

even have a homeland in South Africa to exercise his political rights far from the white Parliament. Perhaps the Department of Co-operation and Development and the race classification board can juggle out an answer for him," said a veteran political figure from Soweto.

There is not even a chance of his flying out from Kwa-You-Know-Where to white South Africa when he cannot get a job in the homeland. That is when he will wish he never flew out from his real homeland, added the politician.

There was also friendly advice to Bomba's critics from some informed quarter. Perhaps Bomba was a victim of subtle propaganda spread by the Department of Information. Perhaps, he had read that if he defected he would be given the chieftainship of one tribe and a big luxury car to drive him around, said the friendly adviser.

"Lieutenant Bomba you never miss your political water until your political well has run dry. In the barren plains of Kwa-You-Know-Where you will find your political oasis but the problem will be that it will turn out to be a mirage," said one of those who had been in the "cooler" more than once.



white church," said a minister of religion.

"I sympathise with Bomba for having to queue all day for food in Mozambique. But he is still going to learn that in our country if you are of the wrong colour you do not only

*Pretoria  
News  
21/8/81*