

Exclusive Report From Mozambique:

A High Price On Development

A journalist who recently visited Mozambique filed this report on the problems and prospects of that key black African nation's development goals.

Two striking yet contradictory facts immediately impress the visitor to Mozambique.

First, this large, sparsely populated country of about 10 million people represents one of the most promising potentials for economic development in Africa, if not the entire so-called Third World. Its fertile river valleys, such as the Limpopo and the Zambeze, are perfectly suited for large-scale irrigated and mechanized agriculture. These same rivers could provide the electric

and from Maputo to the South African Transvaal. In fact, through treaty arrangements, the former Central African Federation (now Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, and Rhodesia) was prevented from seeking alternative ports.

Thus, by 1965, two-thirds of the total tonnage handled in Beira, Mozambique's largest port, and a fifth of the tonnage passing through Maputo were from Southern Rhodesia alone. So interconnected were these economies

MOZAMBIQUE

power for industrial processing of barely tapped reserves of iron, coal, and bauxite. Its port infrastructure is among the most developed on the continent. It is not difficult to see that this potential, once integrated with the vast mineral resources of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Angola, would represent an important basis for the industrialization of all of southern Africa.

Yet, the Mozambican economy is among the most troubled in the world, due to the simple fact that not since the isolation of Cuba has a nation struggled for development under such aversive conditions.

Independence and Interdependence

Development would never have been easy for a sovereign Mozambique, even if it were not under siege. Undoing 500 years of colonial pillage at the hands of Portugal and its British banking patrons, Mozambicans emphasize, is an awesome task in itself. Colonialism's legacy is a population that is 90 percent illiterate. The very structure of the economy is designed to move the largest amount of loot out of the country as fast as possible; the only domestically oriented activity was geared to servicing the expatriate community that administered the colony. The population at large was without even the minimum in the way of roads, hospitals, and adequate food.

By the 20th century, Portugal was completely indebted to the City of London, and so Mozambique's primary role became that of servicing the important British colonies that surrounded the Portuguese colony on all sides. Large modern railroads were constructed from the port of Beira to Salisbury for transport of Rhodesian chrome,

Cuba And Mozambique Collaborate

Mozambique's potential as a mediator of economic development for all of southern Africa was emphasized during Mozambican President Samora Machel's recent visit to Cuba. In a speech Oct. 12 welcoming Machel, Cuban President Fidel Castro cited Mozambique's vast mineral, agricultural, and hydroelectric resources as the basis for such regional progress, referring to the African nation as a future breadbasket for the entire continent. Not only does Mozambique possess more than 50 million hectares of arable land, said Castro, but its huge rivers represent enough hydro-electric capability to supply internal needs as well as much of the energy requirements of neighboring countries. There are rivers in Mozambique, the Cuban president noted, that equal the flow of all of Cuba's rivers combined.

However, the new African nation must "start from zero," Castro said, due to the backwardness and lack of skills of the population resulting from Portuguese colonialism.

Machel, acknowledging Castro's remarks, stated that the colonial regime "organized misery, sowed illiteracy, and maintained the population in maximum backwardness" as a deliberate policy of subjugation.

To reverse this labor power problem of Mozambique, Cuba has received more than 1,000 Mozambican students this year in technical and general education programs, and pledges to double this figure next year. Four schools have been built especially for Mozambicans in Cuba, while the Cuban government has sent more than 400 technical advisors and personnel to Mozambique.

that much of the transportation links between northern and southern Mozambique passed through Rhodesia. In addition, prior to independence two years ago, over a quarter of a million Mozambican workers were employed in the mines and plantations in Rhodesia, South Africa, and Swaziland.

It is difficult to overemphasize this dependence on Rhodesia. A newcomer to Mozambique is surprised at how developed the ports of Maputo and Beira are, complete with huge rail yards, modern ore-loading equipment and the freight warehouses. Yet little of it has much to do with what Mozambique produces internally. As a result, Beira is now practically idle.

