

Another side of Mozambique

LDN 4.8.86

Sir,—Your feature on Mozambique (July 21, 22, 23) can have pleased only those in Pretoria responsible for planning and executing South Africa's undeclared war of destabilisation against Mozambique.

The political conclusion of the series — that the war will end only when the MNR and Frelimo negotiate a settlement — coincides precisely with a key aim of South African policy since the March 1984 accord to force the Mozambican government into such negotiations.

This government has already negotiated: with the MNR's South African masters. In doing so it took considerable risks, but felt that they would be justified if the agreement reached then, the Nkomati Accord, were to contribute towards the ending of the war.

But South Africa, having blatantly ignored its own freely given undertakings, has kept the war going, hoping to place its MNR Trojan horse in the corridors of power in Maputo. This is why the Frelimo government is not prepared to negotiate with the MNR as such. As President Machel says: "Why talk to the corporal when you can talk to the general?"

The Guardian, as the only British daily that has sought to keep its readers informed

about the situation in Mozambique, has slipped up badly in giving prominence to such a farrago of racial prejudices, gossip, and superficial impressions.

It can only assist Pretoria's pressures on Mozambique when the key question of South Africa's ultimate control and direction of the MNR is buried in a mere two paragraphs (in part 3) which go no further than South Africa's own reluctant, narrow admissions of its violations of the Nkomati Accord.

It can only further distort the realities to project the MNR as originating in a "breakaway faction from Frelimo." This is a travesty of the historical record which would please Pretoria.

It can only depress your readers to plough through nearly 5,000 words of unremitting rubbishing of the Mozambican government, giving it no credit for anything. No mention of its achievements in mass vaccination campaigns, expansion of primary education, the practice of non-racialism.

Mozambique is defending itself militarily with the support of countries as diverse as Britain, the Soviet Union, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. —

Yours sincerely,

Alan Brooks.

Mozambique Information Office,
London N 1.