

# The endurance of elites

Emerging Third World nations have priorities quite different to those of the industrialised world. The North — in the economic, not geographical sense — is learning that it is fruitless to expect fully-fledged democracies to spring up in the South, along the lines bequeathed by the former colonial powers.

Any development model requires stability to work. So it is hardly surprising that in Zimbabwe and Mozambique the fundamental watchword is security of the State. Unfortunately, in Mozambique at least, this has increasingly come to mean the security of the ruling elite. And whatever Maputo may say, outside forces are not primarily to blame for the calamity that faces that country.

Since the precipitate departure of the Portuguese, Frelimo has been unable or incapable of addressing itself to the task of economic reconstruction. At the party's imminent fourth congress (see *Current Affairs*) more social and economic programmes will be unveiled. But the military build-up, with its inherent dangers, continues.

Part of the problem is that the Frelimo leadership learned its tactics and ideology in a ruthless guerrilla war. And then, following that war, it diverted national resources against the Ian Smith regime. Now it remains in a state of constant mobilisation against the activities of the Mozam-

bique Resistance Movement (MNR). Mozambique has become a stranger to peace.

Quite explicitly, the Mozambique regime sees SA as its prime enemy, with the MNR as a kind of bush adjunct of Pretoria. It is not alone in this perception.

Whatever the degree of SA support of the MNR, which we do not know, is it not likely that opposition to Frelimo is fostered by Stalinist tendencies within Mozambique itself? The military parades, the public executions, the witchhunts for "economic crimes" — these all have a debasing effect and momentum all their own.

In effect, Frelimo has always had an "enemy" to hold up before "the people" while it consolidates its hold on power. President Samora Machel once called for the redevelopment of the private sector: but nothing came of that, almost certainly because all private initiatives have to occur within the framework of State policy — a contradiction in terms.

Classic Marxist-Leninism holds out the withering-away of the State as the final outcome of revolution. It has never happened. Instead, elites are created and endure within armoured rings.

Mozambique appears to have fallen into this trap. The outcome will be perpetual stasis, perpetual poverty.