

Zimbabwe's Struggle Against Rhodesia

The recent implanting of a so-called "Republic of Rhodesia, whose sole objectives are the defense of the interests of a white minority located in the territory of Zimbabwe, brings into the news the history of this people in the face of the uncontrolled greed of the European colonists.

As is explained in the present work, prepared by the Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union (ZAPU), the sole fact of penetrating into this country located south of Central Africa means for the Europeans that they begin to take part in the Government and, like miniature imperialists, have **all the laws in their favor and all the facilities necessary to become owners.**

A superficial analysis or one which is simply an accounting of a series of events concerning the brutal exploitation practiced by the racist regime of Ian Smith in Zimbabwe, would not be sufficient to gain a real understanding of the situation in which the African majority population lives in a **white republic.**

It is for this reason that the study carried out by ZAPU goes into the origins of the evil and analyzes the facts which have occurred in Zimbabwe since the moment that the first Europeans entered their territory until the present time in which the **black population, exploited and discriminated against, is rebelling with all its energy against its enslavers.**

The Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union, created at the end of 1961 and declared illegal a few months later, is in the vanguard of this struggle of the African people for their rights, against colonialism, and racial domination.

THERE IS guerrilla warfare in Zimbabwe today. The Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union (ZAPU) and the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) have together risen in arms against Rhodesian colonial fascism. In order to understand how that struggle came about, and why it is moving irresistibly forward, a knowledge of the workings of Rhodesian society is a fundamental necessity. Our concern here is to make a first approach to that understanding.

The prime mover of events in Zimbabwe and in all of Southern Africa, now as in previous decades, is the struggle between African and European interests: the Africans fighting to run their own country, Europeans trying to hold

them down and make money. Recent phases of this struggle have been the draconian systematization of apartheid in South Africa in the '40s, the now defunct scheme for a Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in the '50s, the so-called Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) by the Rhodesian settlers in 1965, and on the other hand the growth of powerful African national organizations and mass movements, leading to the guerrilla wars now being fought in Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique, South Africa, and Namibia (Southwest Africa).

European interests in Southern Africa were at first concerned with the trade routes to India and the Orient, as well as with slavery. The Portuguese, Dutch, and British established themselves successive-

ly with a view to controlling the sailing routes to the East. But the discovery of diamonds, gold, and other mineral wealth, together with fertile lands and a temperate climate, all stimulated a tremendous growth of the white settler population. These were not the only causes; periodic crises rocked the capitalist economy, poverty ran rampant, and Britain was torn with civil strife. Cecil Rhodes, the European who most enriched himself in Southern Africa, was well aware that Britain's problems could benefit his colonial venture, supplying him with many thousands of Englishmen hoping to turn the tables on poverty and make their mark in the conquest of Africa. In 1895, shortly after he organized the invasion of Zimbabwe, Rhodes declared:

I was in the East End of London yesterday, and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches which were just a cry for "bread, bread, bread," and on my way home, I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism. My cherished idea is the solution for the social problem — that is, in order to save 40 000 000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population and to provide new markets for the goods produced by them in factories and mines. [...] If you want to avoid a civil war, you must become imperialists.¹

It was just at this moment, with the rush of Europeans to consolidate their dominion of Africa, that imperialism was established as a world system. The English rich

grew richer through investments in the mines and later the industries of Southern Africa, and the poorer colonists hoped to emulate them. They were imperialists in miniature.

It would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that the white settler has always seen himself as a capitalist, whenever possible owning his own farm or business, and demanding as his birthright the equivalent standard of living and social prestige. After all, he is the representative of capitalist civilization on the continent. The role of workers, of course, was to be played by the Africans. The mining boom gave a tremendous boost to the penetration of capitalism in Southern Africa and made the settlers' wildest dreams come true, at least for a few decades. For the Africans it has been a nightmare, their states destroyed by superior military power, their communal lands chopped up into private property and the best of them expropriated, their culture debased, their dignity abused. The backbone of settler prosperity is cheap African labor, migrating southwards to work in the European mines and farms. Penniless Africans from all territories still migrate as much as 2400 kilometers on foot from the northern reaches of the subcontinent to the mines in the South.

Simultaneously with the southward movement of African migrant workers came the northward drive of the settlers, in search of gold, lands, labor, and today, markets. Rhodes was the first to push this expansion, organizing the invading column which took Zimbab-

¹ As quoted in V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*.





we for his British South Africa Company and calling the land Rhodesia after himself. In time the settlers consolidated an independent state, separate from South Africa, nominally subject to Britain, but possessing its own armed forces. Still today a tiny minority in Zimbabwe, the settlers could achieve this unique status only with the backing of imperialist power, which they in practice represent.

A 1968 estimate showed that the population of Zimbabwe is only 5% white, numbering about 237 000, to 4 410 000 Africans. This is a continual source of worry to the settlers, who would like to reach a situation similar to that of South Africa, where the whites are in themselves a large mass. To make matters worse (for the settlers), the African population is growing faster than theirs, at 3% yearly. The South African Professor G Sadie, contracted by the Smith regime, estimated that in twenty years' time, given present trends, the Africans would number 8 000 000 and the whites would only make up one thirtieth of the whole population. The settlers thereupon boosted their immigration drive, and according to the **Illustrated London News**, more than 10 000 white immigrants had entered Rhodesia in 1968 by the month of November.

There can be no doubt that immigration to Zimbabwe holds some attractions for those whites whose only goal is their own immediate comfort, since entering the country is for them tantamount to joining the ruling class. As miniature imperialists, white Rhodesians have all the laws in their favor and all

the opportunities to become property owners. The establishment of European farmers is especially encouraged. A number of whites have acquired holdings through special ex-servicemen's plans. Among them are veterans of Britain's colonial antiguerrilla wars in Kenya and Malaya. Most white farmers were born outside Rhodesia.

The weight of privilege enjoyed by the white community in Zimbabwe is nothing short of staggering. Available data² refer to the short-lived Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland; the per capita figures may be taken as a sound indicator of the situation in Smith's Rhodesia today. "European" income came to £ 625, well above the average for many developed capitalist countries, including Britain. In comparison with African per capita income in the same territories, the figure is even more notable. African income, including the value of subsistence production, was only £17.55 yearly, **one thirty-sixth of the European's income.**

Land Appropriation

The settlers' superior position depends today on the maintenance of **privilege**. Landholding is the economic and social key to this regime. It is the chief property on which the settlers' wealth is based. Its control is the settlers' means of forcing the Africans to work for them.

