Rand Daily Mail, 'Keep out of it or our planes will hit back, May 24, 1983

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Mike Zero One calls Maputo and tells startled air control...

'Keep out of it or our planes will hit back'

By CHRIS OLCKERS and JOSE CAETANO

MINUTES before SAAF Impalas launched a blitz attack on ANC bases in Maputo yesterday morning, an Air Force officer warned the Mozambique Government not to interfere or else action would be taken against it.

A startled air traffic controller at Maputo's international airport heard the officer asking him on the radio to warn Frelimo to "freeze" during the operation.

This was one of the main points which emerged during a Press conference at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria yesterday in which it was revealed that the South African Government gave the go-ahead for the Air Force raid on Maputo only hours after a car bomb had killed 18 people and injured more than 200 in Pretoria on Friday.

A transcript of a tape recording of the conversation between the pilot and the controller was played to members of the Press at a conference in Pretoria yesterday afternoon.

The South African pilot, Mike Zero One, called the tower and this was what followed:

"This is Mike Zero One. I have an important message for you. Tell your military HQ that aircraft are conducting operations in your area. They are operating against the ANC. We have no quarrel with the Frelimo Government and any interference with the aircraft will result in hostilities between the two countries. Repeat: Say again. Say first your call-sign."

"This is Mike Zero One."

"OK Mike Zero One, say again your message."

The pilot then repeated his message and ended with a "you understand?"

At the Press conference, it was revealed that the SAAF could have launched the attack on Saturday morning but that it was delayed because of bad weather.

Instead, the attack went ahead after dawn yesterday when about 10 SAAF Impalas — the SADF refused to give an exact figure — armed with missiles and cannons, for two minutes blitzed six ANC targets about 14km west of the Mozambican capital.

It is understood the SAAF launched its attack from its base at Hoedspruit in the Eastern Transvaal — a three-minute flight from Maputo.

The SADF said yesterday that Operation "Skerwe" (shards or shrapnel) had been planned several months ago.

The Defence Force was unable to say how many people were killed in the raid but described it as highly successful. Of the six targets, five had been hit.

"We reached our objective and are satisfied that we have dealt the ANC a heavy blow. Early intelligence reports indicate that scores of ANC members were killed and injured," he said.

The bases were located in houses in the residential suburb of Liberdade. SAAF jets also strafed a ground-to-air missile base in the area but the SADF stated that it had not destroyed the base.

"We only neutralised it by firing on the base to prevent Frelimo soldiers from firing on our aircraft," a SADF spokesman said.

The targets identified by the SADF were:

- A place known as Gubuza's House where acts of urban terrorism in the Transvaal were planned.
- Two logistical headquarters responsible for supplying weapons and explosives to terrorists.
- An ANC command headquarters where final briefings were given to trained members before they were due to infiltrate South Africa.
- A base called the "Main Camp" where terrorists were kept in transit.
- A house called "September House" where rural terrorism for the Transvaal was planned.

The mastermind behind the operation, an Air Force colonel who may not be identified, said the SAAF had put itself at a disadvantage by attacking the targets in daylight, at 7.27am.

"But we did not want to risk the lives of innocent people. By flying in in daylight, the pilots were able to visual-

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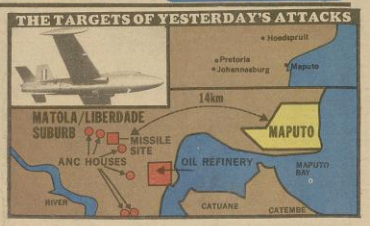

Scorched strands of local building materials . . . all that remains of a peasant hut after SAAF Impala warplanes strafed the area.

Rubble lies around a home . . . damaged by the raiding Impala planes.

The body of a child lies on the ground near her parents' home after the attack by the SAAF planes.

Convicts' saw bid fails

A CLASSIC bid by several long-term prisoners to escape — by sawing through their prison bars — was foiled when a warder spotted it.

A statement by a spokesman for the Prisons Service did not say how the men at Leeuhof Prison, near Johannesburg, obtained the sawing instrument.

