

COMMENT

LIEUTENANT Adriano Bomba's defection from Mozambique to this country raised a lot of eyebrows, but his sudden disappearance and re-emergence in Mozambique raises even a wider range of questions

It was strange in the first place for a black man from a country that has gained its independence to defect to South Africa, which is widely considered as the bastion of white domination over blacks. The Government naturally made political capital about this and went even to the extent of tarring the government of Mr Samora Machel as marxist and corrupt.

Lt Bomba was definitely something like a scoop for this country, security-wise, politically and in other ways.

It was somewhat intriguing to figure out how he (Bomba) was going to feature in the race-ridden situation of this country. What kind of a job was he going to hold in the military set-up, which is mostly white?

Somewhere along the line Lt Bomba must have changed his mind. Some people are saying he was perhaps made to change his mind.

The question that is tricky is to consider what the attitude of the Mozambican Government is going to be about a man who worked for our State, and is now busy trying to overthrow that government in a subversive manner.

Whether they like it or not, our bosses here will be seen as co-conspirators in Bomba's employ under the resistance movement in Mozambique — the Resistencia Nacional al Mozambique (MNR). People will see this as interference in the domestic affairs of a foreign state and nobody will be able to blame them for such a charge.

Among other things it will be asked how Lt Bomba managed to get out of this country, back to his former motherland. It will be asked how he got papers to travel freely from here to Mozambique. It will be asked who assisted him, a bad security risk that he is, to get back there and work with this underground organisation.

Our Government is going to swear itself blue in the face that it had nothing to do with this character's defection back into a country that he has betrayed. They have already said officially from the South African Defence Force (SADF) that Bomba had left their employ some time ago and they had no knowledge about where he was and what he was doing. That is the strangest piece of information we have heard this year. If the man who had defected and caused such a furor could be left to wander around freely and then make his way back to Mozambique, then there is something wrong with our security.

Our experience is that anybody who has defected from one country to another for political reasons is a highly sensitive person, militarily and otherwise. Who knows but that Bomba could have turned double agent and betrayed South Africa?

It just does not make sense and nobody can blame people for asking such awkward questions.

This whole case classically shows the blunders that security people and even the military can get themselves in when they use defectors to score political points.

Sowetan 9/9/82