



# OUR REVOLUTION WILL BE A COMPLETE SUCCESS!

Interview with **GEORGE NYANDORO**,  
Secretary-General of the  
Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union (ZAPU)

Comrade Nyandoro, there was a time when you were a frequent visitor to London, voicing the demands of your organization that the British Government discharge its responsibilities in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Nowadays, you seldom leave your headquarters in Lusaka. Can you tell us why you have come to London now?

You mention your organization's commitment now to fighting for freedom, and since August 1967 the world has been aware of an armed struggle in Zimbabwe.

What stage would you say has now been reached in that struggle, and what perspectives do you see for the future?



The main purpose of my coming is to reorganize the ZAPU office in London, following the executive's decision to appoint Mr K. L. Dube as their representative in the UK, Europe and the United Nations. The truth is that we seldom come to London because the Executive no longer sees the London office as having the importance it had in the past, as we no longer look to Britain or to the calling of a Constitutional Conference to solve the Zimbabwe problem. We are committed to fighting for our independence against British settler imperialism. To put it bluntly, either we are in the bush with our guns and hand-grenades, or Mr Nkomo and his people are in power in Salisbury.

First I must say that resistance to foreign rule in Zimbabwe started not in 1967, nor in the post-war period, but when the first British settlers invaded the country; and this resistance has continued in one form or another, with varied intensity, through 70 years. And we have always regarded our struggle as in the end, inevitably, an armed struggle. The reasons which have inhibited us from taking up arms in the past — in the 1940s and the early 1950s — were merely logistic reasons. Imperialist forces were still dominant throughout Africa, and there was no room for movement in one direction or another, for acquiring supplies or training-facilities. This is a historical fact. But the feeling of the people even at that time was that in order to get freedom and independence from the foreigners dominating our country, there was no other way except by armed struggle. The people of Zimbabwe are wholly committed to liberating themselves, and they have no other choice but to intensify the fight against the British imperialist settler forces, and to dedicate ourselves to fighting together with our brothers, who are in similar circumstances in South Africa. What gains have we made? Our forces have fought valiantly, and forced the Rhodesian regime to call for aid from South Africa, since white Rhodesia alone was unable to contain our patriots. And this in turn has exposed Britain's repeated lie that it would intervene directly in the event of a breakdown of law and order. Instead, the British made a secret agreement with South Africa to assist Smith, and thus avoided the embarrassment of sending British troops to Zimbabwe to fight the liberation forces of ZAPU. And I must mention here that ZAPU is quite aware that if Britain should send any troops into Rhodesia, they would be there to fight against the African people and to defend the white settlers — we are prepared for this, we are prepared to fight British troops and any other foreign troops brought in to help the settlers.

There are also gains in terms of support for our struggle from the progressive peoples of the world, and of course from our comrades-in-arms in FRELIMO, MPLA, PAIGC, SWAPO — and the ANC, with whom we have already concluded an alliance. This alliance is particularly important, because in the past we have found ourselves confronted with an alliance of our enemy: successive regimes in South Africa, Rhodesia, Mozambique and Angola have been working together, and continue to work together, to fight against the forces of liberation in Southern Africa. Our patriots in Zimbabwe and in South Africa found themselves facing a common enemy. Besides, for the South African liberation forces to enter South Africa to fight, they have to pass through Zimbabwe; and where the South Af-

rican forces were already in logistical positions it was logical that our forces should move in, as comrades-in-arms, whether destined to fight in Zimbabwe or South Africa. This is an alliance to which we all, in both organizations, are absolutely committed, it is here to stay, and I wish to tell both our friends and our foes that we need no advice from anybody now, except on how best to consolidate our efforts to dislodge the settlers of Southern Africa.

**What are the prospects for revolution in Zimbabwe? How confident are you of being able to dislodge the Smith regime?**

What are the chances of revolution? Our revolution will be a complete success! There is no question about it — we shall go on fighting until we are in complete control of our own affairs. One need only look back at history, and see how the Algerians fought for their independence against 400,000 French troops in occupation. Today, Algeria is independent. The total settler population of Zimbabwe is only 250,000, but time and again we have been told that the Rhodesian and South African defence forces would prove invincible. We have already disposed of this fallacy forever, in the battlefield in the autumn of last year. Like all peoples fighting for their own liberation, we are armed not only with weapons, but with our own inner, immovable determination to liberate ourselves whatever the odds. Compared with this, our enemies' forces are little better than mercenaries. Our comrades in FRELIMO, MPLA and PAIGC have already shown what revolutionary soldiers can do: Portugal is spending *forty per cent* of its budget suppressing Mozambique and Angola and Guinea-Bissau, yet its forces are retreating at every point.

**ZAPU's executive is based outside the country. How close are you to the ordinary people of Zimbabwe? How do you know that they are behind you, that their mood corresponds with your strategy?**

We know because ZAPU's machinery is functioning inside the country. It is as complete as it was when functioning normally on the surface, and our liaison has been maintained in spite of the enemy's increasing terror. We know that we are reading the mood of the people correctly, because of the welcome our people have given to the alliance with the ANC, as something not only necessary but long overdue. We know because of the welcome and practical assistance that they have given at every turn to the liberation forces. Our guerillas could never survive inside Zimbabwe without the support and protection of the people — and this in the face of death penalties, torture and mass arrests in various parts of the country.

