

Mozambican Socialism and the Nkomati Accord

In looking at the past decade of Mozambican independence, **EDUARDO DA SILVA** examines the processes of economic collapse and political instability which forced Mozambique into the signing of the Nkomati Accord with South Africa.

The Nkomati Accord signed between the People's Republic of Mozambique and the South African government on 10 March 1984 raises a number of important questions for the democratic movement in South Africa. Despite claims that the Accord represents a victory for Mozambican diplomacy, there is no doubt that through the signing and implementation of the Nkomati Accord, Pretoria has achieved one of its major foreign policy objectives in Southern Africa - ie agreement by an important Frontline State to deny the ANC access to South Africa from its territory and to police the remaining ANC presence in Mozambique. In addition the Accord has created the most favourable conditions ever for the South African state to launch an offensive aimed at ending its long standing international isolation.

This article examines why South African strategy was able to achieve this success with respect to Mozambique. It focuses on two issues: the development of South Africa's regional strategy after 1978 and the internal political and economic processes in Mozambique within which South African strategy could intervene to such effect.

THE EVOLUTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN REGIONAL STRATEGY

Mozambican and Angolan independence in 1975 as a result of armed national liberation struggles, fundamentally shifted the balance of power in

Southern Africa. It undermined the hitherto single most important prop of South African policy in the region - the maintenance of a series of colonised 'buffer states' around South Africa. The rapid collapse of Portuguese colonialism gave rise to a hasty reformulation of regional strategy in 1974. South African military capacity was expanded and a new political-diplomatic initiative known as detente was launched. Its objective was the search for influential allies within the OAU. Despite some initial successes, the detente initiative collapsed in the debacle of the first South African invasion of Angola in 1975-6 and the brutal suppression of the 1976 Soweto uprising. This prompted sharp debates within the South African state over the strategy, objectives and tactics of both internal and regional policy. These debates and conflicts eventually led to the fall of Vorster, the assumption of office by the Botha/Malan government and the adoption of 'Total Strategy' as official state policy.

Total Strategy's ultimate objective was defined as the establishment of a 'Constellation of Southern African States' - an anti-marxist grouping, informally allied with and tied to apartheid South Africa through a range of economic projects. More immediate objectives within this framework were also defined. These were: a) to deny external ANC cadres access to South Africa through neighbouring states and to induce these states to police the ANC presence in their countries, b) to

prevent states in the region from aligning themselves with socialist countries, c) to maintain and deepen the economic dependence of Southern African states of South African capitalism, d) to prevent and undermine the development of alternative economic linkages between Southern African states, e) to cajole these states into moderating their criticisms of apartheid.

The Total Strategy initiative involved the mobilisation of the full range of economic, political and ideological as well as military resources available to South African capitalism. The tactical package consisted of a combination of sanctions and inducements.

'Disincentive levers' against non-cooperative states included both the threat and actual implementation of various forms of military action - from raids to the cultivation of puppet groups such as Unita, MNR and the LLA. Economic pressure included disrupting export and import traffic through South Africa, limiting the recruitment of migrant workers, and placing curbs on the supply of important commodities to Southern African states. The combination of military action with economic disruption as part of the Total Strategy, is generally referred to as 'destabilisation'. 'Incentive levers' included offers of aid, investment and cooperation in joint infrastructural projects to states willing to collaborate with Pretoria. These were originally to have been channelled through the institutions of the Constellation of States, particularly through the proposed Southern African Development Bank. However, other institutional forms, such as the Southern African Customs Union and straight bilateral channels have also been used as a means of passing on 'incentives'.

Detente attempted to win the collaboration of individual decision makers. 'Incentives' however, were designed to influence the objective socio-economic context within which decisions were made.

The application of the Total Strategy policy can be divided into four distinct phases. Each has involved a different combination of destabilisation and incentives applied differently to each of the countries of the region.

PHASE ONE 1978 - 1980 LAUNCHING A CONSTELLATION

In its original form the Constellation of States proposal was predicated on Zimbabwe achieving independence under a collaborationist Muzorewa government. Zimbabwe would then have served as the magnet attracting other states into the Constellation. This vision collapsed with the defeat of the Muzorewa forces in the Zimbabwe independence elections in February 1980. The Constellation proposal was further set back by the establishment two months later of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC). Formed on the initiative of the Front Line states, SADCC defined its primary objective as the reduction of economic dependence on South Africa. The inclusion of even the most conservative states in the SADCC was a major reverse for Total Strategy.

REFINING DESTABILISATION

The second phase of Total Strategy from mid-1980 to the end of 1981, involved the application of destabilisation tactics in a fairly generalised and indiscriminate manner. Military aggression against independent states escalated with invasions of Angola, the January 1981 raid against ANC residences in Matola near Maputo, increased support for puppet groups, threats to turn Swaziland into a 'second front', and numerous individual acts of terrorism by South African agents. Simultaneously, South Africa applied economic techniques of coercion such as the withdrawal of railway equipment from Mozambique and Zimbabwe and impeding Zimbabwean imports and exports passing through South African ports.

The third phase began in 1982, with the South African state responding more selectively to the specific conditions in each country. Two objectives were stressed: a) that regional states should limit both the numbers and activities of ANC members, and b) that SADCC attempts to reduce regional dependence on South African capitalism should be curbed. The selective application of the destabilisation/incentives tactical package clearly sought to divide the

states of the region.

Potential collaborator states, particularly Swaziland and Malawi, were offered greatly increased incentives. For example, under the notorious 'land deal' South Africa offered to cede to Swaziland the KaNgwane bantustan and the Ngwavuma region of the KwaZulu bantustan. Through the Customs Union Agreement a R50 million 'gratuity' was paid to the Swazi government in the form of an excess revenue payment. Assistance was provided for the financing and construction of an alternative rail link to the existing connection with Maputo. In return, the Swazi ruling clique entered into a secret 'Non-Aggression Pact' with Pretoria in February 1982, and took strenuous action against ANC cadres in the country.

