

I WANT TO SAY TO THE  
AMERICAN PEOPLE THAT I  
RESPECT THEM... I SAY THIS  
WHOLEHEARTEDLY

JOSIAH TONGOGARA  
ZANU MINISTER OF DEFENSE



NOT A DAY WITHOUT STRUGGLE  
NOT AN HOUR WITHOUT  
THE MOVEMENT  
NOT A MINUTE WITHOUT THE PEOPLE  
J. Z. MOYO  
ZAPU VICE-PRESIDENT  
KILLED JANUARY 22, 1977

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WASHINGTON OFFICE ON AFRICA  
110 Maryland Ave., N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
(202) 546-7961

## *The Cold War and Southern Africa*

# Chilling Zimbabwe

The West is worried about "Communist domination" in our liberation struggle. Imagine that you are a goat and that a hyena has you by the leg. The hyena is not killing you, he is just slowly sucking your blood while allowing you to live and produce off-spring whose blood he can also suck. Then in the distance a lion roars. The hyena is startled and warns you: "That lion is dangerous; don't let him get near." But how do you know that lion won't eat the hyena instead of eating you?

Joshua Nkomo  
Co-Leader, Patriotic Front

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We are not a creation of the Soviet Union or Cuba;  
we are a creation of Zimbabwe.

Robert Mugabe  
Co-Leader, Patriotic Front

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As Americans, we are from a very early age fed the bitter stuff of anti-communism as a preventative for "bad citizenship." It has helped to shape our opinions. In the 1920's anti-communist sentiment was used to whip the country into a fever pitch. After World War II "red-baiting" was widespread as politicians destroyed their enemies with innuendos and Mr. Dulles coined the phrase "the cold war." Now, in the era of decolonization and struggles for liberation, policy-makers still reach back into the collective American psyche and rattle people's fear of communism.

If we begin to understand that our anxieties are being exploited, and that what we are told about political struggles in foreign countries is often more myth than reality, then we can form new views based on new assessments of the facts.

Foreign policy based on US-Soviet competition warps our concept of national interests and allies us

with governments with which we would not otherwise associate.

With the end of the Vietnam war and the growth of detente, it seems that the 1960s of peaceful co-existence was easing the tensions between world giants and even fostering mutual cooperation in some areas. The illusion was short-lived. With the liberation of the Portuguese colonies, Kissinger launched a vigorous US effort to "save" another continent from communism. Joe McCarthy's ghost cast another chill across the world. The cold warrior had returned.

## Enter the Cold Warrior

The cold warrior is appearing at many levels of government and public life, under both national party affiliations. Simplifying issues to the common denominator of communism, the cold warrior believes in the naivete of the "lesser races" and their susceptibility to being led down communism's primrose path. The call to liberation and self-determination is proof that another "little brown brother" has been irredeemably corrupted.

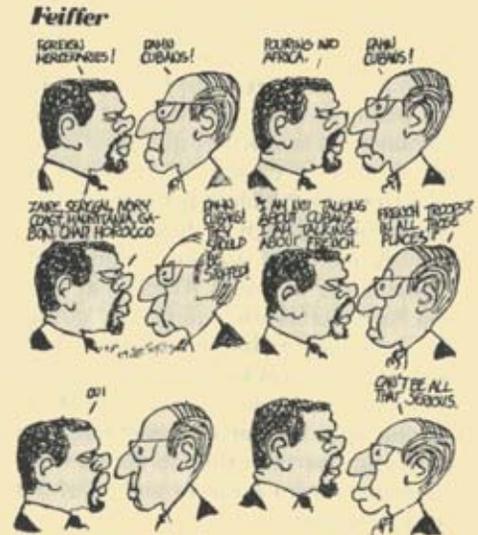
Cold warriors have always found shelter in the halls of Congress. Their view of Africa in the 1970s was shown by the penalties Congress imposed on the former Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola for liberating themselves. The Shaba crisis in May, 1978 underlined Congress' and the Administration's willingness to back greed and corruption while refusing to support states dedicated to meeting the basic needs of their people. The same trend is now taking hold as the people of Zimbabwe struggle against a regime that the world community has denounced as racist and illegal.