The country has been divided into "European" and "native" areas. Each occupies roughly half of the territory. The official distribution is as follows:³

² Keatley, **The Politics of Partnership**, p. 236.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 341-2.

European land (in millions of acres)	
General	37
National parks	<u>4</u>
Total	41
African Land (in millions of acres)	
Native reserves	21
Native purchase areas	7
Special native areas	14
Additional native areas	<u>2</u>
Total	44

Taking into account the fact that Europeans are only 5% of the population, they have at their disposal, per capita, **eighteen times as much land as the Africans.**

This is only part of the story, however, for the areas have been specially established taking into account climate, soil quality, and available transportation, so that the African lands are the worst from every point of view. Ken Brown, an English agricultural expert who served six years in Zimbabwe as a land development officer, has made a stinging denunciation of the technical economic aspects of settler land policy:

Most of the Native Area is poor soil, usually granite-sand known as Class III. In many parts of the country it is quite embarrassing to drive through a European Area into a Native Area. The change in soil-type coincides almost exactly with the boundary line and is startlingly obvious.⁴

Settlers' farms in Zimbabwe are very large, perhaps on the average, the largest European holdings in Africa. Hunton, in his **Decision in Africa** (p. 28), gives an average of 8200 acres, almost four times the size of the average white holding in South Africa. Besides the vast

areas held in reserve to encourage new European settlement, most of the land held by individual farmers is also in reserve. In 1957, of 20 million acres in European farms, only slightly over 2% was under cultivation. Rhodesian farmers prefer to use an intensive cropping system, requiring very little land, and the rest is left untouched, or with a few head of cattle scattered over a vast area. Ken Brown comments that "European agriculture in Southern Rhodesia should be counted among the most ineffective in the world."

African traditional agriculture was a slash-and-burn system in which plots were not cultivated for more than a few years before moving on to a new piece of land. Brown notes that "from the point of view of conservation, and especially in sandveld, the system was almost perfect. [...] The soil maintained its fertility and structure." The settlers forced the Africans into poor areas, whose soils could not support their population under the traditional system of cultivation.

The Department of Agriculture then did everything in its power to oblige the Africans in the reserves to undertake continuous cultivation of land, sacrificing its fertility by not leaving it fallow. The result has, of course, been soil erosion, damage to the watershed, reduced fertility of the land, consequently increased land hunger on the part of the Africans, and so on in a vicious circle. Rhodesia's "native reserves," like South Africa's **Ban-**

⁴ References are to Brown, **Land in Southern Rhodesia**, as quoted in Keatley, *op. cit.*, and to Woddiss, **Africa: The Roots of Revolt**.

tustans, are thus among those areas of Africa most harshly affected by colonialism, to the extent of breaking down the system of subsistence cultivation, and destroying the soil itself. The effect on human life is no less devastating, as the system has bred chronic malnutrition in the reserves. Its most frequent form is the dreaded **kwashiorkor**.⁵ This illness attacks children, permanently restricting their development.

One should keep firmly in mind that the settlers' land policy does not spring solely from a gluttonous appetite for land, nor sadistic attitudes towards the African, nor much less from the various euphemisms about "civilization" with which they entertain themselves. Holding land idle is in itself greatly beneficial to the settlers as a class, since it forces the Africans to seek employment in the money economy, working for the Europeans. In this the settlers' land-holding system is the same as the Latin-American latifundia.

Oblige the African to work, and to work for almost nothing: that is the main requirement of the settler economy. Forced labor is not usual in Rhodesia, as it is in Mozambique, under the system of levies, and in South Africa in the form of convict labor. Land policy has been the main instrument for obliging the African to work for them. Since the Land Husbandry Act of 1951, the Rhodesian Government has been trying to stimulate the penetration of capitalist production relations into the reserves themselves. The Minister of Agriculture recently stated that one of his chief tasks was to promote the incorporation of African farm pro-

duction into the money economy. The hope is that a class of small African capitalists will emerge, concentrating in their hands the land in native areas, and selling the produce. Besides displacing African subsistence farmers toward the labor market, this is a mild attempt to face one of the basic contradictions in the settler economic situation: they have almost no local market. There are less than a quarter of a million whites in the country, and Africans have almost no money to spend, except on the very cheapest essentials; Europe and America are far away, so that transportation costs are high for raw material exports. But on the other hand, the settlers cannot in practice bring themselves to allow even a few Africans to hold economic power.

Another device which has seriously affected the African's possibilities of living off the land has been the special low prices set for African products. Originally based on the depreciation of African agricultural skills and of the quality of their product (African maize is considered dirty, its cattle inferior) this price differential has brazenly been written into official regulations, so that in recent years when the guaranteed price paid by the Grain Marketing Board to white farmers was 38s a bag, the African, provided he could convince the board that his maize was of the same quality, would receive the same 38s, less 3s 9d for the Native Development Fund, less 3s 9d for the traders handling margin, less 5s for "transportation equalization fund charge."⁶

The African farmer, besides keeping body and soul together, is thus

⁵ *Guardian*, June 4, 1969.

⁶ Keatley, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

obliged to pay one third of his gross income to maintain the special discrimination which keeps him in isolated areas, on poor soil, etc., etc.

In recent decades, the settlers have found new means of forcing the Africans off the land. The Land Husbandry Act was passed in 1951 ostensibly for the purpose of protecting the native areas from overcultivation and overstocking with cattle. It provided that there should be no more than one family to every six acres of sandveld soil, with intensive cropping, and limited the number of cattle that could be maintained in relation to the area of land.

The application of the law was cataclysmic for many Africans. They were forced to sell their cattle to Europeans at inferior prices, as for instance in the Wedza District where big bulls were sold at less than £10, compared to the normal price of four to five times as much commanded by settler-owned cattle of the same quality.⁷ The Act called for the forcible removal of 128 000 African families from the lands they occupied, and was met with much hostility and resistance.⁸ It should come as no surprise that in the succeeding years the modern African national movement emerged. The Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union, which heads that movement, describes itself in the preamble to its constitution as "an association of people who have been dispossessed of their land."

