

*THE LAND THAT WEEPS: THE ROOTS AND CAUSES OF INSTABILITY IN
MODERN-DAY ZIMBABWE*

by

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Abstract

This paper will analyze the history of Zimbabwe and identify the recurring themes of racism that ultimately led to Mugabe's ascension to power and his effect on the country. I will identify the founding of Rhodesia in the late nineteenth century by Cecil Rhodes and his impact on the build-up to the Unilateral Declaration of Independence of 1965. The main purpose of my study is to identify the progression of instability in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe by looking at the country's social and political turmoil as a result of racism by the white leadership, leading to the instability that is a major theme to this day.



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Introduction

Due to its volatile history, Zimbabwe is often considered today one of the most unstable countries in the world. This has been the case especially over the last decade as the longtime leader, Robert Mugabe, has plunged the country's economy into chaos, and unemployment and inflation have created little room for economic growth. However, the seeds of instability date from the 1960s, a period of economic prosperity, but also of racial and political turmoil. Over its relatively brief, but highly contested history, Zimbabwe has undergone several name changes.¹ Zimbabwe was, before independence in 1980, known as Southern Rhodesia from 1901 to 1964, and then as Rhodesia from 1964 to 1980. As World War II concluded, the British Empire was losing its status as a world power. Because the British could not provide the same military or political benefits they once did, their powerful empire rapidly declined. India and Pakistan were the first countries to gain independence, then other Asian territories, and finally the African territories. The interesting thing about independence in the African regions was that the British government supported black majority rule, mainly because it was no longer acceptable to treat people of color as subservient – and it was recognized that people of color deserve to be represented in government. This policy seemed to work in countries such as 1950s Ghana and 1960s Tanzania that were among the first British regions to gain independence. These regions had Black Nationalist movements led by men, such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, who became the fathers of the modern countries.

Concurrently, a Black Nationalist movement, led by Joshua Nkomo, emerged in Southern Rhodesia intending to gain its independence. The movement had the full support of the British government, which was trying to get rid of an empire whose staggering costs were crippling the

¹ See maps, pp. 53-54.

postwar British economy. However, Southern Rhodesia, unlike many other African territories, had a very large white settler population headed by the notorious racist Ian Smith of the Rhodesian Front Party. Smith believed that the black population was not competent to govern the country, a shared belief of the white population from their arrival. The struggle for power led to Smith's infamous Unilateral Declaration of Independence on November 11, 1965, a move that made Smith the most controversial figure in African history — a title that he embraces and captions his autobiography. After this declaration, a violent civil war ravaged the country for the next fifteen years. The rise of Robert Mugabe soon polarized the country and during that time made the political situation even more complicated.

The civil war, known as the Rhodesian Bush War, was a conflict among three political parties: Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), led by Nkomo; the Rhodesian Front Party, led by Smith; and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), led by Mugabe. Tensions were complex because ZANU was originally part of the ZAPU coalition but split because of differences in 1963. However, in subsequent years, the two parties would once again join together. When the war officially ended in 1980, elections gave Mugabe's party a majority in Parliament. The result amazed Nkomo, who thought himself destined to be the father of the new nation. Mugabe held the position of prime minister until 1987, when he abolished the role and assumed the presidency. His presidency has been highly contested, especially by activists of human rights, because of his unorthodox policies that have only led to a greater division between the rich and the poor. Like many other leaders, particularly from Africa, the once revolutionary Mugabe gradually abused his power, indulging in a lavish lifestyle while the people of his country suffered greatly. He almost reversed the impact of the independence movement, namely because the racist white leadership at least provided the black population with a decent living. To

this day Mugabe is a polarizing figure because Zimbabwe is plagued by very high unemployment, very high inflation, and a very high HIV rate. All of which leaves the country open to criticism because of Mugabe's tight grip on power.