States which South Africa regarded as either most vulnerable or as its major adversaries, were subjected to an intensified destabilisation campaign. The prime targets here were Lesotho, Angola and Mozambique. Direct military aggression by conventional South African forces, and an escalated campaign of terrorist violence by puppet groups were designed to destroy the capacity of governments to govern. Direct and indirect forms of economic sabotage were co-ordinated from Pretoria. This 'softening up' process caused intense suffering and material damage inducing severe crisis in each of these states.

By mid 1983 the Mozambican government concluded that in order to survive, it had no option other than to sue for peace. To do so it turned to the western powers, launching a diplomatic offensive which sought to persuade them that in return for a measure of support it was prepared to loosen its ties with socialist countries.

This occurred at a time when the western powers favoured a settlement within the framework of the Reagan administration's 'regional security' doctrine. From at least the beginning of 1981 South Africa's activities had clearly enjoyed the not so tacit support of the Reagan administration and other western governments. This support was implicit within the doctrine of 'constructive engagement'. However by mid 1983, in the context of the worst drought this century, such was the scale of the human

suffering directly caused by destabilisation that even the major imperialist powers could no longer turn a blind eye. These conditions generated fears in western countries that Mozambique might appeal for military support from its socialist allies. Thus when Mozambique indicated its preparedness to treat with Pretoria in mid 1983, it met a receptive climate in the west. This created the conditions for direct negotiations at the end of 1983, resulting in the Nkomati Accord.

PHASE FOUR - NKOMATI

The signing of the Nkomati agreement inaugurated the fourth phase in South African policy in the region. Whilst it is still too early to be able to predict the full range and combination of tactics likely to be employed, some indications are already clear. The Accord has created greater opportunities for South Africa to use economic weapons against neighbouring states. In Botha's speech at Nkomati he pointedly referred to his vision of a 'veritable Constellation of states' in Southern Africa. South Africa clearly views a programme of selective investments as a means of deepening dependence on South Africa and transforming SADCC into a complementary institution to the Constellation of states. Whilst open militaristic tactics appear to have been put to one side for the moment, South Africa has no intention of dismantling or even reducing the size of its military machine. This was made clear in the March 1984 budget which increased military expenditure by 21%. As well, the amount authorised to exceed the budget was R40 million. The intention to maintain a threatening military capacity was also stated in the April 1984 Defence White Paper, which emphasised the successes achieved by what it called 'the policy of deterrence', and stressed that a strong military posture was essential if the 'peace process' was to advance.

The Nkomati Accord was however not simply the result of South African policy. It grew too out of internal contradictions and struggles within Mozambique since its independence in June 1975.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROCESSES WITHIN MOZAMBIQUE

There have been numerous attempts to analyse political and economic developments in Mozambique since 1974. One approach portrays FRELIMO as having attempted to implement a 'correct' revolutionary programme in the face of tremendous 'external' difficulties deriving from the heritage of Portuguese colonialism and/or South African destabilisation. This approach ignores the crucial internal contradictions as well as certain basic strategic and tactical errors made by FRELIMO which have in part generated the conditions in which external intervention would be effective. Others argue that FRELIMO was never a 'genuine' workers/Marxist-Leninist party and that the whole project could never have risen above that of petty-bourgeois 'socialism'.

However, in any society where a national liberation movement has seized power, complex and shifting alliances of oppressed class forces have gone to make up the conditions for that seizure of power. In the time after liberation, there are continued processes of class formation, class struggle and evolving forms of political and state organisation.

The following sections attempt to outline the major dimensions in this process as well as the complex articulation between 'internal' and 'external' factors which is indispensable to an understanding of post-independence Mozambique.

FORMING FRELIMO

The colonial state in Mozambique was racist, highly centralised, repressive and authoritarian, and characterised by outmoded bureaucratic practices which reflected the backward character of Portuguese capitalism. No forms of political organisation outside of the colonial institutions were permitted. Trade union organisation was virtually non-existent, except for reactionary sindicatos, open only to whites and 'assimilated' blacks, and incorporated into the corporativist structures of the state. Cultural organisations were likewise severely repressed. The repressive apparatus of the colonial

state was notorious for its practice of brutal torture and assassination routinely applied against any form of dissidence.

All of these features had profound implications for the type of economy and state structures inherited by the FRELIMO government. Four questions were posed. 1) how to break from the dependence on migratory labour to South Africa and transform the economy of the south. 2) How to free peasant agriculture in the centre from the deforming impact of seasonal labour on the plantations. 3) How to produce an indigenous cadre of skilled manpower. 4) How to smash the colonial state and create a people's democracy.

FRELIMO was formed in 1962 through a merger of three disparate nationalist organisations. It represented an alliance of nationally oppressed class forces. During the armed struggle, the organisation underwent a number of severe internal struggles, which FRELIMO interprets as a struggle between different class lines. Through this process, an indigenous Marxist perspective of the national liberation struggle and the type of society which was to replace colonialism was developed.

The armed struggle was mainly confined to the three northern provinces of Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Tete. This struggle was based predominantly on the poor peasantry of these regions and saw the emergence of liberated areas in which new, collective forms of production were developed. Whilst FRELIMO enjoyed overwhelming popular support in the urban areas, by 1974 it had not yet succeeded in translating this into an organised working class base in the cities. In the southern region as a whole, its organised presence remained weak.

As a result of the internal struggles within FRELIMO during the armed struggle, when FRELIMO came to power in 1975 it was committed to socialist transformation in Mozambique. As part of the global anti-imperialist struggle, this implied aligning with other liberation movements and establishing close links with the socialist world.

