# MOZAMBIQUE

## COUNTRY READER
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## ARTHUR T. TIENKEN
## Junior Vice Consul
## Lourenco Marques (1952-1955)

*Ambassador Arthur T. Tienken entered the Foreign Service in 1949 after serving in the U.S. Army and graduating from Princeton University. His career included assignments in Zaire, Washington, DC, Zambia, Addis Ababa, and an ambassadorship to Gabon. Ambassador Tienken was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1989.*

TIENKEN: The short answer to your question is by accident. After we left Germany, we were assigned to Lourenco Marques at that time, now, Maputo.

Q: *Which is in Mozambique.*

TIENKEN: Mozambique. As a junior vice consul in charge of consular work.

Q: *Just a regular assignment.*

TIENKEN: Just a regular assignment. While I was there, we had a visit from a gentleman named Fred Hadsel. Fred Hadsel was the core of a very small group in the Department at that time who were interested in and dealing with Africa. There was no Bureau of African Affairs then. But they could foresee down the road that there might be one. He visited Mozambique, and while he was there, asked me if I wouldn't like to specialize in Africa and join this small select group. I said, "No." And that kind of ended it for the time being.

Q: *Let me ask, what was your impression of Africa? I mean, before you even went there, of an African assignment?*

TIENKEN: An African assignment was the furthest thing from my mind when I was in Germany. But in those days, when somebody said, "You go to Lourenco Marques," that's where you went. You didn't sort of go back and discuss or argue the situation. You were told to go to Lourenco Marques, and you went.

Q: *Yes.*

TIENKEN: So we did. Lourenco Marques at that time was Portuguese. It is fair to say it was full colonialism at the time. The Portuguese were very definitely in charge. The Africans had no standing whatsoever. You didn't talk officially to Africans in those days. You had curfews. You had the Portuguese punitive system at work. This was simply colonialism still in full flower. And that stayed on for several years until the late '60s, I guess, when the Portuguese suddenly left the premises.

But Lourenco Marques, from the professional point of view in those days, was very dull.

Q: *Was this the reason you said no when Hadsel asked you to become an African specialist?*

TIENKEN: That was part of it, yes. Quite a lot of it because Africa in those days was anything but what Africa turned out to be. Here you were as though you were in metropolitan Portugal. You were on the continent, but you had very little to do. There was no political movement, for example, in Mozambique at the time. There were no freedom fighters. There was absolutely nothing substantive that was very interesting. And at that time, I had interests in seeing other parts of the world and doing other things. I wasn't terribly interested in staying in Africa.

It wasn't until 1960, when I first went to the Department as a personnel officer and was given the job of African assignments, that I began being associated Africa again, with one small exception. When I was in Brussels, I was an economic officer assigned in part to the economic side of the Belgian Congo, and our interests as seen from Belgium. But in 1960, I became an African personnel officer. And then my boss, who was later Ambassador Sheldon Vance, asked if I would come to AFC to be Rwanda-Burundi desk officer. I said yes, I think as much because I was very fond of Sheldon and liked to work for him as anything else.

And from then on, I sort of fell into Africa. Most of my assignments had to do with Africa after that. The more I became involved—by this time, Africa was mostly independent and a very

different Africa from Lourenco Marques. The more I was associated with it, the more interesting it became to me.

**SMITH SIMPSON**
**Consul General**
**Lourenco Marques (1954-1957)**

*Smith Simpson entered the Foreign Service after serving on the faculty of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. His career included assignments in Greece, Mexico, India, and Mozambique. Mr. Simpson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy and Ambassador John J. Crowley in 1991.*

*Q: You were in Mozambique from '54 to the end of '57. What was the political situation there at that time?*

SIMPSON: To any objective person, with sensitive antennae, the winds of change had made themselves evident. But not to the Portuguese. They were determined that they were never going to give up their African territories. They were Portuguese territories, not colonies, an integral part of Portugal. So they were never, never, never going to give them up.

The governor general would say to me, "You know, Mr. Consul General, if it comes to that, they'll have to drive us into the sea, because we won't surrender our land."

It was one of my functions, I felt, as the representative of a friendly country, to do what I could to prepare the Portuguese for what was coming. One way I did this was to travel extensively, for this enabled me to comment intelligently on Mozambique. I was able to engage in such traveling because of my good relations with the governor general. As I say, when I arrived, he was really to find that I knew as much (I didn't know much, but he *thought* I knew a lot) about Portugal and its history in Africa, including the Portuguese adventurers and explorers. I think I must have come across to him as a person of good will, for he did me the courtesy of returning my call, which he never did with other consular representatives.

I could tell he was surprised at the kind of quarters we had. The consulate general was located in an apartment house, so that at mealtime, cooking odors permeated the building. When he paid his call it was approaching the lunch period, so he got the full effect of the odors. The quarters also were cramped. I could tell he was rather surprised and disappointed that the United States' representative had such an office. So that, plus a security problem, motivated me to do a little better by my country.

The security problem was to me urgent. My room had French doors opening on a balcony and they were by any standards rather flimsy. Anybody with a good heave of the shoulders could push them open. So I began to press the Department for authority to acquire other quarters, for both reasons--to have more presentable premises and to upgrade security. I finally got it to send the regional security officer to visit us and inspect the premises. He was located somewhere on

the West Coast, I think Dakar. He arrived, looked over our quarters and said, "I agree with you, but I can't say so."

I said, "Why not?"

"Because," he said, "my predecessor came here, inspected, and said everything was secure. I can't dispute my predecessor."

"Well," I said, "let's put our heads together and find a way of doing it."

So we did, we got language which wouldn't embarrass his predecessor but which still made it clear that a security problem existed. Sometimes one has to use as much diplomacy in dealing with one's own government as with foreign. Eventually I received word from the Department: "Okay, go ahead, change your location, but don't spend any more money." How do you get better quarters if you don't spend more money?

So I dickered with a good British friend of mine who ran an import-export business. He was putting up a new building for his business, and there was going to be sizable space on the second floor--good space, airy, light. So I said, "You know, if you had the American consulate general in your building this would give it prestige. You wouldn't have to charge us a lot in view of the prestige we would bring." He agreed so we were able to get much better quarters without an increase in rent.

I got a Portuguese avant garde architect with whom I had friendly relations to help me lay out the space so it would be nice looking, and got him to suggest the colors of paint to use. Then I got the representative in Lourenço Marques of the South African Railways to blow up some pictures of Africa. I had seen them in their calendar and they were magnificent photographs. He blew them up to wall size. We hung those, persuaded USIA to send us pictures of the United States and the combination provided an atmosphere of both the United States and Africa.

The political problem we had at the time was the Portuguese treatment of American missionaries. It was an unusual situation because Salazar had persuaded Rome to appoint a cardinal in Mozambique. The church usually didn't appoint cardinals in places like Mozambique. But Salazar got a cardinal, and he was the source of the harassment of missionaries. As it happened, the missionaries were Protestant, which made it particularly difficult. As a gesture of good will I broke consular ranks and paid a courtesy call on the cardinal. This helped.

I traveled around a good deal--I was the only consular officer stationed in Mozambique who did--and I did it with the governor general's acquiescence. (One has to remember that the Salazar regime was a dictatorship sensitive to foreigners' traveling around their African territories.) I didn't ask the governor general for approval, but on extended trips I told him where I would go asking him for the names of governors and administrators on whom I could pay courtesy calls. Some of them invited me to stay with them. They were very hospitable, happy to have a visitor for they were all pretty isolated. This further cemented my relationships. This had the advantage of letting them know there was an American consul general around and interested in American

citizens. It worked out very well. The pressure of the cardinal diminished and we were able to iron out many sources of friction.

I took a great interest in the health programs of the government. I visited clinics it was establishing here and there in the bush for the blacks. When I'd come back from these trips, I'd tell the governor general the good things he was doing, adding: "You ought to publicize these. People outside of Mozambique don't know about them. Even people in Mozambique are not aware of all the things you are doing. You ought to get yourself a news photographer and have a program of Mozambique news, broadcast over Radio Mozambique. It could be re-broadcast in Portugal. Depending on how well it's done, we might even be able to use it elsewhere." He did this, but too late in my tour of duty for me to be able to do anything about it myself.

In these ways I hoped to get across the idea to the governor general that he was not really cut off from the rest of the world but doing things the rest of the world was doing. This gave me an opportunity to suggest what other things might be done in the hope of easing him along into accepting the winds of change. He was very appreciative of all this.

I inaugurated an exchange program to send Portuguese from Mozambique to the U.S. hoping that, once we got that established, maybe we could send blacks over. I knew it wouldn't work unless I got the governor general over first. If he agreed to go and went, then I would have no problems about anybody else going. So he did agree, but this got worked out only towards the end of my tour.

I left Mozambique the end of '57. The governor general came over in the spring of '58, when I was back in the States. I was his escort officer and I took him to see the Jefferson Memorial, with Jefferson's words about swearing eternal opposition to tyranny. Then we visited Monticello and the University of Virginia. The president of the University hosted a lunch. I had accumulated some materials on Mozambique, which I had donated to the University library, and these were on display. The governor general was quite impressed. He had had no idea that Mozambique was of any interest to the rest of the world. This was a good thing for him to know. Then I took him to visit Williamsburg from which he left for the rest of his trip.

*Q: What about your contacts? I've talked to other people who are dealing particularly in the Portuguese territories and saying that contacts with blacks in Portuguese territory was just about impossible. I mean, you know, significant contacts with black leaders just weren't around.*

SIMPSON: Contacts with blacks were impossible in Lourenço Marques. For one thing, they wouldn't dare to talk to you. So the way I solved that problem was to travel away from Lourenço Marques, and got the missionaries to set up meetings. They were in touch with the blacks, of course, knew who the black leaders were and among them, who were the most informative. So I would meet blacks in the homes of missionaries and in black villages. This kept me in touch with what the blacks were thinking. Otherwise, you couldn't do it. With a little ingenuity one could convert a missionary problem into an opportunity to meet blacks.

My predecessors had never traveled. I got through the whole province, eventually. The governor general and other officials in Lourenço Marques were saying that there was a lot of Communist

activity along the border of Mozambique with Tanganyika, and they thought this came from Julius Nyerere. I didn't view Julius Nyerere as a Communist, so I was very skeptical of these reports. Anyway, I thought I should find out what was going on, so on one of my trips, I went up to the country bordering Tanganyika. In my talks with the governor of the district and the administrators in the towns, I found no evidence of any Communist activity. This was just a lot of hooey that was being propagated in Lourenço Marques.

*Q: How about your instructions from Washington? Because '54 to '57, the real, you might say, explosion of African independence came somewhat later. It was just starting then. We had our bases in the Azores and we didn't want to upset Portugal. You were under the EUR Bureau, were you? Or the NEA?*

SIMPSON: The consulate general was under the African Bureau of the Department and I reported directly to it. The embassy in Lisbon was a little nervous about what I was doing in Mozambique, thinking I was being unduly protective of the missionaries, and this might be disturbing to Salazar. So take it easy, the embassy suggested, don't rock the boat.

*Q: This was very definitely the don't-rock-the-boat period, wasn't it, as far as Africa was concerned?*

SIMPSON: Yes, one had to be a little subtle about the way one operated so as to avoid the impression that he was rocking the boat, but at the same time protect American citizens and American interests, and also to insinuate to the Portuguese that they had better wake up and begin living in the latter half of the Twentieth Century. Required was a little political psychology.

## WADE MATTHEWS
## Political Officer
## Lourenco Marques (1965-1967)

*Wade Matthews was born and raised in North Carolina. He attended the University of North Carolina and served in the US Army between 1955 and 1956. He then entered the Foreign Service in 1957and held positions in Munich, Salvador, Lorenzo Marques, Trinidad and Tobago, Lima, Guyana, Ecuador, and Chile. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.*

Q: *What was the situation in Mozambique at the time?*

MATTHEWS: A insurgency had broken out in the North - roughly in September, 1964 - with Frelimo raiding from its bases in Tanzania. One of my assignments was to evaluate the situation and predict what would happen in Mozambique. It was something of a James Bond assignment. The question I had to answer whether we could expect a free and independent Mozambique in the near future or whether we should assume that the Portuguese would be able to repress the rebellion and therefore maintain Mozambique as an overseas province. That latter outcome

would have depended on a heavily armed Portuguese presence - a large drain on its military resources. Some of us thought that the outcome might be something in between and it became my job to evaluate and make policy recommendations. We actually made recommendations on what U.S. policy should be. These were the "Soapy" Williams days; he was the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs. The Portuguese desk officer with whom we were in frequent contact because he was responsible of Portugal's overseas provinces was Ted Briggs, his boss was George Landau - the Iberian Country Director.

We also dealt with the African Bureau, primarily on administrative support matters. But we did, for substance report, to the European Bureau. Such an organizational confusion of course was reflected in the opposite views that we received from the two Bureaus.

Q: *Lorenzo Marques was a Consulate General at the time. Is that correct? Who was in charge and how did it operate?*

MATTHEWS: It was a Consulate General. We reported directly to the Department. On most messages, EUR - the Iberian division - was the action office with copies provided to AF. I mentioned that I had met the CG - Thomas K Wright - while both of us were in Washington. He had been our Ambassador in Mali. He was identified with the African Bureau.

When I arrived, much to my surprise, we were met by Al Lafanier, the deputy Principal Officer - a position that was not filled when he left, leaving some of that workload to me. He told me that Wright had left a couple of days before on transfer orders. I was later told that he was viewed as having been identified with AF. He certainly seemed to favor independence. I was told that when he showed visitors - probably including Portuguese officials - around our offices, he would talk about "when" Mozambique would be independent and would show the visitors where the Ambassador's office would be, etc. Nor surprisingly, the Portuguese reacted strongly to Wright expressing his views in this manner. It was the same attitude reflected in their denial of Grovert's visa application. I was an unknown quantity, so I had few problems.

So the acting principal officer - former deputy - headed the CG. He was also the economic-commercial officer. CIA had a representative there - undeclared. He arrived roughly at the same time I did, creating all sorts of confusion for the Portuguese. Their intelligence was not very good and they did not know whether I was CIA or whether it was my colleague. Both of us were political officers further confusing the Portuguese; they really didn't know who was the CIA agent. So they put a tail on both of us for about two months which led to their conclusion that I was not the CIA agent.

The Principal Officer had an American secretary. There was a communicator and an administrative officer. I handled political and consular affairs. I had a consular assistant during most of my tour. I also during about half my tour there handled economic affairs due to a series of vacancies and that sort of thing. I had, however, an economic and commercial local assistant. He had a Ph.D. from a university in Goa. He was Goan and had lived in Portugal a brief time. He had spent much of his adult life in Mozambique. He was good in what he did.

*Q: Before we move to the political situation, let's first [do] the consular. Were there any particular consular problems or cases or anything of that nature that bring to mind?*

MATTHEWS: None that spring to mind. Consular work there was rather routine, largely dealing with people immigrating to Mozambique and probably had their applications for visas [to the U.S.] prior to the time they came to Mozambique; and American citizenship [issues]. There was a fairly sizable Gulf oil operation there at the time. In Americans, we are talking about 60-80 with Gulf oil, plus a lot of others, and so they had passports and their problems and so on.

*Q: When I think of oil workers I think of the terms for them around there, roughnecks or roustabouts or so on which sometimes describes this is pretty hard work. Did you have any problems of them ending up in jail or that sort of thing?*

MATTHEWS: No problems that we really had to get involved in. The Gulf oil people did have problems, some of them getting into jail and that sort of thing, but they had a good relationship with the Portuguese authorities. The Portuguese authorities tried to make sure that nobody was killed, and so they would go and get them out an ship them home if there was any real trouble. So, we rarely got involved.

*Q: Well, now on the economic side, what were there any American interests there other than the oil exploration?*

MATTHEWS: It was quite limited. We were successful I think in selling a few locomotives to the Mozambique rail system. The rail system was substantial because the port of Lourenco Marques was a major South African port and Rhodesian port, Avira and Lourenco Marques which the British call Byara, the port up in the middle part. I'm using the old name of course, Laurence au March which was the name when I was there. The transportation was the biggest thing we had an interest in other than oil. Of course, we exported a fair number of cashews. I think it was the biggest source of cashew nuts for the United States, and we exported quite a bit of frozen shrimp and lobster tails from Mozambique waters. No, our commercial interests were quite limited there. Our consular interests were handled by one assistant, and when she was away, the local secretary handled them. Consular work took up I would say at the most 20% of my time, probably less.

*Q: Could you tell me what was the impression you got from the officers serving there when you arrived about whither Mozambique to begin with before you did your own thing?*

MATTHEWS: I told you Reich's position earlier. He had gone by the time I got there. There was a six month interim before Reich's replacement arrived and I think he was an FSO-3 officer which would be the equivalent of an FSO-1 now under the present system. I, incidentally was an FSO-6 when I arrived, but my promotion came through shortly whenever the new list came out, I was an FSO-5, equivalent to an FSO-3 now. I was mid-grade.

*Q: You are talking about a[n Army] captain in the military approximately.*

MATTHEWS: Something like that. I was in my early 30s, 31-32. The CIA officer there whose name I will not mention, but the one who they thought might be me, we had a lot to do with each other. He was a very open individual, and we probably shared a few things we shouldn't have shared.

Incidentally, I would like to tell one anecdote because it because it was important at that particular point. As I said, I had a tail put on me, and he had a tail put on him. Our car arrived, a white Ford station wagon, not too long after I got there. This would have been a few weeks afterward. So, one of the first trips I took with my wife and kids up to see the hippopotamuses on the Inquatmi, I think, was the name of the river. I'm a little confused on the river name. Maybe I got it mixed up. Anyway it was about 35 miles out of town. We decided we'd go not by the interior road which was a paved road, a main north south highway, but by a little road down by the beach, a little tiny dirt road.

