

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

A trip down the Beira Corridor of Mozambique

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Dear Peter:

"Here comes the government spy to listen to what we are saying," said Trish Perkins in a tired voice. She stood amid dozens of children who were clutching plates dribbling corn meal and sauce. As she explained how Maforga Farm and its orphanage were founded, Perkins would interrupt herself to ask a passing child about his health or demand from another why he had not done his chores. A sleeping baby monkey, an orphan itself, clung to her neck as she talked. Perkins and her husband care for some 200 Mozambican boys and girls left homeless by 17 years of civil war.

The Perkins seem above suspicion. They are devout Christians who have been attacked numerous times at their rural farm by the guerrilla army that opposes the Mozambican government. In the final attack in January 1991, fighters from the Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo) fired a bazooka at the farm house while the couple slept on the front porch. Then came a hail of red tracer fire streaming across the darkness. The Perkins eluded death that time, just as they had escaped snipers and arson attacks in previous ambushes that left Maforga Farm in ruins. They didn't always escape, though. In 1986, they and a group of nurses and visitors at the orphanage were abducted and forcibly marched into the Mozambican bush. Renamo finally released them after three months of captivity and a 400-mile walk to the rebels' army camp on the border with Malawi.

Still, the Perkins aren't being paranoid about official surveillance. An older African man crept closer to Perkins as she recounted her life's story. He leaned close to some nearby sheds, then crouched behind a bench to hear better what she said. "He's not the only one, there are several others paid to catch us out," Perkins said. "They've been trying for several years to get us kicked out of Mozambique, but we haven't the heart to fire them. We let them stay on because we have nothing to hide."

Everything in Mozambique, however, is more complicated than it appears. The truth depends on who is telling the story. Peel

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**Trip Diary: Whose food?**

While spending the night at Mafora Farm, I met a Portuguese-born missionary who operates from a church in South Africa near the Mozambique border. He drove a truck with the logo "Food for Africa" on the door. It's a name that rang an alarm bell in my head. A number of right-wing religious groups in the United States have ties to Renamo, including Jimmy Swaggart Ministries and Food for Africa. An otherwise obscure group, Food for Africa is active inside Renamo-held areas. This missionary claimed to be director of missions for Jesus Alive Ministries, another South African-based church said to be linked to Renamo. He could also be part of the other big source of support for the rebels: the embittered Portuguese colonialists, called "Renamo Brancas" (white Renamo), who fled to South Africa in 1975 at Mozambique's independence.

back some surface images and one finds contradictions. Take the Perkins' abduction. The government tried to capitalize on the kidnapping, which made international headlines, to create bad publicity for the rebels. The couple say they remained apolitical, refusing to criticize the captors. But in such a fractious war, one can't avoid taking sides. When finally released in 1987, the Perkins arrived in Zimbabwe only to be abducted by Zimbabwean secret police and held in prison for questioning about pro-Renamo activities. Later, the two penned a religious tract about how God softened their Renamo captors' hearts during the ordeal.

"To reach out to the other side actually helps relations," Trish Perkins said. "There need to be personal encounters, not just one ideology against another. Such terrible things happened in this war that once you start witch hunting, everyone will be a witch."

The Perkins have links to conservative evangelical church groups that have long supported Renamo with food, clothes and bibles in the name of anti-communism. (See box, this page.) They themselves admit to giving food to rebels months before the October peace accord signed by Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama and Mozambique President Joaquim Chissano. In effect, the Perkins indirectly supported Renamo's war effort. South Africa has channeled much of its aid for Renamo through such evangelical groups. No wonder authorities are distrustful. And on the issue of spies, Mozambique security agents uncovered a South African Defense Force spy smuggling military secrets. He was posing as a fervent South African missionary. His base? The Perkins' Mafora Farm near Gondola on the Beira Corridor, a 180-mile road connecting Zimbabwe with Mozambique's port of Beira.

Today, the Perkins are openly driving to nearby Renamo areas with food and clothes (See pages 4 and 5). And they are no longer in a minority. What used to be considered subversion now seems to

be the only option for peace. Many of the 180 foreign aid groups in Mozambique are now working hand in hand with rebel commanders to provide food and improve living conditions in Renamo zones, which include virtually all of the country except the capital city, the urban centers and the Beira Corridor. (A 1990 partial cease-fire created the corridor, a strip of land about three and a half miles wide traversed by a railway, oil pipeline and highway. As landlocked Zimbabwe's economic lifeline to the sea, the corridor is guarded by that country's troops. Yet Renamo continued sporadic attacks on the so-called safe zone and stepped up efforts elsewhere.)

