

Mozambique regime battles guerrillas

by RICHARD HALL

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GUERRILLA attacks, supported from South Africa and Portugal, are being stepped up throughout Mozambique with the aim of overthrowing President Samora Machel's Marxist regime.

Machel has had to cancel a four-day official visit to Britain, scheduled for early next month, because of the 'deteriorating security position' in Mozambique. His special envoy, Fernando Homwana, left London on Friday after giving this news to Mrs Thatcher.

The guerrilla forces, known as the Movimento Resistencia Nacional, are operating in all 10 provinces of Mozambique. Foreign workers at mines and other installations have been withdrawn as the fighting grows more intense.

A key figure behind the MRN guerrillas is Jorge Jardim, a 62-year-old financier. When Portugal still ruled its African territories, Jardim was known as the 'Business King of Mozambique'.

Once a Junior Minister under Dr Antonio Salazar, the Portuguese dictator, Jardim has a long history of clandestine pressure on Mozambique affairs. Towards the end of the colonial period he supplied black auxiliaries for the regular army fighting the Frelimo forces led by Machel—who, in those days, was a guerrilla himself.

Lately, Jardim was involved with Colonel 'Mad Mike' Hoare in a bid to create a white-led army to combat Frelimo. Currently, Hoare is on trial in South Africa for his part in the

failed coup late last year in the Seychelles.

After Mozambique's independence in 1975, Jardim suffered the expropriation of his assets in the country, but remained a multi-millionaire. He runs a financial organisation, Interbanque, in Gabon,

consul-general for Malawi in Mozambique, and developed a close friendship with President Hastings Banda. After the 1974 revolution in Portugal, Jardim was detained in Lisbon, took refuge in the Malawi embassy, then fled to Spain.

In Maputo, capital of Mozambique, there are fears that this piece of local history may be repeating itself today.

Lady Judith Listowel, the writer, is an old friend of Jardim. She said yesterday: 'I know that he and all his family would like to go back to Mozambique.'

The manifest aim of the covert Portuguese and South African campaign is to replace the Machel Government with something more malleable and receptive to foreign enterprise. President Machel is desperately casting around for help to meet this challenge.

He was recently visited by a large political and military mission from the Soviet Union; it inspected army installations.

The self-styled president of the MRN is Domingos Arouca, a rich exile from Mozambique, living in Lisbon. However, there is doubt about the degree of understanding between the various activists outside and the MRN leaders in the field.

The guerrilla commander, Afonso Dhlakama, has disputed Arouca's right to the title and said that 'MRN spirits' were responsible for an abortive bomb attempt on Arouca.

Dhlakama is of a superstitious nature. He relies on witch-doctors for guidance, and threatens deserters with 'lion spirits.' He said that 'Communist bullets' turn to water when they approach him—a common claim by African animists.

However, Dhlakama has been in contact with more than the spirits. Documents captured by Frelimo troops confirm that he has had talks with 'Colonel Charlie,' otherwise Colonel van Niekerk, a South African intelligence officer.



JORGE JARDIM:
Millionaire financier.

on the other side of Africa. Interbanque has links with South Africa and Portugal.

It is widely accepted that the weapons used by MRN come from South Africa. As the guerrillas push their activities northwards, it is believed that supplies are being landed from the sea along Mozambique's 1,500-mile coastline.

One indisputable source of South African backing for the MRN forces—now about 10,000 strong—is the Voz da Africa Libre radio station. This 'Voice of Free Africa' transmits anti-Machel propaganda from the Transvaal.

Jardim's MRN lieutenants include Evo Fernandes, the former editor of a newspaper in Mozambique once owned by Jardim, and Orlando Cristina, a former Portuguese secret policeman who was once Jardim's personal secretary. Fernandes is the MRN spokesman in Europe.

Some recent thrusts by MRN guerrillas are said to have come from bases very close to the borders of Malawi.

Jardim was for 10 years the