

Interviews in Depth

# Zimbabwe ZAPU



George Silundika

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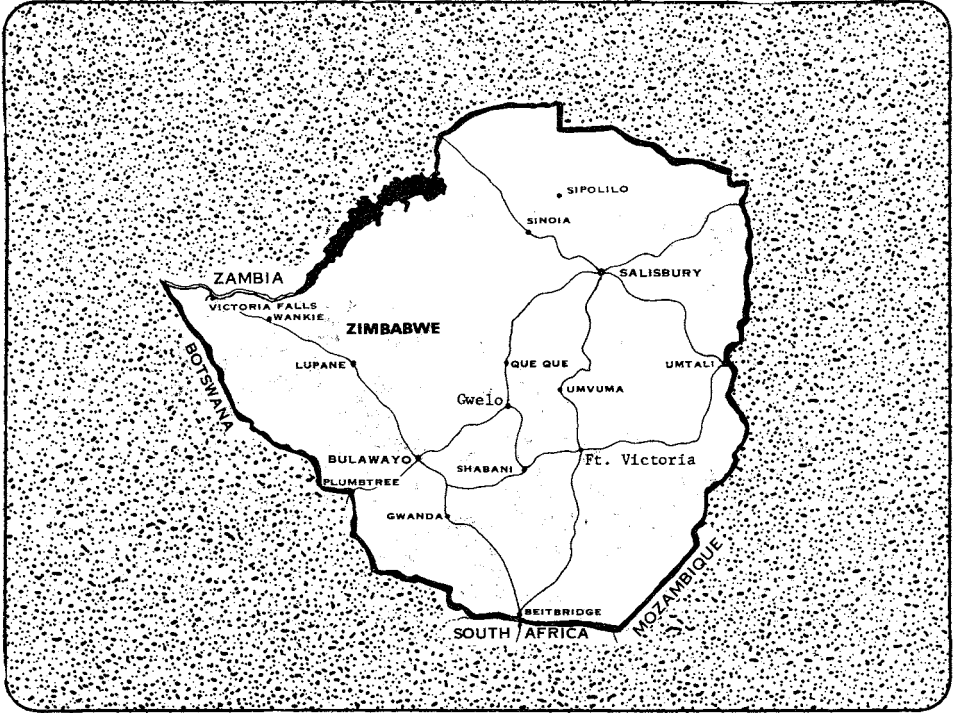
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INTERVIEWS IN DEPTH



# ZIMBABWE ZAPU '2'

Zimbabwe African People's Union.



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**LSM'S OLE GJERSTAD  
INTERVIEWS  
GEORGE SILUNDIKA,  
ZAPU PUBLICITY AND  
INFORMATION SECRETARY.**



Comrade George Silundika.

George Silundika was born in south-western Zimbabwe near the Botswana border in 1929. His father, a store manager, sent him to mission schools for an education — first to a nearby location and later to South Africa for secondary education. In the early 1950's while attending university at Fort Hare he became involved in the nationalist movement through the Youth League, which at the time played an important part in heightening anti-colonial and anti-racist consciousness among the youth of southern Africa. As an active and outspoken nationalist, Silundika soon became a "security risk" to the racist regime and was accordingly dismissed first from Fort Hare and then from the University of Lesotho. Following these expulsions he was fired from several jobs in Zimbabwe for his political views.

In 1959 he played an active part in launching the National Democratic Party, successor to the banned African National Congress, and was elected its Secretary General. He held this position until the Party was outlawed in late 1961. The Zimbabwe African People's Union was formed in December 1961 and Silundika worked at its Secretariat until September the following year when, like many of his comrades, he was placed under restriction as ZAPU, too, was banned. Released in 1963 he was appointed Publicity and Information Secretary of the underground ZAPU and shortly thereafter he left Zimbabwe.

In addition to leading the Party's information activities abroad, George Silundika is also a member of ZAPU's External Liaison Committee, which has the task of coordinating internal and external aspects of the struggle for a free Zimbabwe.

This interview was taped and edited by LSM's Ole Gjerstad at the ZAPU external headquarters in Lusaka, Zambia in November 1972. Additional data was added by T.G. Silundika in December 1973.

## FROM PARLIAMENTARY ROAD TO UNDERGROUND STRUGGLE

*When ZAPU was formed about ten years ago, its aim was to lead a legal and parliamentary-type struggle against the colonial regime. What changes have been made in ZAPU's structure as a result of the changing conditions of struggle over the past decade?*

The formal structure of ZAPU remains basically as provided for in the Constitution, the difference being that we are now operating exclusively underground to avoid harassment and capture by the regime. Our members are still organized at various levels — in cells, branches and districts. The cell organizes members at the lowest level and provides for day-to-day leadership and political guidance. A branch contains several cells, covers six to ten square miles and has a minimum of fifteen members. A district covers a larger area and rarely contains less than three branches. Several districts are then grouped into a region. Leaders at all levels are elected and can at any time be removed by those who elected them. The Party Congress elects members to serve on the People's Council, still the highest policy-making body of ZAPU. Originally the People's Council had thirty-two members but this number has now been increased. The Congress elects a President, Vice President and National Chairman and the President appoints the National Executive from among members of the elected People's Council. This is a mechanism to ensure that we have elected representatives acting as executives. The People's Council also controls the Department of Political Commissariat, which is responsible for political-education at all levels and within all components of the Party. On the administrative side we have a National Secretariat and several regional secretariats, with the latter working under the direction of the former. Their function is purely administrative and their members are appointed not elected. Within the structure of ZAPU there is also a youth wing, a women's organization and a national trade-union. These are mass organizations intended to ensure the participation in the struggle of as many Zimbabweans as possible.