As in all of Southern Africa, taxation is one of the chief means of forcing the African off his land and into the settlers' money economy.

The head tax or hut tax is £2, and absorbs a substantial part of the annual income of the mass of subsistence farmers. The obligation to

pay this tax is rigorously enforced, and guarantees that no family will be able to find economic refuge in subsistence economy. Someone must be making money, if only for a few months of the year. The proceeds of this tax also make up a healthy one-sixth of Rhodesian Government revenues from income and business profit taxes; besides this, Africans are very heavily hit by sales taxes, since these are concentrated on the cheapest goods, rather than on the most expensive ones.

Settler land and tax policy is designed to drive the Africans off the land. But it cannot be sufficiently emphasized that the aim and the reality of this policy is not to disengage the people entirely from their land, nor to proletarianize them completely. Nor are Africans encouraged to settle permanently in urban areas. Subsistence farming, whose products are not sold but consumed by the family, represents a considerable part of African economic activity, estimated at close to 30% of their total income in money value,⁹ due to low productivity, the amount of work-time involved is considerably greater.

The situation which emerges is that of a continual migration of adult men, to and fro between their home communities and the great centers of capitalist production in mines and farms, often far distant. The *Keiskammahoek Survey*,¹⁰ a study conducted by the South Afri-

⁷ *Zimbabwe Review* (Havana), Vol. 1, No. 1, 1968.

⁸ Keatley, *op. cit.*, p. 361.

⁹ Based on data in Keatley, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

¹⁰ D. Hobart Houghton and Edith M. Walton, *The Economy of a Reserve*, 1952, Vol. 2, quoted in Woddis, *op. cit.*, Chap. 1.

can Government of an African district in the territory of the Union, reveals something of the disastrous effects of this system on the life of the African community. The life history of one man, described as "typical of many," shows that between the ages of 16 and 53 he left home thirteen times and worked in six different major areas. In between, he was at home for periods which ranged from several months to several years, but always left again to seek work. For most of this time he was a married man.

There exists a study of the motivations for these migrations, carried out in Botswana (Bechuanaland) by I. Schapera.¹¹ The 297 workers interviewed on returning to their home communities gave the following reasons:

To pay taxes	40%
To pay taxes, buy clothing, etc.	28%
Because of poverty	13%
To buy clothing	10%
To buy cattle, clothing	5%
To give to parents	2%
To seek adventure, see the city, get away from field work, etc.	2%

Thus, earning the tax money was an important motivation for 68% of the migrants, and the next most frequent principal motive was simply "poverty." Only 7% of the replies reflect any sense of freedom from the grimmest of economic circumstances, in the form of buying cattle or seeing the world outside. The importance of taxes is also reflected in the fact that 84% of these workers had taken advances on their salary to pay taxes or levies of one kind or another.

It goes without saying that the absence of the men for prolonged periods hinders a sound development of the communities' economy. In the previously-mentioned study of **Keiskammahoek**, where most adult men are absent at any given time, the women and girls must double their efforts to fill the gap left by the men. Considering that fully one fourth of their productive labor time is taken up with hauling wood and water and grinding corn, small wonder that agricultural productivity is ruinously low. Thus the men's absence does not rescue the family from its economic plight, but rather continues the vicious circle. In other parts of Southern Africa the time spent working for the settlers is undoubtedly less, but the basic experience is the same. The solid majority of adult men in all of the territories must undertake at some point prolonged absences from their homes in search of tax money or additional family income.

Thus, apart from the vast migrations of this kind which take place within the Union of South Africa, as in the case of **Keiskammahoek**, fully two-thirds of the miners in the South African Rand come from outside the country. Zimbabwe is the territory with the second largest immigration of African workers, 48% of the African working class comes from outside the country, including 20% from Mozambique, 17% from Malawi, 9% from Zambia, and 2% from other countries, among them Angola, the Congo, and Namibia.¹²

Zimbabweans also migrate in considerable numbers to other territories. The portions of African men

¹¹ I. Schapera, *Migrant Labor and Tribal Life*, cited in Woddis, *op. cit.*, Chap. 2.

¹² Census data for 1951, quoted in Woddis, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

who at any given time may be found working outside their native country is extremely great. Various calculations have put the figure at **more than half** for Lesotho, **25% to 30%** in Botswana and Swaziland, **more than 40%** in Malawi, **more than 60%** in South Mozambique. When internal migrations are considered, the figures for adult men absent from their home community reach **60%, 70%, 80%** and even **100%**.¹³

The typical African worker is also a peasant. One can almost say that the typical African man is both a worker in capitalism and a subsistence peasant with strong collectivist ideals. This special condition cannot be ignored in understanding the forms of development of the liberation movement, its ideology, strategy, and tactics.

Class Oppression in the Money Economy

The whole migration system is convenient for the settlers in many ways. Most of these have to do with the difficulty it puts in the way of strengthening African class forces within the capitalist nexus. Men of different cultures and languages are together for relatively short periods of time in the mines and farms. It is difficult for them to develop the mutual understanding and trust, and to acquire the necessary organization to build a trade union to effectively oppose settler repression. Another aspect of the migration system favorable to the settlers is the divorce between the place and period of work and the home community and family, which is the African's basic concern. If the situation gets very difficult on the job, the home community represents an alternative source of income, however

diminished; but home is far away, so that a prolonged strike will force him to leave the area.

All these factors, plus the social, cultural, political, and military weapons the settlers have in their hands, make it difficult to achieve meaningful increases in African salary levels. Real wages for Africans tend at best to remain stable and often to fall back. In South African mining, the biggest industry in the Southern Cone, African miners in 1960 were paid 3s 4d a shift, only 4d more than their salary in 1896.¹⁴

Almost no net increase in nominal wages since the 19th century! Real wages, then, have suffered a great deal.

The same general salary level has been current in Zimbabwe through the '50s and up to the present day. Unskilled African workers were receiving 7d an hour in 1956, similar to the 80s monthly in agriculture in Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia, in 1957, and the 100s outside agriculture.¹⁵ All these figures amount to approximately £1 a week, which continues to be the rough baseline to which a vast number of Africans are bound, not only in agriculture but also in other fields. Hunton mentions \$9 a month as the average salary being paid to Africans by the US chrome interests in Zimbabwe.