This paper will analyze the history of Zimbabwe and identify the recurring themes of racism that ultimately led to Mugabe's ascension to power and his effect on the country. Mugabe's Zimbabwe was once prosperous; however, his land reform act of 2000 plummeted it into its current state of instability. I will identify the founding of Rhodesia in the late nineteenth century by Cecil Rhodes and his impact on the build-up to the Unilateral Declaration of Independence of 1965. The leaders of the Rhodesian Front government thought that they were Rhodes' heirs in a Rhodesia where white men were destined to rule. Even though Rhodes was an infamous racist, he did create a foundation that helped Rhodesia flourish well into the twentieth century. Rhodesia's economy was strong and became a hot spot for migration, especially after the First World War. Another important factor in the build-up to U.D.I. was Rhodesia's role in World War I and the subsequent granting of responsible government, which essentially made the country self-governing. The Interwar period, once again, was a time when Rhodesia became a haven for migration and in a sense became the land of opportunity for the British soldiers who felt alienated in their homeland. Similarly, the Second World War would have the same impact on the country because the Rhodesians felt it was their duty to defend the honor of the Union Jack.

Due to the impact of decolonization, the British government in 1953 created a Central African Federation, of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland. The federation failed, mainly because of the differences among the three countries about economics and race and ended in 1963, with the independence of Nyasaland (now Malawi) and Northern Rhodesia

(now Zambia). The run-up to the U.D.I. and the consequent constant tension between Ian Smith and the British Parliament, and especially Prime Minister Harold Wilson; the three main Rhodesian political parties, their agendas, and their role in the civil war; and Mugabe's leadership, from his early success to his ultimate failure with the land reform act of 2000 constitute the heart of this paper.

The main purpose of my study is to identify the progression of instability in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe. The decline is interesting because Mugabe has gone from a revolutionary figure to disrespected dictator, mainly because of the failure of his policies of the last decade. However, a look at Mugabe's leadership prior to the year 2000 proves that his government was highly corrupt, resorting to censorship and violence in order to retain his power, actions that almost reverse the independence movement. While I am not justifying the racism of Ian Smith, in his role as prime minister of the country he did provide the essentials necessary to survive, something that Mugabe's leadership promised but essentially failed to act upon, particularly over the last decade.

Chapter One:
Part One: Rhodes to Instability: The Founding of Modern-Day Zimbabwe
and the Birth of Racism

“There are very few among the sons of men who, born not in the list of kings and warriors and philosophers, have power within them to change profoundly the maps and minds of humanity.”² No statement could better sum up the life of Cecil Rhodes, a man who in many ways caused the instability that was a prevalent theme in twentieth-century Southeast African history. Born in the mid-nineteenth century Victorian Britain, Rhodes showed few signs of greatness in his early years. Plagued by poor health, he moved to Natal, a land with a more favorable climate.

As Rhodes matured, he developed a shrewdness satisfied only by success, underscoring a much more cunning outlook on life than that of his early years. The diamond rush in South Africa was starting to take shape, and Rhodes, along with his brother Herbert, began to engage in this trade.

It did not take long for Rhode’s uncanny business acumen to manifest itself. Despite his youth and relative inexperience, he rarely made a mistake in a matter of business, and his position in the diamond diggings constantly improved; so much so, that by 1873, he was able to return to England to indulge his lifelong ambition of attending Oxford University.³

Oxford, a university that has long been associated with Rhodes because of the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship, opened Rhodes eyes to the hegemonic attitude and superiority that the British Empire boasted in the nineteenth century. Given its vast navy, large landholdings, and moral prestige, at that point the British Empire was the greatest empire the world had ever seen;

² Henry Cust, “Cecil Rhodes,” *The North American Review* 175 (1902): 99.

³ Robert A. Huttenback, *The British Imperial Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966), 100.

moreover, it was always sunny somewhere in the empire, an expression confirming the empire's extensive holdings from east to west.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, a view was emerging among the imperial European empires, a superiority complex rooted in prejudice, racism, and xenophobia. As the age of imperialism began to peak in the 1870s and 1880s, the imperial powers met at Berlin in 1885 to carve up Africa for the Europeans. Rhodes became obsessed with the notion of British superiority, more so than most of his countrymen. In fact, Rhodes was considered the greatest imperialist of the empire, a title that won him either praise or derision, depending on one's political views. According to Rhodes,

Only the Anglo-Saxon race could be God's agent in effecting His purpose, and the proper way to implement God's will was therefore to make the Anglo-Saxons supreme on earth. Rhodes determined to work for the furtherance of the British Empire, for the bringing of the whole civilized world under British rule, for the recovery of the United States, for the making of the Anglo-Saxon race into one empire.⁴