The potentially dangerous prisoners were transferred to another cell immediately after warder Mr M Thekiso saw them.

The prisoners involved are serving sentences ranging from nine to 24 years for murder, theft, robbery, and housebreaking.

The Prisons Service was investigating the escape bid, the spokesman said.

Armed thief snatches car

A SANDTON woman was robbed of her R10 000 Mercedes Benz at a Rosebank shopping centre by a young man who threatened her with a gun yesterday.

Mrs Barbara Yvonne Wilson, of Wierda Road, drove into the parking lot at the Mall, Rosebank, at about 11am when the man pulled open her car door and demanded her handbag. She fled into the shopping centre and he drove off. No arrest has been made.

HOME FRONT

Towards a national strategy

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Mail brings video news

THE video boom is in full swing and with the amount of new movie titles coming on to the market in cassette form — it is small wonder that about 230 000 video cassette recorders are in private homes today.

Video is the BIG industry and to help you, the reader, choose your weekend's viewing, the Mail today launches Current Video Attractions — the first monthly pull-out supplement dedicated purely to the family that watches video movies.

Comrades — two banned

TWO experienced Wanderers athletes, who had challenged a Transvaal Road Runners Association licence ruling, have been officially banned from the Comrades Marathon next Tuesday.

Ken Curr and Peter Hurry were officially notified of the ruling yesterday — and then pledged to continue their legal battle against the local association.

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Bulls to 'spy' on Transvaal

THE Northern Transvaal rugby camp is expected to have a "spy" or two at Ellis Park tonight to assess Transvaal's strengths in their floodlit Challenge Cup fixture against Eastern Province.

Northern' interest has been heightened as they prepare for the big Currie Cup showdown with Transvaal at Loftus Versfeld in Pretoria on Saturday.

Transvaal's form of late suggests they could cause some major problems for the former champions in the race for the Currie Cup.

● See Back Page

Another blast victim dies

By JOUBERT MALHERBE

LATE yesterday South African Air Force Commandant Izak J Henning, 52, became the 18th person to die following last Friday's bomb explosion in Pretoria.

Only hours before he died, he lay in his bed at No 1 Military Hospital, Voortrekkerhoogte, clutching the hand of his wife, Mrs Juliette Henning. He could not speak — "shame, the poor man," a weary and dazed Mrs Henning said at her Eldoraigne home last night.

Mrs Henning said she telephoned her husband at midday on Friday but he told her he could not speak to her and that he would phone back later. He never did.

She visited him in hospital after the blast and Mrs Henning said he could only relate the horror of Friday afternoon in a faltering voice. She said he managed to tell her that when he came round after the explosion the severed head of a blonde woman was lying on his lap.

He was operated on yesterday afternoon but died shortly afterwards.

He leaves his wife and two daughters, Julie-Anne, 16, and Chantal, 14.

Last night scores of well-wishers and military personnel assisted Mrs Henning and her daughters.

And one of the previously unidentified victims of the blast has been identified as Rifleman Wayne Kirtley of Stilfontein, the SABC radio news reported last night.

Rfn Curtley began his National Service in January.

So far, 12 of the 18 victims of the blast, in which 217 people were wounded, have been identified.

Meanwhile, the blast could usher in a new age of urban security.

Major department stores, corporations and public bodies are re-thinking their current security strategies in the light of possible future bomb attacks of this type.

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COMMANDANT IZAK J HENNING
18th person to die following blast

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Breakfast Quip

"They must have moved farther to the left than we thought, comrade."

FA replay on TV on Thursday and Euro-Final tomorrow

By IAN REID
TV Editor

YES — the FA Soccer Cup Final WILL be broadcast live on SABC-TV 1 on Thursday evening.

But get this, as a special extra, at 19.05 tomorrow evening Wednesday TV 1 will be screening a recording of the European Cup Final between Juventus and Hamburg — which takes place tomorrow evening. If you can't wait to see the recorded version, TV 2 and 3 will be broadcasting the European match live starting at 9.30.

Last Saturday soccer fans sat on the edges of their seats watching Manchester United and Brighton at Wembley go into 30 minutes of extra time only to see the game end in a two-all draw.

