

MOZAMBIQUE

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South Africa adopts Israeli military tactics

South Africa's spy plane which was shot down over Maputo was remote controlled and sent its photos back home direct. It was supplied by Israel and used Israeli spying tactics in the undeclared war that is now developing.

Joseph Hanlon reports.

SOUTH AFRICA'S use of Israeli spy planes and tactics against Mozambique has fuelled new fears that Maputo could become another Beirut. Indeed, President Samora Machel said that offers of defence help after the South African raid in Matola "showed clearly that many governments will not passively accept a second Beirut."

The South African air raid on Mozambique's capital, Maputo, on May 23 and the shooting down of a spy plane a week later showed just how vulnerable Maputo is. Maputo is only 60 kilometres from South Africa, the same distance Israel is from Beirut, and there are close links between the Israeli and South African military establishments. Thus Frelimo became very worried at what it saw as the lack of response by both Eastern and Western powers to the Israeli attack last year on Beirut.

This propelled President Machel last year to seek improved relations with Washington while building closer links to Moscow; he clearly hopes that both will show Pretoria that they will not allow Mozambique to be attacked. South Africa, too, has cited the Beirut analogy, which suggests the two May incidents may have been partly intended to test the reaction.

The shooting down of the spy plane on May 30 sent shivers up the spine of many in Maputo. The plane was a remote controlled, pilotless Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) Scout. It is really a big version of a hobbyist's radio controlled model airplane, and is only 3.5 metres long with a 4 metre wing-span. But it is very sophisticated. It can be remotely controlled from over 100km away, such as the Hoedspruit air base in the eastern Transvaal. The plane carries a radio controlled television camera which can swivel in any direction, and which has a zoom lens. It transmits its pictures directly back to the home base. Thus with radio control of both the plane and the camera, its operators can look in detail at any potential target. South African intelligence sources said Scouts were used over Maputo before the May 23 attack.

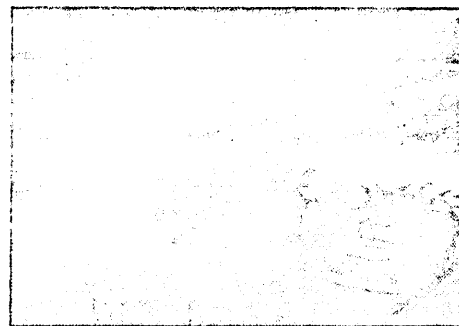
The plane was over Mozambican airspace for an hour and was finally shot down over Maputo Bay. When it was fished out and inspected by journalists, including myself,

the IAI marking was clear. Eventually South Africa admitted the obvious - that it was theirs.

Israel used Scouts extensively and highly effectively in the Bekaa valley to locate Syrian missile bases. One of the Scouts would be shot down, while another photographed exactly where the missiles had been shot from, giving the location of the missile base which was then bombed.

A Scout shot down is a small loss; IAI sells a package of five Scouts, the ground control station, and launch and retrieval systems for only \$5 million.

Israel's justification for its raids into the Bekaa valley was that it was unacceptable for Lebanon to have anti-aircraft missiles to defend itself, and South Africa has already made similar suggestions about Mozambique. Thus it is widely expected that the next raid will be on a missile site - exactly the kind of escalation that took place in Lebanon.



Mozambique displays rockets which brought down S. Africa's spy plane.

This puts Mozambique in a particularly tight bind. The Matola raid showed a number of weaknesses in the air defences of the capital. Apparently the planes took off close to the border and flew low, thus partly defeating Mozambique's radar. And the raid was timed carefully to coincide with the landing of Mozambique's scheduled DC-10 flight from Paris; this meant Mozambique was unwilling to shoot off its Soviet SA-7 heat seeking missiles for fear of shooting down its own passenger plane.

Mozambique needs improved radar, more SAMs, and a more sophisticated control system to allow the short range SAMs to be

used even when passenger planes are in the air. President Machel announced after the raid that "socialist countries have offered to supply equipment to reinforce the defence of the capital." But installing more Soviet missiles would provide an excuse for another South African attack.