The problem with this idea of superiority was that it almost inevitably led to a clash between the whites and the indigenous peoples. Rhodes, then an esteemed businessman with a large fortune, was politically astute enough to make peace with the local king, Lobengula, the leader of the Matabele people in southeast Africa. This land north of South Africa was a source of minerals and other natural resources valuable for trade and strategic purposes. In order to assure peace with Lobengula, Rhodes sent his partner, C.D. Rudd, to persuade the king to sign a document that would give the British businessmen control over all of the natural resources; in return, the British would supply Lobengula with guns and ammunition, as well as a small stipend, and guarantee his throne. Signed in 1888, this document became known as the Rudd Concession. "This pseudo legal document granted Rhodes exclusive rights supposedly to dig for

⁴ Huttenback, 101-2.

minerals for a limited period of time. But Rhodes took it as a blank check to do what he always wanted to do: colonize Zimbabwe as the first stage of his grand plan to bring all of Africa under British imperial rule.”⁵ In 1890, Queen Victoria gave Rhodes a Royal Charter (legal authority) to form the British South Africa Company, which would be similar to the British East India Company. The company ran Southern Rhodesia from 1890 until 1923. Meanwhile, with the approval of the queen, Rhodes, prime minister of Cape Colony, South Africa in 1890, started to implement his imperial dream of a unified confederation under the crown. The infamous Cape-to-Cairo railway, an unfinished project, was supposed to stretch all the way from South Africa to Egypt. However, a few mishaps, such as other European countries taking strategic land holdings, prevented the completion of the railway before his death.



Figure 1: The Rhodes Colossus: Rhodes spanning the Cape to Cairo ⁶

⁵ Dickson A. Mungazi, *Last British Liberals in Africa: Michael Blundell & Garfield Todd* (USA: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 57.

⁶ *Punch and Exploring History 1400-1900: An Anthology of Primary Sources*, p. 401, by Rachel C. Gibbons.

As was often the case with many imperialists, Rhodes' promises to Lobengula proved to be lies. Instead of abiding by the Rudd Concession, Rhodes attacked the kingdom in order to incorporate it into the empire. "Suddenly and without warning, Rhodes ordered his men to invade Lobengula's kingdom in October 1893. The invaders killed the king, destroyed his royal village, confiscated his livestock, and declared Matebeleland a British colony."⁷ Due to this successful invasion, a new province north of the Zambezi River was now under British rule. This new territory would soon be divided, known as Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia, named after founder Rhodes. One historical anecdote regarding Rhodes' impressive imperialist efforts includes an exchange between Rhodes and Queen Victoria: "In a conversation with Queen Victoria, Rhodes was asked, 'What have you been doing since I last saw you, Mr. Rhodes?' to which he answered proudly, 'I have added two provinces to your Majesty's dominions.'"⁸

Rhodes, despite his racism, was a fairly successful prime minister of Cape Colony. In many ways, he eased the tensions between the Dutch Boers and the British settlers, a conflict that surfaced periodically throughout the nineteenth century; that is, he eased these tensions until he ironically escalated them in a different matter. Nevertheless, he encouraged the growth of Boer industry and believed in fundamental education, which students of both Boer and British origin could access.

All the while, Rhodes, being the grand imperialist he was, envisioned a united Southern Africa under the Union Jack. Rhodes' stubbornness, along with his desire to make everything in the world British, led to one of the most embarrassing events in British history. The 1895 ill-fated Jameson Raid was an attempt to overthrow the government of Transvaal, a Boer province

⁷ Mungazi, 58.

⁸ Huttenback, 109.

nestled between British landholdings. The reason for the attempt to take Transvaal, which flourished as a result of its gold mines, was to end Boer independence. The Germans, who were constantly trying to undermine British hegemony, particularly in Africa, had started to negotiate with Transvaal, an act which Rhodes felt was making Transvaal less susceptible to British influence. Thus, the dream of a unified world under British influence was starting to abate. Rhodes, along with his friend Dr. L.S. Jameson, therefore organized a coup, with the goal of overthrowing the Transvaal president, Paul Kruger, a man known for his hatred of the British, and especially Rhodes. Yet, when Dr. Jameson decided to push up the raid, Rhodes hesitated because he felt the British were not yet fully organized. He was right: Jameson met strong Boer resistance, which quickly put an end to the raid and Rhodes' goal.⁹

The raid was even more disastrous for Rhodes the politician: "This bungled affair was almost the ruination of his life's work. Through his involvement, he had betrayed his Boer supporters in the Cape; he had violated the spirit of the charter of the British South Africa Company; and he had created a distrust of the British in the minds of the leaders of the two Boer republics."¹⁰ Consequently, Rhodes was forced to resign his position as Cape prime minister.

