

Rand Daily Mail
(S.A.) Sept. 20, '73

Frelimo fighting may last 15 years

Staff Reporter

PORTUGUESE authorities in Mozambique expected the war against terrorists in that country to last for the next 10 or 15 years, and believed it would escalate.

This was said by the United Party MP for Benoni, Mr. Hendrik van Eck.

He was addressing a public meeting in Benoni, organised by the Benoni branch of the Southern Cross Fund.

Mrs. Van Eck and 32 other UP and Nationalist Parliamentarians recently spent 10 days touring the province.

APPALLING

"The appalling thing is that so many European countries have been persuaded that the terrorists are freedom fighters," Mr. Van Eck said.

However, anybody who believed that Mozambique Africans were against the Portuguese Government was mistaken.

He said Portuguese army leaders had told the MPs that only about three per cent of the population had been influenced by the terrorists.

"Initially, the Mozambique authorities had to deal with the nationalistic movement, Frelimo.

"In due course, however, the Frelimo leaders realised that the Portuguese were so benign and good to the population that hardly any improvements could be made," Mr. Van Eck said.

LOSSES

There were now about 30 former Frelimo leaders working for the Mozambique authorities.

The Portuguese said they had lost about 1 000 men in the war.

After the clearing of a no-man's-land and the resettlement of Africans into villages, the Portuguese had to shoot anything that moved in the bush in those areas, he said.

The terrorists in Mozambique were well-armed and even had anti-aircraft guns and bazookas, he added.