Sanctions and Sabotage

The government of Mozambique closed all borders with Rhodesia in March 1976 in observance of the United Nations resolution calling on all member states to cease trade with the illegal Smith regime. At first it may seem puzzling why a new nation would want to cut such a vital economic connection. But as one government official commented recently, not to impose sanctions against Rhodesia would merely perpetuate Mozambique's dependence at the expense of the future development of its own national economy. Our future, he explained, depends on a free Zimbabwe; our economies are integrated, and therefore we must develop together.

The costs to Mozambique of imposing sanctions are immense. The United Nations has estimated that direct losses in trade total around \$125 million annually. To put this figure in perspective, Mozambique's total foreign exchange earnings for 1977 are projected at approximately \$350 million. Specifically, the application of sanctions has meant not only the loss of all Rhodesian traffic, but all traffic from Zaire, Zambia, and Botswana; all rail traffic from northern Mozambique to the southern portion of the country and South Africa; and all rail traffic between southern Mozambique and Malawi. Indirect costs are almost impossible to calculate.

Although the United Nations has issued a resolution calling on all member states to provide aid to Mozambique in light of these circumstances, total assistance has so far totaled less than half of the more than \$200 million per year estimated by the UN as necessary to cover for the effects of imposing sanctions.

But perhaps even more debilitating to the Mozambican economy in the long run is the widespread, foreign-directed sabotage. It began even before Frelimo, the national liberation movement and now the country's ruling party, assumed power during the transition to independence in June 1975. The colonial government, along with all major Portuguese-British controlled firms, began to rapidly shut off all investment and maintenance following the fall of the Portuguese regime in April 1974. When it became obvious that it was impossible to avoid handing over power to Frelimo, every possible liquid asset was smuggled out of the country. In the months preceding and following June 1975, the smuggling included huge amounts of machinery, equipment, vehicles, and even furniture. Former colonists hijacked several of the country's precious few airplanes to Rhodesia. Hundreds of ships and fishing boats were pirated down the coast to South Africa. In the

outskirts of Maputo I saw factories and stores that had been burned to the ground. I was told that this had been a common occurrence throughout the country, and that colonists abandoning homes and buildings even poured cement down drains to destroy the plumbing.

The Frelimo government made strenuous efforts to urge businessmen, and especially skilled personnel, to stay. But it was widely recognized that the pressure behind the exodus was not coming from some "natural" impulse within Mozambique. Several Portuguese expatriates who decided to stay on and become Mozambican citizens told me how the Portuguese secret police, the notorious British-connected PIDE, planted wild stories in the press. At one point, a rumor swept the country that Frelimo was going to "nationalize" all children, a fabrication that had much to do with scaring foreign contract workers and technicians into fleeing the country.

It is the loss of skilled manpower that is the most crippling handicap for the new economy. The shortage of skilled labor is sorely evident everywhere. Entire factories lie idle for lack of technicians and managers. Even mechanics for busses, trucks, and tractors are in extremely short supply. Within the government, vast portions of the civil service were gutted; officials fled, tons of files were destroyed, machinery was stolen. The apparatus to run the government and the economy had to be developed from scratch, so much so that the government's economic planners still do not have a comprehensive survey of the country's natural resources. Records are so scarce that the true impact of the past 18 months' raids from Rhodesia, for example, has not been determined, since precise population and production figures for the regions affected are not available.

Total production losses resulting from sabotage have not been assessed. However, according to official documents, output of many items, particularly the key export commodities of sugar, cotton, cashew nuts, shrimp, and coal, is not expected to recover to pre-independence levels until 1979-1981.

Rhodesia's War on Mozambique

It is in this context that the Rhodesian regime has launched steadily increasing military raids on Mozambican territory. Under the pretext of retaliation for Mozambique's support of the Zimbabwe liberation movement, these attacks have escalated from quick ground sorties to large-scale operations involving heavy artillery, thousands of troops, and air strikes using attack helicopters and Mirage jets equipped with 500 kilogram bombs.