Although the end of Rhodes' political career came with scandal and public outrage, he did manage to solve a very important problem that is central to this paper. After their wars of 1893-1894, the Matabele experienced a series of droughts and diseases. Since a majority of the whites were involved in the Jameson Raid, the Matabele leader, Mingo, thought it was appropriate in 1897 to rise against a "disorganized" British South Africa Company. More importantly, the uprising failed: "Once the uprising was over in 1897, peace reigned. Indeed the police would not have recourse to arms until 1962, when African nationalists began to use

⁹ Huttenback, 111.

¹⁰ Huttenback, 111.

violence in their campaign for power.”¹¹



Figure 2 Rhodes makes peace with the Matabele, 1896¹²

One mainstay of Rhodes’ legacy is this peace, which was vital to Southern Rhodesia’s success. The locals never had quite the same rights as the white settlers who were increasingly migrating as the twentieth century progressed. However, a thriving economy and a relatively stable government under the charter until 1923 quieted the ever-present racism that would erupt as a contentious topic after World War II.

Rhodes died in 1902, and his legacy is often debated among historians. On a positive note, “In his will, he left lasting testimonial to his concept of empire—almost 200 scholarships at Oxford, to be extended to students from self-governing colonies and from the United States of America (which of course, he hoped would someday rejoin the imperial community).”¹³ No scholar can deny the importance of the Rhodes Scholarship, an award that promotes moral values, key ideas of the British Empire. However, many people, especially in Great Britain, associate Rhodes with the disastrous Boer War, a public relations nightmare for the British Empire, a war that was fought from 1899-1902 and was a direct consequence of the Jameson

¹¹ Ian Smith, *The memoirs of Africa’s most controversial leader Bitter Harvest: Zimbabwe and the Aftermath of its Independence* (Great Britain: John Blake Publishing Ltd., 2008), 2.

¹² Robert Baden-Powell, *The Matabele Campaign: being a narrative of the campaign in suppressing the native rising in Matabeleland and Mashonaland* (London: Methuen, 1896).

¹³ Huttenback, 113.

Raid. In British popular culture, Rhodes is either idealized, as is the case with Oxford University, or vilified, as is the case with many African leaders who emerged after World War II and with the Labour Party of Great Britain. The importance of Rhodes in modern-day Zimbabwe history is his influence on the Rhodesian Front Party, a highly conservative party of white settlers who believed they were the true descendants of Rhodes. Because of this, the Rhodesian Front Party promoted racism and was against black representation in government, key ideas that this paper will discuss.

Whether one agrees with Rhodes' method of governing, one cannot deny his lasting legacy in African history. An almost mythical person, Rhodes saw himself as larger than life. "Rhodes believed that he himself resembled Titus physically, Hadrian intellectually. His favorite quotation was 'Remember you are a Roman.' Rhodes was more Roman than any Englishman had ever been," said the writer Emil Ludwig, "a romanticist of distinction, a genius as a colonizer, an imperialist to the point of madness,"¹⁴ a perfect explanation of the man Cecil Rhodes really was: a monster to some, a mastermind to others.

Part Two: Rhodesia From Company, World War, and the Eventual Path to Self- Determination

After Rhodes's death, the British South Africa Company became the defining force in Southern Rhodesian politics. "The company was empowered to trade with African rulers such as King Lobengula; to form banks; to own, manage, and grant or distribute land, and to raise a police force (the British South Africa Police). In return, the company agreed to develop the territory it controlled; to respect existing African laws; to allow free trade within its territory and

¹⁴ Piers Brendon, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire 1781-1997* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), 194.

to respect all religions.”¹⁵ As white settlers increased in Rhodesia, the British South African Company gave the white settlers more political say in Rhodesian politics, starting with a royal charter issued in 1914. The charter, along with World War I, created a foundation of self-government that would culminate, after the conflict, as the shareholders of the Company lost control of its profit shares, which essentially made Southern Rhodesia autonomous in 1923. The war also played a vital role in Southern Rhodesia’s path to dominion status: its subjects’ valiant efforts gave the region a reputation as being among the most loyal in the British Empire.