So, we were driving along, and I saw this little grey Volkswagen which was my tail some little distance back. Then, we had a flat tire or something. We stopped and got out and to my absolute disgust, I found that somebody had stolen the jack from the car.

*Q: This happened quite a bit.*

MATTHEWS: Oh, yes. The VW was stopped some distance behind. This was completely a one lane dirt road with no traffic whatsoever on it. I scratched my head a little and walked back to the car and explained in Portuguese what had happened, the car did not have a jack, did they have a jack? The two people in it, plain clothes security, white, Portuguese, looked at each other, didn't say a word to me, got out their jack and walked up to the car. They also had their lug wrench which had also been stolen. They jacked it up and while I tried to help a little, they changed my tire for me, put it back on. Not one word, I made a few comments, but they didn't say a word to me. They let it down and walked back to their car. I waited a reasonable time for them to get back; it was a couple of hundred yards behind us. Then we went on the rest of our trip, looked at the hippopotami and came on back. They followed us all the way back.

Some time later I got to know fairly well, I think I called on him already, Antonio Vas, the local Mozambique chief of PITI, Police Internationale [etc.], the Portuguese security police. The secret police if you want to call it although it wasn't entirely secret. We used to exchange little jokes. We'd both go with our kids to the Palana Hotel pool on Sunday morning, this was four or five months later. They had a tap on our telephone which they were quite open about at the consulate. Perhaps they had taps on our home phone, we weren't sure. We would exchange jokes, and he would have somebody tell him on Friday what interesting did you get from the consulate, and he would make some joke about that to me. He would say, "I see you were talking with so and so this week. You have got to watch talking to him. We might throw you in jail with him or something like that."

I told him the story one time about this incident with the two follower cars, there were two people in the follow car. He said," Mm, what did they tell you?" "They didn't tell me anything." "They didn't say anything, they didn't open their mouths to you?" "That's right." "Good he said, because that is what they had in their report. I just wanted to make sure they weren't lying. They

were under strict orders not to speak to you at all." Anyway, it was a reasonable relaxed sort of an operation, and they figured out after a couple of months who I was and my tail disappeared.

*Q: What were you getting from the man who was the deputy consul general and anyone else when you first arrived about the Portuguese position in Mozambique, where it was headed at that point? We are talking about 1965.*

MATTHEWS: They thought it was limited and that the insurgency would grow. They didn't know when, how long it would be before the insurgents took over. He had a list, apocalyptic I would suppose. He was not as sanguine as his predecessor Wright was about when this would take place. He thought it would be some time, but he thought they would get stronger and take over. Now, my assignment was to make the evaluation. I listened to that; I listened to a lot of other people; I listened to a man named Domingo Saluca who was the principal, he described himself as the black showpiece of Mozambique. He was quite open in talking in his office with a little man serving coffee, not a black of course. He ran a newspaper published in Sangni and Aronga, the two principal southern Mozambique languages. They had another I think, Macure language, I'm not sure. Anyway another language newspaper which he owned and published. He was a lawyer. He was really our only black opposition contact in Lourenco Marques because he was the only one around. He wasn't in jail or under very tight cover.

The agency had some others, but most of our contacts with the black opposition, the essentially Frelimo opposition, there was one other small group as I said, was from a source out of country. I would call on Laruca, I made several calls on him. He would talk quite openly, "Yes it is inevitable that Frelimo is going to take over, but what I would like to have would be a peaceful transfer of power." I would say, "Should we be talking like this here in this office?" I would never call him on the telephone other than to set things up because I didn't want to compromise anybody. They did throw people in jail for this sort of thing. He said, "No, they would not touch me; I am their black showcase." I would say a month after that conversation, after I had been there about three or four months, Laruca was arrested and spent the rest of the time I was in Mozambique in the Cape Verde Islands where they had a prison. I never had any contact after he left there with Domingo Laruca. His wife was a white Portuguese, and I did occasionally see her before she left Mozambique and inquire about Domingo Laruca, but he was not as untouchable as he thought.

*Q: Well, just to get a little flavor of the times, in later years the human rights became to the forefront, you would have been protesting this type of thing. I take it that how we dealt with a matter like this was not to protest. It was a strictly internal Portuguese business, was that it?*

MATTHEWS: As I recall in Washington when charges would be made that such and such an individual had been tortured. Torture, incidentally was not, it's hard to [establish]. There were allegations that people had been tortured. They certainly did use rough interrogation, and there probably was some of it. I don't think a person like Laruca, in fact his wife never, claimed that he had been tortured as I recall. He was a lawyer for crying out loud. He had been educated in the Portuguese system; he was married to a white Portuguese woman. He was arrested for contacts with active insurgency and supporting the insurgency; and let's face it, he did have contacts with them. Our reporting indicated that obviously he had contact with them, and he was fairly open.

So, I don't recall any protests. We would not have been involved in any protest in Mozambique in any event because we after all, were a consulate general, although actively reporting. We were not a position. Let me, well, I suppose it would be of interest to find out what I did because my assignment was to investigate. So, I arranged to go up. I could travel essentially wherever I wanted to. I had to let the Portuguese know.

I traveled all over Mozambique, up into the insurgency areas, because at this time the active insurgency areas, bombs in the road, ambushes of military patrols, that sort of thing was up in an area within 60-100 miles of the Tanzania border. There were some little occasionally terrorist incidents down in a part of Southern Mozambique, not in the city of Lourenco Marques, but those were very small scale stuff. So I went up there; I made several trips. I chartered a plane for one trip after six months or so after the new consul general got there, Harold Reed. Henry Clinton Reed, who came from being consul general in Angola for the previous two years. Prior to that, he had been consul general in Au Porto. He was a long time Foreign Service officer. As I recall he had been at the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco. He had been a consular officer for a long time; son of a missionary.

Anyway, I went up and made these trips, and I believe even before we had arrived I had made my reports and analysis, and Lachimeer had signed off on them. He said well, you've been up. I think he even went on a couple of these trips because he was also tied to orientation. I don't remember whether I made such a trip with Al Lachimeer but I may have.

My conclusion was that the Portuguese could defend Mozambique from being taken over by Frelimo, if they had the national will to do so. But it would cost them something. Unlike Angola which was a net economic plus, Mozambique was a net economic loss. Not nearly as much of a loss as Portuguese Guinea. They would certainly defend Mozambique as long as they defended Portuguese Guinea. They were losing more people in Portuguese Guinea and Portuguese Guinea had no worth for them at all except if they gave up Portuguese Guinea, that would give great encouragement to the Mozambique rebels which was marginally important and more important to the Angola rebels.

*Q: Portuguese Guinea is in the bulge of Africa.*

MATTHEWS: West Africa, Guinea Bissau it is called now. Angola was the gem of the Portuguese overseas provinces. But anyway, that was the conclusion that I had and the reason, the basic rationale, had Mozambique been a mosaic of tribes, lots of little tribes, or had there been relatively little tribal identity, then the insurgency supported from bases from countries primarily in Tanzania could have probably swept down and taken the northern part of Mozambique and maybe just kept on going, but there was a big problem.

The principal insurgent fighters were Macombi, a warlike tribe, the best wood carvers in east Africa which was about half in southern Tanzania and half in Mozambique. Right south of them there was a tribe on the far west who did [get outside] support, but not entirely. But the largest tribe in Mozambique was the Macua. The Macua were traditional old tribal enemies of the Macombi. So here are the Macombi supporting the Macua and vice versa. The Macua for that reason remained essentially in the Portuguese camp. They were not generally active participants

in the insurgency. They formed a large buffer, a large block to the southern spread of the insurgency. That was a large part of my analysis, and I must say in retrospect, my analysis was pretty correct.

The Portuguese did beat the insurgency at a tolerable level. They lost more people from traffic accidents while I was there for example, than they did from actual insurgent attacks. The reason being largely insurgents'. The main weapon of the insurgents were little plastic anti-personnel land mines which they would plant in the road. The Portuguese found that if you put sandbags in a jeep, and if you ran the jeep like a bat out of hell, just as fast as you could go, that the land mine would be set off by the jeep, but it would explode behind the jeep and it wouldn't really bother anybody. So, they lost hardly anybody from vehicle explosions.

They did lose some from stepping on land mines, of course. But, mostly because the culture was to speed very rapidly over those land mines, they did lose a lot of people to traffic accidents. I went on some of those jeep rides over a lot of those roads. I never had a land mine explode behind me, but they did drive just like demons.

*Q: What was your impression of the Portuguese army at that time, and how were they dealing with the insurgency and attitudes?*

MATTHEWS: Their principal weapon they had, which the United States got terribly interested in when I reported it, was fortified villages. This was early Vietnam time. So, after I had made my reports and made my analysis of what was going to happen, the fortified villages were generally successful. I don't think any of the fortified villages fell as I recall, once they were properly fortified with some land mines around them and some fences, and this, that and the other. They would pick off people they would find out from grabbing some people and interrogating them who were the principal Portuguese collaborators in the village, and then when those people came out to go to their fields or what have you, they would try to pick them off, so they did get some of the black Africans in the village who were the principal collaborators or what have you. The Africans would go outside of the village every day, largely unescorted to farm because after all the farming areas were outside the village.

We visited quite a few of those fortified villages and recorded how they were set up and so on. Fairly successful, the majority of the people just wanted to be left alone and do their own thing. The villages seemed to have adequate food; mostly they grew their own food. It was by and large not trucked in, but if there were some exceptionally bad - let's say the insurgents destroyed the crops - the Portuguese military would bring in food from other areas. It was very hard to gauge the opinion of a person in the village; I think it depended on his tribal affiliation. Most of them did not speak any Portuguese, and most of us at the Embassy didn't speak any tribal language.

*Q: What was your impression of the Portuguese army and how it operated?*

MATTHEWS: With reasonable efficiency; they were spread fairly thin. I'm trying to remember the number, 40,000 sticks in my mind, but I think that may have been more than there were there. There were certainly no more than 40,000 Portuguese troops in Mozambique, and after all we are talking of a country considerably larger than California. Most of them were obviously

concentrated in the insurgent areas, but reasonably efficient. They were fairly well-supplied. Portugal was a member of NATO so they got some U.S. supplies through NATO. There was an agreement which the United States insisted on that they not use any of those supplies in Mozambique. Now we were not trained military people.

A military attaché may have come to Mozambique at one time while I was there; I don't remember. Any obvious U.S. equipment we would report on, and I recall the small amount that we say, and we would talk with the Portuguese military about is this causing a problem. Well of course, Americans supporting the bloody guerrillas and that sort of thing by not letting us use the equipment here. That all appeared to be equipment that was acquired prior to any U.S. restrictions and prior to any insurgency that had broken out. It didn't look as though they were bringing that stuff down. After all we were not supplying them with equipment, they had a small munitions industry. The sort of equipment they needed in Mozambique that we were apt to see at least was generally not the sort we would supply.

*Q: I take it there was not a feeling in Lourenco Marques of being under siege.*

MATTHEWS: No, not at all.

*Q: How did you get information about the rebellion? Could you talk a bit about your impression of how the CIA, the agency representative, were you getting a picture. Or was this sort of off your radar?*

MATTHEWS: A mix, a real mix. We talked with a lot of people, some people who had business interests in the north, some people who were connected with the Portuguese opposition, that is the metropolitan Portuguese opposition, white Portuguese, but who didn't like the government and would like to come in and tell us anything negative about the government. I don't mean necessarily come into the office and tell us, but who we would meet and have lunch with, we would run into them at some commercial activity or some reception or wherever. We would go to shop or dealing with some lawyer on some local real estate matter, all sorts of sources on that kind of information. We would call on people when we would travel. If there was a local newspaper in the provincial area where you would go, you would always call on the local newspaper editor who may not have been a supporter of the Portuguese and people you would run into in hotels, you would see a lot of it yourself. We did travel around in a lot of these areas, and after my first couple of months there, and I'm not sure I made a trip North during my first couple of months; I may have. I did not have a tail on me, so I could wander around.

You could always run into a lot of people in the slightly urban areas, not out in the bush, who did speak Portuguese. You have to remember there were roughly 120,000 white Portuguese in Mozambique at the time, most of whom you would almost call peasant farmers, some large agricultural cooperatives up in the Limpopo valley where they tried to have sort of transformed Portuguese dirt farmers to Mozambique. This had mixed economic success, some success, but they couldn't really compete with the Africans from the standpoint of the wage scale. I think, as I recall, there were about 8-10 million which is the population of Mozambique of whom about 120,000 were white Portuguese. I would say about half of them there as farmers or businessmen or what have you, and the other half there in some government capacity.

*Q: Did the agency officer have any good sources from your point of view from the insurgency?*

MATTHEWS: Had some. I would say that they were no better than my sources. Don't forget, he did some cover work; he talked to some of the same sources I talked with. He was, after all, listed as a political officer, as was I. So, we talked with many of the same people. We took some trips together. Occasionally he would go off to a bar or to prowl around town, obviously to meet a contact. But he didn't have sources out in the [hinterland?], as I recall; that wasn't the sort of thing we did. The main advantage was the reporting we got both agency and State Department from outside the country which we would see, and of course we'd share this. Then once we got a new Consul General, Harry Clinton Reed, had a good memory for what the contacts would say, and he was a real sociable person toward the contacts. Having served a couple of years at Au Porto, one of the centers of Portuguese domestic opposition, and having served in Angola, he knew the language well. He had a lot of contacts and friends of friends that he knew and were living in Mozambique, so he would get all sorts of information. He hated to write. We would get together in his office almost every morning and he would tell me so and so said this and said that and you ought to see so and so about something. More of my domestic Lourenco Marques information came from him, rather than from my own direct contacts.

*Q: Did you feel any pressure both from these bifurcated bosses that you had, the Europeans and NATO elements? The main thing for Portugal is we wanted to keep the Azores base which was essential to NATO and we didn't want to rock the boat, that was the European context. Then you had the Soapy Williams coterie in the Africa Bureau which saw the winds of change and was quite positive on African independence. These two collided, and here you are down in a place which is a point of conflict and what you are sending out. I mean, nobody is going to be happy if you send the wrong thing. Did you feel any of that?*

MATTHEWS: We felt the difference between the bureaus, no question about that, and I recall somebody on the political side from the Africa Bureau, maybe more than one, did come for a visit to the post. Soapy Williams never came to Mozambique; it would have been a little awkward. Anyway he never did come. Yes, we felt that the Africa Bureau was not all that happy with our reporting, with the slant of our reporting. We reported that the Portuguese could hold on as long as they wanted to provided that they had the will to hold on which is what happened. There was a revolution in Portugal and the leftist group of military took over. They invited Frelimo in and said set it up. Frelimo at the time we were there was not the radical leftist group they became after Eduardo Mondlane was assassinated. As I recall, the assassination took place while we were in Mozambique. Of course Frelimo said the Portuguese did it. I think it was an internal Frelimo dispute between a radical element and the Eduardo Magline element. Most of the time I was there Magline was... Laruca was freed from prison after the revolution came on, maybe before that, I don't recall, and later became associated with Renamo which was set up by the Rhodesian government, the Ian Smith government and was later supported by the South African government. I don't know what ever happened to Laruca but he was the only respectable figure in the Renamo hierarchy, all the others being real goons and that sort of thing. Renamo didn't even exist while I was there.

*Q: What about we were in the middle of the cold war and were always looking for the Russian or Soviet bear under the bed or even the Communist Chinese. Were we looking for Communist influence and what did we find?*

MATTHEWS: Way down there we weren't particularly looking for it. There was little Communist influence in Mozambique. Some of the opposition Portuguese perhaps had communist ties, but we really didn't focus on that, and I'm not sure that any had really serious communist ties that were in Mozambique. The Portuguese P.D. would have come down and arrested anyone they thought had really serious communist ties among the white Portuguese in Mozambique. Among the Frelimo as I said was Laruca who certainly did not have communist ties. He did have Frelimo ties from the Magline stripe that element of Frelimo. Now obviously the Communist Chinese were supplying Frelimo I think gratis with all this anti-personnel plastic mines. They were armed by, well their arms support came from a variety of sources, the Chinese particularly and probably the Russians were a major element in their source of arms and funding up in Tanzania, but that was understood. After all, you take it from where you can get it. The Tanzanian government also gave them considerable support of course.

## BILHA BRYANT
## Spouse of FSO
## Lourenco Marques (1967-1969)

*Bilha Bryant was born in 1934 in Bulgaria. Bryant served in the Israeli Army and worked in the private sector before joining the Israeli Foreign Service in 1959. Bryant resigned from the Israeli Foreign Service and married Edward (Ted) Bryant in 1963. With her husband, Bryant was assigned overseas to Mozambique, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Korea and India. Bryant then began to work for the State Department and served in the Soviet Bureau, Eastern European Affairs and Congressional Relations. Bryant was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.*

BRYANT: And I became an American citizen. During these three years in Washington we had two daughters. So I was sort of busy. Even so, I was very involved in Ted's life; enjoyed his friends and colleagues and made new friends. And then our first posting was Mozambique.

*Q: And that was Portuguese.*

BRYANT: Portuguese East Africa.

*Q: And you were there from?*

BRYANT: From 67 to 69.