In part, it appears that both raids were intended to test Mozambican defences. Whereas the strafing of Matola proved that the South Africans could beat the defences, the spy plane flight seemed designed to see just what was required to trigger Mozambican anti-aircraft fire.

The Matola attack also seemed intended to frighten ordinary Mozambicans, perhaps into putting pressure on the government to move the ANC out of Maputo. This has been a South African demand for some time, and Frelimo has largely resisted. The targets in the May 23 raid were mostly near places where ANC people lived, or had lived before the 1981 raid on Matola. But no attempt was made to hit ANC houses, even when it would have been easy to do so.

Rather, the South African Air Force picked civilian targets. Two of the houses hit, that of advertising executive Francisco Morgadinho and sculptor Alberto Chissano, are both the largest in their neighbourhoods and the most obvious from the air. Both men have occupied their houses since before independence and there could be no question of their ever having been ANC houses or bases.

Morgadinho's house was expertly hit by South African built Impalas flying at treetop level; all the trees in the garden were splintered and the entire back wall of the house was shattered by rocket and cannon fire.

Similarly, the Somopal factory has been making jam for many years; its creche, which was occupied by 18 workers' children when it was strafed by rocket and cannon fire, was also long standing.

The South Africans announced soon after the raid that it had been called Operation *skerwe*, Afrikaans for shrapnel. And they used special fragmentation rockets which break into shards of shrapnel, which were imbedded in trees and littered around the target areas. They caused most of the six deaths and 40 injuries, but they were absolutely useless against military targets.

Journalists were allowed completely free movement in the western Maputo suburbs of Matola, Sial, and Liberdade where the raid took place. I arrived at one site in Liberdade less than two hours after the attack, and before the arrival of the army. Mozambique's prompt invitation even to South African journalists to look for themselves made nonsense of South African government claims to have killed 64 people and destroyed ANC bases and headquarters.

But this raises a new issue about press coverage of such raids. South Africa lied about most details of this raid, except that it took place – the time, the targets, the victims, and its claim to have given an advance warning were all false. On previous raids, such as the ones on Matola in January 1981 and Maseru in December 1982, both attacker and victim agreed on the basic information; this time there was no such agreement.

Yet the world's press took the story first from South Africa, and during the entire week gave equal coverage to nonsensical claims from General Magnus Malan and to on the spot reports from independent

journalists. It will be interesting to see if, in the future, supposedly sympathetic newspapers still give automatic credence to South Africa's version.

Worst, the press allowed South Africa to set the political tone of the reporting. They all accepted without question that it was in retaliation for the ANC attack three days before on the South African Air Force Headquarters in Pretoria. Yet Mozambican leaders have explicitly and repeatedly refused to accept this linkage.

Foreign Minister Joaquim Chissano was at the United Nations for the Security Council debate on Namibia at the time of the raid, yet he did not specifically raise the

issue of the May 23 raid because it is simply part of the "undeclared war imposed on us by South Africa. Many more than the six people killed in Matola and Liberdade were dying in attacks by the Mozambique National Resistance, the armed bandits who are equally tools of South Africa".

One man who knows that linkage very well is Julio Nduvane. A businessman from Chibuto, about 200 kilometres north of Maputo, Nduvane came to Maputo to escape MNR attacks in mid-May, and stayed with relatives in Matola. They live next to Francisco Morgadinho. He was injured in his bed when a South African rocket came through the bedroom wall. ■

SOUTH AFRICA FACES NEW OPPOSITION MOVEMENTS

BLACK POLITICAL, social, community, medical and educational leaders, working outside the Pretoria Government's racial system, have over the past few weeks issued a strong warning to the white rulers that no matter how powerful their military might, they will never crush their quest for freedom.

For the first time since the government banned the mass-based organisations of the ANC and the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) in the early 1960s and the crushing of 17 black-consciousness organisations in 1977, tens of thousands of people all over the country have established two powerful and significant organisations to continue the struggle. The first move was taken when a number of organisations propagating the principles of the ANC's "Freedom Charter" set-up the United Democratic Front (UDF) to mobilise the people against the Pretoria Government's new constitutional schemes to co-opt the Coloured and Indian people into the white "laager".