An even more concrete indicator of the African workers' standard of living and social situation is given by the comparison between the salary levels of black and white workers. According to 1952 census

¹³ Compiled in Woddis, *op. cit.*, p. 113, from source material.

¹⁴ Woddis, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

¹⁵ Compiled in Woddis, *op. cit.*, p. 192

data provided by Woddis for the present territory of Zimbabwe, the European worker's income was fifteen times that of the average African wage earner. Recent data published by the Zimbabwe African Congress of Unions indicate that the ratio is ten to one on the general average. Salary levels for Africans are always many times lower than those of whites. They vary, however, from one trade or industry to another, and these variations are part of the general settler system for keeping the Africans down. The main salary differences are supposedly based on skills. Africans are prevented from acquiring the necessary education and work experience, and even though they have them they are simply ignored when it comes to hiring. "European" trade unions, employers, and government combine forces to block the Africans' chances of moving into skilled jobs. The salary difference between skilled and unskilled workers is then exaggerated out of all proportion to the work they do. Skills, education, "civilization," all are mystified and flaunted at the African to convince him that he is inferior.

It is through these devices that European workers are made the indispensable allies of settler capitalism in oppressing the Africans. The minority regime is absolutely dependent on its kith and kin among the settler working class for political and military support. It is no accident that in an underdeveloped country like Zimbabwe, far from the big international markets, white workers are nonetheless paid 30% to 50% more than British wage earners.¹⁶

Privilege is the price of their al-

legiance. And privilege is watched over with loving care by Rhodesian politicians. One who made his career defending white privilege was Sir Roy Welensky, who began in politics as a white labor leader in the railroad workers' union, and rose to be Federal Prime Minister. In politics, as in income levels, in social prestige, and in access to institutions like clubs and entertainment, privilege in Zimbabwe never expresses class tensions within the settler community, but only between settlers and Africans.

South African capitalists contend that the racist system is a natural one, sanctioned by tradition and by the political status quo. Thus the Transvaal Chamber of Mines defends its labor policy saying:

Any attempt to expand the classes of work open to competent natives would meet with strenuous and bitter opposition from the European employees and their trade unions. In addition, the native employee is restricted by law and by custom from undertaking skilled labor.¹⁷

However, the employers had a strong hand in the construction of the present system. In South Africa during the '30s, the economic crisis produced poor whites. It became necessary to gear up a special "civilized labor" program to restore them to privilege; nonwhites were pushed out of skilled jobs, substituting them with "Europeans," sharpening salary differences. Apartheid was a logical political product of this crisis, being a system which explicitly guarantees the privileged position of whites. Zimbabwe has not yet

¹⁶ Keatley, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

¹⁷ Quoted in Hunton, *Decision in Africa*, p. 42.

reached that stage. Hypocrisy is still the most characteristic mode of its settler politics. Trade unions are required to be multiracial, yet they are so set up as to give no control to the unskilled workers. "Equal pay for equal work" becomes a simple defense of the racial status quo in this context. The language and procedure of trade union democracy in Zimbabwe is used as a cover for the denial of elementary rights to African workers, whose unions are banned as "irresponsible." As if this were not enough, Africans prior to 1959 were not even legally accorded the status of workers ("employees" in the settler terminology). Their labor relations were regulated under the Masters and Servants Act.

This use of cultural, political, and juridical means to maintain the difference between African and white salary levels works much more easily in some circumstances than in others. It is best adapted to the countryside. Africans are more dispersed there. They are also closest to the subsistence economy, and on this basis can be pressured into accepting less money. In general their class forces are less organized. They are more at the mercy of the employer.... ZAPU figures show that as of 1965 the average white wage in agriculture was fully 18 times that of the average African worker. In mining the corresponding ratio is fifteen to one. These are the two typically rural lines of production. They are also the main lines of production in the settler economy. It is no accident that these are the industries in which most Africans are employed; 51% of all African wage earners are engaged in agriculture or mining, compared to

only 8% of the European labor force. In agriculture, the most notable case, there are 62 times as many Africans employed as there are Europeans. Virtually all the manual labor in farming is done by Africans. A striking thing about Zimbabwe agricultural publications is that among the many glossy pictures one never sees Europeans doing production work, only Africans. European farmers in these photos always have the tanned, outdoors appearance which identifies them with the Rhodesia "frontier" image. But their contribution to agricultural production is strictly limited to the supervisory jobs. Such managers, when they don't own their own business, are closely tied to the capitalist and hope to become one. They earn the main part of their income from a profits bonus. Alex Morris-Eyton, for example, pays his manager £25 a month plus 25% of the profits, which usually comes to £1000 a year or more.¹⁸ African men earn a tiny fraction of this sum. African women earn even less, being employed, generally, only at peak season for certain specific tasks. Ben Barry, for example, pays 3s to women for rough-grading 2000 lbs of tobacco leaf in one day!¹⁹ This is a peak seasonal earning for African women farm workers. Eighteen to one is not the highest ratio between African and European farm wage income, only the average. Figures in this field are scarce, but available data prove that these high ratios are typical for Southern Africa in general. The miners on

¹⁸ Illustrated London News, November 30, 1968.

¹⁹ Rhodesian Tobacco Journal, May 1966.

Northern Rhodesia's copperbelt before independence had a ratio of **twenty to one** between average white and African salaries; and this following the copper boom of the early '50s and one of the most successful strikes by African workers in the history of the continent. Average wages for Africans had more than doubled in five years, yet the ratio was still twenty to one. It was seventeen to one in South Africa's gold mines.²⁰ The rest of remuneration to miners follows the same pattern as wages: compensation to the miner who contracts silicosis, or for accidents, quality of accommodations, all are poles apart for Africans and whites. "European" miners on the copperbelt were averaging \$6160 yearly and considered better paid than any other miners in Africa, Europe, or America. They were driving Jaguars and wearing evening clothes and had wages as high as \$1400 per month.²¹

The cavernous social distances existing in the countryside show why the farmers (and miners) are considered the archetypal representatives of settler society. They are, as we shall see, no longer numerically typical of the Rhodesian population, but their immense cultural and economic separation from the Africans, and their close relation to the land, fit in with the traditional settler image, which still has a strong political pull. It is no accident then that Ian Smith has (or had) an all-farmer cabinet.