*Q: And what was Ted doing there?*

BRYANT: He was the deputy principal officer. That was probably one of the worst experiences I have had in my life. Not as a post. Mozambique was a beautiful place. Lourenço Marques was lovely, just lovely. But both the consul general and his wife were from Oklahoma and they didn't know what to make of me, they really didn't. Perhaps my foreign accent sounded suspicious to them. I was friendly, happy, and I entertained beautifully, and they definitely didn't like me or trust me. I have a very interesting story to tell about that. We did not have super markets in Lourenço Marques where we could buy food for parties and things like that. A few of us wives would get together and make the three-hour trip to Nieuwspraat in South Africa, just on the border and either we would drive ourselves or have a consulate car take us. This particular trip was for the Fourth of July party at the Consulate General's residence. We took an office car and driver and went to do the shopping for the party, including a number of turkeys from the local butcher. When we came back, they dropped us off and took all the turkeys – about six or seven of them – to the consul general's residence. About 9 o'clock that evening, the telephone rang. The administrative officer was calling to tell me that a turkey was missing and to ask me if I had taken it. When I said that I had not, he insisted: "Bilha, you must have taken the turkey. The Consul General asked that we come and check in your house." I said, "You can come and check," but I was in tears, I can tell you. They came and of course, they didn't find the turkey. But the next day they did find out that in fact two turkeys were left behind because the butcher had forgotten them in the freezer. And that was that, no apologies. So you can see this incident did not make me happy and not very confident about my future in the U.S. Foreign Service. The Consul General must have been intelligent, but you couldn't' tell. Perhaps being in charge for the first time in his life did something to him. He had a dog, and we all had to go once a week and play with the dog. And whenever they entertained, and some of us attended their dinners, one of our duties was to entertain the dog for 10 to 15 minutes. I mean during a dinner party; people were talking and you had to throw this stupid ball to the dog. It was incredible how they got away with such behavior.

*Q: You wonder how people can do it.*

BRYANT: But they do. And every time he left the Post, he gave written instructions to the administrative officer and all of us about our "dog's duties: "Bill will come at eight o'clock in the morning and give him some grapes; June will come at ten and give him his biscuit," etc. It was really, very difficult to respect a man like that. Mozambique was a very delightful place to live, and all the Portuguese and Africans we met there were very, nice people. It's too bad that relations in the Consulate General were not happier.

*Q: Did you have much contact with what one would today call the "natives." It's a pejorative term, but you had the Portuguese who were settled there, and those who were of African ancestry, who were basically sort of kept apart, weren't they?*

BRYANT: The truth is that we did not meet Mozambican Africans socially. I remember a famous African artist, -I don't remember his name-who was very popular with the European diplomatic community. He was one of the few Africans we could invite, so we all fought over him. We did know well and socialized with the "native" Portuguese, mostly government officials, and businessmen. I remember vividly the visit to Mozambique of Sam Westerfield, a deputy assistant secretary for African Affairs, who was a good friend from our stint in Washington. Sam

was black and was especially interested in meeting Africans. So we had a party for him and of course invited our one and only African, the artist. When Sam Westerfield walked into our house, our wonderful “houseboy” Ricardo opened the door for him, and Sam shook his hand and introduced himself. Then he walked into our kitchen and shook hands with the rest of the staff. They stood there quite taken aback, and told me, "Madam, it's not acceptable to us for somebody to come and shake our hands while we are working.”

There were quite a few black shop attendants. Where else did we see them? -tailors and shoemakers, people like that.

They seemed happy, at least in Lourenço Marques. We didn't feel that they were badly treated, because the Portuguese really accept color, much more than any other European nation. What they lacked is the possibility of a good education. The Portuguese made a big mistake in their policies with the Africans. Mozambique could have been a prosperous and happier country for the Portuguese remaining there, had they provided an education for the Africans. But otherwise we did not see much poverty.

*Q: Was there any revolt going on out in the hinterlands?*

BRYANT: Yes, at that time already the revolt had started, but Lourenço Marques itself was not affected. You could not tell. We heard about things happening out there. In fact, we traveled a great deal, but we were never worried. I loved the Mozambique Africans; they are happy, gregarious, friendly and smart people. They were my favorite Africans, and I've known quite a few Africans. By the way, when Mozambique became independent at least one of the people who worked for us became a government official.

## HENDRICK VAN OSS
## Consul General
## Lourenco Marques (1971-1974)

*Hendrik Van Oss was born in 1917 in Pennsylvania and graduated from Princeton University. He joined the Department of State in 1942 and the Foreign Service in 1945. His career included positions in China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Austria, Uganda, Mozambique, New Zealand, the Congo, and Washington, DC. Mr. Van Oss was interviewed by Lillian Mullins in 1991.*

Q: *So Lourenco Marques was your last post and you were Consul General there from 1971- 74?*

VAN OSS: That is right. That was my swan song.

Q: *You went out to Lourenco Marques at the beginning of the end, as it were, of the Portuguese colonialism there.*

VAN OSS: Yes, although I don't think any of us thought of it as the beginning of the end, although in retrospect probably we should have. But when I first got there the Portuguese were

very firmly in control. The war against Frelimo, the liberation movement, was going quite well for the Portuguese. They had a very dynamic commander-in-chief, General Kaulza de Arriaga, who was quite an interesting and forceful figure. His detractors dubbed him "The Pink Panther."

At the time I arrived, the liberation movement, Frelimo, was pretty well confined to the northernmost portion of Mozambique. It made claims, of course, to controlling from thirty to fifty percent of the entire country, but so far as I could determine that wasn't the case. Their only area of actual control was in the northern part, the part that coincided more or less with the area inhabited by the Makonde tribe, just south of the Ruvuma River which forms the border between Tanzania and Mozambique.

The Makonde are a very aggressive, talented people who spill over from southern Tanzania into northern Mozambique. Frelimo had the support of, and derived much of its power from the Makonde.

It was not until about mid or perhaps early 1973 that it began to become evident something was going to change. I think we were too close to events to see them clearly at the time, but that is when the beginning of the end for the Portuguese became more evident.

Q: *So in 1971 how did the Department prepare you for this post? They apparently did not see the revolution taking off then.*

VAN OSS: Speaking of the revolution in Portugal or in Mozambique?

Q: *In Mozambique.*

VAN OSS: The actual preparation I had for Mozambique was twenty weeks of Portuguese language training at FSI and, of course, the usual briefings. The Department was a "two-headed monster," if you want to call it that. Portugal was an ally and member of NATO. Portugal, also, was the last remaining colonial power in Africa, unless you consider the governments of Rhodesia and South Africa as colonial. Portugal, the colonial power and our NATO ally, was important in the eyes of the European Bureau of the Department. But Mozambique, as an African country, was under the aegis of the Department's African Bureau, which was interested in the liberation and independence of all African countries. The Department's two Bureaus were unified in wanting to put pressure on Portugal to voluntarily give Mozambique its independence, but differed in timing and in how much pressure to apply.

But there were various other currents that I was being prepared for. One was, of course, Rhodesia which was ruled by a government of white settlers who had taken over from the British and issued a unilateral declaration of independence or UDI. The Department (and the British) were very much opposed to the act, and didn't recognize the UDI Rhodesian government. I was under instructions not to do anything in Mozambique that would imply in any way that the U.S. recognized the UDI government. That led to some interesting developments which I will go into later.

Of course, the African Bureau was very much in favor of Frelimo and was trying to indicate that we supported it at least in theory without offending the Portuguese whom we depended on for bases and landing rights in the Azores and support in various other affairs. You recall that during the Israeli wars the Portuguese gave us landing rights in the Azores and thus helped us supply the Israelis.

So there I was, I had two masters. I was in a Portuguese territory and therefore owed a slight bit of fealty to the European Portuguese Desk and the American Ambassador in Lisbon; but as an African specialist I felt I owed primary loyalty to the Bureau of African Affairs. When I arrived in Mozambique I found that practically all my contacts were either with Portuguese officials or with Mozambiqicans who were loyal to Portugal and used by the Portuguese to show how liberal and multi-racial they were. So all my sources of information on the spot were inspired or controlled in one way or another by the Portuguese. That doesn't mean that I didn't also have black and white contacts who were anti-Portuguese. But the ones who knew what was going on in the battlegrounds and in the bush where the fighting was going on were mainly Portuguese officials.

As a loyal and experienced Foreign Service officer I reported what I heard. I called the shots as I saw them and tried to be as critical as possible. But I had these restrictions of having to be careful about Rhodesia and walking a very narrow path between the Portuguese and the Africans.

Q: *In 1971 after you arrived I think the only news report I saw that struck my eye said Hastings Banda visited Mozambique. Was that of any significance?*

VAN OSS: Well, the Banda visit was not of all that great importance to me at the time, but it was significant to this extent: Hastings Banda was one of the few African leaders who got along with the Portuguese. In fact, his honorary consul in Mozambique was a man named Jorge Jardim, a prominent, wealthy Portuguese businessman. Jardim was really a very interesting person. For example, he started parachute jumping at the age of fifty. He was a man's man, very conservative and influential. He had very good relations with Africans and, holding the title of Honorary Consul for Malawi, he was Hastings Banda's man in Mozambique. So the visit of Hastings Banda is significant from that point of view. Also, Mozambique's main importance in Africa at that time was as a passage way for goods going to and from Rhodesia, South Africa and Malawi, which is land bound. Nacala, in the northern part of Mozambique, is a potentially very fine, deep water port. It was slated to become Malawi's access to the ocean. Although Nacala stayed within Mozambique's sovereignty, Malawi was to be allowed to have almost total use of it.

Thus, the Portuguese made a great fuss over Banda but the episode was not all that important. I don't remember much about it now, that is the problem.

Q: *In 1972 things continued about the same?*

VAN OSS: Yes. I did quite a bit of travelings throughout Mozambique, mostly as a result of Portuguese invitations. General Kaulza de Arriaga knew on which side of the street the sun shone and did his best to keep American representatives briefed. He told us what he wanted us to

hear, of course, but through him and through his deputies I was...I actually did this myself, able to arrange for all of us in the Consular Corps to get regular briefings by the Portuguese military authorities. We went over to their headquarters about once every two weeks. We were constantly being invited to go with Kaulza on trips to the north or to the central portion of the country. These trips allowed me to see quite a bit of what was going on.

I can say this, to give just a small tip of the hat to Kaulza, he had trained his men well, had built up their morale. The Portuguese fighting forces were strong and effective. They were not sissies in any sense of the word. Their parachute jumpers were highly trained and included a great number of black troops. At one point later in my tour of duty Kaulza came into ill repute and was fired in effect; I can go into that in greater detail later if you are interested. But once he left, the whole situation changed. Portuguese morale was no longer as high as before and Kaulza's successor was a nonentity whose name I can't even remember now and who was dubbed by Portuguese critics as the "unknown soldier." He was mainly an administrator and ineffective as a leader in battle. At that point the end of Portuguese rule surely should have been in sight for us.

Q: *By that time, the end of 1972 and beginning of 1973, a lot of other countries, Denmark, Brazil, etc. had all announced support for Frelimo and were sending them money.*

VAN OSS: This was going on all through my assignment. The Scandinavian countries, in particular, were giving Frelimo support and we were too. Not military support, but we were giving them humanitarian support. The first chief of Frelimo, Edwardo Monlane, was American trained. He had an American wife, a white woman, and was highly regarded by Western countries.

Q: *Where was he trained?*

VAN OSS: I think Syracuse University but I would have to check on that. He was long dead before I got to Mozambique. Samora Machel was head of Frelimo in my time. Going back a bit to the sources I had, I have frequently been asked why I didn't have any contacts with Frelimo. The reason was that they weren't there. They weren't to be found in any place I was. Later I learned that one of the young black up-and-coming bank assistants we used to know and have lunch with occasionally was, indeed, a hidden member of Frelimo. He eventually became, I think, Minister of Economic Affairs or some comparable job after Frelimo took over the reins. Graca was his first name.

Q: *In that period then, 1971-72, Frelimo personnel were not in evidence in Lourenco Marques at all?*

VAN OSS: Oh, no. Not only that, if anybody had presented himself to me personally as a Frelimo, I would have had to be very careful because the Portuguese had a very, very thorough Secret Security Office, the DGS, and there was always the possibility that they were trying to test me to see whether I was doing something that was not allowed. That wouldn't have kept me from talking with somebody if I had known that that person was in truth a member of Frelimo. But if he had sort of sneaked up to me on the street, he could have been an agent provocateur, so one had to watch out for that.

Q: *The Portuguese were responding to criticisms coming out of the UN, from Scandinavia, from all over the place at this time. Towards the end of 1972 they proclaimed that they were going to have elections or something.*

VAN OSS: I don't recall the timing exactly, but I don't think Portugal ever had in mind, during the period while Caetano was still the dictator, of giving their colonies independence. I think what they had in mind was some sort of greater Portuguese commonwealth or Lusitania, thinking in terms of having some affiliation with Brazil as part of that. Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau would all be members of this commonwealth, each with a certain amount of autonomy like the British Commonwealth. I don't think they ever contemplated that Mozambique would be independent on its own. And it was a great talking point with all the Portuguese that the Mozambicanos were actually Portuguese, or at least Portuguese citizens. Their black henchmen...if you were to meet a black teacher at a school and you were there with a Portuguese official, the teacher would hasten to tell you that he was a black Portuguese. This was part of the Portuguese mystique...that they were color blind, had no racial discriminatory tendencies, and intermarried...and I think to a great extent that this was true.

That doesn't mean that for years the Portuguese weren't hard taskmasters, but basically this was based on a master/servant relationship rather than white race/black race distinction. The Portuguese were not like the British who always felt themselves to be a superior class...well perhaps not always, but in the beginning. I don't think the Portuguese had that feeling. Many Portuguese who came over as farmers to Mozambique married black wives and settled there permanently. Through the decades and generations their descendants became indistinguishable from the blacks themselves. But they retained their Portuguese names. To this day there probably are farmers along the Zambezi River area with Portuguese names who are as African looking as any original Mozambicano.

Q: *Then in 1973 the Frelimo attacks heated up, attacking trains, etc. and coming closer to Lourenco Marques.*

VAN OSS: Yes and no. They never really gained control over any areas other than the northern portion I mentioned before, so far as I could ever discover. In fact, Frelimo propaganda publications we got would display pictures of Frelimo guerrillas marching through the bushes and/or conquering some unnamed village or other, but there was never anyplace you could identify. So it was very difficult to assess the accuracy of their claims.

Q: *The Portuguese didn't take you out and show you villages ruined by Frelimo?*

VAN OSS: Oh, yes, but not many ruined by Frelimo because they weren't ruining many at that time. Towards the end of 1973, I think it was, again my timing is a bit hazy now, Frelimo raids began to penetrate farther and farther south and were beginning to hit places like the Gorongosa National Park (the game park), which was shelled one time causing a great hassle among tourists. They started to lay ambushes along main roads, but these were all hit and run guerrilla operations. They were not land battles involving seizures of territory.

Q: *You said that you recalled during 1973 there were human rights charges against Portugal for torture and the use of napalm against black guerrillas and also at the same time a UN resolution to impose trade sanctions against Portugal.*

VAN OSS: Yes. I don't recall the exact incidents. All I can say is that similar allegations were constantly being made. I suppose at one time, probably still to some extent while I was there, violations of human rights did occur. There were a lot of people in jail. The Portuguese Security Service was very strong and thorough.

There were rumors of torture, but many of these were exaggerated by Frelimo propaganda. I am quite safe in saying this because I read a lot of it and the wording was always quite similar. They frequently described, for example, Portuguese soldiers playing football with the heads of slain African babies and other comparable horrors. It is conceivable to me that somebody at some point in a moment of insanity might do something like that, but it is hardly the sort of thing one would make a practice of doing.

And the Portuguese, as far as I could see...and this was perhaps an eye opener to me because when I first arrived I shared these apprehensions about Portuguese cruelty...were no less humane than the British or the French colonizers, and no more savage in their military actions. I never saw any indication of napalm bombing, and never heard rumors of such that I could give any credit to.

I did hear that at one point...and I think this was in late 1973, in any event it was shortly before Kaulza was fired, dismissed or transferred...there was a massacre of Africans in a village called Wiliamo or something like that. The information which came out was very imprecise. A Bishop said he saw many corpses lying on the ground. Frelimo propaganda claimed hundreds had been killed, the Portuguese apparently acknowledged that dozens were killed. It was not certain whether it was at Portuguese instigation. Sources agreed that uniformed black troops committed the deed, but could not prove whether they were black troops under Portuguese command who had gone wild, whether they were Frelimo guerrillas in Portuguese uniforms, as Portuguese propaganda alleged.

In any event internal machinations in Portugal after the event were such that Kaulza's enemies...General Costa Gomes, to name one, who later on briefly became President of Portugal after the revolution there...managed to oust Kaulza and he was canned. His firing was really the beginning of the end for the Portuguese military effort, and the Frelimo activity gained considerable momentum after that event.

Wiliamo is the only massacre as such that I had any personal knowledge of, and even that was pretty sketchy.

You were asking about Rhodesia and I want to finish one thought I gave very early in this interview. You recall that I had orders not to officially acknowledge the existence of the Rhodesian UDI government. Unfortunately for me whenever the Portuguese invited me and the rest of the Consular Corps to go north with them, they also invited the Rhodesian Consul, whose legitimacy the Portuguese recognized. Unfortunately for me also, our pictures were taken on

various occasions by news photographers. In one published shot I was standing near the Rhodesian Consul a couple of paces away, both of us listening intently to Kaulza. Somebody complained about this, I don't remember who, possibly the British in London. The Department asked me about it. I told the Department that if they so instructed, I could refuse to go on trips where Rhodesian officials would be present, but if I did so I would lose many opportunities to see things and to find things out. I certainly was not doing anything on these trips that would cause anybody to believe we were special friends of Rhodesia and I suggested that the Department just forget about it. I was faithfully carrying out my instructions not to have formal contacts with Rhodesian consular officers and if I happened to appear in the same photo shot as a Rhodesian official, so be it.

