

March 31, 1987

## MOZAMBIQUE MERITS THE REAGAN DOCTRINE

### INTRODUCTION

Since gaining independence from Portugal in 1975, Mozambique has been one of Moscow's closest allies in Africa. This alliance was forged ten years ago today, when Mozambique signed a 20-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union. In return for military advisers and a large arsenal of Soviet weapons, Mozambique's communist regime, known as the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), has given the Soviet navy access to ports, has supported Soviet-backed insurgents, and allowed Moscow's allies preferred access to Mozambique's natural resources.

Soviet weapons and advisers are used to fight the nine-year-old insurgency of the Mozambique National Resistance, or RENAMO.<sup>1</sup> Its 22,000 pro-Western freedom fighters have waged an increasingly successful guerrilla campaign against the FRELIMO regime. RENAMO now controls 80 percent of the countryside.

Mozambique faces other problems: economic and military pressure from neighboring South Africa, a famine that threatens 5 million Mozambicans, and the normal problems associated with a leadership change, after President Samora Machel was killed last October in a plane crash. He was replaced by Joaquim Chissano, who promptly

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1. See "The Resistance Can Win in Mozambique," Heritage Foundation National Security Record, June 1986.

reconfirmed his regime's commitment to Marxism-Leninism and to the Soviet bloc.

Many observers believe that RENAMO is so close to victory that it could become the Third World's first triumphant anti-communist insurgency. A main obstacle to this, strangely, is the Reagan Administration. Instead of invoking the Reagan Doctrine and supporting the democratic resistance forces, as the Reagan Doctrine seemingly would require, the U.S. has sided with the Soviet-backed communist regime. For the last six years, the State Department ostensibly has sought to "wean away" the FRELIMO regime from the Soviet bloc by providing FRELIMO with political, diplomatic, and economic support. Since 1981, the U.S. directly has provided Mozambique \$78 million in bilateral assistance and has voted for another \$154 million in multilateral assistance.

Mozambique's communist rulers, however, refuse to be weaned. They are no closer to the West and no further from Moscow than they were six years ago. It is thus time for the U.S. to recognize that its Mozambique policy has failed. As such, Washington should end all bilateral assistance to Mozambique. The U.S. also should demand the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Mozambique and pressure FRELIMO leaders to negotiate with RENAMO to devise a plan for national reconciliation and internationally supervised elections. If FRELIMO refuses, Washington should consider providing Reagan Doctrine assistance to RENAMO's democratic resistance forces.

#### FRELIMO'S ASSUMPTION OF POWER

Eduardo Mondlane founded the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique in Tanzania in 1962. He organized FRELIMO out of several groups working to end Portuguese rule of its African colonies. One of these groups, forced out of Portugal by the Portuguese secret police, had resettled in newly independent Algeria. This "Algeria Group" contained the most radical members of the FRELIMO leadership: Marcelino dos Santos (who led the group), Joaquim Chissano, Pascual Mocumbi, Sergio Veira, Oscar Monteiro, Aquino de Braganca, and Jorge Rebelo.

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2. See "Chairman Chissano Speaks to FRELIMO Committee," in Foreign Broadcast Information Service-Middle East and Africa (hereinafter referred to as "FBIS-MEA"), November 4, 1986, pp. U2-5.

Between 1962 and 1969, rival factions battled for power. The issue: black nationalism vs. radical communism. In February 1969 Mondlane, a black nationalist, was assassinated.<sup>3</sup> The Algeria Group put Samora Machel in power. Soon after, Soviet bloc assistance to FRELIMO increased.

By the time of the April 1974 coup in Lisbon, which toppled the Caetano regime, FRELIMO was Mozambique's only opposition movement. When Portugal's new rulers decided to abandon their centuries-old African colonies, they merely turned power over to FRELIMO, without an election. FRELIMO took power on June 25, 1975.

