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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

F5

8 December 1964

SPECIAL MEMORANDUM NO. 16-64

SUBJECT: Guerrilla Prospects in Mozambique

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SUMMARY

As we estimated earlier this year,\* the Mozambique nationalist movement, encouraged by increased foreign support, has launched some guerrilla forays into that province. However, the movement is still ill-organized and divided, and the Portuguese are manifesting their intention to hold on by maintaining a 17,000-man military force. Hence, though longer-term prospects are doubtful, we continue to believe that the Portuguese will retain control for at least the next year or so.

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Current Situation

1. Small-scale attacks on military patrols, administrative posts, and communications lines in northern Mozambique in late

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SNIE 71-64, "Short-Term Prospects for the African Nationalist Movements in Angola and Mozambique," dated 1 July 1964.

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

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~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

September marked the outbreak of guerrilla violence in that Portuguese territory which had remained largely free of nationalist agitation. Until then Frelimo, the principal Mozambique nationalist organization, which is led by Eduardo Mondlane and based in Tanzania, sought to avoid guerrilla operations until it had substantially improved its organization and broadened its following inside Mozambique. Frelimo's, or more precisely, Mondlane's, changed tactics stem largely from external considerations, but also reflect some minor changes in nationalist capabilities within Mozambique.

2. In Africa generally, in recent months, there has been renewed pressure to show some progress in "liberating" the white-dominated areas in southern Africa. Emotionalism on this issue dominated the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Heads of State meeting in July, and it continued at a high pitch at the "Nonaligned" Conference in Cairo in October. Meanwhile, growing African resentment over developments in the Congo after Tshombe took office, notably, his introduction of white mercenaries, paved the way for those radicals interested in whipping up strident African nationalism. Indeed, the Congo has provided a golden opportunity for the more militant radicals throughout Africa to press their demands that all African states demonstrate their

- 2 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

willingness at last to support direct action against "imperialist" regimes. With the Angolan rebellion stalled, with the Rhodesian nationalists disposed to await action by the new Labor Government in the UK, and with South Africa much too difficult to crack, Mozambique seemed to the Africans a good chance to dramatize the "anticolonialist" struggle through armed action.

3. Largely because of this increased support from abroad, Frelimo has enhanced its operational capabilities to a degree. It claims about 2,000 fighters. Although this figure is probably exaggerated, perhaps by 50 percent, some revolutionaries, including 200 Algerian-trained guerrillas, are now receiving training from Tanzania's armed forces at sites near the Mozambique border. Frelimo's irregulars now have access to Soviet, Algerian, and possibly Chinese, arms, and chronic fund shortages have been alleviated by subsidies from Peiping and, more recently, by an allocation from the OAU's Liberation Committee amounting to about \$400,000, of which some \$14,000 has been received. Also, there is evidence that Frelimo has been able to maintain communications into southern Mozambique, to organize some cells in that region, and to subvert a number of tribal chiefs appointed by the Portuguese.

4. Apart from radical African pressure generally, the chief event which probably caused Mondlane to advance his revolutionary timetable was the steadily growing pressure from more activist elements within Frelimo. These figures, notably some leaders of the prickly Makonde tribesmen comprising the Mozambique African National Union (MANU), are only loosely subject to Mondlane's orders. It is also possible that another exile organization, the UAR- and Communist-backed UDENAMO, initiated guerrilla raids in order to divert OAU support from Mondlane. It is likely that these various radical elements were encouraged by Oscar Kambona, Tanzania's influential and rabidly African-nationalist Minister of External Affairs, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Thus, on 25 September -- the date on which the first organized raids into Mozambique were launched -- Frelimo proclaimed the general insurrection of the Mozambican people, declaring that "armed struggle is the only way" to achieve independence.

5. In the event, some eight insurgent bands (numbering about 20 men each, based in Tanzania and Malawi) were able to stage some ambushes, attack small settlements, and carry out scattered acts of violence over extensive areas along the borders. Frelimo also claims to have carried out some sabotage, e.g., 10 railroad

cars and a warehouse. Most of the bands were quickly captured or scattered by the Portuguese military, although elements of two may still be at large. An ambush of army units from the Mueda garrison, and the spreading apprehension among plantation owners apparently triggered a decision to have the Portuguese military forces clear a cordon sanitaire along the Tanzania border. This has led to the burning of some African villages, and has precipitated the exodus of several thousand refugees into Tanzania. Their fate has further enflamed African opinion and focussed international attention on the Mozambique problem.

6. Within Mozambique the insurgents seem to have achieved only modest results at best, and additional forays on the September scale have not since been initiated. However, a few minor incidents have occurred subsequently, and the Portuguese are still conducting patrols. The chief consequences of the raids probably have been the growing -- although still limited -- apprehension among the Portuguese settlers as far south as Quelimane, and the temporary intimidation of African labor from working the sisal and sugar plantations with possible economic effects.

Outlook

7. Despite the guerrilla outbreak, and the improved position of the nationalists, particularly in arms and external support, we do not look for a widespread uprising of Mozambicans to join the nationalist cause. (That cause still seems to lack popular support except possibly among the Makondes who straddle the Tanzanian border.) Nor do we consider likely a rapid deterioration in the general security situation in Mozambique. It is true, of course, that the Portuguese cannot prevent the infiltration of individuals or small groups across their northern or eastern frontiers on terrorist or recruiting missions; and that the radical African states and the Communists will continue to encourage and back the nationalists with training, arms, and cash. It is also true that the threat to the Portuguese would develop more rapidly if Kambona should come to power in Tanzania, or if President Banda in Malawi should be replaced by political foes who object to his "pro-Portuguese" policies.

8. Nevertheless, at present the Mozambique insurrectionary movement still appears poorly organized and divided. Mondlane's leadership has yet to be tested. Secondary officials are unimpressive. Further internal disputes seem likely: in particular,

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Cairo's man, Gumane, leader of UDENAMO, will seek a more influential role for his group within Frelimo. Trained guerrilla fighters are still scarce, and increased arms and funds in themselves cannot overcome that handicap quickly. Moreover, the fairly efficient manner by which the Portuguese repulsed the guerrilla incursion, and the harsh retaliation on the African populace is likely to discourage any impulse for popular support from a still largely politically inert people.

9. The nationalists will almost certainly attempt new guerrilla raids. They may now also seek to initiate terrorist campaigns in important urban areas to the south such as Beira and Lourenco Marques, although urban terrorist campaigns would require a degree of expertise which the Angolan rebels have been unable to master after nearly four years of effort -- despite Moroccan and Algerian training. Thus, the nationalists seem too weak to sustain other than a bothersome exile movement for many months to come.

10. This is not to say that the Portuguese are without problems. They have been forced into increasing expenditures to maintain a 17,000-man military force in an economically unrewarding area, to build new military and naval facilities and roads, and to strengthen the police and provide physical security for essential services.

- 7 -

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But at the moment, the main Portuguese concern is scarcely more than the flagging morale on the part of some settlers, particularly in the less populated areas in the north. The chief danger in the situation will be that even occasional rebel incursions may spark demands among the Portuguese in Lisbon or Mozambique for reprisals against Tanzania which would bring about serious complications in Africa. In sum, although there is likely to be some erosion of Portugal's ability to maintain order, it seems unlikely that any eventuality will arise in Mozambique during the next year or so which the Portuguese cannot handle.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:



SHERMAN KENT  
Chairman

- 8 -

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