On the military side ZAPU has been thoroughly reorganized over the last year. In late 1971 the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZPRA) was the formal name given to the military arm of ZAPU. The specific task of ZPRA is to carry out the armed revolutionary struggle in Zimbabwe. As a guerrilla force ZPRA is set up to meet the general military requirements applying to a guerrilla army. It has a High Command of six members plus a number of regional commands. At each of these different

levels there is a division of labour between the departments of logistics, personnel, communications, etc.

Decisions concerning general strategy are taken by the Revolutionary Council and implemented through the ZPRA command structure. The Revolutionary Council is a body recently constituted to ensure the participation of all wings of the Party in the development of the armed struggle. Represented are the Department of Political Commissariat, the High Command of ZPRA, the National Executive and the various mass organizations of the Party. In short, the Revolutionary Council represents all the components of our organization and, as such, guarantees the broadest possible participation in developing our strategy. All major decisions concerning ZPRA are taken at this level, while implementation and minor decisions are dealt with at the different levels down the command structure.

*What is the process of recruitment into ZPRA? Are there any particular conditions a recruit has to fulfill before being accepted for military training?*

Our primary concern is that ZAPU militants must have a correct political orientation. They must be clear about what is involved in the struggle and what kind of commitment they are making. They must fully understand the politics of their situation. Thus, it is not just a matter for ZPRA. A comrade must first be recommended at the cell and branch levels, and this involves an assessment by the political commissar. On the basis of these recommendations the leadership decides whether a person volunteering for ZPRA training is to be accepted. Political commissars work at all levels within ZPRA, carrying out political education and continuous evaluation of our military practices and fighters. Through this process we try to ensure that no volunteer is armed prematurely, and that the political aspect of our struggle remains of primary importance for ZPRA militants.

*Where and how do the ZPRA militants receive their training?*

There is no secret about how the training is acquired. Socialist countries have made it quite clear that they will help us in this area — and they have done so. A number of OAU countries have also assisted ZAPU in the military field. Such help is, in fact, given to all the Liberation Movements. I should add that this assistance only enables the Movements to help themselves within their own countries. Naturally we cannot send all our militants out of Zimbabwe for training; most of them are trained inside the country by comrades who acquired



military skills abroad. This is not unusual, you know. The Rhodesian regime, too, has its men trained abroad in South Africa and Portugal and most of their personnel receive some training by British instructors in Rhodesia. The settlers, like ourselves, are far from being self-sufficient in military training and equipment.

*How does ZAPU's External Liaison Committee (ELC) fit into the Party structure?*

The External Liaison Committee is really a product of the very difficult conditions of our struggle. The majority of ZAPU's leadership is in detention or in prison; only a few are free. The ELC is a nucleus of the National Executive, and its task is to link the external and internal fronts of the struggle. There are four of us in the ELC and this is really our only function. We do not constitute the final authority of the Party, either on the executive or on the policy-making plane. Such authority lies inside the country and all proposals which fundamentally affect our policy must be circulated so that the membership can arrive at a decision. The ELC can act only after that has been achieved. We find it necessary to stress that even though we are members of the National Executive, we must not be regarded as the central authority of ZAPU. Decisions of any major nature are arrived at through the participation of all Party members, and our Committee only carries out its tasks on behalf of the real authority in Zimbabwe.

*How has ZAPU managed to keep this fairly elaborate structure intact under the harsh conditions you have faced over the past decade or so?*

In 1959, when preparing the formation of the National Democratic Party (NDP), we decided it was necessary to also set up an underground structure. When the ANC was banned the previous year, it had become clear to us that the nationalist movement in Zimbabwe could not survive without some form of underground organization. Therefore, even before the NDP was officially launched, clandestine cells had been set up. And if anything happened, the cells were to take up the work of the branches. In 1962 when ZAPU was banned, and again in 1963 following the Cold Comfort Conference, most of our leadership was in fact arrested and detained. It was only due to our underground structure that ZAPU could continue to function.

Since then we have succeeded in developing a *modus operandi* by which communication has been maintained between the various levels, from the top leadership down to the cells. Our organi-

zational principles are understood by the membership and every comrade works with the understanding that, as a member, he or she is bound by the rules of the ZAPU Constitution. Each comrade knows that he has to carry out his tasks, and that he could be arrested and detained at any time. Fortunately, we have never suffered a total obliteration of our structure, though at times there have been temporary setbacks lasting several months. The people of Zimbabwe are conscious of the need to express themselves as a Party, in one way or another, and know that this requires their being organized on a national level.

Thus, although underground, ZAPU functions in many ways similar to the way it did before the ban. The duties of each member include attending meetings at which Party information is made available and political education is carried out. Members at each level have to participate in and support all Party activities carried out in their area and undergo training to help ZAPU intensify the struggle.

## THE MILITARY SITUATION

*Perhaps you could briefly discuss some of the major current problems involved in sustaining ZAPU activities in the face of an increasing repression by the white minority regime.*

Of course, we face many serious problems resulting from repression by the settler regime. Over the years the ruling minority has created a large reservoir of unemployed workers and landless peasants, and from their ranks it recruits a number of individuals who, in return for payment, work to provide the settlers with information. We have several methods of combating infiltration and spying. I already mentioned that political education is carried out by ZAPU cadre to raise the consciousness of the membership and strengthen appreciation of the need for discipline and strict security. ZAPU members thus develop a self-discipline — an understanding of what to say, and when, as well as how to behave under various circumstances. Naturally, when admitting new members we have a process of screening in order to protect the organization from enemy infiltrators. If a person is discovered to have any connection with dubious characters, he is closely scrutinized before being considered for even the most elementary levels of Party activity.

