

the State and political events or, indeed, between the State and capitalism, but the sheer weight of so much overdetermination does not leave much room for a (theoretical) last lonely instance of economics. When analysis is thus sacrificed to ideology we are still in the night in which all cows are black . . .

"African Politics" is divided into four parts, with an emphasis largely, but not exclusively on the francophone States.

The first two parts deal with "Political Forces" and "Political Ideologies", and it is here that Gonidec fails to come to grips with his material. The problem is one of conceptualization, especially in the case of "social class", and in the conflation of the category "petit-bourgeois" with "bourgeois" (Here, Poulantzas's work would have been of great value, but the latter is never referred to). The problem is not that these fractions do not exist, but that Gonidec's typology of African political forces and classes is inadequate. Moreover his failure to explain and explore the relationship between the national bourgeoisie and the foreign bourgeoisie — Samir Amin's "major absent figure" — is a serious omission. Gonidec rightly points out that the danger exists of enclosing the Third World "in a sort of intellectual ghetto" — but his response is to take sociology to task "for its insufficiently universal and universalizing nature". In the process of stretching the original (marxian) categories they cease to be either analytical or normative in their applicability or content.

Part III deals with "Political Structures". Here, the analysis proceeds not from the point of view of the constitutional lawyer but is more concerned with an attempt to determine to what extent the officially proclaimed ideologies correspond with the political realities of life in contemporary African States. This section is more successful than the preceding two sections in that Gonidec's wealth of information is here used to illustrate and not to stifle his argument — that the gap between political practice and ideology is great.

Part IV which deal with "Political Action" attempts to evaluate African States within the context of their achievements, specifically in terms of the twin but related goals of genuine development and real independence. The section dealing with Africa's international relations is perhaps the most significant in the book, and here Gonidec begins to integrate some of the more important aspects of African Politics which he had alluded to. But, as before, his discussion never substantially departs from the level of ideology to the level of rigorous analysis and is often plagued by vague generalizations.

But there remains in Gonidec's work a major contradiction: his overtly ideological stand fails to uncover anything more than a casual relationship between the State and capitalism. While all the time arguing on behalf of a structural interpretation, he is in the end defeated by straightforward economic determination which relegates Politics to mere superstructure. The State is, for Gonidec, in the end, the captive handmaiden of capitalism.

The irony of it all is that Gonidec quotes, with apparent approval, Engels' letter to Bloch in which Engels argues on behalf of a dialectical understanding of the relationship between base and superstructure — that while the economic situation is the **basis**, the "various elements of the superstructure, the political forms of the class struggle and its consequences, the constitutions established by the victorious class . . . the forms of law . . . also have an effect on the course of historic struggles, and in many cases, predominantly determine their form. There is action and reaction among all these factors."

The error then lies ultimately in a structural interpretation of society which must of necessity be static. Perhaps the final word in this regard should be left to Engels: "What all these gentlemen lack is dialectic."

1 First reviewed for "African Studies" □

# THE STRUGGLE FOR ZIMBABWE — THE CHIMURENGA WAR

by David Martin and Phyllis Johnson

Reviewed by André du Pisani  
Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1981.

In this eminently readable account of pre-independent Rhodesia, the focus falls principally on the decisive phase of the second Chimurenga\* or war of resistance, from December 1972 to April 1980 when victory was finally won at the elections by ZANU. The book is mainly a his-

tory of ZANU and its military wing ZANLA, who did the bulk of the fighting during the final decisive seven years. Through the use of interviews and official party documents, especially documents of ZANU, the reader gets a partisan but graphic portrayal of a dehumanising war.

Using a wide canvas, the authors trace the evolution of ZANLA's military strategy, the development of the war from Mozambique, the mass mobilisation and political education which were to lay the groundwork of ZANU's election victory, and Robert Mugabe's emergence and ascendancy as supreme leader. Interwoven with all this are the seemingly endless diplomatic exercises to end the Rhodesian conflict, and the complacency and lack of realism of white political leadership in the face of a growing guerrilla offensive.