Q: *Sometime during 1973, either a statement or a remark saying that he foresaw freedom for Mozambique and I wondered if anything different was coming out of the Department as a consequence?*

VAN OSS: No, I don't think I can connect anything up to that particular speech. The Department was always, as I said before, a two-headed monster. The African Bureau was always putting pressure on the Portuguese to disgorge Mozambique and Angola. The European Desk was always trying to soft pedal it without interfering. I think the Department was pretty consistent in trying to keep some pressure on the Portuguese to give up Mozambique.

Whenever I would chat with a Portuguese I would do my little bit in that direction too. But I had to be a little discreet because I didn't want to antagonize them to the extent that they closed me out of their information circuit. What I got from them was far more important and interesting than what I would have been able to get if they had been hostile to me.

Q: *During this period were you getting good support from the Department?*

VAN OSS: Oh, yes. I got very good support from the Department. I am not so sure the African Bureau always felt it was getting good support from me because in my reporting, almost without being conscious of it, I couldn't help but give the Portuguese point of view because that was what was being drummed into me. I thought I was criticizing it and analyzing it and trying to see to what extent it was correct.

And that brings up another subject that I have to treat very tangentially. There was certain information on that area that I was not getting in Mozambique for reasons which I don't think can be discussed in an unclassified tape. I would have to go to places like South Africa, Pretoria or other places to read this stuff. So there were things being heard by people elsewhere that pertained to my area which I didn't know about until sometimes weeks after the event.

I only bring this up because it shows that I had very little means of checking the accuracy of what I was getting from the Portuguese on the spot. If I had been getting the other information currently I could have put the two side by side and then drawn much more accurate inferences from what I was seeing.

Q: *Why weren't you getting it? Didn't you have classified communications?*

VAN OSS: Yes, but these were things that for reasons I don't think I should get into were not being sent to Mozambique.

Q: *What was the size of the Consulate General when you were there?*

VAN OSS: I had one other substantive officer in the beginning plus an American administrative officer and two American secretaries. Also, if I remember correctly, about a dozen or fifteen locally employed Mozambican nationals.

Q: *You had no consular officer?*

VAN OSS: No, but the administrative officer included consular activities in his portfolio.

Q: *So there wasn't a lot of consular work then.*

VAN OSS: Not very much, but there was a trickle. There was a bit of assisting American nationals who for one reason or another...

Q: *Were they tourists?*

VAN OSS: Well, tourists who found themselves in trouble for one reason or another. An occasional sailor and that sort of thing. The administrative officer handled most of such cases.

My work was mainly political reporting and I had a very fine assistant, Consul Hugh McDougall, who was later replaced by Randy Reed...both of them were excellent officers...who did most of the economic work and also some of the political work. Most of what we did was to follow closely the course of the insurrection and the liberation war. The economic stuff was largely trying to keep track of sanctions breaking by Rhodesia and that sort of thing.

Q: *Just one more consular question before we go on, but probably it didn't come to your attention. Since you did not have much visa work did that mean there were not people fleeing from Mozambique looking for other places to go?*

VAN OSS: No, not many that I recall. We gave a bunch of Leader Grants and sponsored student exchanges. But I don't recall ever having a refugee seeking asylum.

Q: *The people then seemed satisfied to stay in Mozambique up until that time? There was a time when the Portuguese started leaving in great numbers.*

VAN OSS: Ah, the Portuguese. This began to become evident in 1974 or in the latter part of 1973. I can't give you exact timing on this, but the things that should have tipped us off to the fact that the Portuguese were approaching their last stand, were happening in the economic sphere. At one point or another Portugal cut down on subsidies and demanded that Mozambique pull its own weight, pay its own way. At the same time Portuguese goods and manufactured goods began to disappear from shelves in the stores. There began to be shortages in various

products. We began to hear complaints from some of our local staff that the Portuguese were going to abandon them. Of course at that point we had no reason to believe this was imminent so we said, "nonsense". But in retrospect it was beginning to be clear that the place was running down.

The second thing that should have tipped us off more specifically...we knew something was happening but we didn't know how significant it was. There were demonstrations in places like Beira by white Portuguese farmers and businessmen complaining that the army was letting them down, not defending them adequately. This coincided with some of the attacks that Frelimo was beginning to make on Portuguese farms, ambushes on the roads, etc.

This was striking home to Portuguese who up to that point had had little real contact with the war since practically all the fighting had taken place in the north up to now. The Portuguese in the central and southern part of the country never heard a shot fired in anger so far as I could tell. So here suddenly they were being subjected to guerrilla attacks and they didn't like it, so they demonstrated.

The demonstrations had traumatic effect on the Portuguese military. Suddenly they were being blamed for something they felt they had no control over. Their respected leader (Kaulza) had been taken away from them and a nonentity put in charge and they were now being blamed for losing the war. This played a great part in the eventual coup d'etat that took place in Portugal, which, if you recall, was largely inspired by young military officers. So that was another thing we should have spotted as being a harbinger of the end.

Then also there were signs which I couldn't document at the time that morale in the army was beginning to crack. I began to hear more information about corruption in the army...how officers would use food allotments that were supposed to go to their soldiers and sell them and that sort of thing. I couldn't document any of this, these were just rumors that we were hearing.

So in retrospect we should have been alerted late in 1973 that the end was in sight. Up to that point I was convinced that the Portuguese would be able to remain in Mozambique as long as they wanted to stay. And to a certain extent that was still true when they actually left because they were far from being defeated in battle. The military coup d'etat in Portugal had brought young liberal officers into power and they no longer wanted to be bothered with colonial wars overseas, so they stopped them and handed their colonies over to the liberation forces.

Q: *How do you account for this economic slowdown, things disappearing from the shelves?*

VAN OSS: I think that since merchants and factory owners were no longer subsidized from Portugal, had to pay their own way, they became more cautious. They used up their inventories and didn't order new products.

The whole climate began to change towards the end of 1973. The exact timing is hazy in my mind but the key portent was probably the dismissal of Kaulza. These changes became increasingly apparent after he left.

Q: *He was dismissed before the coup d'etat?*

VAN OSS: Oh, yes. He was dismissed some time after the middle of 1973. It may have been a little earlier than that.

Q: *And the coup d'etat in Lisbon?*

VAN OSS: That was in early 1974.

One thing I would like to talk about a little bit more is the Portuguese themselves. As an African specialists I went out to Mozambique with considerable misgivings and with not the greatest appreciation of the Portuguese, to say the least. I thought of them as probably very poor colonists and rather cruel, insignificant people.

I couldn't have been more wrong. I think the Portuguese are a strong and very interesting people with a distinguished past. Whatever they did as colonists in the early days...and I am talking about from 400 years ago up to the 1950's...they probably were no better or worse than any other colonists. But I can say that based on what I saw during my three years in Mozambique they were not very much different from their French and English counterparts at my other African posts, and no less concerned with the welfare of the people they were controlling.

The problem with the Portuguese was that Portugal was the poorest country in Europe and they just didn't have anywhere near the resources to throw into their colonies that Great Britain and France had. I am not trying to denigrate Great Britain and France because they were, I think, good colonizers. But the Portuguese were comparable to them and they tried to educate their subjects. But they didn't try until quite recently to do so. The first black African to graduate from the University of Lourenco Marques did so in 1972. He was an engineer, if I remember correctly.

The Portuguese culture is a very strong, interesting one. The Portuguese people, as such, are very formal, courteous, conservative, not great humorists, but with a flair. They consider themselves as having a great flair for adventure and doing extraordinary things. And I suppose they do, or at least, did.

The people of Mozambique were not...it wasn't an all black versus white proposition. First of all, as I have already said, the Portuguese intermingled very thoroughly with the blacks and those who had been there for any length of time were almost indistinguishable from the Africans. This was certainly true of the settlers and the old farmers.

As in every other African country, tribalism, or ethnic diversity plays a great part. The Makonde were the main tribe that was supporting Frelimo. There was an even larger tribe residing south of the Makonde called the Makua, who were quite pro-Portugal. It was from the Makua that most of the black troops that fought on the Portuguese side came. But there were many other tribes and I think they all, had they been given their choice, would have chosen to have the Portuguese leave. I don't think any of them were happy to have Portugal control them. But I think many of them recognized that they got certain benefits from Portugal.

Indeed the Portuguese ran a fairly impressive colony. Lourenco Marques was a clean city with high-rise apartment houses. The elevators worked, the police worked, the telephones worked, the streets were relatively clean, etc. And this was true in Beira and other cities as well, up in the central and northern portions of Mozambique. There was a college with a number of African students. There were something on the order of 500,000 to 600,000 African kids in primary and secondary schools...mostly in the Lourenco Marques area...out of a population of about seven million, I think it was at the time. (This population figure may be country wide, I will have to check that out.) But an amazing number were in primary school, considerably fewer in secondary school and a very few were in the one university. Those few Mozambicans who did have a university degree usually got it abroad.

So the Portuguese as I say did have something to be said for them.

Now, one of the problems was that while my orders from the Department were consistent, I knew there was a great deal of controversy in the Department between the African and European Bureaus as to how much pressure should be put on the Portuguese and how much weight should be given to any given information depending on its source. Of course, whenever I went to the Department's African chiefs of mission conferences, this sort of thing would become evident.

My colleagues in Nairobi or Senegal or places like that, would always advocate putting heavier pressure on the Portuguese and casting our lot in with the Africans. I would say, "Now just a moment, don't go too fast. Don't forget we are dependent on the Portuguese for a number of things. Who are you going to put in the place of the Portuguese when they leave?" At that point it wasn't at all certain that Frelimo had the technical know how to control or run an entire country. They claimed to be in control of vast areas in the country, but, of course, as I have already indicated, if they had control over 10 percent of the country that was probably an exaggeration and they had no government as such in operation. Many Frelimo leaders were in exile. They had some very fine men, some very intelligent people, mostly leftist. It was largely a Marxist organization. I always felt that before you tried to get rid of the Portuguese we should be sure that it was done in such a way that whatever government took their place was not anti-American and did not take action that would be greatly against our interests. So, this was just internal...these were things we had to worry about and decide.

I remember from attending previous African chiefs of mission conferences, that my predecessors in Lourenco Marques had said very much the same thing that I was saying now, although with some differences because it was earlier in the game. And they were almost taken apart by the Assistant Secretary, who at that time was a very liberal, fine man, but completely and wholeheartedly committed to the black African point of view and who regarded what was going on in Mozambique with the insights that he got from other African countries, which were almost without exception, anti-Portuguese and pro-Frelimo. The exceptions, as I think I mentioned before, were Malawi, South Africa and Rhodesia.

Q: *Nobody seemed to worry about the point that you mentioned--how are they going to govern themselves?*

VAN OSS: Well, this was very evident at the time of the coup in Portugal. I don't know if it is too early to go into this, but the coup took place on April 25, 1974 and almost immediately everything changed completely. It became quite apparent that the Portuguese were going to leave Mozambique very soon. The press, newspaper people in Lourenco Marques started to report freely. In fact one of my contacts in the press came up to me and said, "You know this is interesting. Here I am, I have spent years trying to get articles published in which we have to guard our language and use all sorts of arcane devices to get our point across without violating censorship rules and being taken off to court. Now, suddenly, the press is free and we don't know how to handle it. We don't know what to say. We can say anything we want, but we have no guidelines." They found it very difficult to adapt themselves to press freedom.

One point I want to make now is that the coup in Portugal took everybody in Mozambique by surprise. Perhaps it shouldn't have, but it did. It even took Frelimo by surprise. Shortly after the coup, General Costa Gomes, Army Chief of Staff in Portugal, who landed on his feet during this coup...he was Kaulza de Arriaga's great enemy because Kaulza had once blown the whistle on him for attempting a coup d'etat in Portugal years ago, and Costa Gomes never forgave him for that, anyway he came to Lourenco Marques and offered a cease-fire.

In other words Portugal offered Mozambique to Frelimo on a silver platter. Frelimo propaganda right up to that time had been along the lines that everybody should be prepared for a long struggle, which would continue if necessary for 15 years. Suddenly Frelimo was presented with the opportunity to take charge and they weren't prepared for it. They couldn't take over immediately. They had to establish an interim government. I think it took at least a year before they actually took over formally and became the official government, although they were certainly involved in all decisions almost from April 25 on.

At our Consulate General there was a great deal of reporting to be done. Portuguese military information had practically fizzled out and we were finding it difficult to keep in touch with events. Well, right after April 25 we had more than enough to handle. I had indicated my intention of retiring from the Foreign Service, but it was apparent that too much was happening. (I'm a little off on my timing, it wasn't April 25 when it became apparent that things were happening, it was a little bit before then.) I offered to stay on a couple of extra months until my successor, Peter Walker, arrived.

During those two months, from April 1 to May 31, I was busier than I had ever been with the type of reporting that I enjoyed most: analysis of political events that were unfolding, the ability to attend meetings between the Portuguese who were turning over and the representatives of the black community and Frelimo. At that point there was just a plethora of stuff to send in. It was a vital, interesting time. I felt in my element and enjoyed those two months, professionally, about as much as the three previous years put together.

Q: *You mentioned a group called GUMO.*

VAN OSS: This was really an organization built around a very interesting young woman named Joanna Simao. I have to go back a bit. About eight months before this Portuguese officials began to hint that some great liberal, black Mozambicano was going to appear on the scene. And sure

enough, Joanna Simao appeared. She had once been very closely connected with Frelimo and had been, I think, jailed for a time in Portugal. The Portuguese evidently counted on her to be one of the leading African participants in their plans for eventual turnover of administrative responsibilities to black nationalists and black political figures. She came out to Lourenco Marques and did a lot of talking. She said things nobody had dared to say against the Portuguese and Portuguese rule. She used to come around and speak to me. She wanted to get to the States to make her point. I think, indeed, we did eventually give her a Leader Grant. It became more and more evident as time went on that she was probably in the pay of or in some way beholden to the Portuguese. There was very little question that she had been sponsored by them, but they thought they were being very subtle in the way they were doing it and that nobody would find this out. But it became quite apparent.

Before the coup took place she organized a group called GUMO (Grupo Para O Unidad de Mocambique). This was a group of ex-Frelimo people. Frelimo was not a monolithic structure, there were a lot of opposing elements within the organization. There were forces tangling with each other. In fact, Edwardo Mondlane was murdered by a letter bomb and one of the rumored perpetrators of this foul deed was one of his former companions, Uriah Simango. It was never proved, of course. Frelimo claimed it was the DGS, the Portuguese Secret Service which had sent the bomb. My own feeling was that the DGS probably could have done it much more easily long before then and that while it may have been implicated, I thought the evidence was fairly convincing that some of his opponents in Frelimo were involved also. Don't forget, he had an American wife and was considered to be more moderate than some of them. It is conceivable that some of his compatriots wanted to do away with him. It would have been an extraordinarily stupid thing for the Portuguese to have done, but they may still have done it, I don't know.

So Joanna Simao started this group (GUMO). But as soon as Frelimo came into the picture after the coup, she began to pull back and tried to make up to Frelimo. But they would have nothing to do with her and put her into some form of detention...reeducation I think they called it. That is where she was when I last heard of her which was years ago...ten, twelve years ago. I have no idea what became of her since. But she was a very impressive young woman. A very good orator. She was obviously somebody who to the Portuguese must have seemed just a gold mine, an ideal person to put in charge and keep under surreptitious control.

Q: *Just about that time, while you were still there, there was a report of Frelimo shooting down two Portuguese planes using Soviet surface to air missiles.*

VAN OSS: Yes. I don't recall that particular incident, but I do remember that the Portuguese military had air supremacy. They had the only military airplanes in Mozambique. It was a very small air force. I suppose the entire air force was fewer than 50 planes. They had a few jets. Most of the planes were propeller driven trainers. Some of them were Nord Atlas troop carriers which looked a little like smaller editions of our own Hercules aircraft, big bellied transport planes. They used to put jet boosters on the wings so they could take off quickly and steeply, and avoid any ground fire if they happened to be in areas where fighting was taking place. They had a few helicopters as well.

A rumor came in that Frelimo had gotten some SAM 7 missiles--Soviet. We sort of pooh poohed this idea. Then at one point two of our military attachés from some other country, possibly from Portugal, visited Mozambique and were flown all over the place by the Portuguese. One of my Portuguese contacts told me that a plane flying our military attachés had been narrowly missed by a SAM and that this was highly confidential. When our attachés returned they briefed me on the trip, but didn't say anything about a missile. So finally I asked them outright...after all we were on the same side and I felt they should be frank with me as I had been with them. I said, "I have heard from impeccable sources that you were almost hit by a missile." They were taken aback and said, "How did you know?" I said that I had my sources, and didn't they think they should have told me. We had been worried about SAMs for a long time and it was something that I had to report. There would have been questions asked somewhere along the line if they had reported it and I hadn't.

So Frelimo did have missiles, but not very many of them. I think indeed they did shoot down some planes. You see everything you got was propaganda in a way. You got it from both sides. The Portuguese gave you what they wanted you to know and the Frelimo made similar claims. At one time the Frelimo claimed that they had launched a rocket attack on the runway at the Tet airport in north central Mozambique and had destroyed it. Well it just happened by sheer luck that I landed on that same runway the day after the rocket attack had supposedly taken place. Not only had they not hit the runway, I didn't see any sign of a hole or damage anywhere along the line. I was looking for it having heard the Frelimo announcement on the radio. I eventually heard that some rockets had indeed been launched but that they had hit about a half a mile away from the airfield. But people at home for just a brief moment thought things were really heating up. Well, they weren't.