Urbanization is one of the changes which has tended to upset the equilibrium of the settler system, as Africans concentrate, gaining political strength. The cities are

unquestionably the settler stronghold, from which they exert control over the rest of the territory. But they are also the place where the African can begin to match his force and his skills with the European, and to organize against the regime of privilege.

The portion of the African population now residing in cities is roughly one fifth. Its present size is difficult to estimate from available figures,²² but is somewhere in the neighborhood of 800 000 — that is, **more than four times the European urban population**. This is a substantial force for the settlers to reckon with, and they note with some uneasiness the continuing rapid influx of Africans to the cities. Settler politicians, as usual, are caught in a contradiction. On the one hand they trumpet about the return of Africans to their "ancestral homelands" (meaning the meager "reserves" which the settlers have allotted them), and on the other they want to develop their economy and need plenty of urbanized African workers.

The table shows that Europeans (together with the small Asian and colored groups, which occupy an intermediate position) provide only one sixteenth of the money economy's production workers. They are slightly more important in the urban production trades, like construction and manufacturing, but the African majority even there is an overwhelming five to one. In fact, the great bulk of Europeans are concentrated in supervisory and bureaucratic work, clerical jobs, and skilled services,

²⁰ Hunton, *op. cit.*, pp. 44, 48.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 48. Keatley, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

²² 1951 and 1956 census data in Woddis, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-2.

plus a few skilled tradesmen. Production in the Rhodesian economy is almost entirely African; only its owners and managers are European.

Employment in the Rhodesian Economy (1964-65)

(Taken from: ZAPU: The Role of Trade Union Movement in the Zimbabwe Struggle)

	European, Asian, and Colored	Africans
Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	4 540	283 800
Mining and quarrying	2 640	40 200
Construction	5 050	30 200
Manufacturing	15 590	69 500
Services:		
Private, domestic	24 300	94 000
Others	—	62 900
Electricity, water, and sanitary services	1 260	4 400
Transport and communi- cation	9 190	14 300
Commerce	24 050	33 300
Totals	86 620	632 600

About 40% of the Zimbabwe African population now lives outside the reserves, in the money-economy area, according to a recent comment by settler Finance Minister John Wrathall.²³ Close to half of this group is in the cities. But more important than its total size is the economic and political weight of

adult men in the African urban population. In 1956 they made up fully 61% of the African population in cities. At that time there were only a small number of African families living in cities. More than four fifths of African men had to leave their families behind when they came to the cities to seek work. This is a notoriously explosive social situation. And when one adds the humiliating causes of this break up of African families, the picture is still more aggravating.

The chief reason for men leaving the reserves is the economic obligation to do so, imposed by settler land-grabbing and taxes. They cannot bring their families because they simply cannot earn enough to make ends meet, even at the lowest standard of living, so severe is the discrimination in salaries. In the cities, Africans have some opportunity to enter semiskilled trades, and thus earn rather more than in the countryside, but they must leave behind subsistence production and depend entirely on their wages. These wages, even in the "elite" jobs for Africans, are a small fraction of "European" wages. In other sectors average African wages go as low as one-twentieth of average European wages. One comparative estimate²⁴ gives the 1960 budget of the typical African family of five as £10 a month, while the typical settler family of the same size lived on £120. An article in the *Guardian*, June 4, 1969, recently estimated African industrial workers' wages at £3 to £5 a week, and those of domestic servants and

²³ *Times of Zambia*, May 2, 1968.

²⁴ *Zimbabwe Review* (Havana), Vol. 1, No. 1, 1968.

agricultural laborers at £1 to £110s a week, plus meager "rations." The Plewman Commission on Urban African found in a survey of African families in Salisbury that all had inadequate diets. Beyond this, Dr. Bettison of the Rhodes-Livingston Institute concluded that 57.1% were "extremely impoverished."²⁵

The migratory worker is not paid enough to support his family. He receives only enough to cover the money needs for clothing, taxes, and lesser items, and to keep himself alive during the time he is gone from home. Nothing encourages him to stay outside the "native areas." He can only remain separated from his family, and with no future for his old age. The CCTA report, **Human Factors of Productivity in Africa** showed that the instability of African residence in urban areas was "intimately linked to the problem of security."²⁶ Housing, for example, is usually held conditionally on being employed. The report quoted a study done by the Rhodes-Livingston Institute of town-dwelling African men in Northern Rhodesia prior to independence: 92% intended to abandon the cities sooner or later and return definitively to their home communities.²⁷

Education is another terrain where the struggle has been going on for a long time. Europeans need their workers to have some slight education, but they do everything in their power to prevent Africans from getting more than the minimum. Gone are the days when the settlers possessed a technology unknown to Africans and out of their reach. They must

depend on privilege to keep their monopoly. Up to World War II, for example, there were no secondary schools open to Africans whatsoever, and the amount spent on the education of "European" children was 80 times that spent per African child.²⁸ The situation has changed somewhat since then, but only at the lowest level is this change important. Most Africans now receive the first two grades of primary school, necessary to occupy the unskilled jobs the settlers want them for. But the higher the school level the more Africans are squeezed out; a table of the African children who should have reached the last year of preuniversity education in 1960 shows that only one in 5500 actually got that far:

Entered school	1947	81 821
Primary II	1950	23 366
Primary VI	1954	4 429
Secondary II	1956	1 888
Secondary IV	1958	379
Secondary VI	1960	15

"European" children on the other hand get a fairly advanced education; 75% of them take four years of secondary school. This is 160 times higher than the percentage of African students who reach that level. At the present time there are only five schools in Zimbabwe where African students can complete their secondary education, and less than 400 students reach that level, out of two million African youths! As if this were not enough, free government education is available for all white children, while Africans must pay school fees, ranging from £3 to £60 a year. A 1955

²⁵ Keatley, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

²⁶ Quoted in Woddis, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

²⁷ Woddis, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

²⁸ Data on education are from Keatley.

report said that the African child ... will have no education of any kind in the rural areas unless the parent provides all the necessary capital expenditure on classroom and teacher accommodations of more than 90% of the rural schools. Besides, he has to provide all the equipment for the school, the child, and partly, the teacher.