The Rhodesian raids have two objectives: to cripple the Mozambican economy as much as possible, and to terrorize the population in an effort to provoke demoralization and political dissension. On the latter count, the August 1976 attack on the Nyazonia refugee camp is exemplary. The camp, administered by the United Nations, not by the government, was completely overrun, leaving more than 700 civilians dead.

Similarly, during the several attacks on the town of Mapai, a major population center of the agriculturally important Limpopo valley, it was obvious that the objectives were not strictly military. Schools, hospitals,

and hundreds of homes were destroyed. From photographs I saw of the victims of Mapai, which is now completely deserted, it is clear that the Rhodesian mercenaries did not merely shoot the inhabitants; they spent considerable time and effort in mutilating bodies. These atrocities have been repeated in dozens of towns and villages in the provinces of Gaza, Manica, and Tete.

The Smith regime has chosen its targets with pinpoint precision at crucial points of Mozambique's infrastructure. The destruction of the bridge over the Pungue river in Manica province cut the last remaining major highway connection between Maputo and the north. Not only does this prevent the distribution of vital foodstuffs, much of which has to be imported, but it paralyzes the completion of the electrification projects at the Cabora Bassa dam in Tete. The heavy generators can only reach the dam via the highway not cut off at the Pungue river.

In the area of telecommunications, all links between Maputo and the northern provinces, including the key port of Beira, as well as connections to Zambia and Tanzania, were routed through the country's only troposcatter repeater station in the town of Chicualacuala on the Rhodesian border. The station was destroyed last year. Other attacks have laid waste to food warehouses, airfields, water reservoirs, rail lines, and truck depots.

Nor are the Rhodesian attacks limited to the border vicinity. Last January an air raid was launched against the town of Chocue, 300 kilometers inside the border and a mere 150 kilometers north of Maputo. One official

commented that it is impossible to delineate an area of the country that would not be subject to attack. Since Mozambique has no combat aircraft, Maputo itself is a potential target.

The government has officially estimated damage from Rhodesian attacks at a mere \$13 million. But these are only the direct costs of replacing destroyed buildings and equipment. Not calculated are the losses of crops that could not be marketed due to cut rail and road links. The Pungue bridge, for example, is valued at only about \$1 million, but its real value to the economy is almost incalculable, as shown by the loss of the electric potential of the Cabora Bassa. Nor have the losses in terms of displaced population been taken into account. It has been roughly estimated that a quarter of a million people have been directly affected by the attacks, but precisely how many families have been forced to abandon farms and other activities, no one knows. Complete assessments are impossible due to the isolation of various sections of the country. Communications between Maputo and villages in Tete, for example, now takes days.

Despite unrelenting attempts to thwart Mozambique's development the two- to five-year outlook appears promising. Aid from the socialist countries, and even from certain western nations channeled through the United Nations, is looked to to save the economy from disaster in the short run. Mozambicans are very optimistic about a favorable settlement of the Rhodesian question within a year or two, and assuming that they and the Angolans continue to provide leadership to Africa's black "front-line states," such a settlement is likely to lead to regional development accords based on the vast mineral wealth of the area. Under such conditions, the dormant infrastructure of Maputo and Beira will thrive as hubs of southern African trade.

At the same time, projects are already underway for the exploitation of new resources. A West German firm has done feasibility studies of new coal deposits in Niassa. Millions of tons of high-grade coal may eventually be exported from Nacala, presently a small fishing town but also the best natural deep-water port on the African east coast. Cost estimates have already been made on turning Nacala into a major shipping terminal. The coal could eventually go to steel smelters using iron ore from the central and southern regions, as well as from Swaziland and South Africa, with energy provided by the Cabora Bassa dam on the Zambeze river. The government also plans to incorporate 10,000 hectares of arable land per year into the modern agriculture sector through projects such as the planned Limpopo dam, which will supply irrigation for at least two high-yield crops annually in the valley. In the crucial area of scientific and technical training, the expanding student and worker exchange programs with Cuba and other allies will greatly accelerate Mozambique's already intensive training drives.