The Rhodesians have made political hay from this cold war psychosis. Any package carrying the labels "democratic," "majority" or "mixed" wins widespread Congressional approval; few look inside. And the right wing has been eager to sell the American people a bill of goods:

... The Patriotic Front has a position of power ... because of the massive support which Nkomo and Mugabe are receiving from the Soviets, the Cubans and the Chinese ... The inclusion of the Patriotic Front ... will guarantee the establishment of a militaristic police state and the sup-

pression of freedom. It will also guarantee that the Soviets will have complete control of the heartland of Africa ...

—Senator Jesse Helms, June 26, 1978



## Congress and the Administration

The Right was pleased with its ability to get Congressional moderates to frame the Case-Javits amendment which helped legitimize the internal settlement. 1978 was a good year for them.

Right wing success has been due in part to a White House foreign policy preoccupied with east-west issues. Rather than dealing with the Patriotic Front on its own terms, the Administration has tried to divide it and woo it from socialist states. The Administration has tried to persuade Nkomo to join the Smith government. Recent *New York Times* articles suggest that the Administration may now be promoting Robert Mugabe as the man for Smith to strike a deal with.

The Administration has been far from consistent. As Edgar Tekere, Secretary General of ZANU, put it: The Anglo-Americans came up with another proposal. ... in fact amending the Anglo-American proposal. [Option B] says no elec-

tions before independence . . . What puzzles us was the thinking behind it . . . After everyone had said "yes" to elections, then Whitehall says you need not have elections. This raises suspicions. What is the intention of such a proposal?

Even publications with liberal reputations often reflect an uncritical conservative bias in their reporting on Rhodesia. For example, *New York Times* correspondent John Burns recently reported that the Air Rhodesia plane recently downed had passed over Urumga tribal trust land where guerillas "move clandestinely from one cluster of thatched huts to another, terrorizing the black population."

Inaccurate reports such as these reflect economic interests. US and other western corporations have large investments in South Africa that are highly profitable. Its minerals are regarded as "strategic." A Zimbabwe that nationalized mines and industries in the people's interest could be a model and a base for change in South Africa too, that would cost multinational companies a lot even if it benefitted the majority. It's no surprise then that corporate media and many politicians paint a scarey picture of the great communist takeover.

There's no need to deny that some members of the Patriotic Front, including ZANU leader Robert Mugabe, describe themselves as Marxists; they make no apologies for this. But look at their situation for a moment the way they do, and it becomes clear that the liberation forces are struggling for the same ideals that Americans cherish. The people of Zimbabwe are determined to be masters of their own destiny.

African liberation struggles go through various stages in the Western media. First they are considered the work of a small group of radical malcontents. Then they are a Communist-backed movement—never mind that Communists were the only ones to offer backing—which will destroy the country's wealth (obviously they can't destroy democracy, since it doesn't exist under white rule). Then, curiously, they become a tribal force. This last media stage is a signal that the policy-makers who brief journalists have concluded that the cause of white rule is lost and the only hope for a pro-Western government lies in building up a friendly black force.

Jon Steinberg, *Seven Days*  
November 10, 1978

## Zimbabwe: What is the Liberation Movement?

The Western powers, including America, said no, they could not support violence. Yet they had supported violence in suppressing us; they had provided military assistance to hold us down!

Joshua Nkomo

My name means "we just stay even if there are difficulties."

Joshua Tongogara  
ZANU Defense Minister

The decision for war was not a choice made by the people of Zimbabwe—it was a choice that Ian Smith made for them. Before the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) and for seven years after it, Zimbabweans sought peaceful change. There were boycotts, strikes and demonstrations—all in the strictest Ghandian tradition. Their only result was more oppression, more death, and the jailing of many leaders including Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe.

In February 1959, the African National Congress of Zimbabwe was banned and its leaders detained. Its successors, ZAPU and ZANU, were similarly dealt with. Massive demonstrations were massively repressed by arrests and violence. The belief grew that a solely non-violent strategy was counter-productive.

Robert Mugabe described the transition to the next phase this way:

Where people have pursued their struggle for liberation firstly through non-violence, by appealing to the powers that be to improve their lot and bring about change that would satisfy the majority [there was no result. So the struggle] assumed some measure of violence which was aimed at the destruction of property . . . The violence was not aimed at individuals.

