

1497: Canon Carr's criticisms. AFP. Sept. 16, '73

Canon Carr, who spoke at the Kenya Press Club on Wednesday (Sept. 12) on alleged Portuguese massacres in Mozambique said the Christian church had every reason to be alarmed by "Portuguese oppression and massacre of African peoples". The most compelling reason stemmed from the existing concordat and missionary agreement between the Vatican States and Portugal, he said. "The concordat affords the legal basis for mutual assistance between the Catholic church and Portugal", he said. Under it, "the Church provides the ideology for Portugal's system of bloody colonial oppression, and in return receives aid and orders from Portugal". Canon Carr said that very many Catholics around the world were deeply troubled by this alliance between the Catholic church and Portugal. He said that the Holy See had been called upon many times to exercise a reconciling ministry between the Portuguese government and the liberation movements. Shortly before the Catholic bishop's Conference in Kampala, the MPLA and FRELIMO had asked the Vatican to inform the Portuguese government of their willingness to abandon the armed struggle, given certain conditions, he said. "There is no evidence that this appeal received a reply", the Canon continued. "There can be no doubt that, in setting loose the Portuguese army against the innocent and defenceless victims of Wiriyamu and Chawola, Portugal is guilty of a crime against humanity". He also said that Portugal's use of "napalm, terror and assassination in all her colonies to suppress the legitimate aspirations of Africans for human dignity and freedom, must be condemned as a crime against humanity".