Despite its current emphasis on unity and cohesion, FRELIMO was never a monolithic organisation. Nor did it ever simply represent the interests of workers and peasants. It embraced all those class forces oppressed by Portuguese colonialism. Thus the

issue of which of the colonially oppressed class forces is able to assert its leadership over the organisation, has always been a central question.

FRELIMO took power in a country whose economy and class structure posed very difficult problems for any process of socialist transformation and which brought class contradictions sharply to the fore.

To understand post independence developments, the interaction of internal class struggles with external factors, derived from the changing balance at both the Southern African regional and world levels, must be understood.

1975 - 1977: ATTEMPTING SOCIALIST PLANNING

Mozambican independence on 25 June 1975 marked a change in the balance of forces at three levels. Firstly the fundamental change in relations between the colonisers and colonised within the country. Secondly, it represented a major advance for the national liberation struggles in the Southern African region. Thirdly, together with the defeat of imperialist intervention in Angola and the emergence of a socialist oriented government in Ethiopia it was a marked defeat for imperialist strategy in Africa and had a modest but nonetheless significant impact on the global balance of forces.

Independence did now bring an end to struggles on any of these levels. They intensified as the internal and external forces for whom Mozambican independence represented a setback initiated fierce rearguard actions against the new state.

Immediately after independence most settler owned farms, factories, shops and other property were abandoned. Most Portuguese professional, technical, skilled and supervisory personnel left the country. With the drop in production levels and the collapse of rural commercial networks, export earnings and the provision of food to the cities decreased considerably.

At the same time Mozambique was subject to intense pressure from South Africa. By 1977 the number of Mozambican migrant workers for the South African mines had been cut from 118 000 to a mere 41 000, a move which created severe unemployment in the

Southern region. Because of increased mine wages, resulting from struggles on the mines around this time, and the rising 'unofficial' price of gold, the Mozambican government was able for a while to derive increased foreign exchange earnings, despite the decline in the numbers of workers employed on the gold mines.

However, the mid 1970s saw sharply rising import prices, while world prices for Mozambican agricultural export products of cotton, tea, cashew nuts and sisal were either static or declined sharply.

During this period FRELIMO adopted both defensive actions as well as measures intended to bring about economic, political and social transformations. The sectors of health, education, housing, legal services and burial services were nationalised as an offensive measure in July 1975. All other nationalisations were essentially defensive responses to abandonment by the former owners. The result was the emergence of a state sector substantially larger than anything planned for by FRELIMO. With the creation of nationalised lojas do povo (people's shops), the state was obliged to assume direct responsibility for the bulk of wholesale and retail trade in the rural areas.

At the political level a mobilisation campaign to involve all Mozambicans directly in local administration was instituted. Grupos Dinamisadores (Dynamising Groups - GDs) were set up, and in the rural areas the GDs replaced the collaborationist chieftaincy. Communal villages were also established and the Organisation of Mozambican Women (OMM) and the Youth Organisation (OJM) were mandated to mobilise women and the youth into local administrative structures.

For the first time in Mozambican history, workers and peasants were drawn into forms of organisation with some collective power to materially affect and alter the day to day conditions of their lives, as well as to intervene in discussions over national policy. These organisations began to develop into embryonic forms of popular power and although a coherent strategy of collective organisation and social transformation did not emerge, a social and ideological impulse which stressed mass initiatives and local organisation was generated.

These developments formed a crucial element in debates within FRELIMO over the meaning of socialist transition. However, organisation remained populist in form, addressing social welfare issues without tackling the question of the transformation of production.

In addition to new forms of popular organisation, FRELIMO partly re-organised the state apparatus. A virtually free health service was set up, which stressed preventative medicine and included a network of small local primary health care clinics throughout the country. Free national education and a mass literacy and adult education campaign significantly raised the general literacy and educational level of Mozambicans.

However while the beginnings of a socialist planning process did emerge, the state apparatus retained many of the archaic bureaucratic practices of the colonial state. Post independence government policy stimulated processes of class formation which significantly affected the position of the workers and peasantry and led to the emergence of important new class forces.

Urban and rural workers made important gains in terms of money wages and general standards of living. The nationalisation of housing led to stable and low rents for most workers. On the other hand, widespread shortages and gathering unemployment gradually undermined the economic position of workers. Independence had liberated the middle and poor peasantry from the extreme oppression and economic coercion of Portuguese colonialism and an emerging system of cooperatives did give peasants access to more land. The new state also introduced higher prices for peasant produce. But the rapid collapse of urban/rural trade and shortages of basic industrial commodities needed by the peasantry, had severe economic effects on the peasantry.

As well as changes in the position of workers and peasants, new class forces emerged. The flight of trained personnel meant that those Mozambicans with a modicum of education were required to fill the large number of vacant administrative posts in the state sector. The shortage of technical skills gave this stratum a degree of influence over day to day policy formulation. Although the politics of this stratum reflected contradictory tendencies, a strongly technicist view

of socialist development emerged, which favoured a 'growth pole' approach. Islands of 'modern' development would drag the 'backward' sectors of the economy into 'modernity' without having to confront directly the problems of transforming peasant production.

The concern with strict hierarchies and discipline in the workplace which marked the ideological position of this class force gave rise to conflicts with embryonic institutions of popular power.

Both FRELIMO itself and the state apparatuses remained sites of struggle. No single class force was able to impose itself decisively over the others and this was reflected in divergent state policies. On the one hand various attempts were made to organise collective forms of production, particularly in the agricultural sector. Workers were encouraged to form cooperatives in smaller abandoned enterprises. On the other hand numerous larger abandoned agricultural holdings were consolidated into state farms which consumed a large proportion of the scarce resources under state control.

Progress towards socialist transformation therefore depended on developing organisationally competent structures of popular power to be involved in planning, as well as considerable democratisation of state structures and the establishment of a balanced relationship between these state structures and those of popular power.