By 1960 there was still only one government secondary school for Africans; the rest were mission schools.

At the present time the greatest concession the settler regime has made to African demands for more education has been to provide secondary education for not more than 12.5% of all those Africans who manage to complete primary schooling. Another 37.5% will be admitted to trade schools.²⁹

Rhodesia has a university, and this institution has been a focal point of conflict, since British interests in creating an African elite to pull for it together with the settlers, led to making the college a racially mixed institution, quite an exception in settler land. Even so, the per capita representation of "Europeans" in the university is approximately 75 times as great as the African representation, in proportion to the total population of each group, and these figures do not include the numerous whites who study abroad.

All this fits in very well with the settlers' scheme for disqualifying the Africans from politics for having insufficient scholastic and income levels. At least two years of secondary school are required to have the right to vote. Together with income and property-owning qualifications, only a handful of

Africans have the right to vote.

The settler political parties and Britain have been wasting words for years over how to juggle the electoral system in such a way that everyone will be happy. At present the emphasis is on allowing Africans to elect some members of Parliament, but limiting their number to a minority fraction. None of these proposals can lead to majority rule. Zimbabweans have found that the only way for them to make their weight felt in politics is with guns in their hands.

Imperialism

The small settler minority in Zimbabwe could not, despite its military preparedness, hope to maintain alone its oppression of the African people. It receives vital support from some of the stoutest pillars in the structure of imperialism, forces which in turn depend on the settlers to protect their interests. International finance capital is deeply concerned in the mining of Southern Africa, and the Rhodesian regime is an indispensable local political and military complement to their economic power.

The most important nucleus of mining interests in Southern Africa is the De Beers-Anglo-American complex of gold and diamond mining companies, first erected by Cecil Rhodes. This British-South African combine under the chairmanship of Harry Oppenheimer integrates representatives of the British ruling class, and specifically of its financial establishment, with the biggest South African capitalists.

It has powerful interests in (and

op. cit., pp. 297, 371-2.

²⁹ *Times of Zambia*, February 8, 1968.

directorships on the boards of) almost all of the important mining operations as far north as Katanga and the Zambian copper belt. The group is represented in Zimbabwe

today by at least thirteen subsidiaries. The following is an incomplete list of South African-based parent companies with their Rhodesian concerns.³⁰

Rhodesian company

South African parent company

a) Finance and Investment Concerns

Anglo-American Rhodesian Development Corp.
 Central Reserved Rhodesia Ltd.
 Consolidated Mines of Rhodesia
 De Beers Rhodesia Investments Ltd.
 New Rhodesia Investments Ltd.
 Overseas Investments and Rhodesia Ltd.
 Rhodesia Acceptances Ltd.

Anglo-American, Johannesburg

Rhodesia Anglo-American Ltd.
 (Also one of the giants of the copper belt with more than £60 million yearly in profits in the years before Zambian independence.)

Anglo-American, Johannesburg
 (with Union Minière du Haut-Katanga)

Wankie Collieries Ltd.
 Sandringhan Investments

Wankie Collieries and Anglo-American

Rhodes Investments Ltd.

Rhodes Investments

b) Mining and Prospecting Companies

De Beers Prospecting Rhodesia Ltd.

De Beers, Kimberly

Anglo-American Rhodesia Mineral Exploration
 Anglo-American Prospecting Rhodesia Ltd.

Anglo-American, Johannesburg

MTD Mangua Ltd.
 MTD Sanyati Ltd.
 Messina Rhodesia Smelting and Refining Co.

Messina Transvaal Company

c) Industry

Lawson Motors	Lawson Motors, Johannesburg
Rhodesia Castings Ltd. of Gwelo	City Engineering and Carson, Pretoria
Rhodesia Alumina	Cullinan Refractories Transvaal
Rhodesia Plywood and Timber	Plywood Ltd., Cape Province

Another important settler-based British venture is Lonrho, originally the London and Rhodesia Mining and Land Company, now a whole complex of companies making up an important financial grouping, and which not only operates in Zimbabwe and South Africa, but boasts activity in thirteen states of independent Africa, ranging from mining, ranching, and plantations (sugar, tea, coffee, and timber) and commercial and industrial trading, to construction and civil engineering, electricity and water supplies, brewing and hotels, newspapers, printing and packaging, transportation, real estate, finance, and investment. While much smaller than the Oppenheimer group, it manages to hold 1 050 000 acres of land in Africa and has 60 000 employees. Lonrho has recently taken over the Ashanti gold mines in Ghana, said to be the richest in the world.³¹

Zimbabwe is a base of operations of many US companies expanding in Central and East Africa; these companies also operate in South Africa. Subsidiaries of Union Carbide and Carbon, Metallurgy Inc. of New York and the Vanadium Corp. of America, dominate the mining and processing of chrome ore, one of Rhodesia's biggest foreign exchange earners. American Chemical is interested in the fertilizer industry, and Johns Manville through its Canadian subsidiary controls Rhodesia Asbestos Mines,

which exports to the US American Metal Company and the American Potash and Chemical Corp. which have part interest in the production of lithium for nuclear reactors, a rare metal in respect to which Rhodesia holds a strategic position on the world market.³²

Zambia and Zimbabwe have been the only territories south of the Sahara to compete seriously with the Union of South Africa for density of foreign capital investment up to recent years. Per capita foreign investment ranged from four to ten times the density in other colonial territories. This reflects the intimate union — in earlier times the inseparability — of settler regimes and big colonial investments in Africa. Following this pattern too was the loan policy of the Eximbank and the World Bank, which in their first ten years awarded Zambia and Zimbabwe \$144 million, second only to South Africa.³³

It is easy to see how the political events of the last two decades have arisen out of the social and economic contradictions of Southern Africa. The basic struggle between African and European interests has gone much further ahead than it had up

³¹ West Africa, October 26, 1968.