We have other problems as well. Sometimes there is a need for public opposition to certain measures, for an open political expression on the part of the masses. In the absence of higher leadership, it is often difficult for lower ranking cadre to

take the initiative in such situations. Fortunately, the political awareness of the masses has helped solve this problem. As you know, the solidarity and consciousness of the people were demonstrated in their public actions against the Smith/Douglas Home "settlement" proposals when the so-called Pearce Commission arrived in our country.\* The African National Council had only to issue a call and the masses came forward. This was possible, of course, only because the people have always been organized, and the ANC is but a product of the masses' desire to express themselves. Events of that time revealed a high level of political consciousness and clandestine organization among the Zimbabwe people.

*In August 1967, in alliance with the ANC of South Africa, ZAPU launched a military campaign against the settler regime in Zimbabwe. Within a year the heavy fighting seemed to be over and from mid-1970 until late 1972 there was almost no news of armed struggle in Zimbabwe. What were the reasons for this apparent setback?*

First, let me say that the purpose of this joint ANC/ZAPU action was to enable the ANC comrades to pass through Zimbabwe and into South Africa, and for ZAPU guerrillas to move into various zones of operation within Zimbabwe. We intended to avoid the enemy whenever possible, but with an understanding that in case of a confrontation fighting would be immediate and joint. So, when the enemy spotted some of our combined units before they reached their destinations, there was indeed heavy fighting. This occurs in all revolutions — in your planning you have to include the battles you hope to avoid.

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\*In late 1971 the Smith regime and the Conservative British Government, represented by Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Alec Douglas Home, reached an agreement through which Rhodesia would gain British recognition as an independent state and have all sanctions against her consequently dropped. However, one condition for the agreement to be implemented was that it must be proved acceptable to the people "as a whole" — in accordance with the last of the "five principles." In December 1971 the British appointed a Commission, composed of former colonial servants and headed by Lord Pearce, to assess the opinion of the people. During its visit to Zimbabwe in January and February 1972 the Commission registered an overwhelming refusal on the part of the African population to accept the settlement proposals. In the eyes of the whole world the Zimbabwe people clearly rejected both the legality of the settler regime and the attempt of the British Government to settle the future of the nation over the heads of the Africans.(LSM)

These battles raged in several areas, but especially around the town Wankie. Our guerrillas fought heroically and the enemy was forced to employ all the weapons at their disposal, including airplanes and heavy arms. The Smith regime suffered heavy losses, but so did we. Nevertheless, some of our units managed to break through enemy lines and a high level of fighting continued for about a year. In 1968 operations were centered in the Sipolilo and Dande areas of north-eastern Zimbabwe.

Despite our losses, the impact of the combat helped to mobilize the masses. The settlers had to admit, for the first time, that there were Africans waging an armed struggle inside Zimbabwe with the support of the population. In spite of the severe press censorship in Zimbabwe the people were able to see the results of ZAPU's military activities. Many families — both African and white — lost their sons during the fighting and the regime was forced to admit considerable losses. The fighting spurred the hopes of the masses for freedom and made it clear to them that only the path of armed struggle could liberate Zimbabwe.

During this period the enemy developed new tactics — but we, too, learned many lessons from the early confrontations. We reviewed our strategy and tactics and made several changes to neutralize or counter the new enemy tactics.

Fighting continued well into 1970 when, after a thorough assessment of the struggle, we changed our priorities and devised new ways to face the enemy. From mid-1970 until quite recently very few military operations were carried out by ZAPU forces. But since 1972 the intensity of the armed struggle has increased considerably — and it will continue to do so.

Speaking of setbacks, I would like to emphasize that there are setbacks in any liberation struggle — though the reasons may differ from one movement to another and from time to time. Some of the basic causes are clear. There is the problem, for example, of reconciling plans and means — the discrepancy between the two being an essential problem for all African liberation movements. When I speak of "means" I include equipment, logistical ability, trained cadre, finances, and so forth. To a certain extent our plans depend for their success on external support, but often we do not get all the supplies and other help we need. So problems arise which can lead to temporary stagnation in the armed struggle — as happened with ZAPU from 1970 to 1972. As we expand the struggle, our needs will grow; and the satisfaction of yesterday's needs alone cannot meet the new demands of today. As you probably know, ZAPU also encountered some serious political problems at this time, and these naturally also affected our military operations.



Edward Ndllovu, National Secretary of ZAPU (Zimbabwe People's Union)

## POLITICAL CONFLICTS IN THE MOVEMENT

*Perhaps you could comment on the nature of these problems. What were the main issues and how was the conflict resolved?*

To begin with, those of us in the external leadership of the Party had been on our mission abroad for several years and during this period were subject to all kinds of pressures — which in some instances have had a very negative impact. It became increasingly difficult for us to deal effectively with problems as they arose and a situation gradually took shape in which there was no alternative except to once-and-for-all sort out the basic differences — even if this demanded a lot of time and energy and finally led to the departure of certain leaders.

The essential conflict focused on the question of power. Our Vice President at the time started to make increasingly arbitrary and capricious decisions, at times endangering all the

outside operations of ZAPU. When confronted with his mistakes he claimed that the powers he had assumed derived from the decisions of the Cold Comfort Conference\* which, among other things, made Joshua Nkomo our President for life, but with clearly limited powers. The actions of the Vice President, including his arbitrary appointment of officers and his insistence on administering all of ZAPU's departments, had absolutely no basis in the decisions taken at Cold Comfort. ZAPU cannot be run like a company where the director alone can decide everything, including who is to be sacked and who promoted. It is a political organization and the leadership must be responsible and accountable to the militants and the masses for all its decisions. No leader can simply use the people as instruments to satisfy personal whims.