As war swept across the world, the colonies and dominions prepared to defend the Union Jack. Most of the British Empire was very eager to serve, especially because German influence was slowly more evident across the globe, threatening British landholdings. Southern Rhodesia, though small in population, was one of the premier colonies in terms of measuring the importance of British victory because of the enthusiasm of its whites. “Identifying closely with Britain, they made overt displays of patriotism, collected money for various war-related causes, and volunteered to serve in the armed forces.”¹⁶ The Rhodesian White Regiment fighters took part in the South West African Campaign and other war efforts around the continent, hoping to seize the German-occupied territories. Louis Botha was the leader of the Rhodesian troops. Botha, ironically, was a Boer War hero, who became the first prime minister of the Union of South Africa, already a white-dominated dominion of the empire. During World War I, Botha fought against the Dutch territories, provoking anger and outrage among the people with whom he had previously served. After a string of military setbacks, the white-ruled government started to draft the locals, hoping to provide a stronger army and help assure victory. Thus, the Rhodesian Native Regiment was created in 1916. Southern Rhodesia had other motives for

¹⁵ www.thestampweb.com.

¹⁶ Timothy J. Stapleton, *No Insignificant Part: The Rhodesian Native Regiment and the East Africa Campaign of the First World War* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006), 19.

fighting so eagerly in the war. The Rhodesian White Regiment, the renowned fighting unit of the country, aided victory and more important, aided a post-war settlement favorable to whites. “At a time when the colony was still administered by the chartered British South Africa Company (BSAC), participation in the war was seen by whites as a prerequisite for earning a form of self-government in the future and an important step towards creating their own distinctive nation along the lines of Canada and Australia.”¹⁷ The war was essentially a “make or break” for white Southern Rhodesians if they wanted to carve out their own identity as an autonomous member of the emerging British Commonwealth.

¹⁷ Stapleton, 19.

Chapter Two

From Dominion to Federation, 1923-1963: The Romanticization of Southeast Africa

With the success of the British Empire in World War One, the dominions and colonies were rewarded, to some extent, with more autonomy in a British Empire at its peak in terms of land mass. Due to the intense fighting of the Rhodesian White Regiment, Southern Rhodesia earned significant consideration for self-government, especially since the British South Africa Company was no longer seen as a viable form of government. “The performance of Rhodesians all round had been exemplary. The economy was well managed, development was planned and there was steady progress. There was a history of harmonious race relations and, in the recent war, Rhodesians had made a contribution second to none.”¹⁸ In 1922, the British South Africa Company relinquished its control over Southern Rhodesia, now forced to decide whether or not it wanted to join South Africa or have its own responsible government. The issue for the Southern Rhodesians was that the white settler population made up a small fraction, roughly 30,000, of the population. Thus, whites believed that if they joined South Africa, they would inevitably clash with its larger black population. This issue of race relations was one of the main issues that later plagued Southern Rhodesia, setting up the foreseeable bid for independence that polarized the country.

“In 1923 Southern Rhodesia received responsible government in Lord Durham’s original sense, with the British government retaining some control over legislation affecting African interests.”¹⁹ “Rhodesians voted by a majority of 2:1 for responsible government. They voted, as

¹⁸ Smith, 3.

¹⁹ T.O. Lloyd, *The British Empire, 1558-1995* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 306.