Up until recently, Renamo targeted food relief convoys for ambushes, looting trucks and burning them. Foreign assistance went to the government so aid agencies, too, were the enemy. Most development workers never dreamed of contacting Renamo before the peace because of its reputation for extreme violence. The U.S. human-rights group Africa Watch and others have documented murders, massacres and human-rights abuses by government soldiers, militia and secret police. But the bloodshed created by Renamo is far more prevalent. Says one recent Africa Watch study: Renamo employs "systematic use of mutilation and killings and indiscriminate violence." Even a skeptical reading of press reports reveals a pattern of brutal savagery: public mutilations, rape, torture and senseless murders. Renamo's horrifying image has been systematically cultivated. The rebels commit atrocities with machetes and knives even when they are armed with guns. The guerrillas have publicly castrated men and carved women into pieces. In one northern village, Renamo killed or kidnapped up to 1,000 people and then stacked 52 skulls on shop shelves as a warning to the survivors.

### Trip Diary: Forgiving



When Felix Raove (right) was eight years old, he saw a Renamo soldier kill his father with two bullets through the chest. As an orphan living at Maforga Farm nine years later, he recognized the killer waiting in a line for clothes at the farm. He went crazy, swearing to kill the man. But Trish Perkins made Felix and the ex-soldier talk. The man said he had only followed orders. Finally, prompted by Perkins, Felix relented. "I can forgive him, but God knows whether he's really asking for forgiveness," Felix said. Such reconciliation must happen on a national scale, but how easily when a missionary isn't around to help?

### Trip Diary: Into the lion's mouth

We traveled all morning, bumping over recently-filled craters and trenches in the road. At one point, we creaked across narrow, metal tracks spanning a bombed-out central section of the Pungwe River bridge. A few months ago, this trip to Gorongosa district would have been suicide. The charred hulks of trucks along the



road signified many ambushes by Renamo. Our destination: the heart of the rebels' stronghold in the mountainous countryside surrounding Renamo's headquarters, Casa Banana. This road was supposed to be safe since the October cease-fire. And we were in the company of Maforga Farm missionaries and doctors, who were bringing more than 50 tons of corn meal to feed starving people in the Renamo zone far beyond the government-held town of Gorongosa. Those too weak to walk the last miles to the official Red Cross reception center had gathered at a nearby Renamo base waiting for our arrival. But there was still an element of danger. Renamo commanders had reportedly threatened to detain any journalist who visited their bases. A Swiss humanitarian group, Medecine Sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders), had tried to include reporters in a team investigating health conditions in Renamo-held areas, but was told that any journalist appearing at a Renamo camp would be held as a "political prisoner." So my wife, Bobbie Jo, and I agreed that we would help distribute food or medical supplies and that no one should know we are writers.

We sat atop the mountain of sacks stuffed with grain in the back of a lorry. As we drove past the government garrison town of Gorongosa, stick-people began to follow us. One of our group began throwing small rolls of bread to the trailing people, who would snatch them up. A few miles later we pulled into sight of the Renamo encampment, and some 2,000 people began to clap and sing. The missionaries also began to sing, but their songs were hymns about Jesus. The mob changed its tune.

The people were mostly dressed in rags, old sacks and bark cloth. Some of the most desperate people had on nothing at all.

As people swarmed around the two doctors, Bobbie and I took bottles of rehydration solution and began asking mothers if their babies had nyoka, or diarrhea. Hundreds of women nodded yes. We spent hours dribbling the salted sugar water down unwilling, little throats. Some infants had grotesque, huge heads and pencil-thin arms. Their skin hung in wrinkled folds. Other children had big pot bellies from malnutrition.

Maforga's mixture of religion and emergency relief made me uneasy. Before anyone got any food, local preachers got up one after another to shout out sermons at the hungry multitude. As they wrapped up the proselytizing, they invited people forward to be blessed. Many mistook the movement as a cue for food. The crowd surged forward, some toppling into others. "Not yet," the missionaries shouted in Portuguese. Minutes later, everyone calmed down. Last week, two people were trampled to death at a Red Cross distribution in Gorongosa. Now I know how it happens.

To avoid another rush for food, Roy Perkins decided to divide the masses into 15 small groups, each under the control of a volunteer aid worker and a Renamo soldier. Renamo Capt. Philippe David and I took a group of 92 people and dished out a scoop and a half from the sacks of corn meal to each person. The ration was 2.5 kilos, not even a week's supply. During the lengthy distribution under a scorching sun, David and I talked about the war and if the peace would hold. He is my age, born in 1960. He wore a camouflage uniform and cap, unlike most of the Renamo fighters who dress in ragged civilian clothes. That's how you tell an officer in Renamo, I guess. I asked him the same question I asked everyone: Would the cease-fire hold? "I want it to, but we can't go home yet. Maybe in a few months, maybe in a year." He looked wistful when he talked of home.