During this period FRELIMO attempted to cement alliances with liberation movements, and both the non-aligned and socialist countries. A dominant regional issue was the Zimbabwean question. All internal classes agreed with the policy of active support for the Zimbabwean liberation struggle. The South African question was of a different order. Mozambique's material capacity to support the South African struggle was limited, and FRELIMO was wary of provoking South African intervention. Nevertheless there was a powerful sense of solidarity with the South African struggle. The ANC was never allowed to establish bases in Mozambique and received no logistical assistance, but ANC members could live there and transit facilities were available for the organisation.

In the world arena, the new state adopted a position of vigorous non-alignment. It did however seek to win

strong material and political support from the socialist countries. Significant technical, personnel and cheap credit facilities were made available from these countries at a time when the imperialist bloc was imposing a virtual boycott against Mozambique.

1977 - 1979: A FAILING ECONOMY

This phase began with the Third Congress of FRELIMO which assessed the situation after two years of independence, and approved a strategy for the following period. These years were characterised by attempts to consolidate and stabilise production, and the attempted restructuring of FRELIMO into a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party.

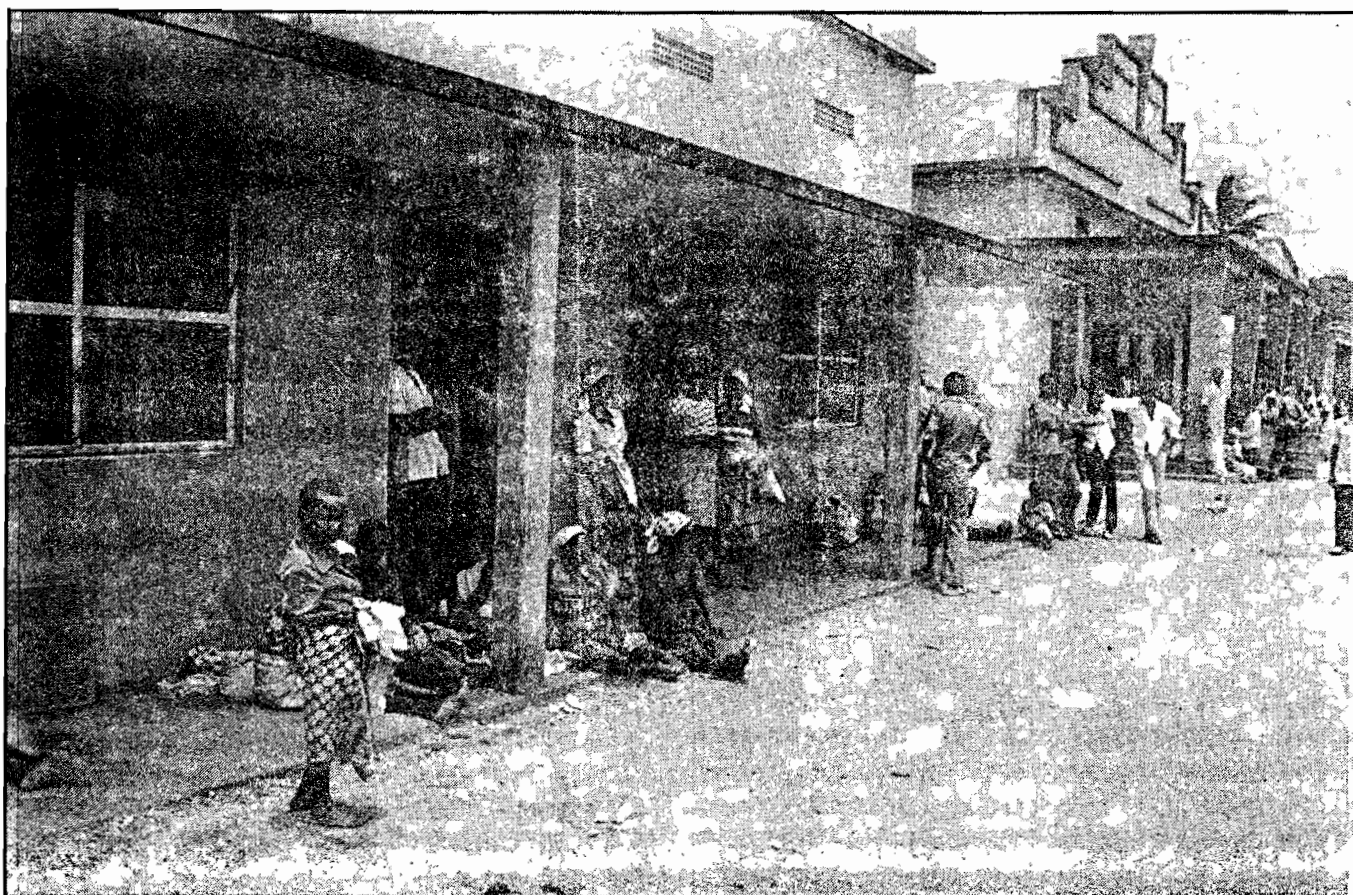
Implementation of UN sanctions by Mozambique against Rhodesia resulted in a loss of revenue and international compensation fell far short of the amount promised. In April 1978 South Africa had terminated the 'premium' previously paid on the remitted wages of migrant workers. An intense foreign exchange squeeze resulted and by 1980 the Mozambican current account deficit stood at USD 300 million. Import

shortages of raw materials and spare parts necessary to maintain industrial production meant an underutilisation of installed capacity. The state was increasingly unable to supply the cheap basic consumer goods to the peasant sector necessary to stimulate urban/rural trade and to cement worker/peasant alliances.

The Third Congress spelled out a fairly pragmatic programme of economic recovery. However these directives remained at a very general level and over the period sharp struggles over their interpretation and implementation occurred.

The decision to transform FRELIMO into a vanguard party initiated a year of intense political mobilisation and discussion throughout the country. Although workers and peasants emerged from this programme with a stronger institutional political base, technicist and statist conceptions of the path of socialist development gained an important influence within the party itself. Struggles over the future direction of state policies intensified within and between all institutions.