Ian Smith claims, with their hearts, not their heads.”²⁰ Ian Smith, in his autobiography, provides an interesting anecdote about how Southern Rhodesia’s decision not to join the Union of South Africa impacted that country’s history. Of course, this is nothing more than pure speculation and should not be used to revise history; it does, however, provide an interesting perspective, especially given South Africa’s troubled history after World War II. Smith states:

Given the nature of the Rhodesian electorate, and its antipathy towards Afrikaner nationalism, the incorporation of Rhodesia into the Union of South Africa in 1923 could have significantly influenced the outcome of the crucial first post- Second World War election in South Africa. In 1948, Smut’s United Party government was ousted by Daniel Malan’s Afrikaner National Party by a narrow margin of three seats. This unexpected victory for Afrikaner nationalism had a profound effect on the history of southern Africa in a variety of ways.²¹

The variety of ways Smith is referring to was the prevalence of apartheid, which influenced relations between the British Commonwealth and South Africa well into the twentieth century.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Southern Rhodesia started to carve out an identity of a dominant white population modeled after Cecil Rhodes’ vision. More and more British were flocking to Southern Rhodesia because of the favorable climate, similar to Rhodes, and because of the up-and-coming agricultural industry that made Southern Rhodesia’s economy so strong. Aside from the racism, which was prevalent in the country from its founding, the issue of land allocation was also a controversial topic. As more and more settlers came, their need for land was met by destroying the local economy as blacks were forced to sell their land or move to less arable land. “The unsteady development of white commercial agriculture was a tale of destruction of African peasant agriculture, a tale of the monetization of the economy, a tale of

²⁰ Smith, 3.

²¹ Smith, 4.

dispossession and forced proletarianisation.”²² “White farmers in Rhodesia feared the competition of African farmers who ‘were reaping a modest gain’ and effectively resisting poorly paid, migrant laborers. In 1924 white workers protested against the training of Africans.”²³ The immigrants lived by the motto of white superiority and entitlement, a motto started by Rhodes and later immortalized, in a sense, by Smith and his Rhodesian Front Party--- as he took racism to a whole new level. In 1925, the local Morris Carter Commission set up Southern Rhodesia as a self-sustaining white colony. This meant that a division among classes, but more importantly among the races was to be implemented. “The Commissioners came to the conclusion that tension was increasing as a result of contact between the races and that it could be diminished only by rigid territorial separation. Consequently, a policy of ‘possessory segregation’ was officially endorsed, aimed at reducing points of contact between European and African landholders to a minimum.”²⁴ The Morris Carter Commission soon spawned the Land Apportionment Act (1930), which divided the land into European areas, native areas, and indigenous areas.

Besides legally instituting racial segregation, the Land Apportionment Act introduced differential tenure categories for the apportioned land areas. In European areas, land was considered private property and was accompanied by title deeds, whereas in the Native Reserves, land was held under what was termed ‘communal tenure’ without title deeds. Africans were granted usufruct rights to use specific land for cultivation, building homesteads, and grazing cattle as part of communal property.²⁵

²² Alois Mlambo and Brian Raftopoulos, *Becoming Zimbabwe: A History from the Pre- Colonial period to 2008* (South Africa: Weaver Press, 2009), 65.

²³ Irene Diggs, review of *A History of Southern Rhodesia. Early Days to 1934*, by L.H. Green, *The Journal of Negro History*, 51 (Oct., 1966):299.

²⁴ Barry N. Frank, “Land Apportionment in Southern Rhodesia,” *Geographical Review* 52 (October, 1962): 577

²⁵ Mlambo, 67.

The small minority of whites received the more favorable land.

TABLE II—LAND APPORTIONMENT IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA, 1958*

CATEGORY	SQUARE MILES	ACRES	% OF COUNTRY
European areas ^a (crown land and "alienated" land)	81,230	51,987,000	53.5
Native Reserves	32,844	21,020,000	21.5
Special Native Areas ^b	20,122	12,878,000	13.0
Native Purchase Areas ^c	12,580	8,052,000	8.0
Undetermined areas ^d	89	57,000	0.5
Forest areas	4,984	3,190,000	3.5
TOTAL	151,849	97,184,000	100.0

*Various government sources.

^a Include 4,000,000 acres of game reserves and national parks.

^b Land added to the Native Reserves in 1950.

^c Areas where Africans may acquire land individually, as distinct from tribal tenure in the Native Reserves.

^d Land owned by Europeans that may be sold to Africans if the owners so desire.