³² Hunton, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

to the time of World War II. It has passed through a series of different phases. In Zimbabwe the first of these was the scheme for the so-called Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The chief motive for the Federation project was to consolidate European dominion over the northern territories, preventing the independence of Zambia and Malawi. Since white settlers were much more numerous in Zimbabwe, the two northern territories were anchored to it. It was thus hoped to frustrate the burgeoning forces of African nationalism. The scheme was framed in terms of colonial development. The Federation would hopefully provide greater political "stability" (the example of the Mau-Mau uprising in Kenya was a frightening warning in those years); it would also consolidate a larger internal market and group under a single colonial regime, the extraordinary mineral resources of Zambia and Zimbabwe.

One of the aims of the Federation was to maintain a satisfactory situation for the settlers' established imperialist partners, and to attract some new ones. The following was the opinion of Sir Ronald Prain, chairman of the Rhodesian Selection Trust group of mining companies, one of the giant profit makers of the copper belt: "A successful completion of federation would recreate the conditions where investors could be confident about further investments in Zambia and Zimbabwe." **The New York Times** went so far as to say in the lead sentence of an article on Zimbabwe political developments: "British Central Africa was federated into a new state to attract

American capital for development of its rich natural resources."³⁴

The Federation was not a model of success in obtaining more foreign capital; African discontent was too evident for that. However, some internal changes did take place in the economic sphere which are well worth taking note of. These amount to the build-up of the so-called Southern Rhodesia at the expense of Zambia and Malawi. One sign of this is the appearance of a respectable industrial sector in the Rhodesian economy, on which the other two territories were made dependent. Manufacturing output doubled in size before the Federation went into crisis in 1960, coming to rival tobacco and chrome as a money earner. The second point is the construction of the Karibe Dam on the Zambezi, a major hydroelectric project which took £55 million, and the Rhodesia Railways, which took a further £29 million, in 1957-61 alone.³⁵ These projects were so situated as to consolidate the Federation's economy around a so-called Southern Rhodesian base. Thus the revenues of the three territories, and chiefly those coming from Zambian copper, were poured into the settlers' pockets, while the Africans were deprived. The lands irrigated, and the industrial resources made available, were to be exploited by Europeans.

Federation meant the consolidation of the misery of the Africans. In terms of repression, it brought the incursion of the fascist Southern Rhodesian settler troops into the northern territories. There were mass actions of protest in all three countries. The Federation was broken up, and Malawi and Zambia eventually gained their independ-

³⁴ Hunton, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-1.

³⁵ Keatley, *op. cit.*, p. 368.

ence under majority rule.

The breakup of the Federation and the coming to power of African governments in the two northern territories provoked a mood of panic among the settlers. The African national movement had arisen three times in organized political form and three times it had been banned. Under federation, protest was first marshalled by the African National Congress of Zimbabwe, formed in 1955-56, and banned in 1959, when over 500 of its leaders were thrown into Rhodesia's many and varied prisons. In January 1960 the National Democratic Party was formed to take its place. The NDP rapidly gained mass support among the African population and was again banned this time before two years had passed. Its successor, the Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union, made the settlers still more uneasy and enjoyed only nine months of legal existence, being banned in September of 1962. The quickening pace of events had exhausted the possibilities of public political struggle against the minority regime, which was becoming more and more fascist in its ideas and methods. ZAPU turned to clandestine political activity and to armed struggle.

The prospects of a fight to the finish with the African peoples of Zimbabwe required action too drastic to harmonize with the public face of British policy in Africa for the '60s. With the former British colonies independent, and vociferously defending African rights, the time had passed when Britain could slaughter and burn without fear of international retaliation, as it did fifteen years ago against the Mau-Mau uprising in Kenya. If such massive repression was to be undertaken, the settlers should prepare to do it in their own name.

They are assured the political ties with Britain, proclaiming a so-called independence, and a free hand to repress Africans. The effects of their "Unilateral Declaration of Independence" were manifold. Chief among them was to concentrate the world's attention on the fuss between Britain and her settler representatives; while differences do exist, they are completely secondary to the common opposition to the African majority. In practice Britain was absolved before world public opinion of responsibility for Smith's fascist tactics and for the conduct of the war they knew was about to begin. In effect, Zimbabwe was thrown into the arms of South Africa, which assumed political and economic responsibility for supporting the regime. Britain's problem was neatly solved. The settler economy is typically colonial in that its biggest capitalists are nothing more than local overseers for huge South African and British concerns. Thus the squabble over settler political "independence" has no firm basis in economic reality. Besides the financiers, many prominent British politicians, former cabinet members, and present government officials are personally interested in Zimbabwe, as substantial share holders in or directors of involved companies. Among them are Reginald Maudling, J. Boyd Carpenter, W. Birch, Quinton Hogg, Gresham Cooke, Sir G. Nabarro, Julian Amery, and Lord Caradon.³⁶ Besides this, South African and British capital are so closely interwoven as to be in practice indistinguishable. The Union of South Africa, despite its

³⁶ *Zimbabwe Review* (Lusaka), Vol. I, No. 2, June 1969

surface ideological differences with Britain, is economically her junior partner in imperialism, at the head of the satrapy for Southern Africa.

Britain has made a show of protest over the declaration of "independence," promoting in the United Nations economic sanctions against so-called Rhodesia, especially a ban on trade. The aim is supposedly to cut off financial and trade ties with Rhodesia. This is designed to appease the pressure of Third World countries for action against Smith. There has been a substantial change in trade relations. Direct British trade has practically stopped, and trade with other countries is much reduced. But Britain has managed to have the sanctions applied step-by-step in such a way that the Rhodesian economy be able to adapt itself to the changes.

Rhodesian Foreign Trade
(in millions of pounds)

	Exports*	Imports
1965	164.7	119.8
1966	119.8	84.2
1967	110	108
1968	106.5	120.8

There was some decline of imports in the first year of sanctions, but the necessary changes in the composition of trade were effected and the total value of imports is now greater than before "independence." Exports have suffered, dropping by more than one-fourth in 1966, a decline which has since rapidly tapered off but has not yet been reversed. The settlers enjoyed an extremely favorable trade balance at the time of the break, which was sharply diminished in the first two years of sanctions, but remained

positive; only in 1968 did a balance of payments problem appear.³⁷

South Africa, West Germany, the neighboring Portuguese colonies, and Malawi, plus the United States and West European countries have taken up the slack. South Africa, which previously had about one-third of Rhodesia's foreign trade, has become the economic support of the minority regime. Accepting the responsibility of patron to such a client, it has been the country most amenable to disguise Rhodesian foreign trade as its own; for example, the UN report released June 23 mentions tobacco and asbestos as two Rhodesian commodities which South Africa exports under its own label.