Machel quickly nationalized major segments of the economy, and then the state took control of all private property (some of which has been returned). He also launched a campaign to collectivize agriculture. At a FRELIMO party congress in February 1977, Machel transformed his "liberation movement" into a full-fledged vanguard communist party. He declared "Our struggle is to destroy all vestiges of feudalism and colonialism, but fundamentally to crush capitalism, which is the most advanced form of exploitation of man by man."<sup>4</sup>

#### THE MOSCOW-MAPUTO CONNECTION

Cuban agents first courted FRELIMO in Algeria in the early 1960s. FRELIMO participated in the January 1966 Tricontinental Congress in Havana, where Fidel Castro brought together representatives of revolutionary movements from all over the world. During the 1960s, FRELIMO members were sent to Cuba for military training. FRELIMO also joined other Soviet bloc fronts, including the World Peace Council and the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization.

By the time Machel visited Moscow in May 1976, he already had signed Treaties of Friendship and Cooperation with Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and North Korea. In Moscow, his Soviet patrons apparently told him that before they would give him such a treaty, he would have to demonstrate his commitment to Marxism-Leninism by formally transforming his movement into a vanguard communist party. As a promise of good things to come, Moscow signed an arms agreement. Machel accepted these conditions, and the

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3. Though the official FRELIMO version blames the Portuguese secret police, some have suggested that radical FRELIMO members were responsible.

4. See Edward P. Cain, "Mozambique's Hidden War," in Charles Moser, ed., Combat on Communist Territory (Chicago: Regnery Gateway, 1985), p. 40.

transformation took place in February 1977. One month later, he was rewarded with a 20-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.

Since then, Soviet military assistance to Mozambique has been substantial. Moscow sold FRELIMO \$978 million worth of arms on very favorable credit terms between 1977 and 1983, including MiG-21 jet fighters, MI-24 helicopter gunships, and T-54/55 tanks.<sup>6</sup> Over the last two years, Moscow has upgraded Mozambique's arsenal. Following a March 1986 Machel visit to Moscow, the Soviets signed a five-year arms agreement that for the first time would provide FRELIMO forces with MiG-23 jets and heavy T-62 tanks.<sup>7</sup> And earlier this month, the Soviets signed a new arms agreement with FRELIMO, the details of which are still unknown.<sup>8</sup>

The Soviets reap benefits from their alliance with FRELIMO. Soviet ships use the Mozambican ports at Nacala and Maputo. FRELIMO meanwhile supported Soviet-backed anti-government insurgents operating in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and South Africa. The Soviet bloc also has been allowed preferred access to Mozambique's natural resources: Moscow takes fish; East Germany, agriculture products (mainly citrus fruit and rice), textiles and coal; Cuba, tobacco, sugar and coffee; Romania, cotton; and Bulgaria, wheat, maize, rice, and beef.<sup>9</sup>

Immediately following Machel's death, Soviet leaders gathered to review Soviet policy toward Mozambique. They apparently decided to speed arms deliveries. Another 100-man contingent of Soviet bloc

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5. This condition reflected a change in Soviet strategy toward Africa. Previously, the Soviets had been invited into, and then out of, several African countries. They apparently decided in the early 1970s that an African leader's personal commitment to a vague Marxism was not enough of a basis on which to commit themselves to providing assistance. Accordingly, they began to demand the establishment of formal vanguard communist parties. Other nations that have accepted this condition in exchange for Soviet commitments include Angola, Ethiopia, and the Congo (Brazzaville).

6. See U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1985), p. 131. Mozambique apparently pays for the weapons by allowing the Soviets and their allies access to Mozambique's plentiful natural resources. The hard currency received from the sale of those resources is then used to pay for the weapons.