It soon became clear that the actions of the Vice President were part of an attempt by a small group of leaders and cadre to seize total control of ZAPU. As a means to this end they tried to manipulate our army. But since the army forms such an important part of any liberation movement, the organization had made sure beforehand that it would never become the instrument of an individual or be used to advance the personal interests of anyone in leadership. The army must always remain an instrument of the whole Party, designed to serve the interests of the Zimbabwe masses and not those of individuals or cliques.

This group also attempted to mislead the Zimbabwe people by appealing to tribal sentiments and chauvinism — turning Shona-speaking Zimbabweans against the Ndebele speakers. Their intention was not to advance the interests of the Shona; they were just trying to use one element of the Zimbabwe people to advance their narrow selfish interests.

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\*At the formation of ZAPU in December 1961 it was resolved that in case of a ban, no other "open" organization would be formed to take ZAPU's place. All political activity would be carried out clandestinely. ZAPU was in fact outlawed in the fall of 1962 and, soon after, differences developed in the leadership regarding this resolution. Those who favoured the founding of a new, legal organization finally broke away and constituted the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). To clear up the ensuing confusion and solve its organizational problems, the banned ZAPU convened a conference at the Cold Comfort farm near Salisbury in August 1963. It was attended by 5,000 Zimbabweans from all over the country and resulted in the establishment of an open body, the People's Caretaker Council, which was to be responsible for organizing the Zimbabwe people in support of ZAPU. (LSM)

The rest of the leadership was not prepared to merely stand by and watch this happen. We resisted all maneuvers in order to preserve ZAPU. The Party, we felt, should retain its basic form and symbols as known to the masses, and the unquestionably established national leadership of Joshua Nkomo. Planning must be carried out by established leadership so that the nation can move ahead within a stable framework and counter the subversive neo-colonialist operations of imperialist forces which will certainly try to take advantage of any internal differences. The conflict resulted in an open confrontation within ZAPU. By firm action on our part — and some good fortune as well — we managed to win out, despite the fact that some of our cadre were led to extraordinary lengths of opportunistic reaction in an attempt to evade the root problems of stagnation in our struggle.

Such were our principal differences. They took a long time to unfold. Frustrations set in and many comrades fell by the wayside. In the end, when it became clear that they had failed to attain their objective, this group of opportunists revealed its true colors. On October 1st 1971 the former ZAPU Vice President, James Chikerema, and Secretary General, George Nyandoro, formed Frolizi, the so-called Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe — an organization based on exiles and without origins among the Zimbabwe masses.

*Are you implying that this crisis was more a product of external pressures on ZAPU's exiled leadership than of contradictions emerging among the Zimbabwe people?*

External forces definitely played a key part in shaping the crisis within ZAPU. For some time prior to the conflict, Chikerema and Nyandoro had been surrounding themselves with the kind of petty-bourgeois elements that one always finds on the fringes of the struggle — those who look more to the rewards of the revolution than to its sacrifices. This group of Zimbabwean lawyers, professors, doctors, etc., led Chikerema to believe that armed struggle could no longer be the primary instrument for achieving our liberation. The course of the struggle, they said, had to be altered. This explains the statement Chikerema made in Dakar, in July 1971, when he arbitrarily made an offer to the British Government for negotiations if the "five conditions"\* were fulfilled. It was obvious that the British neo-colonialists were taking advantage of Chikerema's credulousness in order to manipulate the Party. From then on it was impossible to continue the work of ZAPU without sorting out our basic differences and contradictions.

As an exile element of a liberation movement, we have many

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\*See Appendix

problems. Our supporters do not always assist us only with the materials we request; some of them become impatient if they feel that *their* ideas and plans for the Zimbabwe struggle are not implemented. When they fail to get their ideas accepted, they may look for opportunistic elements within the Movement and seek to channel their ideas through them. There are opportunists in every movement; people who get tired in the course of the struggle and begin to feel that, perhaps, if the organization took an "easier path" the struggle might still achieve many of its objectives. Such elements can also be used by our enemies — they encourage a split and offer the splitters all kinds of aid in return.

Such a combination of external factors plus opportunists within the Movement was in part responsible for the problems that plagued us; and it in this light that we view Frolizi. We hold to a firm ZAPU principle: No organization of the Zimbabwe people should be formed outside the country which lacks the support of the masses within Zimbabwe. This has been a basic policy of the Party since the Cold Comfort Conference. If a new organization is to be constituted, it must emanate from among the people. This is why we did not instantly oppose the African National Council (ANC), since it emerged *within* Zimbabwe and according to the will of the masses at that time. If our nation accepted the formation of organizations outside, we would open ourselves to many contradictions that could only hinder the advance of the struggle. No successful national liberation movement can base itself on exiles and outside forces!





*Did you practice the democratic principle of criticism and self-criticism in ZAPU prior to the crisis?*

Until 1968 the leadership used to discuss all matters freely, decide collectively and accept responsibility collectively. In 1969, however, Chikerema started to avoid meetings and discussion, refusing to convene the External Liaison Committee. And as he was drifting away he made a number of disastrous mistakes, like allowing a film to be made by bourgeois British newsmen in which some of our secret bases and plans were exposed. Naturally, this was a sharp break from our tradition of collective decision-making. I agree that this may speak poorly of ZAPU's internal procedures and practices, but I nonetheless think the problems we had revealed more about certain individuals within ZAPU than about the Movement as a whole. The actions of Chikerema and Nyandoro were absolutely contrary to both the ideology and discipline of the Party.