Statist and technicist notions were reflected in state economic policy. In the organisation of production, the bulk of resources tended to be



Unemployment and scarce resources - products of a failing economy

concentrated in over-mechanised, poorly planned and managed state farms. For example, by 1980, 85% of the entire rice production process of the GAIL agro-industrial complex in the Gaza province was mechanised. Gaza was experiencing high levels of unemployment, and large numbers of workers were laid off in order to further mechanise the production process. New equipment had a very short life, while the foreign exchange shortage and failure to secure spare parts soon reduced much of the complex combine harvesters and other machinery to rusting wrecks.

This experience illustrates the emerging planning process. Targets were set in the agriculture ministry with scant reference either to the undertaking itself and without consulting or involving workers in the planning process.

Cooperatives and family agriculture continued to be starved of resources and at the same time an increasing 'commandism' emerged in relations between state officials and peasants. Most basic decisions about production, marketing and revenue distribution were taken out of the hands of members of cooperatives and assumed by officials. In the subsequent demobilisation, a number of cooperatives collapsed and the general popular impetus for collective forms of production began to wane.

1979 - 1983: PROPOSALS FOR THE 'DEVELOPMENT DECADE'

By 1979 it was clear that any advance in accordance with the technicist, statist conception of socialist development would depend on substantial external investment funds and a tightening up of labour discipline and reorganisation of the management process.

The 'Prospective Indicative Plan' (PPI) for the 'Development Decade', and the 'Organisational and Political Offensive' launched by President Machel in the so called 'Hospital Speech', formed the basis for planning in this period. The PPI planned for a 14.7% annual growth rate over ten years, arguing that this could be achieved because 'we have a vanguard party and we are determined'. To achieve this an accumulation rate of 30% per annum to be financed mainly by injections of

external investment was necessary. This was expected to be provided by the socialist countries at an average rate of interest of 6% (almost half that of the prevailing market rate). Repayment of the financing was to be completed in 1990 and was entirely dependent upon the achievement of the PPI's proposed growth rate.

Complementing the PPI was the 'Organisational and Political Offensive'. The theme of the speech was the need to tighten up labour discipline and to reorganise management systems. The state was presented as a instrument of the worker/peasant alliance. However as a result of 'leftist' and 'liberal' practices, there was too much interference in management decisions by workers and political structures. On the other hand, certain corrupt practices were said to have developed among senior officials. To solve the first problem, directors were to be made individually responsible for decisions and accountable only to higher structures. It was argued that 'ours is a hierarchical society' and that these hierarchies should be respected. To combat corruption and abuses of power by senior officials, socialist legality would be made stronger and structures through which the public could register complaints would be introduced.

Acknowledging the failure of the 'people's shops' to supply basic necessities, President Machel said that it was not the business of the state to 'sell razor blades and matches'. Mozambicans, including those who had fled the country, were invited to bid for and take over now denationalised small enterprises.

Further reorganisation of the state apparatus included the 'modernisation' of the army which was to be equipped to fight a conventional modern war. Top FRELIMO leadership were all given high military rank, and officers could only be promoted above the rank of captain if they were party members.

Zimbabwean independence fostered the expectation that an era of peaceful coexistence in Southern Africa was possible. There were hopes that the Botha government 'reforms' would transform South Africa into a normal capitalist society which would not constitute a threat to its neighbours. The first Matola raid however, put paid to any delusions of 'peaceful coexistence' with South Africa, and

Pretoria's increased support for the MNR made it clear that South Africa was the principal enemy of the Mozambican state.

A major feature of Mozambican foreign policy at this stage was an attempt to have the People's Republic of Mozambique recognised by the socialist countries as 'a new socialist state' rather than a 'country of socialist orientation'. Mozambique also played a leading role in the formation of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) and subsequently sought substantially greater economic aid both for itself and the SADCC.

The levels of aid received however, fell short of Mozambican expectations. Socialist countries inability to provide the required investment funds was largely the result of increased military, diplomatic, ideological and political pressure placed on them by imperialist countries. Moreover, given the situation in Afghanistan, Poland, the Middle East, South East Asia and Central America, Southern Africa ranked low in the order of priorities of the USSR and other socialist countries.

In the event the PPI strategy failed dismally. The first draft of the PPI was put in abeyance pending 'a period of accumulation' which would generate sufficient internal investment funds. Production levels on all state farms fell, organisation deteriorated and resources were increasingly scarce. In response, peasants in all areas of the country began withholding their surpluses from sale on state bodies and instead sold goods on emerging 'parallel markets'. By the end of 1981 there were severe food shortages in both the urban and rural areas.

The economic collapse had certain political effects. Despite falling living standards, peasant support for FRELIMO had largely been maintained. However the general neglect of the family section, unavailability of basic necessities and the growing distance of most state and party officials from the masses, and the emerging authoritarian practices of such officials undermined this support. There was a growing hostility to state farms which swallowed up expensive resources and dragooned peasants into 'voluntary labour'. Some state farms expropriated peasant land and in at least one district peasants spoke of the state farm complex as 'our enemy' and in the same breath described the state farm as 'the government'.

Such political errors by FRELIMO created fertile ground for the terror activities of the MNR, when South Africa intensified its support for the MNR at the beginning of 1981. Political demobilisation in the rural areas meant that FRELIMO could not mobilise popular resistance to MNR bandits. While MNR activities did not win popular support, in many instances the peasantry remained neutral in the battles between the FPLM (Mozambican armed forces) and the MNR.

Destruction wrought by South Africa on Mozambique through the MNR was immense. Thousands of Mozambicans were killed, mutilated or raped, their farms destroyed, crops burned, and implements broken. Eight hundred and forty schools were destroyed, 16 health centres, 24 maternity centres, 174 health posts, and 140 villages with a total population of 110 000 people, were destroyed. The direct cost of this undeclared war in the new socialist state was calculated at USD 3,8 billion. South Africa also imposed a partial boycott on Maputo port which resulted, in a further drop in revenue.