7. Conversations with Western intelligence sources, March 1987.

8. See "Prime Minister Machungo Meets USSR's Koshelev," in FBIS-MEA, March 12, 1987, p. U1.

9. See "The Da Costa File," in Scope magazine, February 25, 1983. This is the extraordinary account of Jorge Da Costa, former head of the Mozambican secret police, who defected to South Africa in June 1982.

advisers was dispatched to Maputo, the Mozambique capital. And Red Army General Yevgeny Ivanovsky, deputy defense minister and commander-in-chief of Soviet ground forces, was sent to Machel's funeral to demonstrate publicly Moscow's commitment to Mozambique's defense.<sup>10</sup>

## THE "TURN TO THE WEST"

By 1980, socialist economic policies and mismanagement had so devastated Mozambique's economy that Machel asked to join the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), the Soviet bloc economic organization. Moscow, itself financially strapped, turned down Machel's request.<sup>11</sup> He then turned to the West for assistance.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker responded enthusiastically. If Machel was willing to accept Western economic assistance, Crocker apparently believed, perhaps he would be willing to drop his ties to the Soviets as well. And, over time, Machel would come to realize that while Moscow could provide him with military aid, only the West could provide him the economic aid he needed. Faced with such a choice, Crocker hoped, Machel would choose the West.

Accordingly, the U.S. sponsored Mozambique for membership in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and gave Mozambique direct bilateral assistance. Coupled with the economic assistance was a diplomatic campaign aimed at achieving a treaty between Mozambique and South Africa. The Nkomati Accord, signed in March 1984, committed South Africa to end its support for the RENAMO freedom fighters; Mozambique agreed to expel Soviet-trained cadres of the African National Congress, which had used Mozambique as the headquarters for their actions against South Africa.

The zenith of the U.S. campaign to woo Mozambique came in September 1985, when Machel visited Washington. There he met with Ronald Reagan, who called him "amigo," or "friend." The Administration even asked Congress to give Mozambique \$4.6 million over two years in military assistance.<sup>12</sup> To date, the U.S. has provided \$78 million in

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10. See "Mozambique: Soviet Signal," in Africa Confidential, October 29, 1986. See also above-cited conversations with Western intelligence sources.

11. Moscow's decision to refuse Mozambique entry into COMECON also may have been part of a new Soviet strategy for dealing with its Third World client regimes. See below.

12. Congress turned down the request.

direct bilateral assistance to Mozambique, and has voted for \$154 million more in multilateral loans.

But the "turn to the West" has not been genuine. The Machel regime never gave up any of its fundamental communist beliefs or its ties to the Soviet Union. Too many observers err in calling Machel--and other Third World communists--"Marxists." In fact, these leaders are not so much "Marxists" as they are "Leninists." That is, they care less about organizing their national economies than about achieving and maintaining power. Their attraction to the Soviet model is not to its economic system, which has proved disastrous, but to its political system, which offers a guaranteed method of obtaining and keeping power. And their attraction to Moscow and Havana is to regimes that provide support for their power consolidation.

As long as Leninism flourishes in Mozambique, nothing fundamental has changed. The FRELIMO regime's willingness to accept Western economic aid in no way signals any lessening of its commitment to Leninism or of its ties to the Soviet bloc.

In fact, it may reflect a new stage of Soviet strategy for the Third World: use whatever means are necessary and appropriate to establish communist regimes in the Third World, then encourage them to accept Western economic assistance. This accomplishes three goals: it releases Moscow from the economic burden of supporting its burgeoning Third World empire, it seduces the West into expending its own scarce resources in the elusive search for a communist regime that can be weaned away from the Soviet bloc, and it stabilizes Soviet-backed regimes which otherwise would deteriorate because of ruinous economic policies.

#### THE CHISSANO REGIME: NEW AND IMPROVED?

After weeks of deliberation following the October death of Samora Machel, FRELIMO chose former foreign minister Joaquim Chissano as the new president. The reasons: First, Chissano was known to have supported Machel's "turn to the West," and clearly was viewed as the contender most likely to guarantee continued Western assistance to the regime. Second, he was younger than the other candidates, and was believed to have the vitality necessary to shoulder the triple tasks of heading the party, government, and armed forces. Third, Chissano

was black, and was not subject to increasing anti-mestico (i.e., mixed race) resentment in Mozambique.<sup>13</sup>

Chissano's selection was greeted with relief by liberals and diplomats in the West. They portrayed him as a moderate. The Washington Post, for instance, headlined its story "Moderate Marxist Succeeds Machel," and called Chissano "Mozambique's pragmatic, westward-leaning foreign minister."<sup>14</sup>