## ESTABLISHING A SOCIALIST BASE

*I wonder if you could tell us something about ZAPU's ideological position?*

We in ZAPU see the need to replace the oppressive economic system that now prevails in our country with a completely different system which will genuinely benefit the masses of people living under it. We proceed from analyzing the present conditions in Zimbabwe, conditions dominated by colonialism. Colonialism has developed from capitalism, and the lives of the Zimbabweans have been molded according to the demands of the capitalist and racist system. These demands, through which we have been exploited for generations, have oppressed and degraded us as human beings.

The racist regime has adopted policies to ensure privileges for a white minority under the capitalist system. And it is important to understand that capitalism in Zimbabwe benefits the entire white minority. The classical picture of the working class versus the bourgeoisie does not quite apply here because of the element of racism in our situation. An African worker and a white worker doing the same job belong objectively to different classes, even though they are both workers. Racism enters to create a privileged minority within the working class. This is an important feature of capitalism in southern Africa.

In our conception of the Zimbabwean revolution we recognize that the economic base must be changed in order to elimi-

nate racism. In short, both capitalism and racism must be eliminated as we establish a socialist base in our country. In ZAPU we try to analyze our situation and conceive of socialism as it applies to us. We are conscious of the many problems that Zimbabwe's people will face on the road to constructing a new society — lack of capital, skilled manpower, education, etc., and we believe it essential that while these factors are being acquired our development must be based upon self-reliance, on our ability to produce for ourselves. Our people must attain full command over the development of a free Zimbabwe. Democracy should be exercised within the framework of socialism and for the well-being of the people.

*I have noticed that you talk about ZAPU both as a "Party" and a "Movement." How has it developed to fill this double function?*

ZAPU is both a Party and, in the liberation struggle, a Movement. It is a Party in the sense that it strives to develop a revolutionary ideology and create a core of cadre who are articulate, dedicated and capable of putting this revolutionary ideology across to the masses. Our ideology and our cadre should be a reflection of the future we would like to build. Ideology is essential because there has to be a motive-force in our effort, something which decides the goal of the struggle and its path. In this revolutionary process, ZAPU works also as a Movement in that it embraces the broadest possible range of Zimbabweans in the struggle.

ZAPU, as it is today, is the product of a protracted struggle. For a long time the nationalist movement in Zimbabwe followed reformist policies. The old ANC merely wanted to reform the capitalist system; to attain parliamentary power and bring in an African bourgeoisie to take over Zimbabwe industry. ZAPU started as a mass organization encompassing all Zimbabweans who for various reasons objected to the presence of the colonial regime. ZAPU's objectives, as stated in our Constitution, are to implement the principle of "one man one vote" as the basis for democratic government in Zimbabwe; to unite the African people so that they can liberate themselves from all forms of imperialism and colonialism; to fight against all forms of oppression, and to create conditions for the economic prosperity of the people. These ideas alone do not make ZAPU a revolutionary Party, even if they are consistent with socialism. As the struggle developed, we found that merely gaining parliamentary power would not solve the basic problems of the Zimbabwe people. It would be senseless to fight against colonialism and imperialism only to establish "indigenous" capitalism in our country after the "victory." The question became: If we get rid of colonialism, what must we put in its place? And gradually we



**Guerrillas at a ZAPU camp**

were forced to develop our position on important issues like the ownership of the means of production, including the ownership and use of land, and the control of the state apparatus.

Because of ZAPU's history as a mass movement it was sometimes difficult to discuss our ideological position openly. Many members entertained petty-bourgeois ideas and aspirations, and some had joined hoping only to replace the settlers as an exploiting African elite once the struggle was over. But after the last spilt we decided to state our ideological position openly and in clear terms. Any member who joined the struggle for the sake of personal gain will now have to leave ZAPU or dedicate himself to the cause of the people. The process of our struggle has proved to the Zimbabwe people that only socialism can solve their problems, and that the armed struggle is the only means by which we can attain our objectives.

*In view of what you have already said about the history and development of the revolutionary struggle in Zimbabwe, perhaps you could briefly summarize recent changes in ZAPU strategy?*

Of course, certain specific aspects of ZAPU strategy and tactics are not a matter for open discussion. But the fact that we have constituted a Revolutionary Council embracing elements from all sectors of the Movement does represent a new aspect of our internal strategy designed to move us onto a stage of more correct analysis and decision. Moreover, we have made sure that the political wing under the direction of the Political Commissariat plays an active and responsible role in order to ensure a correct direction to all of our activities. We have also decided that it is absolutely vital to encourage the circulation of ideas at all levels. We now make a clear distinction between ideas and "rank," so that differences in "rank" should not constitute an obstruction to the critical discussion of ideas. We have to fully utilize our mental resources at all levels of the organization so that the struggle can be carried out on as solid a basis as possible. We believe that through broad, critical discussion and mass participation we can do away with most of the frustrations of the past and greatly strengthen ZAPU's task of liberating Zimbabwe.

Our present military strategy has in part been conditioned by the strength of the enemy. Since 1970 we have analyzed the basis of the enemy's strength and revised our strategy and tactics so as to be able to strike where it hurts the most. The basis of settler power is a large, well-equipped army and a good transportation network and communications facilities. The enemy can finance a large military apparatus because of his industry and trade. We have to take all this into consideration.