This immense damage coupled with the devastating effects of the worst drought of the century and the growing unresolved problems of the organisation of production and exchange, brought the fragile economy to its knees by early 1983.

1983 ONWARDS - THE RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS

At the Fourth Congress held in April 1983, FRELIMO sought to rebuild its links with the masses and revive its semi-moribund political structures. Army personnel said that the campaign against the MNR necessitated large scale mass mobilisation in support of army counter insurgency.

The campaign to revitalise party cells and mass political participation did elicit genuine mass participation. However even before the congress was convened, a number of economic saboteurs were executed and, apparently in response to demands for stronger measures against thieves and black marketeers, public flogging was introduced for minor economic crimes.

Much fear was generated by these measures, but mobilisation for the congress proceeded and a number of criticisms of the party emerged. The FRELIMO secretariat admitted that

errors of 'excessive formalism' which had distanced the party from the masses in many areas, had been made. It was also agreed that there had been a number of other 'mistakes', particularly in economic policy.

The overall atmosphere at the congress seemed to indicate an intention to involve the masses more directly in political processes and to return to FRELIMO's popular base. The new Central Committee elected, brought in a significant number of militants from the rural areas and veterans of the armed struggle. A number of leading cadres who had been based in Maputo were transferred to the provinces where their skills could be used to benefit programmes in hitherto neglected areas. A number of senior party officials, including members of the Politburo and some ministers, were sent to take charge of provincial affairs.

The congress adapted a three year interim plan aimed at reducing hunger, defeating the MNR and consolidating a base for more rapid development in the second five year period of the 1980s. Small projects and local initiatives would be emphasised as the immediate means of providing for the needs of the people. State structures were directed to implement an effective programme of support for peasant agriculture. Greater encouragement was given to 'the private sector'.

It would be wrong to see the lines emerging from the congress as a victory for workers and peasants. The 'popular lines' were orchestrated from above and were largely populist in character. Moreover the adoption of the final programme was the result of protracted struggles between the various forces within FRELIMO. Particularly there was disagreement over whether this 'new direction' was a short term tactical retreat or a longer term shift in strategic vision.

While the congress did in some ways mark a return to the masses, at the same time, decision making powers within the FRELIMO leadership were being restricted to an ever smaller group concentrated around the office of the president. In late 1982, the Central Committee took a secret decision to implement strategy to defeat the MNR. Methods included a stepped up military offensive, the launching of a 'diplomatic offensive and the transformation of the economy onto a

war footing.

The future direction of state policy depended on which of these two trends came to predominate - the turn to the masses or the increasing concentration of decision making power in a small secret group. In the year following the Fourth Congress, the turn to the masses appeared to bog down. Increased support for family agriculture was often interpreted as a licence to give resources to the most successful peasant producers and not to stimulate peasant production as a whole. Also 'Operation Production', instituted after the mass pro-FRELIMO May Day demonstration, attempted to remove all 'unproductive' people from the urban areas. Such 'unproductives' were either sent to their 'areas of origin' in the countryside, at the time of the worst drought and famine in living memory, or they were forceably removed to the remote northern areas ostensibly to work on the labour starved state farms.

This generated fear and resentment as every single resident of the major urban areas was compelled to go through an exhausting, confusing and authoritarian bureaucratic process to 'prove' that they were 'productive'. Local administrative officials were able to assume unchecked powers to determine the fate of those living in their areas. Reports from the relocation areas told of appalling conditions and lack of food. Perhaps the most important consequence of this campaign was that for the first time Mozambicans expressed the idea that the state was no longer 'theirs'.

It was in this context of a collapsed economy, a deteriorating military and political situation that those in the FRELIMO leadership who argued for an accommodation with South Africa were able to persuade the rest of the leadership, and in particular the president, that to preserve the Mozambican state they had no option other than to sue for peace with Pretoria.

THE NEGOTIATIONS

No attempt is made to trace the step by step process of these negotiations, nor the full range of interests involved. Rather the analysis concentrates on the demands of, and gains made by each of the two major parties involved.

Mozambican state representatives entered negotiations with the central objective of achieving a peace which would ensure the survival of the state and allow for economic recovery. Within the FRELIMO leadership there appeared to be a strong current of opinion that economic recovery was dependent upon attracting external investment. Since this was not forthcoming from socialist countries, it would now have to be obtained from the west. The peace settlement would therefore have to be of a kind to attract foreign capital. In order to achieve these aims, Mozambique was prepared to make concessions at a number of levels - internal socialist policies, regional alignments and the country's international alignments.

The first concession was made in this latter area. During Machel's visit to Western Europe in October 1983, there was much effort made to convince western countries that Mozambique was not a Soviet 'puppet' and that it was prepared to loosen ties with socialist countries. The immediate objective of this visit was to persuade western powers to pressurise South Africa into abandoning its undeclared war against Mozambique. A number of western governments were persuaded that Mozambique seriously wanted to negotiate within the framework of the 'regional security' doctrine. However, the visit failed to extract promises of immediate investment and very little military support. It appeared that western investment was dependent on an agreement with South Africa, and any subsequent investment would be in one of two forms: a) through South African subsidiaries of western companies, and/or b) in the form of tripartite deals in which US banks provided the finance, Portuguese firms the technical manpower and South African based firms the imported components.

The United States played a central role in persuading South Africa to enter realistic negotiations with Mozambique. Western countries had initiated this process once it became clear that Mozambique was prepared to make concessions on issues such as internal control over private capital.