The composition of foreign trade has unquestionably changed. Fortunes have been made and lost by individual capitalists and branches of industry. But as a whole the Rhodesian economy has probably suffered less than it did in the recession which accompanied the break up of the Federation. A brief review of the situation will serve to illustrate this.

Revenues from mining have remained quite stable since "independence," being £33 million in that year, 1965, and £32 million in 1967, when sanctions were supposedly taking full effect. Foreign investors continue to control the entire mining sector of the economy, and show no signs of loss of appetite. Since then ICL has taken new concessions in copper, nickel, cobalt, uranite, lead, zinc, tungsten, and silver; Anglo-American has gone for copper, nickel, uranite, chrome, thorbonite, limestone, and platinoids; Messina Transvaal has

³⁷ Foreign trade data from the *Guardian*, October 25, 1967, and June 24, 1969.

taken new concessions in nickel; US Vanadium and Union Carbide have gone for chrome, platinoids, copper, and nickel; South African Manganese has gone for aluminum and zinc chromium; Lonrho has expanded in copper and gold; and numbers of other companies have taken new concessions especially in nickel. These foreign firms, most of them with substantial British capital behind them, continue to reap handsome profits in Zimbabwe despite sanctions.³⁸ Lonrho, for example, may have been affected by sanctions, but it has not exactly been crippled: the group's before-tax profits have jumped from less than £ 2000 before the political crisis to more than £5 million.

The manufacturing sector has benefited from sanctions which have given it a tightly protected home market, small but affluent. Import substitution is proceeding apace in Rhodesia today. Rhodesian industry before "independence" had reached a point of modest achievement which enabled it, after an initial slump, to broaden its base and grow. The manufacturing index for 1968 stood 3.5% higher than in 1965, and 25% higher than in 1966, the first year of sanctions. The situation has become so promising that the British automobile manufacturers, Ford and BMC, have found no point in not resuming their car assembly operations in the country. Other international firms with interests in Rhodesian industry today are Fisons, Unilever, Metal Box, ICO, De Beers, Guest, Keen and Nettlefolds, Chloride Groups, British Insulated Cables, Lancashire Steel, Stewart and Lloyds, Tate and Lyle, British Petroleum, Ever-Ready Batteries, Vickers, Hawke Siddley, Gallaghers, British-American Tobac-

co. Rothmanns.³⁹

In banking and insurance, foreign houses also control the field, the principal ones being the Standard Bank, Barclay's, National and Grindlay's Bank, Pearl Assurance, Netherlands, Ottoman Bank, and the Old Mutual. Business is not slumping. Savings have risen. So have fixed deposits.

Agricultural production on the other hand has been forced to a drastic reorientation. Tobacco had been for some time the main export crop. Sanctions have substantially cut off tobacco exports to Britain, and together with the switch to milder leaf on world markets, Rhodesian production has been reduced to one third of its former level. However, the settler government is doing its best to solve the problem through diversification. The aim is to substitute all agro-imports, such as cotton, coffee, or wheat, and to produce crops more easily absorbed by reactionary neighbors, either for their own consumption or to be exported under the guise of a local product, like tea. Meat seems to be the chief new agro-export, whether canned, frozen, or on the hoof. Tobacco farmers have been encouraged and instructed in every way to go into cattle production, while growing maize and other fodder crops.

Settlers are quite conscious of the danger that economic decline holds for them at this time, and they are particularly worried about the situation in the countryside. Typical is the following statement by farmer Gertjacobus du Plessis, who says

³⁸ *Zimbabwe Review* (Lusaka), Vol. I, No. 2, June 1969.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

they demand better prices "not because we are greedy but because in the national interest, we must develop our farms and employ as many Africans as is economically possible."⁴⁰ Farmers have gained a more solid production base through diversification, but they need fewer workers.

The switch from labor-intensive tobacco cultivation to other crops and to cattle has brought with it a substantial decline in African employment. The settlers know this has political implications for the immediate future, and they are worried.

Complete figures are not available, but the trend is nonetheless evident to a marked decline in jobs for Africans in agriculture, not compensated by an increase in industrial and construction employment. The total number of employed Africans went down 1% between 1965 and June 1968, while the population was growing more than 12%. It is significant to note that throughout this period, both in the general slump which lasted until 1967 and in the subsequent rise in employment, jobs in agriculture have been steadily reduced, while industry and construction have been expanding. The number of agricultural jobs for Africans has gone down by 18% (47 000), while nonagricultural jobs have increased by 10% (37 000).⁴¹ Africans have fewer jobs than they need, and the only new jobs are in the cities urbanization is, therefore, continuing apace. The settlers know there is potential political dynamite in this process; they have chosen to defend white government at all costs, and find themselves caught in a contradiction.

The British Government and big business interests in Zimbabwe have made some timid experiments in promoting a middle-class political movement among Africans, capable of playing collaborationist roles like that of Hastings Banda, Prime Minister of Malawi, but the discriminated African urban population is solidly proletarian, and has paid no attention whatsoever. Unlike some parts of Latin America, for example, the racist social and economic structure on which settler power is based cannot admit the emergence of an African middle class, nor a comfortable urban working class, which could be susceptible to reformist propaganda.

Meanwhile, the countryside has been the scene of the greatest political changes in the history of Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union and the African National Congress of South Africa are refuting the myth of European superiority and invincibility, through armed struggle; they are now sustaining a guerrilla war which affects major areas of the country. The combined military forces of the fascist regimes of the so-called Rhodesia and South Africa have been unable to frustrate it. Our analysis shows that the course of development of the economic and political situation cannot but increase the discontent of all sectors of the African population, urban and rural. It is evident that the African liberation movement, now that it is fully underway, must go on to final victory. No amount of trickery and force can save the settler regime from destruction.

⁴⁰ Rhodesian Tobacco Journal.

⁴¹ Based on *Illustrated London News*, November 30, 1968, and *Times of Zambia*, August 25, 1968.