## ON ZIMBABWE STUDENTS ABROAD

*In a recent ZAPU publication there was mention of a program called "Homewards into Battle." Maybe you could explain that title and summarize the content of the program?*

As you might have realized, that particular publication was directed to elements of our people presently outside Zimbabwe. The purpose of the publication was to deal with an aspect of the struggle that we are very concerned with — namely, the tendency among many Zimbabweans to be diverted from the struggle by outside attractions. It was our intention to emphasize the current nature of our struggle and point out that everyone, whether a militant of the Party or not, must return to

Zimbabwe and carry the struggle forward from within the country. The tendency for more and more Zimbabweans to go into exile must be changed — we must reverse it and create a flow back to the country. Our slogan "Homewards into Battle," is also intended to counter an impression the outside world is getting of an increasing dispersal of our people. We continually emphasize that the center of our struggle must be *inside* Zimbabwe.

*Many young people from the exploited countries studying in Europe and North America, including Zimbabweans, claim to be taking part in the liberation struggle of their people. What is ZAPU's attitude toward this phenomenon?*

There are many young Zimbabweans studying abroad and most of them will want to return to their country in the future. The question is, When? Some, perhaps, will return only to share in the fruits of a victory achieved by those who have struggled, suffered and even laid down their lives. Zimbabwean students spread all over the world are seeking what we would all like to accomplish: the scientific knowledge denied to our people during the colonial era. Of course, any Zimbabwean with an education is a potential asset to the future of the country and we know that many of these students are very concerned about the liberation of Zimbabwe. They see its necessity and feel very strongly about the struggle, and are concerned with its progress. But it is at this point that the real question emerges! What contribution are they, in fact, making to the liberation struggle?

ZAPU insists that in the present circumstances it is necessary for all Zimbabweans to actively participate in the struggle. This is where we normally encounter wavering and opportunism. Students are people who learn to deal with abstract ideas and when we invite them to join the armed struggle many immediately become architects of all kinds of escapist notions. Most of the things they say are mere rationalizations designed to avoid physical involvement in the revolution.

This problem, as you said, is common to most revolutionary struggles. On our part, we must admit that wavering, desertion and defection from the struggle are far too frequent among Zimbabwe students abroad. This is regrettable not only because the masses lose the creative energy of these young people, but because their behavior has a negative impact on our work in the international arena. Many pose as "representatives" or "spokesmen" of the Zimbabwe struggle, while at the same time refusing to accept the discipline, sacrifices and responsibilities of active participation. Their most common mode of escape from this is to discredit the efforts of those who are committing

their lives to the tasks of the liberation movement. It is not so much the struggle itself as "the way the revolution is being handled" which they invoke as a pretext for dropping out. This criticizing and discrediting makes great "entertainment" for the bourgeoisie and academic liberals, but we hope that most serious people are able to determine the difference between genuine revolutionaries and big talkers.

ZAPU's demand is simple and straightforward: We want every genuine Zimbabwean patriot to come forward and join the liberation struggle, to accept his share of the hardships and sacrifices involved. Such is his task at the present moment in history, and it applies as much to students as to other Zimbabweans.

I would like to add that ZAPU believes the international community should not provide aid to *individuals* but only to *movements* which are actively engaged in bringing about the liberation of their countries. No person should be aided merely because he has lived under an oppressive regime. There are many opportunists abroad who make a living by exploiting the sympathies of foreign liberals and progressives (while the destitute children of parents who sacrificed their lives in the struggle remain entirely without help from international organizations). If the latter deal with individuals instead of with genuine Liberation Movements, they will be lending their efforts to promoting a way of life where the real oppression of colonialism and neo-colonialism is left unchallenged and its victims largely ignored. If progressive organizations and individuals within the international community really want to see an end to colonialism, racism and oppression, they should support those actively involved within the Liberation Movements and not persons who are acquiring knowledge primarily to advance their own personal interests. Individuals who are prepared to stay away from the front forever — living a high-life abroad and talking struggle while doing nothing about it — deserve no support. We feel that it is not only a waste of funds, but a form of indirect assistance to our enemies. We know that imperialist forces are doing this consciously — through scholarships, grants, loans, etc. — in order to divert people from the real struggle and create an elite which can later serve the interests of imperialism. But we believe strongly that progressive organizations abroad have an obligation to assist only those Movements which are actively engaged in the real fight to eliminate oppression.

## EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND THE JOINT MILITARY COMMAND

*There are now three Zimbabwe organizations — the Zimbabwe Af-*

frican National Union (ZANU), the African National Council (ANC), and Frolizi — which in addition to ZAPU claim to represent the vanguard of the Zimbabwe people's struggle for freedom. This situation has created considerable confusion abroad and has made support work extremely difficult. Perhaps you could explain exactly what separates ZAPU from the other organizations I have mentioned as well as ZAPU's specific relations with ZANU, ANC and FROLIZI.

ZAPU was originally formed to provide continuity in the nationalist movement after the successive bannings of the African National Congress and the NDP — both established by Zimbabweans, in Zimbabwe, and with mass support. The line of the masses was consistent from the founding of the ANC to the formation of ZAPU and, despite the banning of our Party in 1962, the interests of the masses have continued to be advanced through ZAPU's clandestine and military activities.

About our relations with these other organizations: ZANU was formed by people who left our Party in 1963. What was the reason for this split? At that time our nation had reached an important juncture regarding the direction we should take in the struggle. The leadership was exposed to external pressures and some felt that our earlier decision not to form another open organization should be changed...that a new legal organization should be set up. The Party refused, however, feeling that this would only be yielding to the manipulations of the colonial regime. Those members in opposition then broke away and formed ZANU. They said the situation in Zimbabwe should be brought before the Commonwealth and not to the UNO as ZAPU had proposed. Certain African governments, you see, thought they could succeed in convincing the British Government to back down on the "Rhodesian question" — just as they had recently succeeded in having South Africa expelled from the Commonwealth. We held that the issues were different and that Britain should be made to face a broad international forum in addition to the armed opposition of the Zimbabwe masses.

