

# **The struggle to liberate Zimbabwe**

**by**

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ZANU**



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THE WHITE immigrant ruling class in Rhodesia came to Zimbabwe under the auspices of the commercial British-South Africa Company founded by Cecil Rhodes, with the aim of exploiting the country's resources. The first natural resource was land, which the British-South Africa Company gave to the first settlers as grants or sold at very low cost to those who came later, thereby creating a white landowning class. Then exploitation of the natural resources of Zimbabwe by the British-South Africa Company and large British and American firms began in earnest.

These companies imported a number of white, unskilled or semi-skilled workers. More and more of the land came under the ownership of individuals and companies, but the mines, farms and plantations required cheap labour. This labour was provided by the African people of Zimbabwe, who were looked upon as just another natural resource to be exploited. As the first white settlers became landlords, the Africans had their lands taken away from them and became landless peasants.

The white man discovered that the more landless Africans there were, the greater the supply of cheap manpower. And so the process began of depriving more and more Africans of their land. Large tracts were claimed by the whites, and what remained was so small that many Africans were forced to move to the European areas and work in white homes, commercial firms, mines, farms, etc.

Thus arose the white, capitalist landlord class, which could provide employment, and all Africans were transformed into either peasants or workers. The workers in white-owned mines, houses, plantations and farms were considered migrants, since they did not live in their home villages but in the so-called African rural reserves.

It is clear that the struggle between the Africans and the white regime in Zimbabwe is basically economic—that it is a struggle of the peasants and workers against the landowners, the capitalist exploiting class. It is also true that the conflict is racial, i.e. that the capitalist class of employers belong to the white race, but it is incidental that the exploited workers and peasants are black. This is why the struggle of the Africans in Zimbabwe is a component part of the world struggle of the working class against capitalism and bourgeois exploitation.

The Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) considers its fight part and parcel

of the struggle of all exploited workers and peasants in the world. This struggle promotes solidarity among all movements which seek the elimination of imperialist exploitation in the world.

The white regimes in Southern Africa—Rhodesia, Portugal (Angola and Mozambique), the Republic of South Africa and Namibia—have closely co-ordinated their efforts to maintain their possession and exploitation of all African territories and indeed can be considered to have concluded a military alliance. South African soldiers can be found in Rhodesia, Rhodesian soldiers in Mozambique, and even Portuguese soldiers in Rhodesia.

The combined military forces of these three regimes are very powerful. What is more, they have the support of NATO and the Western countries, Great Britain, France, West Germany and the United States, which have considerable present and potential economic and financial interests in Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Their assistance in the construction of the Cabora Bassa dam was part of a plan to assure the continuous economic and military support of the Western countries for these regimes on the basis of their large capital investments.

## Fear-ridden regime

The overall strategy for liberation of South Africa, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe must give priority to limiting the extent to which these regimes can concentrate their combined forces in each of these areas in Southern Africa. We must strive on all fronts—political, economic and military—to see to this limitation. Achieving this objective on the military plane requires the simultaneous action of liberation forces in all other regions.

Portugal is an old European country with strong ties in Europe, including membership of NATO. It is a member of the United Nations. South Africa is one of the founders of the United Nations. The whites in South Africa have been there since 1962, and the country is economically advanced. The white population numbers four million.

Rhodesia, on the other hand, is a very young colony; the white man came just a little over 90 years ago, and there are only 220,000 whites. Almost 65 per cent of the total white population settled there after the Second World War. Whites account for

only 5 per cent of the total population, but the Africans out-number the whites 20 to one. The regime in Rhodesia is not even recognised by South Africa or Portugal. Although many countries are flouting their sanctions against Rhodesia are on the books.

The regime of Ian Smith in Rhodesia has been exposed in the last nine or ten months to continuous assault of ZANU force although to a lesser extent than in the Portuguese colonies. Smith closed the border with Zambia and then re-opened it; one day the leaders of the white regime refuse to negotiate with the Africans, and then the next day they do, while at the same time arresting, keeping in detention or otherwise harassing the African leader. The whites have mobilized all their forces and have called thousands of armed South Africans, euphemistically called "police men", to the rescue and are trying to mobilize as many territorial units as possible.

In the north-eastern provinces, African schools, hospitals and shops have been closed down; African property has been confiscated; men, women and children have been placed behind barbed wire in concentration camps, which recall the British measures against the Mau Mau in Kenya. These are the actions of a nervous fear-ridden regime, which is revealing all of its fundamental weaknesses.

An analysis of the relative strengths and weaknesses of each of the three members of the reactionary axis in Southern Africa shows that Rhodesia is the weakest link in the chain.

Common sense argues that the total strategy for liberation of Southern Africa should concentrate on the struggle in Zimbabwe, since there are good prospects for the liberation fight to be victorious in the near future, and that is why we are asking for even more assistance from the progressive forces in Africa and the world.

Ian Smith has at his disposal a 12,000 man land army (including Africans, members of the Rhodesian African Rifles) supported by a fairly strong airforce. However, counting the territorial units, Smith could raise an army of 30,000 men. This is quite a formidable number, which in various parts of Zimbabwe could inflict enormous damage to the liberation movement.

The strategical aim then is to attenuate the enemy forces by causing their deployment over the entire country. The subse

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quent mobilisation of a large number of civilians from industry, business and agriculture would cause serious economic problems. This would have a psychologically devastating effect on the morale of the whites, most of whom had come to Zimbabwe, lured by the prospect of the easy, privileged life promised by the regime.