The UDF, which already has branches in Johannesburg, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and in other cities, is made up of more than 100 organisations dedicated to the struggle for justice and liberty.

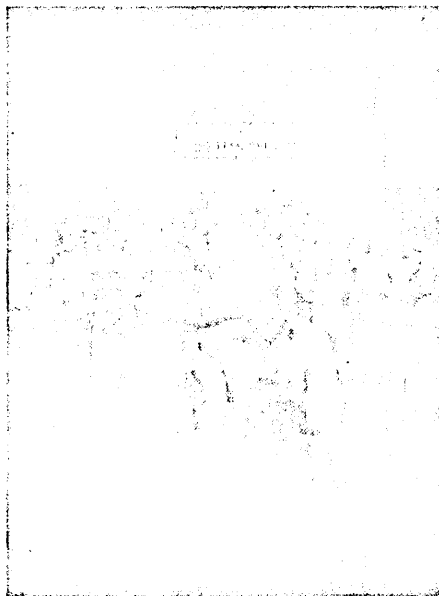
Some of the main organisations include the Soweto Civic Association; South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU); Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO) and the Democratic Lawyers Association (DLA); the Congress of South African Students (COSAS); the Natal Indian Congress (NIC); Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC); the National Medical and Dental Association; the National Education Union of South Africa; the Eastern Cape Co-ordinating Committee, which comprises trade union, civic, church and student bodies; the Federation of South African Women and a number of organisations in Cape Town.

The non-racial, democratic UDF demands that all South Africans must have direct representation at all levels of government, that South Africa is a unitary state, and that all people living within the borders of the state are South Africans.

The other basic demands are for:

① A national convention to decide the future of South Africa. All political prisoners should

unfettered and exiles should be allowed to return home safely.



Opposition movements are uniting to defeat apartheid.

② A unitary state should be formed on the principle of one person one vote.

③ All people should have the right to live where they please in security and comfort.

④ Decent housing and rents which all people can afford.

⑤ Jobs for all, a living wage and the right to organise trade unions.

⑥ Free, non-racial and relevant education for all.

⑦ Equitable land distribution among the people.

Another organisation, the National Forum Committee, was established early in June when more than 800 people representing more than 200 organisations met to discuss the continued repression of the black people by the white minority regime.

Initiated by the Azanian Peoples' Organisation (AZAPO), which represents the black consciousness philosophy in South Africa, the National Forum Committee has drawn-up a manifesto emphasising the need for unity in the liberation struggle.

The manifesto, in its preamble, emphasises that the liberation struggle is not only against

racial discrimination and apartheid but against the economic system of capitalism which forms the basis of oppression of blacks.

Although the primary function of the two-day congress was to form another front against the new constitution of Prime Minister, P W Botha, the participants re-iterated that the constitutional scheme was but one facet of the struggle against apartheid.

They also set out a number of minimum demands for any future negotiations with the all-white government. The main demand was that all jailed, banned and exiled leaders should be allowed to take their rightful place in South African society.

Although the UDF and the National Forum Committee differ on a number of ideological questions, especially the role of whites in the liberation struggle, they seem to have found common ground on one major issue – the total rejection of all political structures created by the white minority regime for the black people.

It is this stand that has prevented their co-operation in any way whatsoever with organisations such as the Inkatha movement of Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and the Indian Reform Party. While the latter two organisations reject the government's constitutional proposals, they still adopt a moderate stance. Both the organisations have committed themselves openly against the liberation movements and Chief Buthelezi still operates from a government platform as head of the KwaZulu Bantustan.

Archie Gumede, who is head of the section of the UDF, told *New African* that the very fact that the mass of the people were still able to organise at grass-roots level indicated that Pretoria had not broken the just struggles of the black people.

"South Africa can use its military might to temporarily threaten the neighbouring countries but it can never use this might to smash the just aspirations of the black people inside South Africa.

"The Western countries, especially the Reagan Administration, must realise that a white minority cannot rule forever. They must use their so-called 'constructive engagement' policy to warn Pretoria that it can never go on oppressing the black people forever. For as long as we are denied our democratic rights, the struggle will continue," said Gumede. ■