The British were at that time nursing false hopes that the Zimbabwe Africans would abandon ZAPU, constitute another legal organization and join the settlers in putting a common request to the British for "independence." They could then make use of this opportunity to call a constitutional conference to discuss this and related questions. The leader of ZANU, Rev. Sithole, was attracted by this idea and made several overtures to the settler leader, Winston Field. We, on the other hand, strongly rejected such a move because it meant pushing for a phoney "independence" rather than for *majority rule*, which formed the basis for all our demands. A conference involving the British and the settlers leading a delegation of "all Zimbabwe people"

could only result in "independence" for the settlers, with the African masses remaining a vast internal colony. This result was built right into the proposed structure of the delegations. Comrade Nkomo and the majority of the ZAPU leadership foresaw this result and accordingly rejected the legalistic plans of Sithole.

The founders of ZANU also inclined toward a legal elitist movement, led by people with degrees and emphasizing "intellectual" status as a necessary element of leadership. This was obviously contrary to the feeling of the people but ZANU made strong efforts in this direction. Only later, when they saw that this could not succeed, did they turn to popular slogans about the armed struggle.

More recently, however, a transformation has taken place within ZANU ranks and they now believe as much as ZAPU in the need for armed struggle. Our differences have thus become largely historical, and it is for this reason that the external wings of both organizations felt that with our comrades inside Zimbabwe coming together in the African National Council — without abandoning the identity of their respective parties — it was necessary for us to follow their example. Therefore, on 23 March 1972, we constituted the Joint Military Command (JMC), a body of fourteen members, seven each from ZANU and ZAPU, whose task was to coordinate the military operations of the two movements. At present, we are engaged in the process of building a unified army, but we hope this will only be the first step in a successful process of unification. The formation of the JMC is based on our common belief that the future of Zimbabwe is organically linked with the development of the armed revolutionary struggle; and because of this, we now have to take all possible steps to eliminate obstacles and threats to the unity of the Zimbabwe people. The question of the political identities of the two movements is not necessarily an obstruction, because once we arrive at a common conception of what the future holds, further consultations regarding the political aspect of our work should experience no serious difficulties.

As matters developed, on 17 March 1972, after four days of discussion — with the participation of an OAU subcommittee comprising the Foreign Ministers of Ghana, Cameroun and Zambia, and the Deputy Foreign Ministers of Kenya and Tanzania — comrades Jaison Moyo for ZAPU and Herbert Chitepo for ZANU signed, in Lusaka, a further agreement supplementing the earlier Mbeya agreement by providing for the formation of a Political Council made up of seven members from each organization. This Political Council was to plan the overall political and military strategy under the chairmanship of a ZAPU member.



Unfortunately, though a compelling necessity for the future liberation of Zimbabwe, these arrangements have not yet become operational due to delays caused by a few elements within ZANU who are just maturing to the glory of a few successful military operations in Zimbabwe — a stage we in ZAPU passed long ago.

Such is our relationship with ZANU. The differences, however, have clearly receded and a common conception of the struggle now exists in both movements.

For a long time there have been pressures, especially from some of the OAU countries, for ZAPU and ZANU to unite. This has sometimes made our work difficult. False unity is an obstacle to progress, and it would have been useless to form a new party just to satisfy the international community. Such a new party would have been unable to operate in Zimbabwe if its formation had not been approved by the masses. This, as I stressed earlier, is one reason why the extension of cooperation between ZAPU and ZANU is not something which can be decided outside and presented the Zimbabwe people as a *fait accompli*.

As I said before, such outside pressures are in part responsible for the formation of Frolizi. During the crisis within ZAPU Chikerema started secret, personal negotiations with the ZANU leadership on the question of unity. During these talks the ZANU leadership became divided, some not believing that Chikerema had a mandate to negotiate alone on this question or the backing of the entire ZAPU organization. Those ZANU members who wanted to continue the negotiations eventually joined with Chikerema and Nyandoro to form Frolizi. They were followed by a number of middle level cadre from both organizations — some of whom initially occupied leading positions in Frolizi and issued all kinds of statements about their plans for the armed struggle. Within a year, however, these younger people had been deposed and now the real leaders, Chikerema and Nyandoro are firmly entrenched in the drivers seat.

As I emphasized, we are very much against the proliferation of splinter groups. As ZAPU is developing systematically, healing its wounds and preparing for the future in a constructive manner, we do not think that new organizations should be formed. We believe the actions of Chikerema and Nyandoro were reactionary and ZAPU now has absolutely no relations with Frolizi. It is to the misfortune of the Zimbabwe people that there are forces beyond our control which encourage splitist tendencies; forces both in Africa and outside. This is unfortunate, but we trust that the Zimbabwe people will stand firm on the principle of not recognizing or tolerating any organization formed outside the country.

Regarding our relationship to the African National Council, we recognize the ANC as a legitimate political phenomenon at the present stage of the struggle. A critical issue arose in Zimbabwe: a constitution was about to be imposed and it became necessary to initiate open political action to counter this move by the settlers and British colonialists. The people rose to protect their interests and to inform the outside world of their real position. In these circumstances large numbers of politicized and already organized Zimbabweans played a significant part of launching the ANC. Though some of the ANC leaders themselves were not previously involved in the struggle, ZAPU cadre mustered the existing underground power and succeeded in registering their position with the international community. The ANC thus evolved out of necessity — as a result of the developing opposition within the country — and at the moment it performs a necessary function. Naturally, if it begins to waver and diverge from the basic policies of the struggle, or if it is misled by opportunist forces, we will not keep silent. We will quickly draw the attention of our brothers and sisters to any such tendencies, and they will no doubt deal with them. However, for the time being, we think that the masses must use this tactical opportunity to advance the struggle and mobilize the concern of the international community.



