

# Rhodesia - Zimbabwe

## A Fact Sheet - 1973

### > RHODESIA: THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE ♦

5.8 mill people (95% Africans) in a country the size of California, rich in chrome, asbestos, gold, copper, coal, iron ore, tin, nickel. One of the most urbanized countries in Africa (ca. 30%). Located on a high (4,000 ft) plateau with few forests and sweeping grasslands.

The African peoples are predominantly Shona, a broad language-grouping of highly democratic and non-military peoples, organized in small village groupings with a great respect for individual rights and a concern for community integration and welfare. The smaller (20%) Ndebele groupings are derived from the powerful Zulu kingdoms of South Africa.

The whites, smaller in population than greater Madison, Wisconsin, migrated to Rhodesia from Britain and South Africa. Over 60% have arrived during the past twenty years and are primarily of lower and lower-middle class origin and speak English. They enjoy one of the highest standards of consumption in the world with many servants and an abundant supply of cheap labor.

Asians and Coloureds constitute less than 1% of the population and stand between the Europeans and the Africans in income, occupation, residence, and political rights.

The economy is based on agriculture (maize, tobacco), mining, and some manufacturing with a GNP of over \$ 1 bill per year. Foreign investment is primarily British (US\$ 600 mill). American direct investment is US\$62 mill, \$50 mill of which is in chrome (Union Carbide, Foote Minerals). Other US investors are Ford, ITT, St. Regis Paper, Coca Cola, Pepsico, Avis, Hertz. Major trading partners with Rhodesia are South Africa, Portugal, West Germany, Japan, USA.

### > HISTORY ♦

- 1890s - Invasion of white pioneer columns from South Africa with resistance from Ndebele and Shona peoples in organized rebellion. After defeat, African areas looted and many killed. Land with high rainfall taken by whites.
- 1900-1940s - Isolated African resistance in millenarian and proto-nationalist mvts.
- 1922 - Whites vote not to merge with South Africa but to become a white-ruled, self-governing colony of Britain.
- 1955-62 - African Nationalist movements organize and seek to negotiate with whites for political participation, an end to segregation, more economic opportunity. Whites reject these demands, ban all nationalist movements, elect the most conservative segregationist government to power, vote to end the rule of law through a series of laws which curtail individual rights. Military and police power and size extended. Prisons, torture methods, detainment camps, intimidation, and brutality are increased.
- 1966 - ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Movement) and ZAPU (Zimbabwe African Peoples Union) begin armed struggle against white regime.
- 1965-66 - Rhodesian Front (Ian Smith) government make Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from Britain. UN imposes sanctions on supplies to Rhodesia from Member states. Rhodesia saved by Portugal and South African support.
- 1966-73 - Britain continues sporadic conversations with Smith government to find a compromise settlement. No compromise is found which would ever allow African majority rule in foreseeable future.
- 1968-73 - ZAPU/ZANU military efforts mount, and Rhodesia increasingly militarizes, makes alliances with Portugal, and receives South African troops and arms.

## > THE INJUSTICES ◆

- 38% of the most arable land is reserved for the 5% of the population which is white.
- Through "provincialisation", Africans are being forced into an apartheid-like Bantustan system without political representation.
- All African majority-rule nationalist movements are banned.
- A white official estimates that 70% of all employed urban Africans fall below the bread-line. Malnutrition and infant mortality among Africans are widespread.
- Whites, coloureds, and Asians constitute 12.5% of the labor force, but they receive 58.7% of all the earnings of the country.
- Average per capita wage earnings are: African \$41 - European/Col./Asian \$ 1134. and the gap between white and black wages is growing each year.
- Chances of a child entering university: Africans 1:6000 - Europeans 1:125.
- Number of Africans completing upper secondary school 1928-1964 - 94.
- Segregation by race in: buses, residential areas, schools, swimming pools, cinemas, toilets, public parks, etc. Segregation being extended in the 70s.
- Elimination of virtually all African constitutional rights through various emergency powers, separate legal systems, and a proposed new "pass" law.
- Imprisonment rate per 100,000 population: Rhodesia 155; Britain 73; Netherlands 25.

## > WHY DOES RHODESIA SURVIVE ? ◆

- By military mobilization of most able-bodied males and a large and increasing military budget, supplemented by South African troops, helicopters, armored cars, etc.
- Through sanctions-breaking oil through South Africa from Shell, Mobil, BP, Caltex.
- Through sanctions-breaking importation of ferrochrome by Union Carbide and Foote Minerals under a special amendment by Rep. Harry Byrd Jr. in 1971.
- With sanctions-breaking trade with Japan, West Germany, France, South Africa, etc. and with companies such as TWA, PanAm, American Express, Mastercharge, Carte Blanche, Diners Club, Avis, Hertz, and others.
- Because of US votes at the UN with Britain, Portugal, South Africa, and others not to sanction South Africa or Portugal, the suppliers of armaments, trade, and political support to Rhodesia.

## > WHY MUST RHODESIA FAIL ? ◆

- The whites are small in number (est. 257,000) and cannot sustain losses. Many will leave at first sign of danger.
- Rhodesia's economy is in trouble. Sanctions have destroyed the lucrative tobacco industry. Many farmers are deep in debt and sustained only with subsidies. Foreign currency available is declining to an estimated 50% of 1965 levels. Certain spare parts in industry are not obtainable. Rhodesian foreign earnings are blocked in UK.
- Tourism and immigration are declining.
- White morale is bad with increasing resistance to military mobilization.
- Urban Africans are responding with strikes and protests against intimidation and threatened political deals with Britain. Rural populations are becoming increasingly resistant as land-hunger, population, and malnutrition increase. Draconian actions by the police, military, and parliament increase sympathy with the liberation mvts.
- The liberation movements are better organized than before. Now, only two ZAPU/ZANU are active, and these two are united in a Joint Military Command, which receives funds jointly and plans military strategies together.
- Zambia has closed her border with Rhodesia, cutting off revenues from the railway for Rhodesia and freeing Zambia to be more supportive of the work of ZANU/ZAPU.
- The liberation movements are experiencing successes in battle in Mozambique and in northeastern Rhodesia, where the white troops move only by day and only in armed force. The liberation soliders are finding support from villagers and fear in the white soldiers, who on average are very young and not well-trained.

## >> WHAT CAN YOU DO ? ★

1. SUPPORT ZANU AND ZAPU, THE JOINT MILITARY COMMAND WITH DONATIONS FOR SHOES, CLOTHING, FOOD, VEHICLES, AND SUPPLIES. SUPPORT IS NEEDED URGENTLY. Send donations to the Madison Area Committee on Southern Africa, 731 State St., Madison, WI, 53703.
2. WORK TO CHANGE AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD RHODESIA - TO END SANCTION-BREAKING AND TO STOP INDIRECT SUPPORT OF RHODESIA THROUGH SUPPORT OF SOUTH AFRICA AND PORTUGAL.

**M**adison **A**rea **C**ommittee on **S**outhern **A**frica .. **1973**