When I found her later, Bobbie Jo was angry and near tears. She had seen Josephine, a Maforga worker, refuse to give food to three gaunt women and their babies. An overly devout African, Josephine screamed that the group were "devil worshippers" and then ripped matching, colorful amulets off both mothers and infants. Bobbie Jo, astounded, asked what she was doing. "They worship the demons of our forefathers!" the zealot cried. She put her hand on their heads and shouted out prayers to the sky.

Only minutes earlier, two Renamo fighters slipped Josephine letters to be mailed to their families. The men said they had been abducted into Renamo in the 1980s and have never had a chance to tell their loved ones they are still alive.

Other Renamo soldiers unloaded several bags of corn meal and carried them off to their bunkers hidden in the bush. Before the cease-fire, supplying food to soldiers would have been considered vital support for a war effort. Afterward, it magically becomes a humanitarian act. Should I care that Maforga helped supply Renamo long before the peace accord? Or does reconciliation mean that everyone must just forget about what happened during the war and focus on the future?

Children are not spared horrors of war. Norwegian Save the Children (Redd Barna) conducted a study of 50 homeless children and found 29 witnessed murder, 14 lost one or both parents and 16 had at one time been kidnapped by Renamo. Sometimes, victims such as these become participants. One foreign military attache estimates that more than half of Renamo is under 15 years old.

#### Trip Diary: UN-timely

A look at the timetable set by the peace accord, which took effect Oct. 15. To date, it remains hopelessly behind.

.Within 30 days: all government and Renamo soldiers in assembly points, all foreign forces out.

.Within 60 days: 20% of all soldiers demobilized, a national elections commission established

.Within 90 days: 20% more of total troops demobilized

.Within 120 days: a further 20% demobilized into civilian life

.Within 180 days: complete disbanding of all combatants

.August 1993: election campaigns begin, all parties registered

.October 1993: election

Still, the cease-fire has made Renamo an acceptable actor in long-range efforts to rebuild Mozambique and in the immediate push to stave off famine. Culminating two years of difficult talks, the seven-point peace treaty ended 17 years of war but lags far behind its original, ambitious schedule for implementation. The agreement called for the withdrawal of Zimbabwean and Malawian troops stationed in Mozambique. Those troops have since been significantly scaled down, but still remain. The Zimbabweans, for example, removed 2,000 troops and their fortifications and heavy armor, but a force of nearly 5,000 is still on patrol.

Zimbabwe cancelled its scheduled victory celebration and withdrawal because there

were no UN troops to take its place in guarding that country's interests on the strategic corridor. By the date of this writing, only 25 UN monitors and support personnel are in Mozambique. UN special envoy Aldo Ajello, an Italian diplomat overseeing implementation of the peace plan, requested a total UN force of 10,000. But just today, he won approval for only 5,000 "blue helmets" or UN troops and 2,500 observers. Cambodia, by comparison, has about half the population of Mozambique and is less than a quarter of its size, yet it has 22,000 UN personnel.

UN peacekeeping troops are vital to preventing renewed fighting. By this time last month, both the 61,000 government troops and 21,000 rebel fighters were supposed to be in assembly points where they would surrender their guns to UN peacekeepers. Instead, there were no peacekeepers or assembly points and Renamo forces swiftly captured five towns in the north. More than 100 died. Two of the towns have since been retaken by the government in heated battles, and Renamo pulled out of the others to avoid further fighting. Ajello has since drawn up a new 18-month

implementation calendar that is being negotiated. Says Ajello, "It will be more professional, more realistic and more viable."

The peace accord also provides for existing Mozambican laws to remain in force until a democratic election in one year. In a major concession by the government, the accord's third protocol mandates that candidates for administration posts in Renamo-held areas must be residents, virtually ensuring Renamo members will be chosen for the new positions. The police and intelligence services will be overseen by two commissions, equally composed of government and Renamo representatives. Both parties are bound to respect the political rights and security of all Mozambicans.

#### Trip Diary: Survival depends on potholes



Trucks carrying tons of relief food, shipped by donors to Beira and in transit to Zimbabwe or Zambia, speed past hungry Mozambicans each day on the corridor. I spotted a group of women intently gleaning the gravel on the roadside. They were collecting the few corn kernels dropped by the racing trucks that hit a large pothole in the road.

Not only the cease-fire but also drought is helping to legitimize Renamo, a shadowy and perhaps poorly understood military power. What people call the "worst drought of the century" in other parts of southern Africa is in its second year in Mozambique. The Red Cross estimates three million people are at risk of starvation in Renamo-controlled areas as well as government-held territory. But those in Renamo zones -- an estimated 100,000 in isolated areas along the corridor -- were far from where they could be reached by assistance, so a mass exodus from Renamo areas began. As hunger set in among the soliders, the war faltered.