At the time of UDI in 1965, Britain refused to intervene militarily to bring about the majority rule it said it favored. Instead it sought sanctions which the West then broke with a high hand. The West's hypocrisy and Smith's intransigence lit the bomb of guerilla war which began in earnest in 1972. The people of Zimbabwe do not like violence, but violence was forced upon them.

It was then we decided to go a step further and organize armed struggle . . . We believe it is the only way of bringing about peace. Armed struggle is not being waged for the sake of violence. It is an instrument for securing the necessary

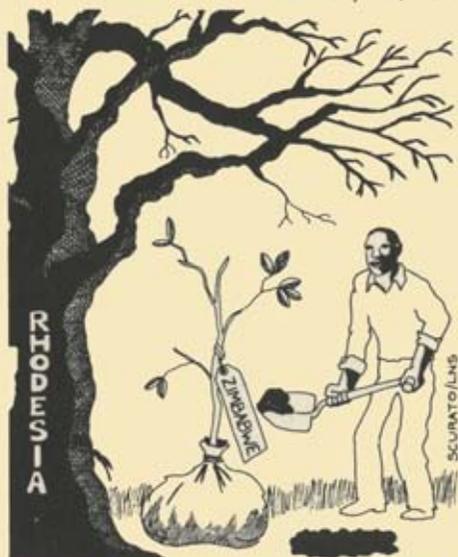
peace and the necessary justice in the country.

Robert Mugabe

This process has enormous mass support. The people of Zimbabwe are quick to say that the freedom fighters are their sons and daughters—"children of the soil." For many missionaries, they are former students whom they support wholeheartedly:

Public enemy number one [for Rhodesia's regime] is the Catholic Church, which the government accuses of supporting the guerillas . . . Missionaries tell stories that would be treasonable if overheard in Salisbury. They report almost 100 percent support for the guerillas and admit they have evolved a *modus vivendi* with them.

*New Statesman*  
January 19, 1979



The struggle has literally become one huge classroom under the trees where soldier-teachers are involving the people in the process of governing their own lives; in the process of educating themselves; in the process of providing their own health care. It becomes clear that the women and men of the Patriotic Front are more than simply soldiers, and the brand of socialism they profess is the sharing of all they have with the people, including their lives. The lesson is the equal distribution of the political and economic power without regard to race. As Edgar Tekere of ZANU says, "We have an obligation to be blind to the fact of race, and to look upon people as people."

## Sanctions and US-Africa Policy

In the 96th Congress the Right has decided that the lifting of sanctions against Rhodesia is an excellent case for demonstrating their strength. But it is more than that. It is a declaration that they are willing to sacrifice the lives of others to "save them from the tide of Communism."

For lifting sanctions will only prolong the war. It is the first step in a scenario leading to US interference in southern Africa. Without regard to long-term interests, by lifting sanctions the US would be putting everything on the line to protect oppressive regimes whose time has come. The lifting of sanctions and the consequences it will precipitate will find the US repeating its role as the lone violator with South Africa of international law. President Carter's Africa policy that has been so carefully and tenuously crafted will crumble as even the most moderate of African states refuse to back the fiasco termed the internal settlement.

The gist of Latyr Kamara of Senegal's statement was that "the search for a peaceful settlement in Southern Rhodesia had been useless . . . Smith's internal settlement was a myth . . . Senegal would support a resolution which would support the Zimbabwe liberation movement and which would extend sanctions."

### UN Debates on the Question of Southern Rhodesia

If conservative pro-Western African states such as Senegal, Liberia and Sierra Leone reject the US position, the United States would seem not to know or not to care what *any* Africans think. Its anti-communist apoplexy has a racist side. The members of the non-aligned movement put their critique this way at a recent meeting in Mozambique:

The powers that had been coming forward with proposals and plans for peaceful solutions in Zimbabwe and Namibia had systematically and unilaterally revised their plans when they found them beginning to take concrete shape to the detriment of the interests of racist minority regimes and the big monopolies.

The only visible force to counter the new right wing offensive is the American people. The Third World respects the force that ended the Vietnam War.