The process of reaching an agreement took nearly four months. For the South African government, the agreement in the early stages, was directly linked to the situation in Angola and Namibia. However, once the South Africans were

convinced of FRELIMO's sincere intention to control the ANC, they realised that their major objective vis-a-vis Mozambique had been achieved. A small, controlled, purely diplomatic ANC presence in Maputo was acceptable to South Africa. Agreement was then reached and the Accord signed on 16 March 1984.

POST NKOMATI

The operative clauses of the Accord explicitly forbid each of the 'High Contracting Parties' from allowing their territory to be used for any form of military activity by any group directed against the other party. However, the Accord does not oblige Mozambique to expel any ANC personnel as long as they do not carry on activities linked to the armed struggle.

Nevertheless, Mozambican authorities have implemented the Accord with a vigour far beyond the letter of the agreement. The reasons for this are not clear. There may well be secret clauses to the agreement and there are certainly powerful South African pressures on Mozambique through the Joint Security Commission set up by the Accord. The Mozambican authorities appear eager to be seen to be implementing their side of the bargain in the hope of putting pressure on the other party. South Africa however has patently not acted with anything like the same rigour in controlling MNR activities.

Since 16 March FRELIMO has embarked on an intense campaign to sell the Accord to the Mozambican people. All decisions leading up to the Accord had been secret, and came as a shock to many Mozambicans. This campaign has involved numerous public meetings, a 'Solemn Act of Homage' to President Machel, the revival of nation-wide 'political study' of Machel's speeches on the issue. the Central Committee and the People's Assembly have been called upon to endorse and applaud the fait accompli.

The campaign's central theme represents the Nkomati Accord as a victory for Mozambique and a defeat for South Africa. Official word has it that the imperialist powers were forced to recognise that the People's Republic of Mozambique was a sovereign state whose leaders took their own decisions independent of 'superpower pressures'. The militarists in Pretoria had been forced to abandon their attempt to

overthrow the FRELIMO government and to retreat from their militaristic 'destabilisation strategy'.

FRELIMO on the other hand was said not to have abandoned any of its fundamental principles. The Accord was depicted as the culmination of FRELIMO's twenty year 'socialist policy of peace'. The government could now destroy the MNR and concentrate its energies on economic recovery under the slogan of 'peace and production'.

The Nkomati Accord is clearly not a victory for a revolutionary Mozambique. However, if South Africa implements its side of the bargain the Accord frees Mozambique from South African military assault. The Mozambican authorities have gained, but at the cost of conceding to most of South Africa's major demands. Pretoria is in this sense clearly the major beneficiary of the Accord.

By the end of 1982, South Africa had defined a clear set of objectives which for good reason fell somewhat short of overthrowing a FRELIMO government. These reasons were well stated by Deon Geldenhuys, one of South Africa's academic theoreticians; 'Assuming that South Africa is either engaged in destabilising Mozambique or contemplating it, several objectives are readily discernible. First and foremost, South Africa would want

FRELIMO to abandon its active support for the ANC, which means denying it sanctuary. A more ambitious objective would be to influence Mozambique to loosen, if not cut its close ties, particularly in the military field, with communist powers. South Africa would also welcome Mozambique toning down its condemnation of the Republic. What Pretoria essentially desires is a friendly cooperative neighbour instead of a Marxist state threatening its security. To achieve these objectives, support for the MNR and the severe manipulation of economic ties are the two obvious means to employ. To talk of the MNR overthrowing FRELIMO or even forcing it into a compromise seems highly premature and indeed unrealistic. South Africa would therefore have to confine its objectives to changing political behaviour, not political structures'.

Since Nkomati, there have been numerous moves to tie Mozambique into closer dependence on South African capitalism. A trilateral agreement between Mozambique, South Africa and Portugal has been signed, covering the supply of electricity from the Cahora Bassa dam. This agreement provides for joint action by South Africa and Mozambique to protect the dam and its powerlines. Further agreements on the use of the Maputo



Some light relief for Mozambican troops - but the MNR threat lingers on

port and an increased labour quota for Mozambique on South African mines are likely.

There are also indications that some capitalists are considering making selected coordinated investments in Mozambique. A number of highly publicised visits by leading businessmen, such as David Rockefeller and Tiny Rowland, and a smaller number of actual investment proposals have been made. Some indication of the pattern of future approaches towards Mozambique has already emerged. Any substantial foreign investment inflow will depend on a substantial 'improvement in the investment climate' as was made clear by Rockefeller during his visit. Such investment will be confined to defined sectors - tourism, transport and related services, and agri-business projects producing for export on the land of dismembered state farms. Pik Botha is reported to have urged diplomats from the United States, West Germany, Britain, France Canada, Italy and Japan to 'involve themselves in greater development efforts in Mozambique ... The matching of political expectations with economic progress is one of the most pressing needs facing both Pretoria and Maputo in the wake of the Nkomati Accord'. He also stressed that 'South Africa had begun its own initiative to coordinate domestic private sector investment interest in Mozambique to assist the long and difficult path back to reestablishing the Mozambican economy'.

PERSPECTIVES

Prospects for changes in the conditions which led Mozambique to seek an accommodation with South Africa are not bright. The debt situation is such that even if production levels were to recover rapidly, these would not be translated into equivalent rises in the living standards of the Mozambican people. This has been implicitly acknowledged in an official document distributed by the National Planning Commission to western embassies. Even if exports were to reach record levels in the next two years and a debt rescheduling favourable to Mozambique were negotiated, a reduction in the Balance of Payments deficit would be dependent on holding the level of imports at roughly current levels. Moreover, there are grave production