Benson Baptist, a 42-year-old Renamo captain, put it succinctly: "Drought ended the war." Renamo abducted Baptist six years ago, after he returned from two years of engineering studies in London. Surprisingly, he's now a Renamo stalwart, in part because he thought he was on the winning side. "We'd be fighting -- and winning, too --- but the drought destroyed our food," Baptist said.



### Trip Diary: Land mines

Renamo laid mostly large land mines in the roads because it wanted to blow up military trucks. The government, however, planted mostly small anti-personnel mines because Renamo has few vehicles. So when you see Mozambicans with legs blown off, it's a safe bet that they stepped on a mine laid by the government.

In July, during talks to end the war, Renamo finally agreed to the unhindered transport of humanitarian relief to all areas under its control. That promise meant little, however, in the face of Dhlakama's foot-dragging in taking out the land mines his forces planted and opening up the roads. At the Oct. 4 signing of the main peace agreement in Rome, Dhlakama made similar assurances. But the roads weren't really opened until the second week

of November and even then six relief trucks hit mines, although no one was injured. Finally in late November, the first convoy with 120 tons of food reached the village of Pindanganga, one isolated Renamo area in Manica Province. Others soon followed.

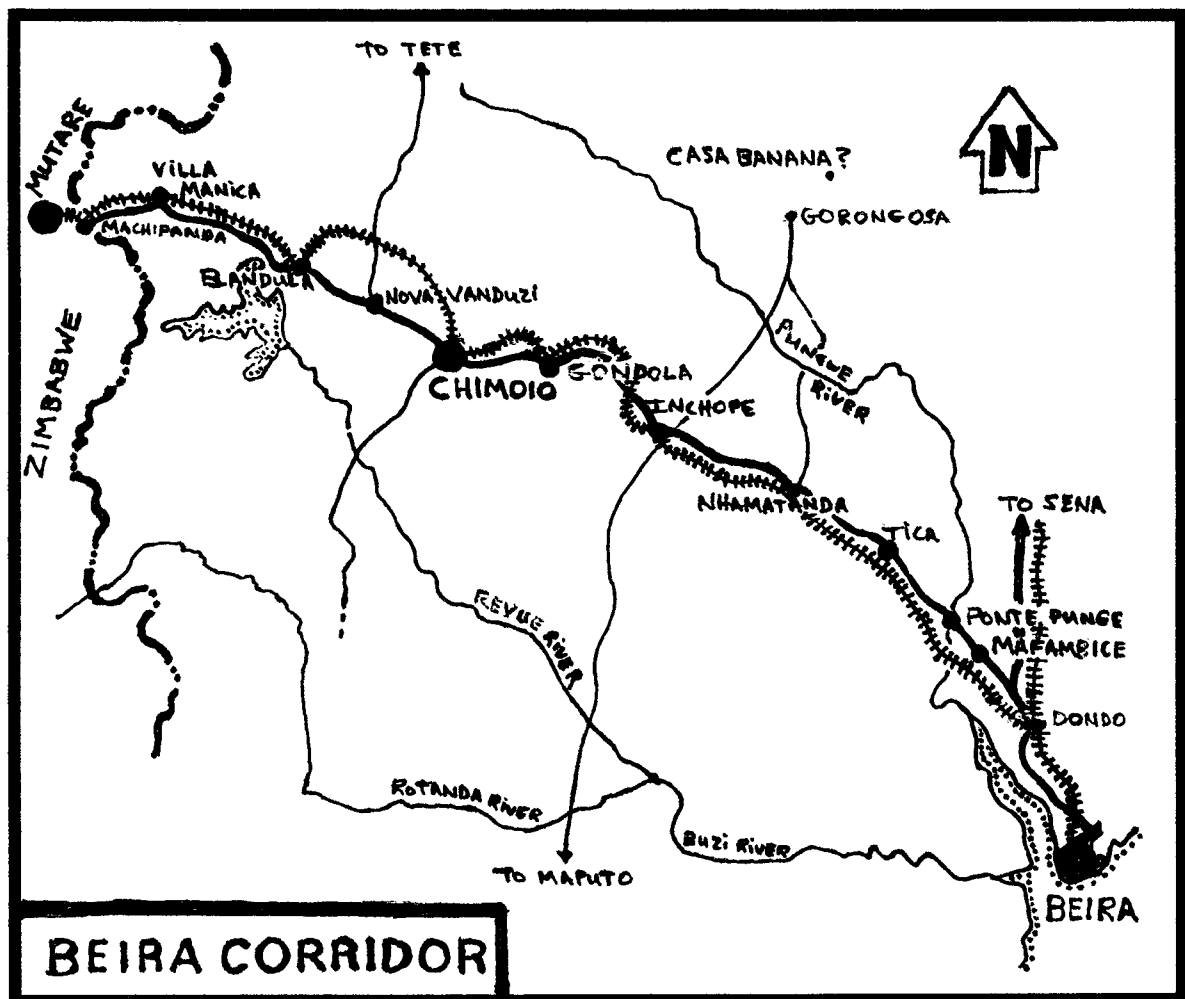
As the world found out in Somalia, drought relief amid the chaos of war means large quantities of food never reach the people most in need. But now that hostilities have ended, Renamo soldiers can directly receive assistance instead of surviving on what they took in food tributes from the people living under their authority. Foreign relief agencies, however, remain wary of giving food directly to armed combatants. The demobilization is off-schedule and the disarming of soldiers is in limbo: a risky-looking situation to those unfamiliar with Renamo zones.

