

South Africa threatens

JOSEPH HANLON reports on growing fears in Maputo

FEAR IS GROWING in Mozambique that Maputo could be the next Beirut. Both South Africa and Mozambique have been making pointed references to the Lebanon.

Speaking to the Frelimo Central Committee, President Samora Machel stressed that South Africa is 'one of the principal allies of Israel' and that lessons must be read from what has happened in Lebanon. He noted that as the first step Israel supported a 'puppet' group in Lebanon — the Falangist militia — just as South Africa has supported Unita in Angola and the 'Mozambique National Resistance' (MNR). Then Israel moved into southern Lebanon to protect the Falangists and to attack the PLO, just as South Africa invaded southern Angola to help Unita and attack Swapo.

Next Israel said it could not allow the presence of sophisticated Syrian weapons in Lebanon. Speaking to the Nationalist Party Congress in mid-August, the South African defence minister, Magnus Mallan, said that Pretoria could not permit 'sophisticated weapons' in Mozambique.

Finally, Israel launched its full-scale invasion. 'Faced with the passivity of the UN Security Council and other international bodies, Israel continued until it had destroyed and conquered the Lebanese capital,' President Machel said.

The West's repeated refusals even to maintain the weak existing UN sanctions against South Africa strengthen the parallel. And the Soviet Union's unwillingness to confront the United States over the invasion of Lebanon is causing Frelimo some worry, as the USSR is Mozambique's main military backer. Mozambique has recently had military talks with countries as diverse as Brazil and Libya, and recently signed its first military agreement with a Nato country — Portugal.

The parallels with Lebanon cause special worry here because of the unexpectedly rapid escalation of South African destabilisation activity, seemingly with the approval of Washington. After independence in Zimbabwe, Mozambique naively believed that if it did not allow the African National Congress actual bases, then South Africa would keep its hands off. In fact, South Africa took over sponsorship of the MNR from Rhodesian intelligence (which created it in 1976) and vastly expanded it. MNR activity has made large parts of three provinces unsafe and effectively cut the country in half.

By May, however, the Mozambican army seemed to have stopped the spread of the MNR. So South Africa moved on other fronts. There are more frequent overflights

near Maputo and along the border, and much heavier attacks on installations near the South African border. Finally in August, South Africa dropped the mask of the MNR and acted directly. Ruth First was killed by a letter bomb, and South African commandos staged at least two incursions in the border area, 50 kilometres west of Maputo. In one, the commandos went directly to the house of a Portuguese aid worker, and shot him dead as he opened the door.

South Africa is by far the most sophisticated military power in the region. It would be hard to see Mozambique or the ANC militarily as more than a pinprick in the side of apartheid. The 'sophisticated weapon' that threatens South Africa is that Mozambique represents a viable, non-racial alternative to apartheid, Machel said. 'We are attacked because we are independent and are building socialism.'

Just a few months ago, talk of an invasion would have been considered ridiculous. Now people nervously point out that Maputo is only 60 kilometres from the South African border, exactly the same distance as Beirut is from the Israeli frontier. If South Africa invaded to destroy Mozambique's 'sophisticated weapons', would anyone come to its aid? □

SWEDEN

Peace man deported

DUNCAN CAMPBELL reviews a 'witch-hunt' against a researcher

A YEAR-LONG Swedish security case came to an undignified end last week when Owen Wilkes, a researcher at the renowned Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri), arrived in New Zealand after being deported.

Wilkes was arrested last August after a holiday trip, cycling with a friend in Gotland and Oland, popular tourist islands in the Baltic. He had taken a few incidental notes of radio masts he had passed on the tour, as one of his research interests was the effectiveness and the relative defensive and offensive capacities of Swedish and NATO countries' radar systems. Although the islands, like all other military establishments in the Baltic, are subjected to reconnaissance flights by aircraft of at least six different nationalities, Wilkes's possession of the notes was initially held to be evidence of an espionage operation. The notes extended to five pages and contained 363 words describing what he had seen from public roads.

After three days, the Swedish security police substituted instead an accusation that Wilkes's note-taking had been 'gross unauthorised handling of secret information'. During a series of trials which concluded in June, the prosecutors attempted to maintain complete secrecy about the various subjects of Wilkes's

notes, in order to bolster their case that the installations concerned were secret. Large parts of three successive trials were held *in camera*, while the deputy chief of the Swedish defence staff, Admiral Schuback, alleged to the court that a foreign power would be able to use the information jotted down by Wilkes in order to attack Sweden. Eventually, many of the Swedish newspapers came to attack the affair as an unnecessary 'witch-hunt'.

Nevertheless, after a first trial in a lower court, Wilkes was found guilty of handling secret information and sentenced to six months in jail, followed by deportation. The jail sentence was suspended for appeals, and later dropped. During the trial it emerged that the Säpo (security police) had been tapping telephones and conducting other surveillance against Wilkes and Sipri. The weekend before he was arrested, Säpo officials had secretly broken into Sipri's Stockholm offices and taken some 17 documents. After he was arrested, they had covered their traces by again searching Wilkes's office at Sipri with a legal warrant, and removed folders of information about the defences of other Scandinavian countries.

Why the investigation was started at all is a mystery. It may have been a deliberate attempt to undermine Sipri's reputation and standing in the country — it was set up and has been financed since 1966 by the Swedish government, to commemorate 200 years of peace. Its *Yearbooks on World Armaments and Disarmament* are virtually the only authoritative and unpartisan sources of international information on defence, which are not tainted by serving the interests of a particular defence ministry, alliance, or national interest. Owen Wilkes's major work at Sipri was a three year study of all military bases on foreign territory around the world — such as US overseas bases and Soviet bases in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. The Wilkes report on *Foreign Military Presence* will now be published by Sipri next year — although initially the institute and its staff recoiled from the 'spy' issue instead of defending Wilkes and its own independence.

Before the final court hearing, Swedish peace groups supporting Wilkes organised a mass cycling tour of the Baltic islands late in May, during which, and under police surveillance, they took numerous photographs and made extensive notes of all the installations Wilkes had observed. The police took no action because, they said, no law had been broken.

In the final hearing, Wilkes's lawyers repeated their earlier demonstrations that the information concerned in the case was available to any visitor to the islands, and in addition in publications like *Jane's Weapons Systems* (an annual) or the Swedes' own *Air Force News*. Nevertheless, the conviction was upheld, although the sentence of imprisonment was dropped and the deportation limited to a ten-year period. The Swedish authorities have therefore been somewhat embarrassed by a nomination of Wilkes for the Nobel Peace Prize by New Zealand academics. Sipri itself has also been selected to receive the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education, which will be awarded in Paris in two weeks' time. □