So it is a replay — and SABC-TV 1 will be switching over to the BBC at 8.30pm for more live coverage via satellite. And the match will also be broadcast live on the English radio service.

Though SABC-TV 2 and 3 also screened live coverage of the game on Saturday they will not be screening the replay because, according SABC spokesman Mr Eric van der Merwe, "their programmes are shorter than TV 1 programmes, so there would not be all that much sense in screening an edited version later and so cut out scheduled programmes."

To "make space" for the live re-play on Thursday, TV 1 is going to have to postpone several of the regular evening programmes.

In the "holding queue" till the following week will be the scheduled programme "Energy — A Matter of Choices" (which was to have been a look at the energy crisis; "The Music Maker" — a short story by Herman Charles Bosman[1], and "Tom Jones".

As it did on Saturday afternoon, TV 1 will be staying with the replay even if it goes into extra time, which means that coverage could end by 10pm.

From Perth, Sapa-Reuter reports that the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Bob Hawke, was asked yesterday to declare the English Football Association Cup final replay an event of "national importance" so that it could be relayed to the outback.

The telegram appeal was made by a member of the West Australia Parliament, Mr Ernie Bridge, who told Mr Hawke: "You have only got to say it is an event of national importance and the Australian Broadcasting Commission will televise it."

TV rugby is live tonight

By TV Editor

THERE will be direct transmission on TV 1 this evening, starting at 6.55, of the rugby at Ellis Park where Transvaal will be playing Eastern Province.

Jack Frost is setting in seriously

By DIANNA GAMES

STOKE UP the boiler folks — its getting colder, according to the Weather Bureau.

It has predicted a minimum of -1°C for Johannesburg today, with -2°C in Vereeniging and Bloemfontein and -3°C in Bethlehem, with frost warnings. Maximum temperatures in most centres should be below 18°C.

Yesterday's minimum temperature for Johannesburg was 2,2°C and at lunchtime it was 8°C, with a minimum of 3°C and maximum 14°C in Pretoria.

In Florida, Pretoria, 13mm of rain fell yesterday with 10mm at Kempton Park and Jan Smuts. Ermelo had 33mm, Piet Retief 24mm and Bethal 20mm.

A spokesman for the Department of Water Affairs said the Vaal Dam was only 27,89% full as against last week's 29%. The P K Leroux Dam and Hendrik Verwoerd Dam were both at their same levels of 62% and 65% but weekend levels must be read.

● See Page 2

Boy, 14, sentenced for killing on bus

Mail Correspondent

A 14-YEAR-OLD Standard 6 schoolboy was sentenced in Durban's Supreme Court yesterday — to be detained at a reform school until his 18th birthday — for stabbing and killing a fellow passenger during a bus ride to Sea Cow Lake last October.

Mr Justice Friedman said apart from the boy's youth, there had been some degree of provocation which reduced his blameworthiness in the murder of Mr Shabir Khan Mohamed.

However, the court was of the view the stabbing had been deliberate and the youth's actions showed a reckless disregard for another man's life.

In his judgment the judge said it had become abundantly clear that crimes committed by young men "wielding lethal knives" was not only prevalent in Durban but had reached such a degree of prevalence to have become frightening.

"Ordinary decent law-abiding citizens find themselves unable to walk the streets of Durban and, more particularly, those areas where they happen to reside", the judge said.

The Court heard that Mr Mohamed and two girls were in a bus travelling to Sea Cow Lake Road.

The youth also boarded the bus and after he had spoken to one of the girls Mr Mohamed challenged him to a fight.

The boy then pulled out a knife and stabbed Mr Mohamed in the neck.

Mr Justice Friedman said although there did not appear to be anything inherently bad in the youth's background he was unable to support the submission by the defence counsel, Mr G Lotz, for a suspended sentence.

Mrs M Steyn appeared for the State.

Home Finder

YOU will find details of the houses for sale, plus the latest in property news, in Midweek Homefinder, the Transvaal's biggest midweek housing marketplace, in the Rand Daily Mail tomorrow and every Wednesday.