

-----  
Republic of South Africa

PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES AND RHODESIA-FIRST DEFENCE LINE AGAINST  
TERRORISM

DURBAN, November 25 - Everything indicates that the Communist-led terrorist onslaught on South Africa is entering a second and more serious phase. This warning was given here last night by Mr. T.J.A. Gerdener, Administrator (equivalent to governor) of Natal Province, who said South Africans should accept the fact that some very big problems lay ahead for their country.

Speaking at a meeting to establish the Mozambique Soldiers' Comfort Fund, Mr. Gerdener said it was time that South Africans realised that if the 80,000 soldiers which Portugal had in Mozambique and Angola had to be withdrawn tomorrow, South Africa could become involved in a terrorist war within a matter of weeks. He said that South Africa was greatly indebted to Portugal and more particularly to the thousands of soldiers who would be fighting in humid swamps while South Africa was enjoying another Christmas.

Mr. Gerdener said it had to be realised that the Portuguese territories and Rhodesia had become South Africa's first line of defence and that the question whether they succeeded in withstanding the terrorists or not would determine South Africa's future in no uncertain degree.

He warned that Portugal could not be expected to keep its armies in Africa if it were forced to "decolonise" and for South Africa the effects could be extremely serious. The insurgents which have been held at bay by Portuguese troops for years now would, he said, overrun Angola and Mozambique in no time and that would inevitably lead to a serious confrontation which might involve the whole of Southern Africa.

Whether it was wise and possible for South Africa to extend its Rhodesian fight against terrorists to the two Portuguese territories was, he said, a matter best left to the government.

But there was no doubt about the fact that South Africa would have the fullest justification for doing so, said Mr. Gerdener, for the simple reason that the terrorist leaders and the Organisation of African Unity had made it abundantly clear that their ultimate aim was to overthrow the White leaders, not only of the Portuguese territories and Rhodesia, but particularly those of South Africa.

..MORE

-----  
Republic of South Africa

PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES....(2)

To back his arguments about the dangers to South Africa in the event of Portugal having to withdraw from its African territories.

Mr. Gerdener said : "The pressure on Portugal could best be gauged when it was realised that that relatively poor country had to keep five soldiers in the field for every one soldier in the whole of the South African permanent force.

That terrorism in Southern Africa had taken a new turn and could be expected to become worse in the months ahead arose from several reasons he said. Among them were :

1) The first terrorist outbreak in Angola, six years ago, had now spread to no less than three fronts in Mozambique, two in Angola and one in Rhodesia.

2) Whereas the original attacks were confined to one country in Southern Africa, it (terrorism) had recently spread to no less than seven.

3) There was ample evidence that Communist and guerilla war leaders from various countries had taken charge of the training of terrorists in Tanzania, Zanzibar, Zambia and Angola and what was more important, that they were working to a well-organised master-plan.

4) More weapons and ammunition had been off-loaded in Dar-es-Salaam in the past five years - and particularly the past few months - than in the preceding five years - most of this from Communist China.

5) "Advisers" from Algeria, Cuba, Communist China, Russia, Egypt and other Communist countries had made their appearance at a number of places where they had not been until six months ago.

6) Zanzibar had virtually become a Chinese weapon depot. Tanzania now had 41 training camps for terrorists and the number of Communist Chinese in Dar-es-Salaam - the headquarters of the Frelimo (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) terrorist organisation had increased over the past few months to 5,000.

7) Terrorist activities were now financed from sources in a steadily growing number of countries, among them several Western democracies.

..MORE

A.F.P.  
N° I428

AFRICA  
NOVEMBER 28, 1967

SOUTHERN AFRICA

91

-----  
Republic of South Africa

PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES... (3)

8) All reports from the fighting areas indicated that the terrorist activities were building up that increased onslaughts could and must be expected within the next months and that the terrorists possibly had already between 20,000 and 30,000 trained men.

9) All indications were that terrorism was being turned into a war which the Communists intended extending in the years which lay ahead. (A.F.P.)