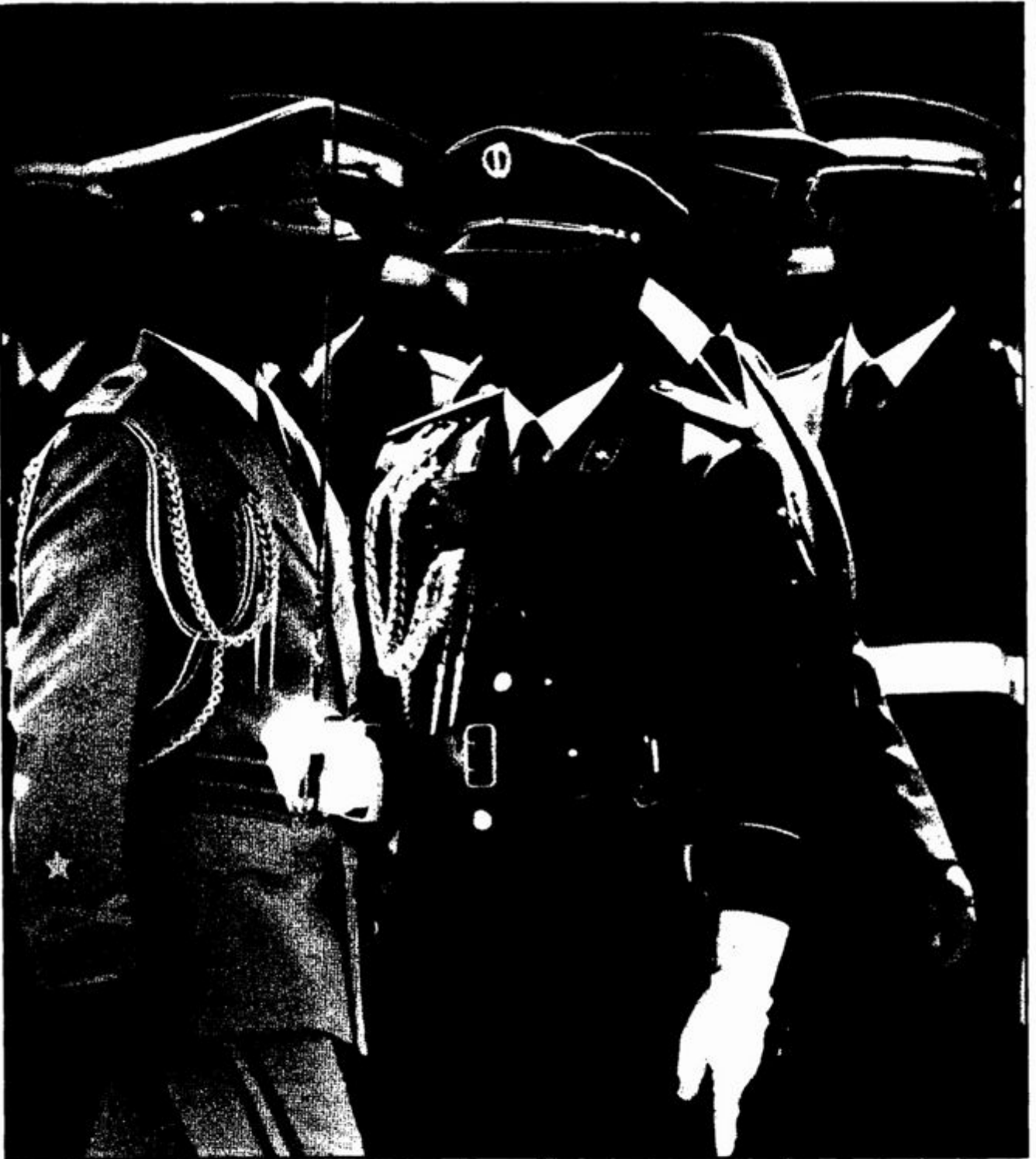
problems to be solved, particularly in the state sector, which according to calculations by the Ministry of Finance, recorded a combined deficit of nearly USD 500 million in 1983.

FRELIMO response to this crisis has involved a retreat from state and cooperative forms of property. Kulaks, small private capital and foreign multinationals are all being invited to submit proposals to take over the assets of collective enterprises in deficit. The 1984 state plan (PEC 84) indicates that drastic cuts in existing social services are being discussed if not planned. The document speaks of the need to end a 'spirit of freeloading' and proposes the introduction of charges for medical services, prescriptions and basic education. It further proposes a reduction in the total number of people employed in the state apparatus and a sharp rise in basic taxes. One of the major objectives of such measures is to reduce the money supply in Mozambique.

There are differences within FRELIMO as to how far this process should go. Some argue that such measures are a temporary retreat, necessary to attract private capital. Others appear to regard this as a longer term strategy, with a more permanent presence envisaged for the private sector and foreign capital. It is argued that western capital investment can be 'controlled' by a determined party leadership.

Yet there is little short term prospect of foreign capital rescuing Mozambique from its current economic woes. The Nkomati Accord has improved the investment climate in southern Africa, but the bulk of new foreign investments are likely to be concentrated in their traditional location in the region - South Africa. Since foreign investment coming to Mozambique is likely to be restricted to tourism, transport services and agri-business for export, there will be no immediate benefits to the mass of workers and peasants. A marked improvement in the security situation will also be necessary before most likely investors will commit funds to Mozambique. Despite the Accord, there seems to have been little real progress against MNR forces.

Increased foreign investment will generate new social pressures. For some class forces in the urban areas it is likely to provide access to presently



The Nkomati Accord: peace for Mozambique - progress for socialism?

unavailable goods and services. These forces are a potential source of pressure for closer accommodation with private capital and South Africa.

Mozambique signed the Nkomati Accord to cut the ground from under the MNR. Since 16 March the MNR have escalated the terror campaign. Even if South Africa does cut off logistical support, attacks are likely to continue for some time as the MNR attack the only available sources of food, peasant

settlements, army and government depots. The MNR is not an 'alternative' movement to FRELIMO, but its continuing presence and activity does have an impact on the forms of political discussion. The central issue around the question of MNR activity is the ability of the FPLM to wage a politicised campaign against the bandits. In the words of FRELIMO's major slogan, at all levels within Mozambique, 'a luta continua'.