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Figure 3²⁶

As a result of the socio-economic schism that became greater as Southern Rhodesia became whiter, unrest was slowly but surely rising and would soon implode after the hypocrisy of the Union Jack in World War II because the living situation did not get better for the blacks as promised. "The African voice in the country, dumb since the rebellions, began in the early 1920s

²⁶ Frank, 2.

to become audible, but the sound was faint and far away, the message confusing and obscure,²⁷ but nonetheless evident---- the divide of Southern Rhodesia, although seemingly stable, was a time bomb waiting to go off as would be the case in the ensuing years.

The interwar period saw a romanticization of life in Eastern Africa. Authors such as Ernest Hemingway, Elspeth Huxley, and Agatha Christie wrote about white life in Eastern Africa. This shows that for many writers East Africa was popular amongst people seeking adventure or escape. Hemingway's short story, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," about a husband and wife hunting in Africa, evidences the first and Agatha Christie's the second. However, in her short story, "While the Light Lasts," Christie paints a vivid picture of life for a veteran of World War I, a picture thus showing why this region's prosperity made it such a hot-spot for migration. The opening lines of "While the Light Lasts" shows the contrast of life in London; Africa was more free, more open, and this was something that many people, especially war veterans were seeking. The opening lines are as follows:

The Ford car bumped from rut to rut, and the hot African sun poured down unmercifully. On either side of the so-called road stretched an unbroken line of trees and scrub, rising and falling in gently undulating lines as far as the eye could reach, the coloring a soft, deep yellow-green, the whole effect languorous and strangely quiet.²⁸

Christie uses vivid imagery to present the unlimited opportunities, analogously the opportunities Southern Rhodesia had to offer because of its flourishing economy and the several emerging sectors that helped the economy flourish. The protagonist, the business man's wife, says of her first husband, "This was Rhodesia, this was the land Tim loved, where he and she were to have

²⁷ Mlambo, 69.

²⁸ Agatha Christie, *The Harlequin Tea Set and other Stories* (New York: Berkeley Publishing Group, 1998), 37.

gone together after the war was over.”²⁹ That was the general sentiment of most Europeans about Rhodesia; they loved the promise of the country, making it a haven to carve out a new life, as had Cecil Rhodes.

During all great periods of history, writers often write about what they see and why this is important. For instance, Charles Dickens wrote about the Victorian period; Rudyard Kipling and Jules Verne wrote about Great Britain’s mighty imperial empire; and in many ways, Christie, does the same thing. Even though her stories only briefly mention Africa, they show an interesting perspective that many people had in the post- World War I era, a perspective of starting over, forgetting the horrors of war, and beginning anew in eastern Africa, particularly Southern Rhodesia, which many people thought provided a safe haven to start a new life. But war soon came again.

World War II had a profound impact on Southern Rhodesia. A large part of its instability that became ubiquitous in the 1960s stems from the influx of immigrants flocking to Southern Rhodesia because of the immense prosperity the country was experiencing as a result of the war. Similar to the other colonies and dominions of the British Empire, Southern Rhodesia participated in the Second World War. However, Southern Rhodesia’s lifestyle was distinctly different from all the other British entities— the small African country boasted a reputation for being “more British than Britain,” and the country took great pride in its value system modeled after the peak of the British Empire in the nineteenth century. Smith states in his autobiography, “You Rhodesians are more British than the British. So often I heard that during the war years 1939-45. It was a comment which pleased Rhodesians. To think that we were not British would be ridiculous. After all, what is our history? Rhodes’s dream of a British route from Cape to

²⁹ Christie, 39.

Cairo.”³⁰ This meant that fighting for the Union Jack was an honor, not a duty to the Southern Rhodesians. To get a taste of life in Southern Rhodesia, the soon to be Prime Minister Ian Smith commented on his return home from fighting in the war that he valued the close family ties that were common amongst the white settler families. Smith stated:

And so back home— always a good feeling, but even better when one is a member of a close-knit family built around worthwhile traditions. It is worth repeating: great nations are built on the foundation of great families. There was also the advantage of being part of a small rural community, where people were interested in one another, and prepared to lend a helping hand. That communal spirit, turning out to support your local team, making your contribution to the social life of the community, is the bedrock of civilized life.³¹

This lifestyle, with its sense of community, was something that was lacking in England following the destruction of the war. England lost its prestige. Many people longed for the wartime sense of tradition, pride, and honor and found it in Southern Rhodesia, a hot spot for immigration after World War II. However, the war also led to an even greater divide between white settlers and native blacks.

