

(b) Radio Truth in English 0430 gmt 18 Mar 85

Text of commentary broadcast by the anti-ZANU radio:

This weekend marks the first anniversary of the Incomati accord between South Africa and Mozambique. Its short and checkered history has been beset by many storms and right at the moment its future hangs precariously in the balance. Why has this peace initiative, which everybody welcomed except the Soviets, reached such a critical stage? Why have the high hopes nurtured at its launching failed to materialise to the degree expected?

In part the answer lies in that statement that the Incomati was hailed by all except the men in the Kremlin. From the outset, the Russians were determined to (?hush) the accord. Within its terms, they saw a challenge to the supremacy of Soviet influence in Mozambique. The prospects of regional peace and harmony were a major stumbling block to Soviet objectives for the region as a whole. Their agents worked behind the scenes to promote disenchantment within the Frelimo hierarchy concerning the practical application of the accord. Through disinformation, the Soviet propaganda machine spread the rumour that South Africa was not abiding by its part of the bargain. They (?beat up) expectations that were never a part of the original agreement with regard to the containment of Renamo [Mozambique National Resistance]. Mozambique was portrayed as the loser rather than the beneficiary. At the same time, the Russians worked on the frontline states, already sensitive to any cooperation with Pretoria, and convinced them that the South Africans were not sincere in their expressed desire for peace.

Through PANA, an element in the Soviet-sponsored new world information order, a survey has been conducted to discover what the youth of Africa think about the Incomati accord. From such a source, the outcome is a foregone conclusion. One of the principal causes of Marxist disquiet is that the Incomati agreement provided the opening for the Western democracies to supply economic aid to Mozambique. In particular, the Russians feared the American involvement and deemed it to be a threat to the global balance of power. The United States' offer of limited military assistance to Mozambique was seen as a direct challenge to the East bloc domination of this form of aid. Lastly, as we reported to you earlier, a senior Soviet diplomat in Harare in an unguarded moment [word indistinct] that his political masters were determined to sabotage the Incomati accord. He even had the gall to berate the frontline states for doing too little in this direction.

We turn now to (?the bone of contention), the continued and increasing success of Renamo. It is common knowledge that this resistance movement now controls most of the Mozambique countryside while Frelimo dominance is confined to the principal urban centres. Renamo could not have achieved this level of success without considerable

backing from the local population. This confirms that the MNR is an authentic organisation with a defined political identity. There seems to be little doubt that the armed forces of Mozambique are thoroughly demoralised and deficient in military skill. As a matter of false pride, Frelimo refuse to admit either the authentic nature of Renamo or the inefficiency of their own troops. So they create a scapegoat. Who better to fulfil that role than the regional whipping boy in Pretoria.

It is all too easy to say that South Africa has not fulfilled her part of the agreement, that she is still responsible for the support flowing to Renamo even though it may not be coming directly from government sources. Not one shred of evidence has ever been produced to back up this claim but as a political gimmick, it serves its purpose.

Leading members of Frelimo even contradict each other in an effort to cover up their own shortcomings. In an interview on Lisbon Radio, the Mozambican Economic Affairs Minister, Jacinto Veloso, admitted that the Portuguese element of Renamo is the force which has been providing the backing for the movement since the signing of the Incomati accord. He also named Malawi, the Comoros Republic, and Islamic countries as being heavily involved. The latter, he said, was a major source of finance for Renamo. During the interview, Mr Veloso maintained that the Portuguese wing included former entrepreneurs, industrialists and traders. He admitted that the Islamic connection arose from the harassment of Muslim clergy by Frelimo and the desecration of some Muslim places of worship. The Arab nations concerned were also anti-communist and opposed Mozambique's subjection by the Soviet Union.

The real heart of the problem is Frelimo's failure to negotiate with Renamo at the very beginning when the differences could have been more easily resolved. (?It is like) the disease of cancer - if it is nipped in the bud in the early stages with the correct treatment, a permanent cure can be effected; if you fail, the disease will spread throughout the body and will prove to be terminal. Even now at this relatively late stage, treatment is preferable to the attempt of excision by military force. So at this anniversary time, let Frelimo get to grips with reality. They and their colleagues in the FLS [frontline states] must stop falling for the Soviet propaganda line.

The Incomati accord did not specify that South Africa must bring Renamo resistance to an end. This would have been an impossible requirement, for Renamo has a momentum of its own. Pretoria was required to halt any support for the MNR from South African soil and to use their influence to bring about a ceasefire. Any observer with an open mind, whether he likes South Africa or not, must admit in all honesty that the regime has done its best. The Boer, as the saying goes, is firmly in Frelimo's [word indistinct]. They must be prepared to negotiate with Renamo in good faith, something they have steadfastly refused to do up to now.

As Zimbabweans, we hope that the Incomati accord is not consigned to the dustbin. As far as we are concerned, anything that curtails Soviet penetration in our region is worthy of preservation. Secondly, any contribution towards peace and stability is better than a revival of confrontation. Happy anniversary.