The book comprises fourteen chapters, each of which is well researched and informative. The first two chapters set the stage and regional and international contexts of the Rhodesian conflict. We learn of Soviet, Chinese and Western interests and involvement in the conflict, and of the Frontline States. Particularly impressive is the authors' treatment of the personalised nature of the relationships between Frelimo, Samora Machel, Marcelino dos Santos on the one hand, and the ZANU military and political leadership, on the other. ZANLA's use of the Tete province in Mozambique as an operational base in 1973 is rightly seen as a turning point in the political and military strategy of ZAPU, and ultimately in the war itself. However, the authors largely fail to explain why this was so. The North-Eastern border of Rhodesia with Mozambique not only afforded the guerrillas with admirably suited geographic and demographic factors — dense vegetation and high population density —, but the area had suffered decades of administrative neglect, while the Shona in the area, the Korekore, intersects across the Tete province, thus easing the infiltration of guerrillas from Mozambique into the North-east. A final factor was the lack of physical impediment comparable to the Zambezi river on the common national border. With active FRELIMO concurrence, ZANLA was presented with an excellent opportunity.

Chapter 3 outlines the historical thread of European colonialism, and domination and of Shona revolt. Sketchy, as it is, it provides both continuity and perspective on what follows. Central themes introduced in this chapter, are further developed in Chapter 4: notably, inequalities in land distribution, in educational opportunity and in labour conditions and job opportunities.

In chapter 5 the reader gets an insight into ZANU mobilization and recruitment. The opening of the north-eastern front through the Tete province in Mozambique and its implications for the nature and scale of recruitment are analysed. Against the backdrop of mass mobilisation and recruitment, the failure of the Smith regime's efforts to seek alternative legitimate leadership to negotiate with, are juxtaposed. Especially valuable, is the authors' succinct treatment of Smith's counter-revolutionary strategies, which were premised on the exploitation of nationalist ambitions and rivalries whereby Smith was able to keep them divided and continue to rule while undermining the efforts of the guerrillas by raising false hopes for a settlement.

In the next chapter we learn about the political costs for the regime of its inconsistent use of force, the patchy nature of Rhodesian intelligence and the effectivity of ZANLA strategy of political education.

Chapters 7 and 8 which respectively focus on the Portuguese Coup d'Etat and on Détente, make fascinating reading. The behind the scenes activities of Tiny Rowland, chief of Lonrho, Kaunda, Vorster and Smith to respond to the deteriorating situation in Mozambique, are brought into sharp focus. Especially illuminating is the authors' discussion of the acrimony between Kaunda and Nyerere over détente with Pretoria.

The strengths and weaknesses of the book are best demonstrated in Chapter 9 entitled 'The other side of détente'. While Lusaka and Pretoria pursued détente, the Rhodesians developed a strategy to destroy the guerrillas from within, to subvert and divide ZANU and ZAPU until they ceased to be a force in the bargaining. This strategy, like détente itself, nearly succeeded, but not only because as the writers assert, "it was overcome by the resolve of Black liberation forces". The Rhodesian counter-revolutionary strategy failed for both political and military reasons. Politically, Smith underestimated the commitment of the frontline states to the struggle as well as the extent to which local administration had collapsed in rural areas. For example, by July 1977 already some 300 schools had been forced to close, leaving more than 40,000 children without schools.

Militarily, the vital element of providing permanent and participatory protection at the local level had always been lacking in the Rhodesian counter-insurgency strategy. Numerous 'search and destroy' operations were launched, but a 'clear and hold-' type operation had never been introduced in a satisfactory manner. The authors also neglect important elements of Rhodesian counter-strategy like the idea of a modified cordon sanitaire along the Mozambiquean border, and especially the many 'pseudo-operations', whereby members of the counter-insurgency forces posing as insurgents engaged in intelligence gathering especially in the North-East (Mount Darwin, Rusape, Bindura) and also in Botswana. The partial treatment of the war by Martin and Johnson thus ignores the aspect of counter-insurgency, and tends to treat it as residual.