It was therefore not surprising to find no Maoist writings in Maputo's bookstores. One government official told me that when a Chinese "technical" mission was consulted for advice on how to recover an abandoned factory producing light agricultural machinery two years ago, the Chinese unhesitatingly recommended the plant be torn down. Distribute crude hand tools among

LaRouche: South Africa- Mozambique Tie, Key To Peace

Mozambique's enormous economic potential represents the unique basis for a durable peace effort in southern Africa. U.S. Labor Party chairman Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. outlined such a peace proposal in a statement released this week:

"The Republic of South Africa is properly perceived as the mediator of high-technology-oriented economic development throughout the region. This requires, of course, that the nation's internal and external policies be brought into agreement with equitable economic development treaties with its predominantly black neighbors, and the issue of Namibia resolved in that context. ...

"A solution to the problem means that the Republic of South Africa must negotiate through (most probably) Mozambique, and must establish both detente and economic cooperation with Mozambique and Angola. In that case, a treaty-negotiating commission initiated with participation of the Republic of South Africa, Mozambique, and Angola will lead toward rapid and substantial improvements in all matters throughout southern Africa — provided that continental Europe and the United States support this effort."

the rural population for "labor intensive" ("full employment") cultivation, the advisors said. The mission was politely told to leave.

The surest guarantee in Mozambique's fight for development is the Frelimo leadership's commitment to scientific and technological progress. The "Economic and Social Directives," Frelimo's development guidelines presented at the party's Third Congress last February, emphasize that the primary task for ensuring expanded production is "the constant raising and

upgrading of the scientific and technical knowledge of the working classes" (emphasis in the original). The document calls on Frelimo cadre and the government to "accelerate the process of industrialization and promote the establishment of heavy industry ... (and) the progressive mechanization of agriculture.... The global strategy of our economic and social development ... is to take agriculture as the base and industry as the decisive and propelling factor."

— C. Allen

Black African Diplomat:

South African Arrests, A Vorster Bid To Block Regional War

South African police carried out a nationwide sweep on the morning of Oct. 19, arresting more than 50 leaders of nearly every organization considered part of the country's "black consciousness" movement following a declaration by the Pretoria government outlawing these groups. (For a viable policy for South Africa see "NATO in Caesar's Foolish Footsteps" by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. International Section.) What follows are an African frontline state diplomat's comments on the South African clampdown:

Q: What do you see as the motivation behind the recent South African clampdown?

A: I think Vorster's action resulted from two closely related things: the upcoming elections in South Africa and the danger of the Rhodesia crisis erupting into regional war.

Q: What is the connection between the two?

A: Vorster does not want to get maneuvered into backing up Rhodesia's Prime Minister Smith in a southern Africa conflagration. Vorster has called the elections to get a

big mandate to aid in pursuing this goal. The British and allied forces intended to heat up racial sentiments to throw Vorster's right-wing base into a frenzy, and make it impossible for him to stay out of the crisis precipitated by the Rhodesia issue.

But by focussing the election campaign on South Africa's determination not to be dictated to by Carter or others, Vorster is clearing out a certain rancor that has existed in his base due to government cooperation with the U.S. in the past. By strengthening his position internally on the basis of this particular issue, Vorster hopes to be able to continue holding back, and not be maneuvered into going to the aid of Smith militarily.

It looks like the recent clampdown was a move by Vorster to preempt an operation designed to heat up racial antagonism in his base, thus jeopardizing his overall strategy. I don't see the clampdown as a unilateral action by the South African government to go after blacks, but an action taken to procure a position that will enable Vorster to maintain his policy of war avoidance.