

Dismissals intended to reassure Mozambique

# Rebel sympathisers in S. African army sacked, says Botha

From Patrick Laurence  
in Johannesburg

Members of the South African Defence Force suspected of sympathising with the rebel Mozambique National Resistance have been either transferred away from the Mozambique border or dismissed, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr R. F. "Pik" Botha, announced at the weekend.

Mr Botha's statement, made on the first anniversary of the signing of the Nkomati accord between South Africa and Mozambique, is the first admission by Pretoria that members of the SADF might be assisting MNR rebels in their fight against the Mozambique Government of president Samora Machel.

Senior Mozambique officials have previously expressed suspicions that members of the SADF might be covertly aiding the insurgents in direct violation of the Nkomati pact, which bound both parties not to allow their territory to be used for attacks on one another by ex-patriate dissidents.

The decision to transfer or dismiss the SADF members came after renewed complaints by the Mozambique Government on the even of the first anniversary of the pact. The complaints were investigated and "full details" of the findings were given to the Mozambican officials by General Magnus Malan at a meeting in Maputo last Thursday, Mr Botha said.

East Thursday's meeting resulted in a reaffirmation of the pact by both parties, which expressed their joint concern at the "increase of violence in Mozambique" and discussed proposals for peace.

Mr Botha hinted at one of the steps which might be taken to curtail the violence: the employment of highly-trained security guards to protect the Cabora Basa hydro-electric power station in Mozambique. Built largely with South African and Portuguese capital, the station supplies electricity to South Africa.

Escom, the giant South African corporation responsible for the generation and supply of electricity, is believed to be recruiting security guards to defend the Cabora Basa station, which has been a frequent target for sabotage of MNR rebels. The use of private guards would enable South Africa to help the besieged Government of President Machel without running the risk of embarrassing him through the presence of South African soldiers.

The police investigation which uncovered the gang was launched in response to Mozambique Government allegations that the MNR was funded by South Africa, Mr Botha said. The investigations had revealed that the MNR was partly financed by "an international web of bankers, financiers and businessmen," Mr Botha added.

Two members of the gang had fled to Europe but extradition proceedings to bring them to trial in South Africa were being considered.

Mr Botha also disclosed that South African police had uncovered a pro-MNR gang of forgers operating in South Africa. Several members of the gang had been arrested and would appear in court soon, Mr Botha said. He displayed forged bank notes, as well as propaganda leaflets against President Machel's Frelimo Government.

The South African police, he said, had established that a gang in Johannesburg had been printing counterfeit U.S. dollars and South African rand to pay for such smuggled goods as diamonds, emeralds and ivory from Mozambique. Mr Botha added that perhaps aircraft bringing smuggled goods out of Mozambique were also flying in arms and other supplies for the rebels.