The truth is that Chissano was a member of the original group of radicals, the Algeria Group. According to his official FRELIMO biography, he was sent "out of the country" (presumably to either Cuba or the Soviet Union) for military training twice between 1964 and 1966.<sup>15</sup> He holds the rank of major general in the Mozambique Armed Forces, granted for his service as FRELIMO's security chief during the war, when he purged the party of non-communists.<sup>16</sup>

In his first speech as party Chairman, Chissano reaffirmed his Marxist-Leninist commitment. He declared: "We are going to strengthen our FRELIMO party...we will be intransigent with deviations that are contrary to party policy.... Our party has defined the construction of socialism the objective of Mozambican society...because only a socialist society guarantees to the people as a whole equal rights and opportunities." In case anyone doubted his commitment to the Soviet bloc, he added: "The FRELIMO party will continue to follow the principles contained in its Statutes and in its relations with the Marxist-Leninist parties and with other socialist states."<sup>17</sup>

Earlier this month, another regime official specifically rejected the notion of Mozambique's "turn to the West." Information Minister

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13. This last factor may have played a larger role than is immediately apparent. The leaders of Mozambique's armed forces increasingly have voiced resentment over the lack of black control over the party and government. For instance, of the original Algeria Group--which controls FRELIMO, and, hence, Mozambique--only Chissano and Pascual Mocumbi are black. The others are all mesticos.

14. See William Claiborne, "Moderate Marxist Succeeds Machel," The Washington Post, November 4, 1986, p. A14.

15. See "Radio Carries Biography of Chairman Chissano," in FBIS-MEA November 4, 1986, pp. U5-6. Jorge da Costa, the defector, claims Chissano was sent to the Soviet Union:

16. As even that same Washington Post story admitted, "During the guerrilla war against Portugal, Chissano headed FRELIMO's security department...just before independence, he sided with radicals in ousting conservatives from the party." See Claiborne, op. cit.

17. See "Chairman Chissano Speaks to FRELIMO Committee," op. cit.

Teodato Hanguana declared in London that "Mozambique is not shifting from one side to the other, from West to East." "The Soviet Union has been a historic ally," he said, adding that this had not changed.<sup>18</sup>

#### THE MOZAMBIQUE NATIONAL RESISTANCE

The Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) was established in April 1977 by Andre Matsangaisse, with the help of disaffected FRELIMO militants, Portuguese exiles, and the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organization (CIO). Rhodesia backed RENAMO to retaliate for Machel's support for anti-Rhodesian guerrillas. Matsangaisse was killed in 1979, and his lieutenant, Afonso Dhlakama, took control of RENAMO.

When Robert Mugabe successfully wrested power from Ian Smith in Rhodesia, he immediately cut off assistance to RENAMO. South African Military Intelligence (SAMI) took on the task of aiding the insurgency, and through the early 1980s, RENAMO continued to grow.

RENAMO first unveiled its political platform in August 1981. In effect it is a draft constitution for post-FRELIMO Mozambique. Its seven chapters deal with politics, economics, justice, constitutional matters, health and education, public services, and foreign policy. It calls for the dissolution of the communist system of government, and guarantees "the people's right to choose and freely vote on the country's political, social and economic system."<sup>19</sup>

The Nkomati Accord of March 1984 ending South African support stunned Dhlakama. But RENAMO did not dissolve, as Samora Machel had assumed it would. Dhlakama proved that he was not a "South African puppet." In fact, RENAMO became even stronger, carrying the war for the first time into all ten of Mozambique's provinces. RENAMO increased its combat contacts with FRELIMO forces over the next three years: in 1983, RENAMO averaged 100 contacts per month; in 1984, 150 per month; in 1985, 200 per month; and by 1986, the average approached 250 per month. Moreover, in an important indicator of trends in a

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18. See Andrew McEwen, "Minister denies tilt to West by Maputo," The Times of London, March 7, 1987.

