

Tight US security on Bomba

The Star Bureau

WASHINGTON — Like many visitors to Washington, the young man was thrilled by what he saw at the famous Air-and-Space Museum. After all, he is a pilot himself.

But he was not allowed to dally at the museum. Security agents whisked him away in case someone tried to kill him.

He is Adriano Francisco Bomba, the 23-year-old air force lieutenant who flew his outdated MiG fighter from Mozambique to a South African military base at Hoedspruit last year because, he says, he no longer wanted to defend the communist system that was destroying his own country.

He has been living in South Africa since then.

Lieutenant Bomba gave evidence this week at a Congressional hearing into Soviet-backed terrorism in southern Africa. He told of his training and education in Russia and of the new lifestyle that the Frelimo Government imposed on Mozambique.

Security around him during his fortnight in Washington was so tight that it was impossible to get near him for an interview. Eventually he was contacted by telephone.



Lieut Bomba

"I enjoyed giving evidence at the hearing," he said. "I like the Senator (Senator Jeremiah Denton, chairman of the subcommittee on security and terrorism) because he is a person who speaks the same language I do.

"I admire the way the security people work, but it's a pity I couldn't see much

of Washington. I go back to South Africa tomorrow and I can't really say that I have visited America."

Lieutenant Bomba is living in Pretoria now, working for the South African Government and studying by correspondence for the matric certificate that will allow him to go to university.

"My job is mainly in propaganda work. I'm connected with the defence force but it's just in propaganda. I'm not actually a soldier any more.

"I've made a lot of friends in the air force, mainly in Cape Town. I came there until the beginning of November while I was flying Impalas.

Lieutenant Bomba, who speaks fluent English still bears a hint of a Portuguese accent, says he has somewhat mixed feelings about his defection nine months after the event.

"On the one hand I'm happy in South Africa because I've got freedom of movement. I work. I've got money. I can do with my money what I want to do.

"But on the other hand there can't be

happiness. I've got all my relatives in Mozambique, you know.

"The way of life in South Africa is different. For example, I'm living in the Pretoria area but I don't deal so much with black communities.

"In Mozambique you can have a white neighbour when you are black, that's not a problem. That's one thing that's new for me you see, just something new.

"But I understand South Africa. They've got their own reasons, they've got their own problems, they have to solve them.

"The reforms that the Government is making in South Africa, I look to them with hope. I think the government is working very well to change South Africa — and it is changing, really."

PLAYS GUITAR

Lieutenant Bomba says he lives at "A South African Government facility." What does he do in his spare time?

"I watch TV, and listen to music, and play guitar. I go to the zoo. I walk around. I get out whenever I want.

"One thing I'd love to get is a commercial pilot's licence. I don't want to become a commercial pilot as a profession, but the licence would be a good backup."

He says he has no plans at present other than to remain in South Africa and get on with his studies.

"But I didn't see very much here in America, just a little bit. I hope I'll come back one day."