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Southern Africa — A Risk for World Politics

Developments in and round Moçambique since Portugal has started the process of decolonisation have probably made it clear to everybody to which extent all Southern Africa may be becoming a source of danger in world politics. On the day when the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Soares, and the leaders of FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), Samora Machel and Dos Santos, signed an agreement in Lusaka to prepare for Moçambique's independence, a *coup d'état* was attempted in Lourenço Marques with definite signs of a separatist purpose. Such separatist movements in areas contiguous to the South African Republic, which may aim at joining Moçambique in some way or other, could have unforeseeable effects.

Already long before the negotiations in Lusaka, the question of relations between the future state of Moçambique and South Africa had become topical, because this is the decisive question for the bias of Moçambique's future foreign policy. South Africa needs Lourenço Marques as the *only* port for the imports and exports of Transvaal, and the Delagoa Railway is one of the most important traffic arteries of the South African economy. Also, very many South African miners are from Moçambique: in 1971, the register of miners contained 132,000 names of men from Moçambique. The hydroelectric power station of Cabora Bassa was to receive an installed capacity most of which had been earmarked for South Africa. But what will happen when the future State of Moçambique, under OAU (Organisation of African Unity) pressure on FRELIMO, fully joins the fighting front against South Africa? It would be fatal to nourish illusions on this point. The port of Lourenço Marques would be made out of bounds for South African exports and imports, the railway would close down, hiring of miners in Moçambique would be stopped, the traffic in goods and capital would be cut off, and South African tourists would no longer be welcome — all very hard blows for South Africa, but also for Moçambique. Moçambique would have to forego all income from port dues and port work, from railway freight and tourism, most of the hard currency remittances from the wages of migrant workers, which means that it would lose huge sums. Shrinking foreign trade (South Africa, after Portugal, had been the most im-

portant importer and exporter for Moçambique) would pose immense economic and social problems for the new government, because Lourenço Marques would be bound to die a quick economic death after South Africa ceases to invest there.

Mr Vorster, the South African Prime Minister, has drawn attention to the mutual dependence of the two countries but has enumerated only the potential losses of Moçambique. In addition, he warned against the possible case that Moçambique would be used as an assembly place for troops to attack South Africa — for South Africa would know how to defend itself, with measures that might involve the whole of Africa. Strong words these but they do not conceal the political isolation in which South Africa finds itself today.

This is a fatal new burden for the defence of South Africa. It will have to defend itself now on a multitude of fronts: not only by land but also by sea and against guerilla warfare. There is much anxious questioning: Will South Africa slide into a position comparable to that of Israel, permanently expecting attacks by the other side, permanently prepared for dealing out precautionary blows, which means that all its military planning must be for preventive wars, and always doomed to political defeat unless it finds powerful allies?

He who wants peace ought to attempt to protect Southern Africa as much as possible against the danger of war, for a South African war would not remain a purely regional conflict which the big powers might watch calmly in order to intervene when the situation seems suitable. Prophylactic action is needed, and the last chance for it is here and now: by bringing sovereign Moçambique and Angola into a good-neighbour convention for the whole of Southern Africa, that would have to be guaranteed by the big powers. The suggestion sounds unrealistic, and supporters of *realpolitik* will warn: it cannot be expected of OAU to mete out to South Africa a treatment that differs from that of all the other "areas of decolonisation", nor could it be expected of South Africa that it changes its "internal order" sufficiently for marking it the basis for a convention of this type. Does that mean that nothing should be done, or ...?

Günther Jantzen