Q: *So at the time that you left Mozambique, the end of May, the first of June, there hadn't been an election?*

VAN OSS: No, I don't recall an election. I do recall that the Governor General, Pimentel dos Santos, had left. He resigned. If I remember correctly an air force general or an admiral, some military figure, took over on a temporary basis. They brought in a number of people to take part in an interim government. Then long after I left Frelimo sent in representatives to take charge. Chissano, the present President was then Foreign Minister...he came in and set up an interim government. About a year later Machel marched in and took over with great fanfare. But that was long after my absence.

Q: *While you were in Mozambique could you tell us something about the CODELs or visits? You haven't mentioned anyone coming out from the States or the Department.*

VAN OSS: Well, we had a fair trickling of VIPs. Congressman Crane came out. Then-Congressman, later Senator John Heinz came out because he was married to a Portuguese woman whose father was a doctor in Lourenco Marques. One of the high officials in the Nixon Administration came out, I can't remember his name now. I do remember that General Kaulza gave him a Soviet automatic rifle and it was inscribed to him. He kindly left it in my care saying, "Send it to me via pouch, please." I said, "Well, I'll do my best." But as it turned out we couldn't get it in the pouch, it was against all rules. We had no way, strangely enough, of getting that

blasted weapon back home. So I finally decided that I wouldn't fight the system any longer and I would leave it up to my successor. I put it in the code room and forgot about it. I don't know what happened to it to this day.

The big visit while I was there was that of the National War College. This was quite interesting because, if I remember correctly, the Department didn't want them to go to South Africa because of the apartheid business and there was great pressure to keep them from going there. So the National War College said that they would like to come to Mozambique instead. There was a great hassle about that too because the African Bureau I think was none too pleased. The National War College persisted. The Portuguese got wind of it and were delighted to have them come because what better way of getting across the Portuguese military point of view was there?

So the War College came and let me tell you that for a small office with three or four Americans and a dozen or so nationals to handle a group of 30 odd officers and State Department people was not easy, but we did it. The Portuguese put on a great show, had fine briefings in which they put forth the Portuguese point of view.

The Portuguese line was that their fight against Frelimo was really a fight against communism. Frelimo was a communist organization, they were a part of a communist plot to take over the southern part of Africa. First they were going to get control of Mozambique and Angola and then they were going to aim for South Africa. From there they would hop over to Brazil and get a foothold in Latin America. Then go up through Panama, Mexico and threaten the United States. And that with very little exaggeration was exactly what their line was. They had maps with arrows pointing to all these areas. So the National War College got the big treatment.

Kaulza and his people were most anxious to get the group up north, to Nangade, which is right on the border of Tanzania, right in the middle of the Makonde area and subject to shelling and all that. The Department of State and Defense put their foot down and said no, that it was politically infeasible. I had a very difficult time explaining this to the Portuguese and getting them to accept it. Anyway, they were happy to have the College.

Q: *What year was that?*

VAN OSS: I think it must have been in late 1972 or early 1973.

Q: *Normally the War College tours are in the spring.*

VAN OSS: There was a chiefs of mission conference in Addis Ababa right after the War College visit. As the War College group was going to Ethiopia, I hitched a ride with them in their plane. So if you could find out when that chiefs of mission conference was held it would indicate exactly when the War College was in Mocambique.

Incidentally, I might add, it was a great morale booster for the young unattached ladies in the Consulate General, to have the War College there.

Q: *Looking back to the country you were serving in at that time you mentioned that you did take a lot of trips and I assume you saw a lot of that large African country. Can you tell us something about it?*

VAN OSS: Certainly. Many of the trips I took were on my own, although I usually had to get the assistance of Portuguese authorities in terms of getting accommodations, arranging transportation, etc.

I also took a lot of trips as part of Kaulza's efforts to bring the Consular Corps into the picture. This was all part of Portugal's attempt to gain acceptance and keep us on their side. I remember one of the places he used to love to take us was Nangade, which I think is the northernmost, or one of the northernmost towns in Mozambique. It was right in the heart of Makonde territory. The Makonde, as I think I told you, was the tribe which supported Frelimo and occupied one of the areas that Frelimo controlled. Nangade was a fortified enclave right in the middle of this Makonde area. It was heavily fortified by the Portuguese. To get in there they would fly a plane in at a very high altitude and then descend in tight circles in order to get down to the air field as quickly as possible without encouraging enemy gun fire. Nangade was frequently under fire from across the river. It was right next to the Ruvuma River which is on the border of Tanzania. It was shelled from across the river, probably from within Tanzania. It was interesting to know that Frelimo had many of its camps in Tanzania. I was lucky because during the several times I visited Nangade no shells were received or sent.

Other trips that I can recall that were especially interesting were visits to the headquarters of the Portuguese armed forces in Nampula, located in the northern part of Mozambique. In Nampula we used to see training exercises by the troops, parachute jumps and things of that sort. I found them quite impressive. The morale of the parachute troopers seemed very high. They were very skilled in their jumping abilities and their training methods seemed very up to date and effective. There were quite a few black troops among them as I recall.

Q: *I am interested in what you saw. You did a lot of flying, saw Mozambique from the air. What did the surface look like? Is it at this period of time total forest cover? Was there much devastation?*

VAN OSS: No. From the air it was very difficult to see any devastation. In fact, I didn't see too much devastation because there wasn't that much heavy fighting in any part of Mozambique when I was there. The fighting was largely in the north. There is some forestation there, but I would say that Mozambique is largely savannah country and scrub. There are forested areas but it is not rain forest type country. The climate can get hot but it is not bad.

Q: *What is the rain fall?*

VAN OSS: Good heavens, you are asking me for statistics that I can't remember. There is a monsoon season. There is quite a bit of rain fall. It certainly is not a desert.

Q: *What was the main occupation of the tribes or the people living outside of Lourenco Marques? You mentioned farmers, were there a lot of farmers?*

VAN OSS: There were some. It is a mixture of all sorts of things. There are a number of towns in that area. The farmers are largely north of Lourenco Marques in farming settlements, many of them in the Limpopo and Zambezi River areas.

Q: *The London Times, February 1974, reported something about the movement of Africans into protective villages. Did you know anything about this?*

VAN OSS: Oh, yes. This was a tactic which I think the Portuguese had learned from the British and to a certain extent from us in Vietnam. The British had adopted this tactic in Malaya and we did it in Vietnam with our new hamlets. The idea is that you take people who are dispersed throughout wide areas and very vulnerable to terrorist attack or pressure to supply food, etc. and bring them together in protected areas. These areas were surrounded by barbed wire and theoretically had all the facilities...huts, schools for the children, infirmaries, pretty basic. Militia were stationed in each village to protect the villagers. The people were all registered so that any strangers who came in, in theory at least, would be noticeable. I believe the Portuguese had a fair amount of success with this tactic.

"Mad Mike" Calvert visited Mozambique. He had been with Wingate's Raiders in Burma during World War II and in Malaya during the emergency there. He was an expert on guerrilla, jungle warfare. He came to Mozambique to offer his advice to the Portuguese on these protected villages.

The war ended before the Portuguese had a chance to see if these tactics would work. When they started to use protected villages everybody thought the struggle with Frelimo would go on for at least a dozen, twenty, thirty years. If it had, one would have been able to tell whether the protected villages would keep the guerrillas away from the people. I just don't know what the ultimate result was. But I visited a number of them. They were very much like the new villages in Malaya that I had seen some twenty years earlier.

Q: *The Portuguese were in Mozambique for a long time. How wide spread was the use of the Portuguese language?*

VAN OSS: Oh, extremely wide spread. It was the lingua franca of the country. Like all African countries there are many dialects and languages in Mozambique. They are certainly as different as French is from Spanish or even German. The only language that they all spoke and the language that Frelimo propaganda was written in was Portuguese. It was the same in Uganda: all the politicians spoke English...as they did in India. One of the attributes of colonialism was, I suppose, that it gave large areas a lingua franca they otherwise wouldn't have had.

Q: *Tribes were able to speak with each other who ordinarily never would have been able to do so.*

VAN OSS: That is right, although Africans are pretty good linguists. The average African who is educated usually speaks a half dozen dialects of one sort or another in addition to the lingua franca. But Portuguese was the language commonly spoken.

Q: *It will be interesting to see how long that lasts?*

VAN OSS: Oh, I suspect it is still there. I suspect they are speaking Portuguese more than any other single language. English, of course, is I think more and more becoming a world language. There were quite a few English speakers in Mozambique as well.

Q: *Do they teach English in the schools?*

*VAN OSS: I think so, yes.*

Q: *As well as Portuguese.*

VAN OSS: Well, Portuguese was the main language of instruction.

Q: *Could you tell us something about missionaries in Mozambique?*

VAN OSS: Yes, they were very important. You had, of course, the Catholic missionaries, usually priests of one denomination or another. But the ones I got to know best were the Protestant missionaries who were predominantly American or Swedish. We had some very close friends among the American Methodist missionaries. They had their headquarters right outside Lourenco Marques. But they also had a very fine hospital up in...they called it Chikukwe...quite far up the coast near Inhambane...several hundred miles north of Lourenco Marques. This place had an excellent hospital with skilled American doctors and nurses. I remember being extremely impressed by the fact that one doctor would normally perform as many as 30 hernia operations in one morning. They had hundreds and hundreds of patients...both in and out patients. They also ran a leper village. I believe that hospital is working again now. It ran into very bad times immediately after independence because I think the Frelimo was quite loath at first to rely on foreign medical help.

## WILLARD DE PREE
## Ambassador
## Mozambique (1976-1980)

*Ambassador Willard De Pree was born in Michigan in 1928. He received a B.A. from Harvard University and an M.A. from the University of Michigan in 1952. He served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1944-1946. His Foreign Service career began in 1956 and included positions in Cairo, Nicosia, Accra and Freetown with ambassadorships to Mozambique and Bangladesh. Ambassador De Pree was interviewed in 1998 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

Q: *Today is March 9, 1994 and we are continuing with Bill De Pree. We were getting you set to go to Mozambique where you served from 1976-80. Before going to Mozambique you had been dealing with the matters in Africa anyway.*

DE PREE: That is right, I was the Africa man on the Policy Planning Staff.

Q: *So basically you didn't need to be brought up to speed before you went. Did you have any problems with confirmation or anything like that?*

DE PREE: No. The problem was the delay in getting agrément from the government of Mozambique. We had to wait almost nine months. The Department hoped to get me out there by independence day which was to be in the summer of 1975. We had put in the request for agreement long before that, but the Mozambique Government dallied. The Mozambicans were unhappy with our policy of support for Portugal during their liberation wars; they were concerned that the United States might not view with favor its Marxist pro-leftist radical government; and they had some suspicion that the US might use the CIA to create problems. I think they deliberately kept us waiting. We didn't get agrément until early in 1976.

Q: *Was this also designed to make sure that the United States would be fairly low on the totem pole as far as the diplomatic corps was concerned?*

DE PREE: Yes, I think it was a signal to let us know that we were not the number one player on the local scene.

Q: *Did Congress give you any problems?*

DE PREE: Congress gave me no problems, but Congress had placed a ban on development aid to Mozambique. There were three countries in Africa where development assistance was proscribed: Ethiopia, Uganda and the government of Mozambique. This was a very clear signal of how the Congress felt about Mozambique. Nonetheless, the US decided to open an embassy since for the many, many years we have professed to be in favor of self-determination. If we meant what our rhetoric said, we should be prepared to enter into a relationship with the government, even if it didn't meet with the favor of many in the US

Q: *What was the situation when you got to Mozambique? The capital of Mozambique is...?*

DE PREE: Maputo. It used to be Lourenco Marques when it was Portuguese.

There had been some protocol problems right from the start. The US had a consulate for many years in Lourenco Marques. At independence, the consulate staff flew the flag over the consulate even though the US had not yet entered into formal diplomatic relations with the Government of Mozambique. That made the government of Mozambique unhappy and they asked the Consul General, Peter Walter, to leave. The other Americans on the staff stayed on, as did most of the local employees, although over the next year or two many of the white Mozambicans on our staff left.

Relations with the government were decidedly cool. It was very difficult to get appointments with government officials. We had problems getting the government's OKAY on housing and a new chancery. There were plenty of houses available, as the Portuguese were departing, but the

government denied our requests to rent or buy the properties. Clearly, the government was letting us know we were not on their list of favorites. We were not their "natural allies", which was how the government referred to the Soviets, Chinese and others who had supported them in their liberation struggle.

Q: *What was the political situation there?*

DE PREE: The Mozambique Frelimo government was made up almost exclusively of people who had been active in the liberation struggle. There were a dozen or so ministers or key government officials who were committed communists. Some of them didn't want the government to have anything to do with the US Moreover, the Congressional proscription against providing development aid to Mozambique did not make it any easier for us. It was certainly not an easy environment in which to work.

Q: *What was the government structure like at that time?*

DE PREE: It was made up largely of people who had engaged in the liberation struggle. The make-up was about 50 percent black, about 25 percent white and 25 percent mestizo. So racially it was a good mix. As a matter of fact, the Portuguese territories probably did better on that score than a number of British or French colonies. But the government was woefully inexperienced. The same was true outside the government. For example, there were very few doctors. I think there were two in the whole country when I arrived. So they were hurting for people with skills. The Portuguese were leaving. At independence, there were about 250,000, including military forces. A year later there were about 20 or 30 thousand. The departure of the Portuguese left the country desperate for people who could assist in the development process.

Q: *Was it the typical Soviet type of government? Did they have elections that meant anything? Representative bodies?*

DE PREE: There was an elected parliament, but there was only a single party slate of candidates one could vote for. It was a Marxist government. But very few of the people who came out of the liberation struggle were what one might call dedicated Marxists. However, there was a radical minority of ideologues in the government, many of them mestizos or white Mozambicans.

Q: *Was the Soviet hand heavy there?*

DE PREE: Yes, it was. They were there in numbers and were providing military and development assistance. Not only the Soviet Union, but China, Bulgaria, East Germany, Cuba, the Vietnamese. There were communist advisors in every government ministry.

Q: *Who was the head of the government?*

DE PREE: Samora Machel.

Q: *What was his background?*

DE PREE: He was a medical technician, one of the first to take up arms against the Portuguese, who assumed the leadership of the liberation struggle upon the assassination of Eduardo Moudlane, the founder of Frelimo. Machel was charismatic, forceful, bright, something of a born leader.

Q: *Were you there to just keep the flag flying and wait developments, or there to try to open up a dialogue. This was the beginning of the Carter Administration.*

DE PREE: Actually, I was sent out by the Ford Administration. In time, it was hoped we could open up a dialogue, but initially it was pretty much a holding operation. Judging by its votes in the UN, Mozambique was very much in the Soviet camp. Its press and media were caustic and shrill in their criticism of the US There wasn't much prospect of turning this around. There were many who didn't even think it worth the try. They were prepared to write off Mozambique from the start.

There were others however, who thought that there might be some areas where US and Mozambique interests overlapped and that the US should work to elicit Mozambique's cooperation in these limited areas. One of the areas where we thought that our interests might overlap was in seeking a negotiated settlement in Rhodesia. This would be important to us, for if Mozambique worked against a negotiated settlement it would be exceedingly difficult to halt the fighting, for Mozambique bordered on Rhodesia and could provide sanctuary and support for those intent on a military solution. It was also hoped that, in time, if the Mozambicans could prosper as an independent nation that its non-racial or multi-racial makeup might provide an alternative or model for the people of South Africa.

My approach was the later. To be patient, but to look for opportunities to demonstrate to the Mozambicans that a negotiated settlement in Rhodesia was as much in their interest as anyone else's. It was tough going, for the suspicion and criticism of the West and the US was strong. But in time, the Mozambique government came around to acknowledge that there were areas where the US interest and Mozambique interest overlapped and we began to get their cooperation in seeking a negotiated settlement in Rhodesia. Machel's cooperation was very important. The British would not have achieved a settlement in Rhodesia when it did without his help.

Q: *For the sake of somebody who is not familiar with this, could you go into the situation at that time in Rhodesia and what we were trying to do?*

DE PREE: Yes. We were trying to work with the British to see if we could persuade the white government in Rhodesia, led by Ian Smith, to hold elections and agree that whoever won the elections would take over in an independent Rhodesia. There were various groups in Rhodesia who had taken up arms, two major factions. One, the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), had its headquarters in Maputo and was led by Robert Mugabe. The second group, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), was led by the long-time nationalist leader, Joshua Nkomo. They were rivals for power. ZANU was largely supported by the Shona, the largest tribal grouping in Rhodesia. ZAPU had its backing largely from the Ndelbele. Machel was supporting ZANU. Interestingly, the Soviet Union was supporting ZAPU. The British hoped to get ZANU and ZAPU and other political forces in Rhodesia, including the whites, around the

table to see if they could agree on a cease-fire, a date for elections and a transition to independence. The contenders were not able to settle it on the battlefield. Meanwhile the war was spreading. Rhodesia began to carry out raids into Mozambique to go after the ZANU rebels. There was a lot of fighting along the border. In time, the Rhodesians began to stir up trouble inside Mozambique, creating a dissident movement within Mozambique. It was very costly to Mozambique.

Q: *Where these white?*

DE PREE: No, these were black Mozambicans many of whom had fought with the Portuguese military and had been suspect in the eyes of the Frelimo government. They didn't really have a future in Mozambique. They were recruited, trained, and armed by the Rhodesians to conduct insurgency within Mozambique. It didn't amount to much in the first few years but gradually grew in importance. With the dissidents receiving support from South Africa, the Frelimo government couldn't suppress it.