**In what way do you see resolutions of the United Nations, in particular the selective mandatory sanctions imposed against the Smith regime, as helping the struggle?**

We have repeatedly made it clear that economic sanctions just do not work, for the very countries that put forward the idea from time to time violate the UN resolutions themselves! Britain is one of the culprits. Ever since taking the case of Rhodesia to the UN and asking for mandatory sanctions, Britain's own companies, operating from London, have been able to continue trade with Rhodesia. Banks are still operating in Rhodesia, insurance companies, oil companies such as Shell, B. P. and Caltex, and mining organizations are still carrying on, undertaking international trade in many ways; and the British Government has not even made the least gesture towards prosecuting these companies for violating

# GEORGE NYANDORO

**Secretary-General  
of ZAPU**

**A Biographical Note**

George Nyandoro has been a leading figure in the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe for twenty years. He came into public politics through trade unionism, and through the Southern Rhodesia African Association, which, with trade union backing, formed the short-lived All African Peoples' Convention in 1951—53. But the AAPC leadership soon revealed itself as corrupt, and Nyandoro, together with many of the younger members, felt that it was time to set up a more dynamic political organization, capable of uniting the peoples of Zimbabwe behind the objective of *liberation from white rule*.

They formed the Southern Rhodesian African National Youth League, with R. J. D. Chikerema as President and George Nyandoro Vice-President. The Youth League set about establishing branches throughout the country as preparation for the formation of an African National Congress, which was formally set up on 12 September 1957. Joshua Nkomo became its first President, R. J. D. Chikerema Vice-President, and George Nyandoro Secretary-General.

The ANC found spontaneous support among the people, and branches were formed throughout the country. But in 1959 Edgar Whitehead's govern-



You mention the armaments reaching the Smith regime. What dangers do you see in the arms race now developing in Southern Africa, and in the continued supply of weapons to South Africa and Portugal by the western powers?



ment banned the organization, and for a year there was no political movement. Nyandoro, Chikerema and many other leaders were detained and not finally released until 1963. Nkomo was abroad, in Africa, and, says Mr Nyandoro, "we who were in detention felt that he should not come back because he would be detained and we would have no spokesman to the outside world." Mr Chikerema smuggled a letter out of jail, asking Joshua Nkomo to stay abroad until such time as he was called back. During their incarceration, Nyandoro, Chikerema and others kept the fires of freedom burning; and in prison they drafted

the UN resolutions. To illustrate the farce that Britain has made of the whole question of the Smith regime's "rebellion," I will tell you a story. Only last year, in 1967, the Chief of the Rhodesian Police, a man named Barfoot (who has since retired) was allowed to come to this country and receive medical treatment in a London hospital for brain injury. The British government did not arrest him, a senior official of a rebel regime, either at the airport or thereafter, and he went back to Rhodesia — free to continue and sustain an illegal regime!

Is there then anything to hope for from the international community? Apart from acting as a constant reminder of the hypocrisy of the British, there is nothing we can expect of the United Nations as an organization. But we do expect individual members of the UN to increase their assistance to our liberation struggle, materially, financially and morally. We call upon all the progressive and freedom-loving peoples of the world to assist us in many directions; by exposing the hypocrisy of the British, by campaigning to prevent further arms and other support reaching the settler regime, and we particularly ask sympathisers to give us all the material assistance they can. (We can be contacted through our headquarters in Lusaka, Box 1657).

We see a very great danger, which we call upon Africa in particular to recognise. In our view, the imperialist forces are all out to *re-colonise* Africa, and they are using the fascist reactionary forces on the soil of South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal. We are witnessing day by day South African forces in Rhodesia, and in Angola, South West Africa and Mozambique. Some are also in Malawi. These forces are poised in strategic positions to pounce on independent Africa. Their targets are Zambia, Tanzania and Congo (Kinshasa). The South African Minister of Defence, Botha, threatened only a few months ago to move into the copperbelt, occupy the area, and negotiate from a position of strength! This is the danger — and an imminent danger, which we call upon Africa to take active steps to avert before it is too late. Africa has to give increased aid, on a massive scale, to the liberation forces of the oppressed peoples of Southern Africa, to enable them to engage and finally dislodge the agents of the imperialists. The enemy will stop at nothing, they are devoid of any morality, they are a gang of bandits determined to plunder and exploit Africa . . . look at France, running with the hare and hunting with the hounds, and openly supplying arms to the regimes of Southern Africa. And Britain, which in spite of its recent confirmation of an arms embargo against apartheid, refuses to restrain a company selling leg-irons to South Africa, and continues to supply spare parts to the aircraft and the Saracen tanks which are being used against our freedom forces in Zimbabwe! And the United States and West Germany, who between them have provided apartheid with the technical know-how to build its own rockets, and even make its own atomic bomb!

We know what we are up against. But we also know that whatever the imperialist enemy may be prepared to do, in the end we must win, because the people are behind our struggle, and they will settle for nothing less than their complete freedom.

the Constitution and policy of the National Democratic Party, which was formed on 1 January 1960, with Mr Nkomo as its President. He himself returned to Zimbabwe soon afterwards, in response to calls from the people.

The NDP too was banned, on 9 December 1961, and its successor, ZAPU, was formed 8 days later. In September 1962, ZAPU was banned, and George Nyandoro with Joshua Nkomo, J. R. D. Chikerema and all other members of the leadership were placed under restriction. They were released in 1963.

The executive then decided that five

of its members should be stationed outside the country to conduct the organization in the open, while the rest would stay to organize underground. Soon after this decision, however, the President and all the executive members remaining in Zimbabwe were arrested and detained. Thus Vice-President Chikerema, together with George Nyandoro, Jason Moyo, George Silundika and Edward Ndhlovu — then stationed in Tanzania — were charged with the responsibility of running ZAPU both externally and internally, that is, of co-ordinating the external operations of the movement with its internal underground activities.