The conflict in Zimbabwe is being waged between the racist, landowning ruling class and the African peasants and workers, who have been deprived of their land and are land hungry. The pattern of exploitation of the Africans has been so uniform, that virtually all Africans, including those in the army and the police of Ian Smith, belong to one class—the class of oppressed workers and peasants. The strategic aim of the liberation struggle is united action against the settlers by all those who can unite and widen the rifts in the illusory unity of pro-Smith forces.

To achieve this goal, all progressive forces must take concerted action. ZANU is concentrating on trying to achieve this prerequisite. Its socialist analysis of the problems in Zimbabwe is correct, as is the socialist programme which it offers. ZANU is able to win the full support of workers and peasants in the armed struggle it is waging. This is the experience that ZANU has had in the northern, north-eastern and eastern parts of the country, where our forces have in recent months been engaged in constant combat with Smith's troops.

## Battlefield unity

After learning about our socialist analysis of the Rhodesian system and inspired by the vision of the new socialist order promised by ZANU, workers, peasants and even students and members of the petty bourgeois have joined our struggle. Great numbers of them have begun military and political training, while the rest provide assistance in food supplies, etc.

In the course of our joint undertaking, which fighters, workers and peasants have all joined in, we have seen the meaning of true unity. The diverse elements of our population have united in joint action. We believe that unity forged in common struggle, jointly-shared risks and the shedding of blood is the highest form of unity. And this is the most powerful unity.

We are aware that we must do everything in our power to unite all the forces fighting for the freedom of the country. These endeavours recently culminated in a

dialogue with the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU). We consider this dialogue, even though it did not lead to joint operations, to be an important step in the direction of unity. However, unity in the battlefield is the surest guarantee of the national unity of Zimbabwe, as well as of other countries.

The enemy have realised that the unity of the people is the greatest threat to their position. The enemy have resorted to typical imperialist methods to disrupt this unity. On the one hand, they are trying to terrorise the population by closing down workers' and peasant schools, shops, and hospitals, by mass arrests, merciless killing, the bombing of villages, and the destruction and confiscation of property. When all these measures proved ineffective, the enemy uprooted and resettled entire villages to other parts of the country. Now

plans are to turn the border regions into a "shield". But all the measures taken by the enemy have been doomed to failure.

On another front, the enemy have tried to prevent the growth of the revolutionary nationalist party ZANU and even of patriotic organisations such as the African National Congress (ANC) and have forbidden anything to be written about them or their activities. The regime has forbidden the ANC to hold meetings, to collect donations within the country or to raise funds abroad. In order to sow dissension between the ANC and the nationalists, the enemy have threatened to ban activities and allows only a precarious existence, while the leadership of the ANC is gradually becoming estranged from the masses and is losing their support.

The regime has the well-known strategy of permitting the existence of a submissive African government of the Bantustan type so long as an African leader to their liking is found. Our people, however, have seen through this British, South African and Rhodesian ploy and are not to be fooled. Traitors to the people can always be found such as the organisers of the Forum for the Acceptance of the Agreement and Conventions for Acceptance of the Agreement. They fool no one.

*Source: Review of International Affairs, Belgrade, 5 November 1973.*

## Somalia's example

Somalia, like many independent African states, has been facing an acute shortage of industries and factories. The only means of income for the people was from livestock rearing, which is still predominant in the country. Until the country became independent, in 1960, the only important industrial establishment in Somalia was the sugar factory at Jowhar, some 55 miles from the capital, Mogadishu. This factory, which is now wholly owned by the government, was established in 1921. It was run and managed by Italians with over 150 expatriates working on the plant. The production of sugar was very discouraging as the factory had an output of less than 12,000 tons a year.

The situation has now changed. The sugar estate consists of about 10,000 acres, of which some 7,000 acres are under cultivation. The factory and the estate have a labour force of 5,000 people, all Somalis. After independence the plant had to undergo several changes and reorganisations. The people, imbued with a spirit of developing their country, had to exert more effort in order to expand the factory and improve production. Since then production has been raised to 45,000 tons a year. Along with sugar, the factory also produces a variety of byproducts such as rum, vodka and whisky which have found a great

market in Italy. Some of these drinks are used for local consumption, thereby reducing the inflow of imported wines and spirits. The money, which would have been used for the import of alcohol, is now utilised for development projects.

Tanzania, at present, has three sugar factories of reputable standard, but none produces byproducts such as those obtained from the Jowhar sugar factory. Zanzibar is establishing its own sugar factory and a sugar cane plantation has already been started. When the first vice-president, Aboud Jumbe, visited the sugar factory in Somalia, he was very impressed with the activities of the factory, especially with the production of rum, vodka, whisky, hair oil, perfumes and shampoos as well as carbon dioxide gas. Aboud Jumbe was presented with samples of these byproducts and it is hoped he will do something to encourage the people at home to follow the Somali example when the Zanzibar sugar factory comes into full operation. Perhaps other sugar factories in Tanzania will also explore the possibilities of producing these byproducts. If the Somali factory can produce these things, why cannot Tanzania? Somalia has set an example for us, and it is up to us now to be self reliant in this field also!

*Tanzania Maelzo Feature Service.*