This was all going on while Mozambique's economy languished. Soviet and East European assistance was not proving all that successful. The state farms and communal villages were not producing the food that the government had thought they would. Trade with South Africa, which had been a major foreign exchange earner for Mozambique, was being cut. The two countries did continue to trade, but there was a UN embargo on Rhodesian chrome which used to transit through Mozambique, and the revenues of this transit trade all but dried up. The number of Mozambicans working in the South African mines also dropped. Clearly, the government was in trouble and realized that the economy was unlikely to pick up without an end to the fighting in Rhodesia. At the same time, Mozambicans were beginning to realize that state management of the economy was not the answer. Nor was Soviet and Communist assistance.

The humanitarian relief aid the US had been providing Mozambique, following floods and drought in the country also helped to overcome the suspicion that the United States may have wanted to topple the government. All these factors helped persuade the government that it was in its interest to work with the British and the United States to seek a negotiated settlement.

By the second year of my tour in Mozambique, US relations with the government began to improve. Machel began to explore with the British and us a way to end the fighting in Rhodesia.

Q: *Who would you talk to in the government?*

DE PREE: Largely with President Machel himself. But the cooperation we got from the Mozambicans on Rhodesian matters was largely done behind the scenes. Machel did not want it known that he was working with us. He designated a couple of people in his government Fernando Honwana and Sergio Viera, as embassy contacts on these matters, but he was always available when I asked to see him. And he would always see our joint negotiating teams whenever they came to Mozambique.

Q: *So this was with basically the Rhodesia/Zimbabwe thing, was that it?*

DE PREE: Yes, although we also brought him into negotiations on Namibia. I think he appreciated that we sought his counsel and advice. With respect to Rhodesia, he was suspicious that the British were seeking a settlement that would exclude Mugabe and ZANU from power. I think he had reason to be suspicious. For a time, the British did seem to favor a coalition of whites and moderates, including Bishop Muzorewa, that would exclude Mugabe and ZANU. Machel thought this was a mistake. He pointed out that Mugabe had the support of the Tshone, the largest tribal group in Rhodesia, that ZANU was doing most of the fighting inside Rhodesia, and that in the end ZANU and Mugabe would come out on top. Mugabe was a difficult person to deal with. He refused to cooperate with the British and us when he didn't like what we were doing, but he was just as quick to thumb his nose at the Soviet Union and the East when he didn't like what they were doing. He kept reminding us that it was Nkoma and Zapu, not he and ZANU, that the Soviets were supporting. He was very much his own person. He had great integrity.

Q: *Did we have any contact with Mugabe?*

DE PREE: Yes, I was seeing Mugabe. He would come over to the residence occasionally with some of his people to discuss developments, or I would call on him at his office. At first we and the British were reluctant or hesitant to involve him in our efforts to reach a negotiated settlement. This may have been because Ian Smith and the whites didn't trust him and thought they could put together a majority coalition without his support. From the perspective of Maputo this seemed to be a mistake and I urged the Department to consult with him and include ZANU in the search for a negotiated settlement. At first the Department didn't appreciate this. Through official, informed channels, I was told that I might be pressing this point a little too hard. I was also hearing through the grapevine that Secretary Kissinger was beginning to think that I, and some of my Foreign Service colleagues in the area, might not be as supportive of his and the British negotiating efforts as we should be. Clearly Kissinger wanted to keep a tight reign on these negotiations. It was at about this time that the Department instructed all the ambassadors in Southern Africa that when reporting on the negotiations we should send our cables only to Washington. The Department would decide what other posts in the area should receive copies of our reports.

I was miffed by what I was hearing. While no doubt some in Washington may have thought I and my staff may have had the wool pulled over our eyes by Mugabe, we were not doctoring our reporting. We were reporting things as we saw them. We may have accorded more weight to what Mugabe said than the other Rhodesian nationalists, but that was to be expected, given the fact that Mugabe's and ZANU's headquarters were in Maputo. I thought that was why I was out there. So we continued to report much as before. We didn't pull our punches. In time our reporting did seem to register in Washington, particularly after the change of Administration in January of 1977. Incidentally, one of the first cables we received after Vance became Secretary of State, was one encouraging us to share our reporting and views with neighboring posts. What a change.

Q: *Why were people so set on Nkomo or Bishop Muzorewa?*

DE PREE: Because for a long time people thought Mugabe was not to be trusted. They had the impression that either Mugabe or Bishop Muzorewa would be easier to work with, would be more willing to accommodate the interests of the whites. People were also put off by some of the firebrands within ZANU. Whatever the reason, this notion that Mugabe and ZANU were not to be trusted persisted for a long time. On the other hand, Machel and the Mozambicans did not fully trust Nkomo or Muzorewa, fearing that they might be prepared to agree to a cease fire before there was acceptance of the principal of majority rule. But, over time Machel came to take the British at their word, that they would conduct free and fair elections and turnover power to whomever won the election. From that point we and the British had his cooperation in seeking a negotiated settlement.

The cooperation, however, almost came undone when the British failed to let him know that they were urging President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia to meet privately with Joshua Nkomo. When he heard that this meeting had taken place and that the British and the US had known about it and hadn't told him about it, he was livid. He called the British Ambassador and me in and told us that if we were going to work behind his back with Nkomo, he would have to reconsider whether Mozambique and the front line states should continue to work with us. He felt terribly let down. I was instructed what to say, but the instructions were just not convincing. I decided it was better just to acknowledge we did know about the meeting, to regret that we had not consulted with him, and to live with the consequences, rather than to try to justify our actions. In time, Machel realized that he needed a settlement and that one couldn't be achieved without the British or us, and resumed cooperating with us.

Late in 1980, the British finally got everybody to agree to meet in London, at Lancaster House...Mugabe, Nkomo, Sithole, Bishop Muzorewa and Ian Smith all were there, as were representatives of the front line states, including Mozambique. The British hoped that everyone at the conference would agree on the modalities for a transition to majority rule and independence, and participate in elections. But Mugabe was holding out. We and the British feared the conference would break up without agreement. If so, it would be difficult to ever get them together again. At that point I received a cable from President Carter instructing me to request President Machel to use his influence with Mugabe to get Mugabe to agree. There wasn't much time, for some of the delegations had already purchased tickets to return home.

Q: *You were all up in London at this time?*

DE PREE: No, President Machel was in Maputo. I had about five or six hours in which to try to persuade him to weigh in with Mugabe.

I had a good working relationship with Machel. The chemistry was right. We were both candid and honest with each other. When I called for an appointment I was told that he was in a cabinet meeting, but that he would see him immediately afterwards and that they would call me just as soon as the meeting broke up. When the call didn't come through, I asked if I could come over to the President's office, where the cabinet was meeting so that I could see him as soon as he got out? It wasn't long after I got there that the meeting broke up. Machel and I went into a corner. I delivered President Carter's request as instructed, emphasizing that the US would work with the British to ensure free and fair elections. This is what the Zimbabweans and front line states had

been fighting for. They had won. I told him that we believed he was the one person who could persuade Mugabe to agree. Would he do it? He looked me in the eye and said, "Yes, I will do it. Tell President Carter that I will try me best." I rushed back to send a cable. And then we waited. It wasn't long and we were informed that agreement had been reached. The British, who were monitoring telephone calls, later told us that Machel called Robert Mugabe. Machel told him that he had this appeal from President Carter, that we had assured him that there would be free and fair elections and that power would be turned over to whomever won the election. If Mugabe felt he had the support of the majority of Zimbabweans as he said he had, and Machel thought he had, then they were going to win the election and that would be the end of it. He urged Mugabe to sign. I got a nice cable from Washington thanking me for my efforts with Machel. Margaret Thatcher has since publicly acknowledged that it was Samora Machel's intervention that brought about the settlement.

Our decision back in 1976 to enter into diplomatic relations with Mozambique and to seek Mozambique's cooperation in those areas where US and Mozambique interests overlapped paid off.

Q: *I think this points out an important element to diplomacy and that is often the idea is raised, "Why do you need an ambassador, the Secretary of State can pick up the phone and call somebody?" But it is true in business, it is true in personal relations and is true in foreign relations that the person on the spot if they can develop a relationship, it doesn't have to be a warm friendly relationship, but one of understanding and basic trust, that you can communicate through this. You can't do it with the great man back in Washington picking up the phone and saying to do this and do that. It just doesn't work.*

DE PREE: No, it wouldn't have worked that way. During Kissinger's last year as Secretary of State he was very much engaged in African issues. He came out to Africa. He wanted to come to Mozambique. I was instructed to see which of two possible dates would be most convenient for President Machel. Machel saw me at once, but said he would have to think it over and would let me know the next day. I knew the answer was likely to be no. And it was. It was, I was told, "an inopportune time for the Secretary to visit Mozambique." This wasn't the easiest cable to send. With the Secretary being courted by almost everyone to visit their capitals, what kind of ambassador did the US have in Maputo, who couldn't even persuade the head of state to receive the Secretary. I could almost hear the Secretary's comments in Maputo. So Secretary Kissinger never visited Maputo.

A couple of years later, after Carter had won the election, Machel went to the UN and met with President Carter in New York. I attended the meeting. In the course of the discussion, Machel mentioned that he had turned down Secretary Kissinger's offer to visit Maputo. He said he wanted President Carter to know why. It was because "I didn't trust Secretary Kissinger then and I don't trust him now." With that attitude no ambassador could have persuaded Machel to receive Kissinger.

Machel had a great respect for President Carter. He believed President Carter's veto of Congressional action to rescind the embargo on Rhodesian chrome was crucial to the settlement. The veto persuaded Machel and Mugabe that President Carter and the US could be trusted. I can

remember receiving the news of President Carter's veto. I had to go to the airport early in that morning because Machel was leaving on a trip, and it was customary for the diplomatic corps to see him off. Robert Mugabe was out there, as he was accorded diplomatic status by the Mozambicans. I took the occasion to break the news of President Carter's veto to him. He was very moved, embraced me, and said, "Now there is a chance to end the fighting."

I informed President Machel too of the veto, but did not have a chance to discuss it at any length because of his departure. He was off to some conference. He may even have been going to Cuba. Shortly after his return, he opened a new session of parliament. Afterwards, as was the practice in Maputo, members of the parliament, the cabinet, the diplomatic corps and party officials assembled in a circle to greet the President. He began to shake the hands of people around that circle. When he came to the diplomatic corps he spotted me, took my hand and walked me diagonally across the circle of all these people. We retreated to a corner, where he asked me to send a message to President Carter, thanking him for his courageous act of vetoing the legislation. Then he walked me back arm in arm across that circle and got into his car. My diplomatic colleagues, the Cubans, the Russians, the Chinese must have wondered what this tete-a-tete was all about, for publicly Machel and the Mozambicans were still rather critical of the US, nor did they know how much cooperation we and the British were receiving from Machel behind the scenes. This was a moment in my diplomatic career that I savor.

Q: *I take it Machel was almost atypical of many of leaders that he wasn't out to get political points but out to get something done.*

DE PREE: Yes, I think he was genuinely interested in doing something for the people of his country. There was very little corruption in the government during the time I was there. It did not take Machel long to realize that state management of the economy was not the answer to Mozambique's problems. Nor was Mozambique's close relationship with the Soviets much help. In my third year in Maputo I got a call asking if I could come see him. He wanted to talk to me about agricultural production in the United States. Jimmy Kolker, who was a junior officer at the time, came along as a notetaker. Three or four cabinet ministers were with the President. He began by saying, "Look, you Americans know how to produce food. You are the world's major producer of food. And you know we are having problems with our production. The Bulgarians who are helping us with rice haven't had much luck. In fact their aid project is a disaster. Why don't you come in and prove your way is better. You and the East can compete here in Mozambique. We will let you have as much land as you need, good land. We will even let you have land in the Incomati basin, which is fertile and well watered. My minister of agriculture," who was at the meeting, "will see that the land will be made available at once."

It was the type of offer one would have liked to have accepted, but I told him there were two reasons why we just couldn't do it. I reminded him that there was still a Congressional proscription on development aid to Mozambique, which prohibited the Administration from providing any development assistance to Mozambique. I said that I hoped that proscription would soon be lifted [it was later]. But I said the second reason was even more important and that was because our approach to agricultural production was quite different from the approach adopted by the government of Mozambique. I said the US government did not try to manage the economy. We left that to the private sector, where the price of commodities and market forces

encouraged the individual to produce, to make it worth his while to produce. I said that in my view Mozambique would have to change its whole approach to agriculture and the economy before Mozambique was going to have much success in turning its economy around. I would have loved to been able to proven that we could have done it better, but that just wasn't in the cards.

Q: *Was he looking over his shoulder at Tanzania where Julius Nyerere had gone the socialist route and basically destroyed the economy? Was he looking around and seeing how these things didn't work?*

DE PREE: He had his eyes open. He was bright and quite aware of the problems his friend Julius Nyerere had in Tanzania. He saw too what neighboring South Africa had accomplished with its approach to agriculture. He was a pragmatist. I am convinced that had he not been killed in the plane crash, you would have seen quite a change in Mozambique's approach to management of their economy.

Q: *Did you put yourself in a position deliberately in competition with the Soviets by saying that you are doing it this way and it isn't working? Or did you not over emphasize the competitive aspects?*

DE PREE: We didn't really have to. The Mozambicans had their eyes open and were quite aware of what was going on. The Soviets and the East had a big presence in Mozambique. The government wasn't getting as much out of their aid effort as they thought they should. For example, the Soviets were harvesting shrimp off the coast and shared their yield with Mozambique. But the Mozambicans believed they were being short changed. Moreover, the Mozambicans were being told that the Russians were applying fishing methods which were destroying the beds and endangering the future of the industry. Machel was aware of this. It wasn't necessary for us to keep reminding him. The communists' failures spoke for themselves.

Machel was very much a realist, not only on economic issues, but other matters as well, including South Africa. In 1977, Andy Young, then our Ambassador to the UN, came to Maputo to attend a UN conference, which had been called to show solidarity with the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia. On that occasion Andy Young met with President Machel. I accompanied Andy. They talked about the racial situation in South Africa. Andy Young drew on the experience of the Civil Rights movement in the United States to suggest that some of the lessons learned might be helpful in South Africa. Machel listened politely but kept reminding Andy Young that the numbers were different. Whereas in the US the percentage of blacks in the United States was about 15-20 percent, in South Africa it was the reverse. Machel thought the fundamental difference in numbers argued for a different approach. But he said that the whites had every right to be in South Africa. In fact they had as much right as the blacks since much of southern Africa was open country when the Bantus and Afrikaners moved in. Yet while the whites had every right to be there, they didn't have the right to suppress the blacks. That had to cease. I think over time Machel would have been helpful in bringing about a peaceful transition in South Africa.

Q: *What about the CIA while you were there? You had two civil wars going on. One inside of Mozambique and one in Rhodesia. This seems like a place where you might say the CIA couldn't help but get involved. Was this a problem?*

DE PREE: Yes, it was. Mozambique was obviously a country in which the CIA wanted to be present. There was a large Chinese and Soviet military and diplomatic presence. The Cubans, East Germans, and Vietnamese were also there. We did have CIA personnel in the embassy. They were not declared. For the first few years, it was a rather unproductive station. This bothered headquarters officials in Washington, who thought they should be getting more out of the station than the station was able to deliver. Washington was putting a lot of pressure on the station to get moving. Because of that pressure the station became more lax in terms of the safeguards and professional standards that they applied. I was concerned because of the risk of being caught out.

I got myself into trouble with the agency when I turned down requests of senior CIA officials to visit Maputo. Even though the Government of Mozambique and the Soviets, Chinese and others were well aware there were Agency people on the mission staff, I did think it wise to call attention to this fact. I therefore turned down some very senior people. I was told later that they didn't particularly like it. But I was concerned that headquarters didn't appreciate the risk they were running of operating in Mozambique.

I left the country in the Fall of 1980. Shortly thereafter one of the station officers sought to recruit somebody in Maputo and got caught red-handed. As a result the entire station was kicked out. In my judgment this happened because we were amateurish, we were too impatient for results and took unacceptable risks. We were very critical of the government of Mozambique for expelling our people and asked for an apology. I thought we protested too much. After all, we had brought it on ourselves.

Q: *It is always a problem because these operations have a life of their own. You have to produce...what we are really talking about is the recruitment of agents who will then send in reports and this is always a very tricky thing because if this effort gets publicized...we have a major case right now in the United States called the Ames Spy case, which has upset relations with Russia. These things not only have a life of their own, but have major political consequences, often far out weighing any results they get.*

DE PREE: It was a long time before we assigned an ambassador to Mozambique because we didn't like the way they handled this incident. We didn't like being publicly exposed the way we were. Let me add here that the US government was not seeking in any way to topple or create problems for the government of Mozambique. We were interested in knowing what the Soviets, the Cubans and the other Communist players in Mozambique were up to. In my judgment, that was a legitimate objective. But we did it in such a way that we created problems for our bilateral relationship. This took time to heal.

Q: *What about your relations with countries there with which we really didn't have relations with. The Vietnamese, Cubans, North Koreans, Soviets, Chinese, etc. How did you handle these?*

DE PREE: Well you couldn't help but run into these people. Whenever the diplomatic corps assembled formally, the Mozambicans asked us to line up in order of our presentation of credentials. This put me next to the Cuban Ambassador, with whom of course we didn't have relations. I was civil. He was too. We would engage in small talk, but not much more. That was true of other communist diplomats with whom the US did not have diplomatic relations; except for the North Koreans. The North Korean Ambassador refused to shake hands with me. He would just put his hand behind his back as Dulles did with Zhou En-lai.

Mozambique was a fascinating place to be. I stayed almost five years. I was scheduled to leave after three years but stayed on because of the good working relationship I had established with Machel and because of the on-going negotiations on Rhodesia and Namibia. I left a few months after the elections in Zimbabwe. It was a very satisfying tour.