"Obviously, some of our food relief goes to Renamo," says Ernst Schade, the resident representative in Mozambique for Norwegian Save the Children (Redd Barna). "It's something the donors don't want to hear, but we are being contacted more and more these days by Renamo officials looking for support and looking to have organizations in areas of their influence."

Schade has worked in Mozambique through government channels for more than a decade, but has always tried to shy away from official contact with the rebels. Save the Children's emphasis has been on the people squatting on the margins of towns because they have fewer resources for survival. "As Europeans, we tend to underestimate the coping mechanism of rural people on the African continent," he said. "People have wild foods to eat, like leaves, berries and roots that displaced people in town can't find."

The organisation has its hands full with the Beira Corridor, now home to tens of thousands of people who have fled their rural homes because of war to the towns of Mozambique's central provinces of Manica and Sofala. The drought swelled an already bursting population in the corridor. The enormous influx of





dislocados, or dislocated people made homeless by the war, began the same year of the partial cease-fire. In Chimoio, the largest city along the corridor and the capital of Manica Province, the population has more than tripled from 60,000 to 200,000. Refugees have also settled elsewhere along the corridor and in Beira, pushing the corridor's total population above 1.3 million. In a matter of days, entire villages can spring up along the road as people evacuate traditional homes and crowd into shantytowns. The once-forested environment degraded quickly and is still being plundered as farmers starved for land slash down vegetation, even clearing slopes too steep for easy cultivation.

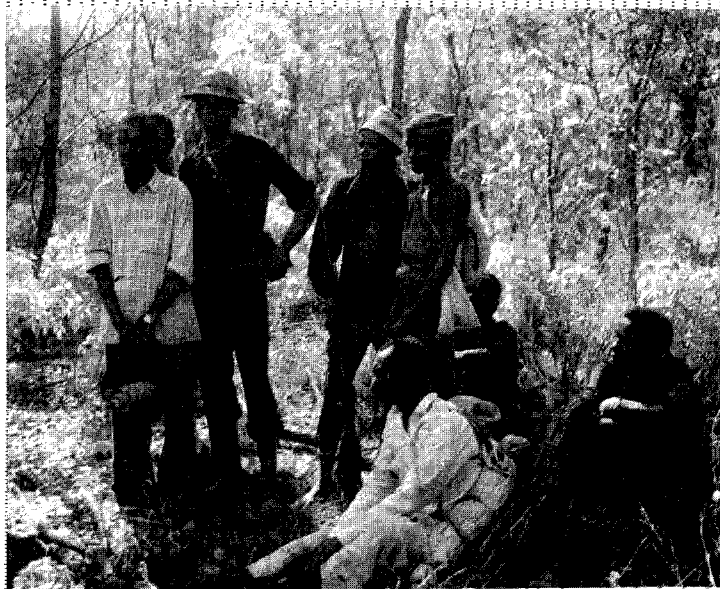
With peace, however, the strategy of Save the Children and other relief agencies is changing to focus on supporting peasants to stay in their fields so next year's crop can be planted and they can feed themselves. Two weeks ago, Save the Children joined other groups in a distribution of food and seeds in Renamo areas. Schade warns that if more people pour into the corridor, there

could be a catastrophe in the making. "For God's sake, let the people go back to where they were, back to square one," he said. "What is happening is what we feared would happen: the government is trying to keep people where they are. It's essential to get people moving out of the corridor before refugees are repatriated from Zimbabwe, but the government wants control of these people."

Why do military forces attempt to control a population? As in all countries at war, food supplies play a critical role in determining the effectiveness of an army. Renamo needed people to grow food to support its war effort. Rural-based guerrillas operate amid a peasant population "like a fish swims in the water," as the Mao Zedong maxim goes. When the inhabitants began to leave, the pond began to dry up. Today, Renamo is motivated to let in relief workers and their food, so it can hold onto the population.