19. See Cain, op. cit.



guerrilla war, RENAMO began initiating an increasing share of the contacts, from 60 percent in 1984 to 85 percent by mid-1986.<sup>20</sup>

#### THE REGIME WEAKENS

As FRELIMO's position weakened, Machel began consulting his regional allies. Returning from one such meeting, his plane crashed on South African territory. In the debris, South African authorities found documents outlining a conspiracy by Mozambique, Zimbabwe, the Soviet Union, and Cuba to overthrow the neighboring Malawian government.<sup>21</sup> Though these nations denied the charges and claimed the documents were forgeries, Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda reportedly confirmed their authenticity.<sup>22</sup>

Zimbabwe, which already had contributed an estimated 10,000 troops to defending the Beira Corridor (which runs from the Mozambican port of Beira to the Zimbabwean capital, Harare) pledged more assistance. Zambia and Tanzania also increased their commitments to FRELIMO. The Soviets speeded the delivery of arms already promised, and there are unconfirmed reports that two battalions of Cuban combat forces have arrived in Beira, with another five expected shortly.<sup>23</sup>

Following Chissano's installation as President, rumors spread through Mozambique and Lisbon that he would soon open negotiations with RENAMO.<sup>24</sup> Though Chissano continues publicly to deny the rumors, the evidence is strong. Senior members of the Mozambican Armed Forces are in contact with RENAMO, and have pressed Chissano to

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20. By controlling the contacts, RENAMO forces fought only at times and places of their own choosing. These classic guerrilla tactics resulted in increasing effectiveness against FRELIMO forces: by early 1986, five FRELIMO soldiers died for every two RENAMO insurgents. See John d'Oliveira, "Military Initiative Lies with the MNR," the Johannesburg Star, March 19, 1986, p. 13.

21. Following a September 1986 visit to northern Mozambique with Soviet and Cuban military advisers, Machel had put extreme pressure on Malawi to expel RENAMO forces which had used Malawi as a sanctuary.

22. See "Crash Documents Reportedly Reveal Malawi Coup Plot," in FBIS-MEA November 7, 1986, pp. U7-11. On Kaunda's verification, see "Kaunda: Document To Overthrow Malawi 'Authentic,'" in FBIS-MEA, January 14, 1987, p. U4.

23. See above-cited conversations with Western intelligence sources.

24. See, for example, "FRELIMO Officials Reportedly Seek MNR Talks," in FBIS-MEA, February 17, 1987, p. U1, and Peter Youngusband, "Mozambican president is expected to extend feelers to RENAMO," The Washington Times, March 4, 1987, p. 6A.

open talks. They also are believed to have warned RENAMO leaders secretly of upcoming government attacks on RENAMO bases.

#### U.S. POLICY TOWARD MOZAMBIQUE

"Constructive engagement" has been Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker's policy of dealing diplomatically with all the governments of southern Africa. He believed that by reducing conflict in southern Africa, he could reduce Soviet influence. The flaw was in the premise: not all reductions in violence decrease Soviet influence. Crocker's mistake was in identifying U.S. interests with a particular regime, instead of with the nation as a whole. In Mozambique, that meant aligning the U.S. with a self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist regime closely tied to the Soviet Union. If that meant downplaying FRELIMO's ideological beliefs, so be it. In congressional testimony earlier this month, Crocker said "We do not consider the Government of Mozambique to be...a communist government." He continued: "The Government of Mozambique has been working systematically in the past four or five years to move away from its previously close embrace with Moscow."<sup>25</sup>

But FRELIMO has not reduced its ties to the Soviet bloc; it merely has taken U.S. and other Western nations' economic assistance, and quite likely will continue to do so as long as it is offered with no political strings. An estimated 3,500 Soviet, Cuban, and East German military advisers still are in Mozambique, and the Chissano regime recently requested--and received--even more to help fight RENAMO. Early this month, delegations from the Soviet Union, East Germany, and North Korea were in Maputo simultaneously, all negotiating increased support levels with FRELIMO.<sup>26</sup> FRELIMO is not moving away from the Soviets; the Mozambican communists are moving closer. Clearly, the campaign to wean away Mozambique from Moscow has not worked.