## CHESTER ARTHUR CROCKER
## Assistant Secretary for African Affairs
## Washington, DC (1981-1989)

*Assistant Secretary Crocker was born and raised in New York and educated at Ohio State University and the School for Strategic and International Studies (SAIS). He served on the National Security Council (1970-1972), as Professor at Georgetown University (1972-1977), and as Director for African Affairs at the Center for Strategic and International Affairs (1976-1980). In 1981 he was appointed Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and served in that capacity until 1989, at which time he rejoined the faculty of Georgetown University. Mr. Crocker was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2006.*

*Q: It's a question I want to ask, at the time was anybody saying, "The Soviet Union's going to collapse within five years or so," while you were doing this?*

CROCKER: No, I don't think anyone was thinking that. What we did see and this begins to address your question, we did see that the Mozambicans were getting told, "*Nyet*" quite often, when it came to rolling over debt or getting more credits or whatever. So Mozambique's leadership was in the uncomfortable position of having a superpower patron that was a reluctant participant in subsidizing a totally statist, feckless government.

And so they were getting pushback on that side and then on the South African side the Frelimo government was getting beaten up, because South Africa was building up RENAMO as a sword over their heads and destabilizing the country, large parts of the country.

So Mozambique was uncomfortable. We watched the Mozambique thing pretty closely and we were interested in why it was that the Russians weren't handing out more support to the Mozambique government.

Were they making a choice? Were they encouraging the Mozambicans to come over? We were actively wooing the Mozambicans to come over.

Mozambique, I should say, is a very strategic place. It's got a coastline longer than California's and three of the best deepwater ports in Africa. It's the major place from which the Copper Belt's copper and cobalt is exported.

This is a serious strategic stake and the Soviets seemed to be saying, "Do we really care that much?" So it opened the door for us and for our European friends to play a more aggressive hand in Mozambique.

Angola was much more closed. In fact, by the mid-Eighties we had creative Mozambican help to open the doors in Angola. Fascinating!

*Q: Did we have relations with Mozambique?*

CROCKER: Yes, we did, although they were strained in the early years of the Eighties and at one stage we didn't have an ambassador anymore and we had a chargé only and they didn't have anybody much here.

It was a cool period, but eventually we built it back up again and assigned really first rate people.

*Q: As an active duty Foreign Service Officer and now retired, this is normal diplomatic practice, when the going gets tough we yank out our ambassador as a sign of disapproval, just when we really should almost add more resources to deal with a problem, we cut and run. This is diplomatic practice, which has always struck me as being wrong headed.*

CROCKER: I'm not as well briefed as I ought to be on the specifics of this, but there was an intelligence incident of some sort here, which led to a reciprocal expulsion and I think it was in that context that we downgraded relations and then we built them back up again.

But this was an intelligence screw-up that we found out about and had to deal with the results of and that wasn't the only one that took place, by the way, where somebody's trying to recruit somebody or

*Q: Now, was Mozambique a player in this process?*

CROCKER: Very directly, yes.

*Q: How so?*

CROCKER: Well, Mozambique and Angola of course are brother lusophone countries. They came out of the same colonial experience. They came out of the same revolutionary experience. They knew each other very well.

There were people in the Mozambican structure that we were working with. I mentioned earlier that we were 'weaning' Marxists. We were trying to create a roadmap with Mozambique that would lead to a much stronger direct relationship between Mozambique and Washington.

So we developed allies there and they helped us develop allies in Angola. That was the sequence.

My senior deputy, Frank Wisner, at the time spent half his life running that process. We ran it together, but he was in the lead with the Mozambicans in many cases and spent many, many man-hours working with Samora Machel and Jacinto Veloso and various other Mozambican officials, who eventually led us to Kito Rodrigues and other allies in the Angolan structure.

So Mozambique was, in a sense, if I may use the terminology of conflict resolution here for a minute, Mozambique was an 'insider partial' in this diplomacy. It was an insider in the sense that it was on Angola's side, it was a brother to the Angolans, but it was advising us, the big superpower, the Western capitalist superpower, on how to basically do our homework and how to play our cards.

And sometimes the Angolans would invite the Mozambicans to join meetings with us, so that they'd have someone else at the table. It was quite extraordinary how that worked.

*Q: Really a fascinating period of diplomacy, because this is where worked.*

CROCKER: Well, diplomacy, it worked in terms of building relationships, in terms of building a sense, if you like, of trust. I'm not sure if trust is even the right word. It's familiarity and it's a sense and that you'll do what you say you'll do and that you'll be there tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. It is a mix of respect for competence, acquaintance, and predictability.

In some of these cultures it's an investment of time, it's an investment of building relationships, it's also an investment of just plain listening and coming to grips with the world and the history that they live in, rather than expecting that they will just come to grips with the one you live in. It's gotta be both.

*Q: I was talking to a man who was an administrative officer in Africa and found that relations with Foreign Service Nationals in this country were poor. He hired some outfit to do a survey and discovered that the nationals did not feel that our officers cared for them: "They don't ask 'How's the family?' when they come in in the morning and talk a little about family matters."*

*Americans don't do that, building up that almost personal regard and interest.*

CROCKER: You've absolutely got to do it and it may even lead to a kind of collusion, if you like, at a certain point. But what you're trying to do is to get people to the point where they can tell you a little bit of the truth and as they do you can tell them a little bit of the truth about what it's going to take to get to the bottom line.

And events like this, the negotiation of the Lusaka Accord of February '84

*Q: How stood Mozambique? Was this part of the situation, or could this be dealt with separately?*

CROCKER: I think, looking back, the worst month of my tenure was October of 1986, which was the month right after the override of the president's sanctions bill, which made it look, in the eyes of many, that our policy was going to change dramatically, even though we knew it wasn't. The administration was not going to drop the policy of negotiation in Southern Africa, we were going to continue doing exactly what we had been doing, but we're going to do it against the backdrop of having lost a major debate.
It somewhat hamstrung us. I made it look to various people that our policy had been either defeated or fundamentally changed.

*Q: I don't think we've talked an awful lot about Mozambique. What was happening in Mozambique, up to the death of the president?*

CROCKER: You're absolutely right, we haven't talked enough about it, but it was a parallel peace process and the high point of it had been the Nkomati Accords that was signed in, if memory serves, the spring of 1984, which was kind of a detente agreement between Samora Machel's Mozambique and P.W. Botha's South Africa.

It was a strange scenario, very strange bedfellows. Here was this former hospital orderly, Samora Machel, who was a kind of a street talker, he talked in your face and he was very charismatic and very spontaneous kind of guy, who always had some off-the-cuff wisecrack. He and Reagan got on like a house afire. Reagan was very moved when Machel died, because he liked Machel.

He didn't like his policies. He saw him as a Marxist. But Maggie Thatcher had convinced Reagan that Machel was someone that we could deal with.

Machel came to Washington and had one of the best visits that we had the entire time that I was assistant secretary (and we had a lot of African visits). Reagan got to him by telling jokes, some of them off-color jokes, some of them anti-Soviet jokes and Machel began reciprocating with his own anti-Soviet jokes and they had a good time together.

*Q: I saw on a television program, we had officers in Moscow who were designated to collect these jokes and pass them on to Ronald Reagan.*

CROCKER: No question, and some of the Soviet empire heard about them.

Despite this, the warming up process between Mozambique and South Africa (1983-84) became victim of the dirty tricks departments within the South African government, specifically the Department of Military Intelligence within the armed forces, which was running the war.

They really were running the RENAMO war and they were determined, whatever P.W. Botha had agreed with Michel about at Nkomati in '84, by '85 we knew and in '86 even more so, that the civil war was hotting up, and that the Mozambicans' backs were against the wall.

I concluded at the time that P.W. Botha was playing a double game and was telling his foreign affairs department that he was living up to his commitments and telling military intelligence to do what they were doing, which was to torment the Mozambican regime and weaken it to the point that it was like a ripe fruit ready to fall into your hands.

What they intended to do with that fruit if it did fall into their hands one never knew for sure, but Mozambique was a disaster, it was a mess and Machel was a good guy working to try and reach out and broaden his relationships with Britain and the United States and so on, but he didn't have the strategy, or the smarts, maybe, to figure out what to do, given the fact that he was facing a tough-minded South African campaign to destabilize the country and perhaps seduce the US into joining in the effort.

So when Machel went down in that 1986 plane crash, we'd been doing things for him, we'd been providing some access to assistance and helping open doors for him with the World Bank and the IMF, debt relief, that kind of thing.

When he went down, we worried that maybe Mozambique itself would go down and would become in a sense nothing but a battleground between a dying Soviet-aligned regime on the one side and a South African-sponsored insurgency on the other side.

That did not happen. It not happen because the Soviets were disengaging a little bit from providing a blank check to places like Mozambique and because Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan were determined that it not happen.

The new leader who came in to succeed Samora Michel, Joachim Chissano, did a good job, was very impressive and although a totally different personality from Machel he managed to appeal to the Brits and the Americans and began putting some things right, in terms of Mozambican internal policy, that made a bit of a difference.

So we didn't lose Mozambique, but we thought, when I said, October 19th of '86, that we might lose Mozambique as a successful front in our effort to rewrite the map of Southern Africa.

Chissano turned out to be a very remarkable guy. He just stepped down as president a couple of years ago, had a long tenure and quite a successful tenure. A very, very shrewd, thoughtful person, with many skills.

So people make all the difference. I don't know if all this could have happened if it hadn't been for Margaret Thatcher. Which was interesting, because on some other issues she wasn't necessarily very farsighted.

But on dealing with Gorbachev and dealing with the Mozambique account and figuring out how to advance a joint cause in Southern Africa generally she could be very helpful.

**MELISSA FOELSCH WELLS**

**Ambassador**
**Mozambique (1987-1991)**

*Ambassador Wells was born in Estonia and raised abroad and in the U.S. She was educated at Mount St. Mary's College and Georgetown University. In 1958, she joined the Foreign Service and served in Washington and abroad. Her foreign assignments include posts in Brazil, France, United Kingdom, Trinidad-Tobago, and Switzerland. She also served in senior positions at the United Nations in New York. Her ambassadorial assignments include: Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau (1976-1977); Mozambique (1987-1991); the Democratic Republic of Congo (1991-1992); and Estonia (1998-2001). Ambassador Wells was interviewed by Ann Miller Moran in 1995.*

*Q: What do you see as the major area that you'll be involved in?*

WELLS: You have a government, a country which is part of the Lusophone area. I have some experience of that from ten years ago, being our first ambassador in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. Now I have a chance to go to Mozambique, where you have a country of tremendous potential, which is working its way away from a system, a philosophy, that they adopted at first when they became independent. Some people would say, "Why don't you just change the labels?" But that's not as important as to what's happening, the fact that they have taken steps to privatize. The basic issue is not whether you're on "my side" or "their side"; it's the fact that they are part of this awareness that is going on in many parts of Africa, that the model of planning that was adopted at independence does just not work. It does not work. It's demolished anything that existed.

And what's the alternative? What do you do now? So rather than chucking off a label, exciting things are going on in terms of sale of parastatal organizations, the assets. You don't hear about this. The fact that our AID program, by legislation, is directed toward the private sector because of legislation, because we are not to be dealing with a Marxist-Leninist government, creates a cramped situation in terms of flexibility, but is very exciting. I think it has opened up all sorts of new opportunities for us that maybe would not have been there if those constraints had not been placed on it. I'm speaking very freely. I'm sure that many people within the Department now would not agree with that.

But the challenge to go, to see this transition taking place within the much larger context of regional problems in southern Africa and, of course, now the issue being apartheid in South Africa and our own sanctions, it's part of a very, very, very rich picture in terms of challenges.

*Q: Do you expect you'll have a lot of challenging on that particular point?*

WELLS: Oh, I expect so. This is crucial, what will South Africa's attitude be toward Mozambique, the issue being that Mozambique is a natural egress and means of transport for the landlocked countries. If Mozambique can be neutralized in terms of ability to transit, then you have a very different situation in southern Africa. Of course, the position of the government in Mozambique antedates this particular set of circumstances by several years; it goes back to '84,

having signed an agreement with South Africa which was heavily criticized. It's fraught with exciting area issues.

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*Q: It certainly gave us a very clear picture of what your life was like in Mozambique. I wish it had been longer. At one point--and correct me if I'm wrong--I believe you said that before you went, you pictured the war in a certain way, and that when you got there, you found that you were wrong. Could you tell me in what way the picture of the war changed when you got there?*

WELLS: There's two things here. One is that, for whatever reasons, I was not aware of people traveling as much throughout the country and doing reporting--I mean people from our embassy--as when I got there. The other issue being that I personally traveled up and down. I mean, I stopped logging the miles after 10,000 or something like that. It's a big country to go from A to B in the north, for example. It's a huge country. The best way to describe it is, their coastline is the equivalent of from Maine to Florida. So to move around, you cover the miles. You log the miles.

I'm not trying to impugn anything that happened before, because that was a particular time in history, the relationship with the host government, but I made it my business to travel a great deal, to visit what they call the campos dos deslocados (these were the people who had been displaced, who are essentially refugees within their own country) and to talk to them. I talked to people who had availed themselves of amnesty, I talked to people in hospitals, essentially to civilians. Those with amnesty obviously had been carrying weapons before, but essentially [I talked] to civilians, to try to piece together from them what happened, number one, to them. How was this attack? And two, what was their understanding of what this world is all about.

To answer the question that you put to me, it began to take shape in the following fashion: one, that there was a strong internal component to the war that I had not been aware of and which was basically rooted in the mistakes that the FRELIMO [National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique] had made when they came to power at the time of Independence. Once I learned about these and raised them with the government, they began to respond and say, "Yes, we admit we made mistakes. We made mistakes."

*Q: A Marxist/Leninist slant to everything?*

WELLS: Let me give you an example. Two things. Shortly after I arrived, I was, of course, making my calls and I met with one of the leaders what you would call the theoretician for the FRELIMO party; in other words, in terms of where they've been, where they're going. It was a bit of a stiff meeting at first, and he was definitely what one would call a hard-liner. As we started to talk (I had prepared this ahead of time), I said, "You know, I'd like to try out on you some of the questions that I had to answer for the Senate of the United States to be confirmed." And I trotted them out. He smiled. [Laughter] He realized. But the point I was making was that they were hanging onto language about Marxist-Leninist dogma which they weren't implementing, which they weren't using.

Eventually we became very good friends during my stay there. I remember before the FRELIMO party congress in 1989, he put the question to me, saying, "Look, Melissa. If you could write it out, what would you like to see come out of this congress?"

I came back immediately and said, "Remember the first time we met and I tried out those questions on you? Why do you need all these references in your charter to Marxism, Leninism, and all? You're not doing it. You're trying to privatize. The churches are open. Is this a monument that you need for sentimental reasons? This is your past. You're shooting yourself in the foot. It's time that you gave all this up."

Now, I cannot say that I'm personally responsible for this, because there was a general trend in this direction in any event, but I'm pleased to report that as a result of that congress, there were no further references to Marxism or Leninism in the party thinking.

*Q: They've dropped it?*

WELLS: They've dropped it. They've dropped it totally. Of course, at this stage they now have a new constitution. They have a new electoral law. They have several new parties registered. They're very small parties, but they are definitely committed to a multi-party system.

But again, to go back to that important question, what was different were two things. One, the fact that there was a deep involvement in terms of the local people and their dissatisfaction with many of the things that FRELIMO did. Why it had to be counteracted in such violent fashion and with the use of terror against civilians is another question.

*Q: Was that by FRELIMO?*

WELLS: No, I'm talking in terms of the RENAMO, the hundreds of civilians that I interviewed and the question of the children. You saw the child combatants, I mean children abducted and trained to kill. Certainly in the case of the children, this was documented by American psychologists who came out there and interviewed and did statistical work with them and worked with them in terms of psychodrama, trying to rehabilitate these children who, at the age of twelve, killed people.

*Q: Did I understand correctly, Melissa, that the little boy who was mute...*

WELLS: Frenisi. Yes.

*Q: ...was asked to set fire to his family's home and he did it?*

WELLS: This is one of many horrible stories. What happened in his case is... and people obviously will be asking, if he's mute, how do we know the story? And I'll get to that in a moment. But his story is that he went down to fetch water by the pond, the stream, wherever it was, as he did every day of his life. He came back to their hut and there were men with guns surrounding it. Then they told him to set fire to the hut. They gave him a torch. Of course, the hut is what you call a palhota, a thatched roof and so forth, so that the thing went up in flames.

Immediately the parents came running out and then their heads were cut off. There are other gory parts to the whole thing.

You see, when Frenisi came to us at the Lhanguene center, I remember I reached out for him, because I used to go there several times a week to be with these children, and he just wouldn't speak to anybody, wouldn't speak to the other children, nothing. He would just always be off by himself. He would not participate in any of the activities. He'd be off in a corner, and then from time to time tears would pour from his eyes. I remember I'd go there with ice cream and Coca-Colas and with Donald Duck cartoons, and I remember taking him and putting him on my lap, and he was like a little sack. "Okay, she wants to hold me." I mean, I tried to cuddle him and so forth, but just no reaction whatsoever, except sometimes he cried.

Eventually the story came out via drawings, because the way Dr. Boothby would draw the stories out from the children was by asking them to draw. Frenisi did participate in this eventually because there were bright colors and papers and things that at first he wouldn't have anything to do with. He was simply asked, because nobody knew his story. He was there for months on end, and nobody knew. We knew something must have happened which was horrible, but we didn't understand why he didn't talk to anybody. He was asked to draw his home, and Dr. Boothby has that drawing, the first drawing. He said, "You know, any person with minimal training in psychology, especially child psychology, can see that this child has a deep problem." At this stage, as I recall, the whole violence aspect hadn't even come into it.