Chapter 10 traces the rise to power of Robert Mugabe, which is directly correlated to the intensifying conflict between President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and ZANU. This chapter is particularly illuminating because it emphasises the international dimensions of the Rhodesian conflict, as well as the ZANU/ZAPU rivalry for the succession to white rule. In the next two chapters we learn of the attempts by Samora Machel of Mozambique and Nyerere of Tanzania to unify bickering ZANU and ZAPU in the Zimbabwe People's Army (ZIPA), and the unsuccessful Kissinger diplomatic safari to resolve the Rhodesian enigma. Especially interesting is the growing personal animosity between Vorster and Smith and between Muller and van der Byl, over the Rhodesian impasse.

The last two chapters focus on the prelude to Lancaster and independence. The air of inevitability ascribed to events by the authors, coupled to their lack of time perspective, tend to somewhat distort the focus on these apocalyptic events. While Martin and Johnson have provided what is probably the best account yet of the first

(1972-1976) phase of the Rhodesian war, the subsequent phase (1977-1980) still awaits its historian.

**The Struggle for Zimbabwe** is an important book that deserves to be widely read by all South Africans. It underscores the dictum that the inconsistent use of coercion by government can both speedily alienate individuals and focus their discontent upon political institutions, and that legitimacy is a political necessity, for it reduces dependence

on naked power by allowing government to rely on authority.

\* 'Chimurenga' is a Shona word which has its political origins in the uprisings of the 1890s as the Africans north of the Limpopo River fought to prevent white settlers from the south occupying their land. The word 'Chimurenga' has a number of meanings in current usage — revolution, war, struggle or resistance. □

## POST : ORGANISER / RESEARCHER

AFRA, the Association for Rural Advancement, based in Pietermaritzburg, Natal, is looking for a fulltime organiser/researcher, to start work in early 1983.

The aims of the Association have been defined broadly as:

- a) to monitor, enquire into, record and publicise all matters relating to the social and economic position of persons in the rural areas of Natal, with special regard to the effects of the policy of resettlement;
- b) to take action and to encourage other persons and/or groups to take action to alleviate hardship, discrimination and oppression among such people.

The responsibilities of the person appointed to the advertised post will include the following:

- undertaking ongoing fieldwork/research into the issue of resettlement in Natal/KwaZulu;
- writing reports and factsheets dealing with the results of this work, for publication and dissemination;

- establishing and developing contact with communities affected by resettlement policies, where appropriate;
- developing AFRA's usefulness as a resource organisation for communities affected by resettlement and for other outside groups engaged in similar or related work;
- administrative work in the AFRA office.

We are looking for somebody with initiative, maturity, and a commitment to rural development as well as having research and communication abilities. Previous experience in community/rural development work will be a recommendation. The job is based in Pietermaritzburg but involves travelling and so a driver's licence is essential.

Interested persons are asked to write to the AFRA Committee, P.O. Box 2517, Pietermaritzburg, 3200 by 30 November 1982, setting out their experience, qualification, and interest in the job. More details about the job can be supplied on request by writing to the above address. Interviews with suitable applicants will be arranged thereafter.

---

ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL ADVANCEMENT  
P.O. Box 2517  
Pietermaritzburg, 3200

Telephone: (0331) 57607

### EDITORIAL BOARD

**Chairman:** Peter Brown

**Vice-Chairman:** Alan Paton

**Members:** F. Antonie, J. Arnott, T.E. Beard,  
N. Bromberger, M. Dyer, C. Gardner,  
P. Rutsch, J. Unterhalter, M.H. Whisson.

**RATES** (6 issues - published every two months)

#### ORDINARY SUBSCRIBERS

S.A. R5.00 p.a.  
U.K. £3.00 p.a.  
U.S.A. \$6.00 p.a.

#### DONOR SUBSCRIBERS

S.A. R20.00 p.a.  
U.K. £10.00 p.a.  
U.S.A. \$20.00 p.a.

REALITY, P.O. Box 1104, Pietermaritzburg 3200 R.S.A.