When the drought struck last year, government soldiers began restricting travel into the bush by civilians to prevent food from going out to the guerrillas. Now, under pressure from foreign food donors, the government seems to be relaxing its grip on the inhabitants under its rule.

#### Trip Diary: Grave problems



The cease-fire, for some, means the first opportunity in years to travel freely through the countryside. On one afternoon, just off the corridor, I found nine men from the village of Pindanganga grimly trudging toward the road along a dirt path. "We are starving now," said an older man carrying an iron pot. "Even if we take someone to the cemetery, we are too weak to dig a grave. So if someone dies we are leaving them in their home and closing it up." This group was heading to Gondola for food, although they had been told by government officials to wait for help. The next week, Pindanganga was among the first Renamo areas to receive food aid.

The issue of the demographic pileup is yet another reminder that some "facts" have been created as a war-time necessity. While some of the rural population indeed fled Renamo areas, others left only in search of food for themselves and became caught in a government "mousetrap" baited with food, according to relief workers and UN officials. Mozambican authorities insist, however, that these **dislocados** fled the Renamo areas out of fear, and those who remain are hostages.

"Bullshit and propaganda," said Jean-Claude Legrand, the UN advisor to the Manica provincial commission of emergency relief who oversees humanitarian efforts in Renamo areas. "It's definitely true there were some people kept against their will, but there are many more who volunteer, are willing and want to be there. They stayed because they decided it was better for them."

Government media reports and the foreign press corps alike characterize Renamo as "bandits" bent on looting and destroying. The common wisdom among journalists is that Mozambique's cease-fire could easily fall apart because Dhlakama can't control the loosely-affiliated brigands. Legrand tells a different story. Since Renamo does not control any towns, Legrand's initial contacts with its regional commanders takes place deep in the bush. He has walked 10 miles to a hidden military base or driven on makeshift tracks laboriously cleared by Renamo guides to avoid land mines. In each area, regions that haven't been visited by outsiders for more than a decade, Legrand says he finds an embryonic civil administration. If anyone knows Renamo, he does.

"They have a clear design for the future and are well-organized, even if they are bush fighters," Legrand said. "There are no doctors, but there are school teachers. No notebooks or pens, but there is learning going on in every village."

Renamo has apparently evolved from its inception at Mozambique's independence. The operation then consisted of mercenaries hired by the Southern Rhodesians and Portuguese to destabilize the new, socialist country. After the nationalist struggle in southern Rhodesia resulted in majority rule and a name change to Zimbabwe in 1980, many thought Renamo would dissolve. Instead, South Africa assumed support, supplying even more arms, training and "humanitarian assistance" such as food and medicine in its strategy to destabilize neighboring nations. Operations by Renamo expanded to the south, outside the capital of Maputo, and to the north. Renamo gradually gained ground and now claims to control 80 percent of Mozambique, which covers an area about the size of Texas and Pennsylvania combined.

Renamo capitalized on political openings created by unpopular government policies. In the early days of governing, the Mozambican state tried to demolish traditional rule by chiefs, under the slogan "For the country to live, the tribe must

die." In addition, all property belonging to the Roman Catholic Church and other religious groups was nationalized. Other unpopular steps that reshaped traditional society followed. In the 1980s, for example, the government adopted large-scale forced villagization as a counterinsurgency measure against Renamo. That policy alienated peasants and swelled rebel support. Maneuvering to position itself as an anti-communist "contra" group, Renamo won right-wing backing in Germany, Britain and the United States.

"They have to appear anti-communist for the outside but inside the country, Renamo rallied the people in rural areas in a rural revolt," Legrand said. "The government forced the creation of artificial villages and tried to destroy traditional leaders, so Renamo got a strong reaction. Peasants are peasants and they're not going to take up arms. But when Renamo appeared, the people clapped their hands and gave them food and shelter."

#### Trip Diary: Meticals

Mozambique's currency, the metical, has become so worthless that even the government doesn't want it. In October, the transit fee for driving on the corridor was raised and became payable ONLY in foreign currency. The fee for large transport trucks jumped from the equivalent of US\$25 to US\$150, at a time when about 5,000 tons of drought relief are being brought weekly to Zimbabwe from Beira. We paid US\$40 for our Toyota Corolla. The fee was actually US\$30, but of course they refused to give change, even in meticals. Some hotels and people offering accommodation don't accept local money, either.

Since 1987, however, the government has gradually changed, in part because of pressure from Renamo. The ruling party, the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (Frelimo), moved away from a centralized economy and political system. It also adopted a new constitution in 1990 that guaranteed the right of other parties to oppose it. At the same time, however, the state lost most of its economic resources to fight a protracted war. The thawing of the Cold War following breakup of the Soviet Union left both sides with less backing. Renamo no longer had much value without a perceived need for a communist "containment policy." On the government's side, Soviet military aid dried up and a

"favored-customer" petroleum contract with the Soviets that supplied 70 percent of the country's fuel expired. Now Mozambique barter non-traditional exports like shoes and cloth for drums of oil because it lacks foreign currency to simply buy them. The state also implemented tough economic reform measures to qualify for low-interest loans from the International Monetary Fund.