A new U.S. policy is needed. The U.S. should:

o Terminate economic assistance to FRELIMO. The State Department justification for aiding FRELIMO is that it will entice FRELIMO into coming closer to the West. But making FRELIMO's economy run more efficiently is not enough; that simply would mean helping to create a lean, efficient communist regime in Mozambique. FRELIMO's putative movement away from Marxism is not nearly as important as its

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25. See Neil A. Lewis, "Bid To Have U.S. Back Mozambique Rebels Halted," The New York Times, March 16, 1987, p. A9.

26. See coverage of Mozambique in the March 12, 1987, edition of FBIS-MEA.

break with Leninism. As long as the regime maintains its Leninist political structure, nothing fundamental has changed.

o End famine assistance. The U.S. recently announced it would provide FRELIMO \$50 million in famine aid. The most recent U.S. experience with famine aid to a communist government in Africa was disastrous. Some U.S. aid actually contributed to the death toll in Ethiopia.<sup>27</sup> Until U.S. famine relief officials can guarantee that aid to FRELIMO will not be misused in a similar fashion, it should be held up. If FRELIMO cannot make such guarantees, the program should be terminated.

o Launch a public diplomacy campaign. The West, and the U.S. in particular, has been fooled by the FRELIMO regime. FRELIMO is as rigidly communist as it ever was, and will continue to be so. The U.S. should launch a diplomatic campaign aimed at exposing the true nature of the FRELIMO regime and at persuading other Western allies to terminate assistance to FRELIMO.

o Upgrade contacts with RENAMO. No high-level U.S. policy maker has ever met a RENAMO representative. This has resulted in a profound lack of knowledge about RENAMO's structure, political goals, and military strategy, that has manifested itself in the current flawed policies. The Administration should immediately send a high-level envoy to RENAMO-held areas of Mozambique to report back on the real situation.

o Demand withdrawal of all foreign forces. Only the combined forces of the Soviet Union, Cuba, East Germany, North Korea, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Tanzania keep the Chissano regime in power. Their withdrawal would force the regime to open national reconciliation talks and would be the best indicator of the regime's sincerity in its professed desire to "turn to the West."

o Push for national reconciliation. RENAMO will not go away. It will not allow political and economic stabilization in Mozambique unless its goals are met. The only way to end the strife in Mozambique is to negotiate an end with RENAMO. The U.S. should push FRELIMO to begin negotiations immediately.

o Consider Reagan Doctrine assistance to RENAMO. If the Chissano regime refuses to negotiate with RENAMO, the U.S. should signal strongly its break with the communists and place itself squarely on the side of the democratic resistance forces. Such action, in the context of U.S. assistance to the UNITA freedom fighters in Angola, would restore consistency to U.S. policy in

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27. See William Pascoe, "Time for Action Against Mengistu's Ethiopia," Heritage Foundation Backgrounder No. 568, March 11, 1987.

southern Africa. As in Angola, RENAMO's greatest needs are the anti-aircraft missiles necessary to deprive regime forces of air superiority.

## CONCLUSION

For ten years the communist FRELIMO regime in Mozambique has been one of Moscow's staunchest allies in Africa. It has provided support to Soviet-backed insurgents operating against pro-Western governments, given the Soviets access to ports on the Indian Ocean, and allowed Soviet bloc nations preferred access to Mozambique's natural resources. Meanwhile, a pro-Western insurgency has waged an increasingly successful guerrilla war against the regime, and now controls 80 percent of the countryside. The communist regime is so weak that it must depend on 16,500 foreign troops and military advisers to keep it in power.

U.S. policy toward Mozambique has been a failure. Instead of pursuing the promising path of the Reagan Doctrine, and supporting the democratic resistance forces, Ronald Reagan and George Shultz have listened to those who claim they can wean away the communist FRELIMO regime from its close ties to the Soviet Union. For six years, the U.S. has tried this strategy, providing political and economic support to the Mozambican communist regime, while specifically rejecting the cause of the pro-Western RENAMO insurgents. After six years and \$78 million, U.S. influence has not increased and Soviet influence has not decreased. Clearly, it is time for a new policy--one aimed at winning freedom for Mozambique and one that affirms the Reagan Doctrine.

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