*What further developments, if any, do you think are possible for the ANC?*

You have to appreciate that the essential qualities of the ANC leaders are their nationalism and their desire for freedom. At the same time it must be recognized that they have come rather late onto the field of struggle and are thus not very experienced. Again, taking into account their long-time religious involvement, we feel that they need more time to develop the kind of approach that has been employed during our period of clandestine activity. There are some similarities between the emergence of the present ANC and the previous development of the old ANC, NDP and ZAPU. This is primarily because the Zimbabwe masses were the basic force. We are confident that the masses won't allow any leaders, whether of the ANC or any other organization, to commit the nation to a non-revolutionary course. Our guarantee is the persistence of the masses in their demand for genuine freedom, which they have already sacrificed so much for. The ANC struck a correct note with an already organized people, and the people reacted in a disciplined manner. So, while the ANC leadership is inexperienced, the masses have a long history of struggle and will ensure a correct direction to further developments. Bishop Muzorewa's recent public surrender of the principle of "One Man, one vote!" and his unprincipled flirtations with Ian Smith represent a radical and dangerous deviation from the correct line of the masses.

## STRUGGLE FOR A HUMANE SOCIETY

*Growing cooperation between the racist regimes of southern Africa would seem to both strengthen their overall military position and reduce the strategic significance of national borders on the sub-continent. How does ZAPU think this trend should be dealt with by the Liberation Movements?*

We see European colonialism as a single, coordinated process — both at present and in the past. At the Berlin Conference ninety years ago the colonial powers divided Africa up among themselves; they agreed by treaty to dismember and conquer an entire continent. Such was their cooperation then. And now that the exploited peoples are rising to throw off the yoke of colonialism in all parts of the world, the colonialists have again joined forces to resist their being ejected. The Vorster regime in South Africa and Namibia, the Caetano regime in Portugal and the Smith regime in Rhodesia share a determination to maintain their minority and racist governments in power and hold the African masses in check. These regimes have coordinat-

ed their economies, intelligence apparatuses, military forces and international diplomacy in an all out effort to continue their enormous exploitation of the peoples and natural wealth of Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia, Angola, Zimbabwe and Guiné Bissau.

We are also aware that these racist regimes are closely aligned to powerful capitalist forces centered in Europe and the United States. In the decisive economic sense, the essential power of these regimes stems from the NATO countries which provide almost all the equipment employed to suppress our peoples and their struggles. It is therefore necessary that the Liberation Movements coordinate every possible aspect of their operations in order to counter the strategy of the imperialist-racist forces. I believe that the alliance between the ANC of South Africa and ZAPU was a concrete step in this direction. We also have good relations with Frelimo, SWAPO of Namibia, PAIGC and MPLA. This stems from a common desire to expand and deepen our struggles. It is impossible for Mozambique to be really free while Zimbabwe remains in colonialist hands — because if driven out of Mozambique, the colonialists will attack from Zimbabwe. If South Africa is not touched by the struggle, it will also remain a rear base for the Portuguese counter-revolutions in Mozambique and Angola. Similarly, Namibia could easily become a base for enemy actions against a free Angola or Zimbabwe.

These possibilities were clearly revealed in the visits of Smith to Portugal and South Africa's Minister of Defence, Botha, to Rhodesia as well as in the monthly meetings of the "Council of Three" consisting of top-ranking South African, Portuguese and Rhodesian military officers. Since 1967 there have been South African troops in Zimbabwe, and both Rhodesian and South African soldiers are active in Angola and Mozambique. This is not just a political episode; it is a manifestation of deep and extensive colonialist cooperation which so far has had only a few expressions on the surface.

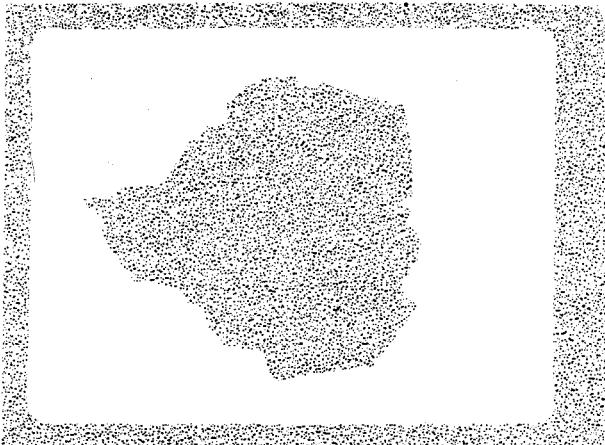
The formation of the OAU was based on the need for African countries to come together to check the forces of imperialism on the continent. The racist regimes in the south represent a grave threat to independent Africa — a base for imperialist activities against the entire continent. It is therefore imperative for the Liberation Movements to coordinate their strategies in harmony with continental objectives. Our struggles against the racist and fascist regimes are hindering the imperialist offensive against independent Africa, and for this reason both the OAU and the Liberation Movements benefit from close cooperation.

## APPENDIX

### THE FIVE PRINCIPLES

During negotiations between the settlers and the British government for Rhodesia's independence, it was agreed that the following conditions would have to be met to protect the rights of the African population before Britain would "let go" of the colony.

1. The principle and intention of unimpeded progress to majority rule, already enshrined in the 1961 Constitution, would have to be maintained and guaranteed.
2. There would also have to be guarantees against retrogressive amendment to the Constitution.
3. There would have to be immediate improvement in the political status of the African population.
4. There would have to be progress towards ending all racial discrimination.
5. The British government would need to be satisfied that any basis proposed for independence was acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole.



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