Frelimo's capacity to rule has been steadily eroded. In a confidential progress report for the first six months of 1992, a European development agency noted that "the various structural readjustment programs for Mozambique have resulted in a sharp

### Trip Diary: Interview with a Renamo commander

Interviews through interpreters just aren't the same. I'd ask a question, then wait for our translator, Joao, to query Renamo Major Inacio Morgado Massenda. The 27-year-old field commander would respond in a semi-shout, gesturing sharply with stabbing motions in the air. Joao would explain the answer in a hushed monotone, so soft I could barely catch the words. Maybe it's the guttural sound of Portuguese, but I assumed Massenda was upset with each question. His replies via Joao, however, always sounded calm. In English, I might have caught some of the nuances in his words but in this second-person monologue from Joao, I know I missed a lot. I did, however, learn the basic facts about this officer in the rebel army.

Massenda joined Renamo in 1980, after completing high school. He said he volunteered to fight in the guerrilla army out of a desire to change state policies, though our interpreter Joao believed Massenda was originally abducted into Renamo like thousands of others. Over the years, Massenda fought in four provinces. Then he went to Renamo's Gorongosa headquarters, Casa Banana, to work in the upper echelons. He has a brother studying at the university in Maputo and another studying in the United Kingdom. He wants to study as well when peace is assured, if his superiors allow him. Since February, Massenda has supervised relief operations in Renamo zones along the Beira Corridor and in Nampula Province by expediting the clearing of land mines and then escorting trucks into the hinterland.

Q: Will peace last or will it fall apart, like in Angola?

A: It's very simple. If you come here by car, you're main objective is to be in Chimio but you can have an accident. Likewise, an accident is not our objective. Our objective is peace and we make sure we work for peace. You have to understand that we worked for two years to make this agreement, looking at each point needed for peace. Everyone is going back to the fields so that means peace. If Angola is at war again, it is because they had an accident. The procedure for a cease-fire was not well prepared. But here it is different. We will work hard to avoid an accident.

Q: Can you be sure all guns will be turned in when necessary?

A: It's an important question because someone who has a gun can do anything he wants. In Renamo, we know exactly how many guns are distributed. We're working now to concentrate soldiers and arms. All our men are under control, from the smallest unit to the biggest.

Q: Many compare Renamo to Hitler and the Nazis and say it commits similar atrocities. How do you feel about that?

A: Where we have a war, we have blood. We have no sanitary wars. You can't have a cause without effect. Also, it's bad to compare one situation with another. You have to understand that the military here is not like a computer, where you press a button and something appears on screen or you push a button and send a missile out. But we have to forget those things and begin a new war, a war for development where we don't cross our hands and wait for aid but where we create conditions to help ourselves.

decline in government's capacity to finance or co-finance even basic needs development. This has been exacerbated by the existence of a war economy in which security requirements account for over 40 percent of the national budget." In blunter terms, one expatriate development worker said: "The government here has technically collapsed and if Renamo controls the rural areas, it is because they are otherwise uncontrollable by the government."

In the vacuum of authority, emergency food-relief operations are indirectly helping to promote an alternative governing structure where official administration has ceased. By working with these agencies, Renamo is learning management skills in supervising the distribution of food and the provision of medical assistance, according to Roger Ruffy, chief of an International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) sub-delegation in Beira.

"By being in contact with the ICRC, Renamo is receiving training on how to administer those zones," he said. "Many of the Renamo people we've worked with are being moved around to other areas. It's a sign these are valued people." Until June, the ICRC was the only agency authorized by the government to work in Renamo zones. The

ICRC is not supposed to do emergency relief work, but Ruffy said corruption by officials and banditry forced him to act.

#### Trip Diary: Lost relief

Driving all along the Beira Corridor, I saw people waving fistfuls of medicals, Mozambique's currency, at passing vehicles. I thought it was an offer to change money at black-market rates, but a relief official says these people buy "lost" sacks of grain from truckers hired to haul relief food.

"We had to ask ourselves if we should intervene just because the government and other NGOs (non-governmental organizations) were too dishonest to do the job properly," Ruffy said. "When it went so far that people were dying because nothing was being done, then we had to intervene." The ICRC is forbidden by its own protocols from giving food to soldiers from either side. Acting as a "scout" for other organizations in Renamo-held areas, however, it promotes feeding operations by relief groups that can. "It's not official policy to give food to soldiers, but a soldier has to eat," Ruffy said. "Something has to be done."