So he drew him out and he asked him to draw this part and to draw that part, and then the whole story came out. The reason he wasn't speaking was because he felt guilty.

*Q: Of course! Poor little thing.*

WELLS: Because in his little six-year-old mind, he was the one who killed his parents because he set fire to the thing. I was there when they reenacted the psychodrama which is where the other children who've all had brutal experiences, as well, play different parts, and little Frenisi is sitting, watching. He watches a little boy playing his part and they reenact the story according to Frenisi, with killings and so forth. Frenisi sees that that there is nothing he could have done. To you, to me, hearing the story we arrive at an immediate conclusion that he was forced to do it. But Frenisi had never clicked on that. He was just beset with rage and guilt that he was responsible for the death of his parents.

*Q: The poor child.*

WELLS: This is just one story. There are so many.

*Q: And you saw so many! The scenes where you were sitting by the side of a nine-year- old child who was, if I understood correctly, in terminal shock, your face was...*

WELLS: She died before I left the hospital. She was not just moaning. I mean, she was unconscious, but there were sounds coming out of her mouth. I can tell you here--I couldn't do it on the film--that I believe in God, and what I was doing there was just holding onto her and

praying and giving strength for whatever the future held, and the future held that she was dead before we left the hospital. And she was in a very good hospital.

Remember that we're traveling with a camera crew and sound equipment and so forth. When I was traveling by myself, I didn't take extraordinary risks, but with this whole gang I just did a quick and easy visit to a hospital in a war zone that was fairly close to us, as opposed to some of the areas that I was asked to go to in very difficult areas, but where I would never dream of taking other people along. Certainly people from my embassy, possibly, but not the camera crew.

*Q: Had you seen this child before?*

WELLS: No, I'd never seen the child before.

*Q: Your face was a picture of compassion.*

WELLS: I was told by the Italian doctor there that they didn't expect her to live through the day. We then went on and visited with other wounded. I often tried to find out, preferably from their own lips (if they didn't speak Portuguese, I would simply ask a nurse to translate or something), what was their story? What happened?

*Q: Did you ever find out that child's story?*

WELLS: No.

*Q: I suppose you have to multiply that.*

WELLS: By the hundreds, and then those I never saw. Thousands.

*Q: Is it true that approximately 100,000 people have been killed during this ten years?*

WELLS: Yes.

*Q: That's a modest estimate?*

WELLS: A modest estimate. A modest estimate.

*Q: You mentioned a home for children, and I could not quite get the name.*

WELLS: Lhanguene. That was the one that appears in the film you saw last night, which was a hostel for out-of-town students. When we understood, this problem particularly of the child soldiers, if I may call it that, but which is only part of a much larger problem of traumatized children who may not have actually carried weapons and killed, but who have been exposed to an enormous amount of violence...

*Q: Is this run by the U.S.?*

WELLS: I'm very proud of that. I had a little bit of trouble getting it started. I don't want to go into all that.

*Q: You started it?*

WELLS: I started it. I got the U.S. Government to fund this project. We had to have a place for the children and the government made that available. We had to get it fit to live in, and Al [Wells] donated his services in terms of supervising the plumbing and making sure the toilets work and so forth.

But then the key thing was to bring the specialized talent from the States. First we had a child psychiatrist and a psychiatric social worker who came over and who did the first cut in terms of interviewing the children that were in that place at that time. Then later on, a few months later, once the idea was developed into a project, because we didn't know what to do. What do you do with children who have been taught to bayonet and to kill? Do you just treat them like any other twelve-year-old, or do you put them in prison, or do you "warehouse" them, you know, because they're unsafe for society? These were issues that had to be discussed.

Dr. Neil Boothby from Duke University is a very well-known child psychologist who has worked in Southeast Asia and in Central America, and particularly with this problem of children and violence. The whole project was implemented under Save the Children Federation of the U.S.

*Q: Who put up the original money?*

WELLS: The U.S. Government. Then the project acted as a lead for Save the Children, U.K., for Redd Barna from Norway and for various others. The idea was to develop a training model, because at that stage there was not one trained psychologist or psychiatrist in all of Mozambique. They had to rely on outside talent. Obviously these people are still in training and sometime will qualify, but we can't wait that long.

So what Boothby did was to develop a model in terms of training local people, mainly people from the Ministry of Education who have a lot of experience with children, or the Ministry of Health or the National Women's Organization. He created a training course, quite sophisticated, in terms of being able to size up the children, to spot which child could possibly have what you call post traumatic stress disorder, which is the key thing that we're looking for here.

*Q: They used to call that shell-shock? It comprises shell-shock?*

WELLS: Yes. PTSD, as it's known, didn't even exist in World War II. I understand that some people in the world still question whether it exists or not. But certainly in the U.S. we recognize it as a real problem. Many of our Vietnam veterans have suffered and are still suffering from it, everything from nightmares to aggressive behavior, many symptoms. But how to assess it, how to draw out the child and then how to deal with it in the psychodrama?

Then in addition to that, we got into the question of reuniting the children with families, if you can find them. By the time I left Mozambique, we had reunited 2,000 children--2,000--in a

country at war, where people can't read, where they have not even seen a photograph of a loved one. We managed to track down the families. I won't always say the parents, because often the parents are killed or we just don't know.

*Q: How were you able to do that, since illiteracy is such a problem?*

WELLS: This is going to take some time, okay? I love this project, obviously. The training model for what you would call the parapsychologists, the local people, the people being trained, would then be taken to other provinces to train others in the treatment aspect. Because there's the treatment aspect of the child, if necessary, and then there is the reunification aspect.

On the reunification aspect, we also developed a procedure which Dr. Boothby had used successfully in another part of the world, and it runs as follows: From the children that were in the home, we got clues to identity. Of course it depended on what age they were and how much information they had, but the older they were, the better they remembered the name of the village, the name of their parents. They can give clues as to from whence they came. The younger they are, the more difficult it gets, but we don't give up. We get together all the clues, and then it becomes obvious that some children come from a certain region. Then we photographed all of the children. Then each child spoke into a tape recorder, an audio cassette, in his or her tribal language, saying, "I am Paulo, my mother's name is So-and-so," and as much as they recall of what happened to them.

Then we went out, and I went with them. I went up to the place in Gaza Province, where we first tried this, and what happened was that the people who were still in a camp or were displaced there were told to assemble at a certain point. I'd say maybe 500 people showed up. We wanted more people, so we had to wait. We said, "This concerns children, your children possibly, children of your friends." So they came. You could just see the mood was like, "Let me get on with my... I have to go get water, I have to do this, I have to do the other."

So the man spoke and said, "Look, we're going to be passing out to you sheets of photographs." It wasn't one single photograph, but there would be a sheet, quite large, like a poster size almost, and it would have six, eight, sometimes ten photographs of the children. We passed them around, and I remember watching the crowd looking at these. Remember, many of these people had never seen a photograph, and all of us change when we're photographed. So they started looking and passing, mumbling and muttering. I remember a few people come up to the desk that we had, because we had said, "If you think you might recognize someone up there, come up. You don't have to be sure. Just come up."

I remember at one point a wonderful woman came up, an elderly woman, very dignified face, and she came up and she pointed and said, "I think this is my grandson Angelo." And it was Angelo. We don't bring the children with us. So then the next step is that she comes and she sits at another table. I was sitting at the same table with her. We got the tape that Angelo had recorded, and played it for this woman. I was so moved. I mean, I don't understand the language. They were speaking Shangaan. The woman was sitting opposite me and was looking down into the tape recorder which she's never seen in her life, and a voice is coming out of the tape recorder. I remember her face was sort of crumpling up there, looking, "What is this?" I kept watching her

face, and then the tears started pouring down her cheeks. I got up and I hugged her, because it was clear what was happening. She was hearing a voice. Again, your voice on a tape recorder is not the same as the one you hear with your ear. She was not sure, but what the voice was saying matched with the information she knew about Angelo.

Then she and I composed ourselves, went back, turned the tape around, and she recorded for Angelo. Got the process?

*Q: I do, indeed.*

WELLS: I asked someone to translate for me, because, again, it's in Shangaan. One of the most moving things. She said, "This is your grandmother." And she said, "Angelo, what you don't know is that your mother is alive. She came back to us two months ago, three months ago, and we killed a goat to celebrate." And so forth.

So then we take the tape back to Angelo, because, again, you have to be careful. Angelo has been through a terrible experience: he's been abducted. He was abducted and lived in the rebel camps for a long time. Again, we have to be very careful, because a child must want to go back to the family, because after the experience that the child has gone through, they may find the safety of Maputo and the center... Well, the child has to want to go back. You can't just say, "We've found somebody who knows Angelo. Out with Angelo."

This was another interesting part of the process because they didn't all immediately say yes. They thought about it; they thought about it. Angelo was reunited. Maybe I'm talking too long about this, but my little boy, the one that was in the film, I saw him, I said goodbye to him before I left. He's outside of Maputo, but again I don't want to say where. We never... Obviously we couldn't find any family of his. We know that his parents are dead. What we did was, because as we found homes for more and more children, the few that were left, it was very sad because they had bonded together as a group and now they're all going off. Frenisi, at this point, was saying, "Well, I want to go back to my family. I want to go back to my family."

*Q: This was the child who was mute?*

WELLS: Yes, the one who later spoke. He did speak once he caught up. Another time one of them was having a birthday party, a little boy who had lost both his arms, and I came with a birthday cake and we had a little celebration. There was a new child there who didn't speak much, and Frenisi kept bouncing back and forth from one end of the table to the other, you know, going to this little boy and explaining to me, saying, "You know, he's new here." Frenisi was beginning to learn Portuguese at this point, because before that he didn't speak Portuguese. "He's new here. He doesn't talk very much." And it was as if he was looking at me and saying, "I know you know me from when I didn't talk at all." [Laughter] But he was now in charge of this other little one.

*Q: Isn't that remarkable!*

WELLS: Trying to help him, but making sure that everybody knew that he was helping him. Anyway, he's with the family. We found family for the best friend that Frenisi had at the hostel,

and we approached his family to say, "The two boys were so close. We cannot find any trace of Frenisi's family, even in the extended concept of the African family. Will you agree to take him?" And this is the wonderful thing about Africa and its concept of what a family is. They are very poor people and they said, yes, they would.

*Q: Did they speak the same tribal language?*

WELLS: Yes.

*Q: These children who were abducted, is this because the rebels want to raise their own recruits?*

WELLS: I don't know the reasons for that. The study that was done, based on dozens and dozens of interviews with children, and I've read it. It has not been published yet. I think it's going to be published at some point in some professional outlet, psychology journal or something like that. But it's difficult to understand. What do they want these little children for? Well, many of the littler ones, you know, collected firewood, collected water, did chores around the camp. But there were others, stronger ones, the bigger ones, who became part of that whole [guerilla] concept. They wanted to be one of the big boys and they could become even more brutal. They were trying to outdo each other in terms of brutality.

*Q: Of course.*

WELLS: These children were found firing weapons at the Army, and that was a problem in itself, to get the Army to hand over the children, because they don't see them as children; they see them as young boys carrying weapons. And you're talking about ten and eleven-year-olds.

*Q: FRELIMO used children, too, did they?*

WELLS: No. I remember at one point, one place I visited, this was up country, a bunch of boys had been brought in, and the person in charge there said, "What do you mean? Antonio (or whatever his name was), give up your weapon to the guard here." The guard agreed. Antonio took out the ammunition, he took out the magazine. He took that Kalashnikov apart and put it back together again, and Antonio was about eleven.

*Q: Imagine!*

WELLS: And he knew how to use it.

*Q: You visited Lhanguene once a week?*

WELLS: In the early days, at least once a week, if not more. I'd go over there every weekend.

*Q: Was this for a particular reason that you went that often? This was not policy; this was humanity?*

WELLS: This was me, yes. I was overwhelmed with these children and their problems. While we were putting the project together, and then when the first team came, the child psychologist and psychiatric social worker, I was there for most of the interviews. I just wanted this thing to work. I mean, I gave a lot of my time because, quite honestly, Ann, you can't just handle it in a bureaucratic way. It wouldn't work. It wouldn't fit. You see, we're used to emergency programs where we send food, we send medical supplies, tents, blankets, you name it. But "shrinks"? That's something else.

*Q: These are badly damaged children.*

WELLS: Yes. What do you do with them? There's one school of thought within the Mozambique government--and I'm glad it did not prevail--that these children should be what we call "warehoused." That was the term I coined. Not lock them up. They're not in prison, but...

*Q: The Romanians did that with their retarded children.*

WELLS: You just keep them because they're unsafe.

*Q: Yes.*

WELLS: The approach that prevailed, of course, is totally different in terms of the future. Children can be rehabilitated. Some of them are damaged for the rest of their lives, obviously. Children have been reunited. One of the ringleaders who admitted in his interviews that he can remember killing six people, at least, I mean, bayonets, whatever, has gone back to live with his uncle. In his case, it was particularly sad because when they located the family, the family didn't want him. I won't say they didn't want him; they were not thrilled with bringing him back because they were afraid that they would get retribution from their neighbors because he was involved in killing, you see. He'd been seen in attacks.

We tend to forget, and this is so interesting when you get inside Africa, when you get out of the cities and into the bush and into the villages, how perceptive the people are, how they communicate with no electronic equipment at all. That bush telegraph... and that's not just Mozambique, it's happened to me in other parts of Africa. It's incredible how it works. They know what's going on.

*Q: They are problems with any number of facets, aren't they?*

WELLS: Yes.

*Q: It seems to me this would be very valuable work in view of the number of children who are being dislocated all over the world--the Kurds, African children...*

WELLS: Yes. I don't want to go into it in this interview, but within the last couple of weeks I've been in touch here in Washington to see what can be done in a more organized fashion for the "children of war". I'm not talking just about immunization and food and so forth, because that's a tremendous problem, but there are so many people focusing on that as opposed to the

psychological damage. It's not just the Mozambique experience; it's the Uganda experience before that, where they had the kidogos - again, child soldiers. We know that it certainly went on in Cambodia. These are people who are alive and they are the adults of tomorrow. They're carrying this stuff around in their heads, and we have to cope with it. We can't just lock them up. We can't just turn them loose, either, turn them loose without talking to them, without trying to relieve them of guilt feelings, which is essentially what our program does. It has to be focused, done in a more organized fashion.

*Q: When you went to Mozambique, you were very enthusiastic. The interview that you did with me shows that. You had a set of goals. Did those goals change once you got there?*

WELLS: No. No, they didn't. The goals were the same.

*Q: You found they were all valid?*

WELLS: They were all valid and they would be, obviously, in terms of enhancing the bilateral relationship, but within that, trying to bring about peace talks, which we did achieve. The peace talks have borne disappointing fruits thus far, but peace is never easy after a long war, and I'm still hopeful. We did achieve a more open political society. There's a new constitution. There is the commitment to political pluralism. Those are very important achievements. I'm glad that it happened on my watch, and I take some credit for it.

## CLAUDIA ANYASO
## Desk Officer: Anglophone West Africa
## Washington, DC (1997-1999)

*Ms. Anyaso was born and raised in North Carolina and was educated at Morgan State University and American University. She joined the State Department in 1968, where she specialized in Education and Cultural Affairs, with particular regard to African countries. She had several tours in Washington as well as abroad. Her foreign assignments include Lagos, Abuja, Port-au-Prince and Niamey, where she served primarily as Cultural and Public Affairs Officer. Ms. Anyaso was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2009.*

*Q: You came back n '97?*

ANYASO: Yes.

*Q: What did you do?*

ANYASO: I was a desk officer; Marilyn Hulbert was our director at the time. I was responsible for Anglophone West Africa and nobody wanted to handle Mozambique and Angola so I also became the desk offer responsible for the post management for our staffs in Angola and

Mozambique, which was wonderful because I had never visited those countries and this gave me an opportunity to get to southern Africa.

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There was a contrast for me in what I was seeing in the country [Angola]. There was this sort of Corniche or island out there where they were building restaurants and big hotels; maybe it was like Hilton Head. All that was going on and as I say they had the oil executives who were building these mansions in one part of the place so there was a very big gap between the rich and the poor in the country. In Mozambique you didn't have that kind of gap it was more…

*Q: They didn't have oil did they or did they?*

ANYASO: They didn't have oil so you didn't have that gap. Our PAO, Harriet Maguire, at the time and our ambassador were working very hard on various programs in the country but as I said we did a lot of English teaching so that is what she was concentrating on there. Our ambassador at the time loved opera so during my visit there was a program at his residence; there was an American working for UNICEF or one of the UN organizations whose name was Michael Jackson and I told him afterwards that I didn't think that was an appropriate name for an opera singer. Come up with an Italian name or something but not Michael Jackson. But there was a lady from Mozambique who had been trained in Europe and she sang beautifully so they did a program at the ambassador's residence and that was quite nice.

There is a magnificent hotel in Mozambique called the Polana, it's one of those grand old hotels right on the Indian Ocean and there were a lot of conferences at that particular hotel. But it is a very poor country. They have wonderful handicrafts and they grow cashews in the country and they were making peli-peli I think very well, their industry was doing well I think until the World Bank came in with a plan to send their cashews to India and it became a big brouhaha because it was taking away what they felt was a big industry in Mozambique; I think they finally won and kept their cashews and processed them at home. But just looking at the people and the country they have a long way to go. Economically we had come up with this HYPIC program, which was a technical assistance program for the poorest of the poor countries and they definitely qualified for that. So they were working their way through that system to get some more aid into the country and I think they are doing quite well.

*End of reader*