It is because of this reluctance to feed soldiers on either side that individual efforts like that of Maforga Farm may be making a small contribution to the future stability of the country. Peace in Mozambique depends on the distribution of food relief and on the progress of development in the next few months. Renamo soldiers must be included in all of this or they might again use their weapons to survive if a return to a sustainable, normal life is blocked or even hindered. The same must be said of government soldiers. If Mozambique disintegrates into anarchy, few will look to these men for help. Mutinous government troops

blocked the Beira Corridor in September, saying they had not been paid in 13 months. Other uprisings were sparked by low pensions for disabled veterans and lack of jobs after demobilization. Privately, aid workers worry more about banditry by these troops than Renamo. A lot of food aid is stolen by Mozambican forces before reaching the local level. Last year, government soldiers twice derailed a train and stole hundreds of tons of relief food.

Then, there is the third force: all the others who loot at gunpoint and remain unidentified in most incidents. During the war, the government handed out hundreds of guns to civilians to promote self-defense militia. A steady flow of weapons from South Africa and elsewhere to Renamo has also added to the availability of firearms. Military sources say there may be as many as 1.5 million AK-47 rifles circulating in the country.

"What's to stop a man with a gun from saying he wants not just that five-kilogram ration, but that whole bag?" wondered a Canadian government official inspecting how his country's donations are distributed.

"There are thousands of guns floating around. The government doesn't know who has what."

Mozambique, as a whole, is a broken country. Aside from the thin ribbon of

# Trip Diary: The "R-A-T" Hotel



In Beira, the greatest symbol of the city's past glory is the Grand Hotel. Built in the mid-1950s as a casino with massive curving staircases and crystal chandeliers, it never opened because of opposition from the Catholic Church. It was later transformed into a hotel but closed less than 10 years later and entropy took over. At independence, the government wanted to make a university out of the dump. Then it was a transit center for those sent to "re-education camps." Today, avocado trees grow from the third floor and thousands of squatters cook meals on open fires and sleep on the parquet ballroom floors. One last billiard table sits amid debris from a collapsing ceiling. Blackened shreds of curtains hang like cobwebs. The elevators serve as garbage pits and urchins play in the rubble. All that's left of the hotel's marquee are the letters R A ... T ...



asphalt upon which huge transport trucks zoom past, the Beira Corridor is a wreck and it represents the state of the entire country. Driving down the corridor, one sees the remnants of Portuguese manors lie in overgrown brush. Broken and burned vehicles rust on the road's shoulder. Telephone lines have been cut and left dangling. In the smaller towns along the route, buildings are crumbling. Beira itself has no running water and the few passable streets without potholes are sometimes flooded by raw sewage. Sports stadiums, hotels, restaurants and schools are in ruins. Even many people along the corridor are broken, hopping on crutches and swinging stumps of legs blown off by land mines. The destruction and neglect can be blamed primarily on the war. Renamo may have achieved its stated objectives -- forcing Mozambique to embrace multiparty democracy and capitalism -- but the country has been shattered in the process. The decisive force in Mozambique's future, not surprisingly, remains Renamo.

The years of struggle between Renamo and the Mozambican government concerned power, not the welfare of the people. Now that the fighting is finished, however, a battle for power will be waged by competing for popular support through improving the people's lives. In this new contest, it will be in Renamo's best interest to promote basic rural services such as roads and clean water supplies. By doing so, Renamo could create an even stronger power base for itself in a peaceful society that has fair elections.

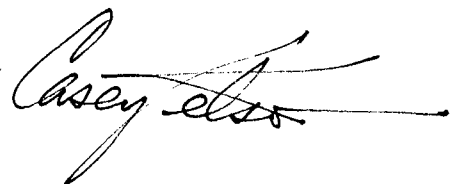
"The quicker you get Renamo cadres into responsible functions, like deciding which roads to be opened or building physical infrastructure or moving supplies, then the greater the chance that peace will hold," said Ulrich Weyl, who has worked in Africa for more than two decades. "They will experience the difficulties of governing and experience the rewards of success, so it will be difficult for them to go back to arms."

Weyl is the boss of the German Agency for Technical Co-operation, as well as the government's coordinator for the rural reconstruction program in Manica Province. From his dual position, he is attempting to integrate Renamo into the planning and implementation of future rural development efforts.

Weyl sees political stability resting more on this issue of immediate collaboration between former enemies than on the future election. "For two generations, these people have been subjected to war and poverty," Weyl said. "Now development and peace go together. If you involve people in their own development, they will take care of anyone wanting to disturb their peace. If they see things improving with peace, then they will protect it."

Let's hope so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Casey', followed by a long horizontal flourish.