The Second World War had a different impact depending on if one was white or black. Nearly all the inhabitants of Southern Rhodesia participated to some extent in World War II. Thousands fought, but those who did not helped through the production of foodstuffs. More importantly, many contributed to the building of a military airbase for the British Air Force. While the white settler population joyously fought in the war, the black population was slowly becoming disheartened by the hypocritical defense of why they had to fight in the war “against oppression.” “The African people’s involvement in the war was to have profound psychological and political effects that would change their attitude towards colonization thereafter. For example, Africans were struck by the contradiction of their defending their colonizers from

³⁰ Smith, 1.

³¹ Smith, 27.

German and Italian tyranny while they themselves continued to labour under the tyranny of Western colonization.”³² This kind of thinking exploded in all the imperial empires after World War II, thus leading to the end of imperialism and the rise of new independent nations under black rule, except, of course, for Southern Rhodesia.

Fueling tension in Southern Rhodesia as elsewhere was the Atlantic Charter signed by Winston Churchill in 1941 and recognized by all the Allies in the war. The charter proclaimed the right of people to self-determination, which meant that the locals throughout the British Empire would no longer be subservient. The charter was suspect by great leaders, such as Mohandas Gandhi, because the British had been promising self-determination to India for years but failed to move forward with this action. After the war ended, the white population, especially in Southern Rhodesia, reaped the benefits of the post-war economic boom, infuriating the Africans even more. “After the war, Africans were incensed by the fact that their sacrifices and efforts were neither recognized nor rewarded, most receiving a mere ‘pat on the back’ before being shoved back to their pre-war impoverishment, while demobilized white soldiers were feted and given farms and other material rewards.”³³ Actions such as this fed African nationalism while emerging black leaders demanded independence from foreign influence. Countries such as Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria all received independence that was supported by the Labour Party of Great Britain, but not Southern Rhodesia. A deep-seeded racism and bigotry rooted in the white settler population dated from Cecil Rhodes, and the white population in power was adamantly opposed to giving the black majority a say in politics. Thus the road to unilateral declaration of independence began with the migration of whites to Southern Rhodesia.

³² Mlambo 78.

³³ Mlambo, 72.

From 1946 to 1951 the peak of migration occurred in Southern Rhodesia. While some soldiers fell in love with the climate, others were enticed by incentives of the post-war settlement package that the government was offering. “Yet others were fleeing the difficult post-war conditions in Britain and hoped to benefit from the promising economic prospects in a country, that, because of institutionalized discrimination against the employment of Africans in skilled trades, provided great prospects for self-advancement.”³⁴ The increase of skilled workers from Great Britain greatly enhanced the now- thriving manufacturing sector because the workers had a notion of the success of capitalism that expanded the domestic market of the country. “Under these stimuli the industrial economy expanded rapidly, with the number of manufacturing units rising from 299 in 1939 to 724 in 1952.”³⁵ The economic growth of Southern Rhodesia, while reaching the urban population, did not amalgamate the blacks into mainstream society. Instead, a greater severance between the flourishing settler population and the oppressed black population was becoming more evident, giving rise to the Black Nationalist movement in Southern Rhodesia.



Figure 4 Joshua Nkomo meets with British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, 1965³⁶

³⁴ Mlambo, 80.

³⁵ Mlambo, 82.

³⁶ “Joshua Nkomo,” Obituary, *BBC News: World*, July 1, 1999.

The leader of the nationalist movement was Joshua Nkomo. In his obituary, BBC news cites Nkomo as “the first modern nationalist leader in white-ruled Rhodesia. He was a giant, both politically and physically, who dominated the Zimbabwean stage for half a century.”³⁷ Nkomo started the fight for independence against the white-ruled government. His most enduring legacy was his bitter rivalry with the infamous Prime Minister Ian Smith, who Nkomo claimed was manipulating the masses to push independence under a constitution that favored the white majority. While the nationalist movement in Southern Rhodesia was emerging, “Nkomo urged the British Government to make Southern Rhodesia independent ‘by the normal process that Britain has used in other territories which have achieved independence.’”³⁸ The British Labour government, and its Prime Minister Harold Wilson, supported a move toward independence of the black majority, who outnumbered the white population sixteen to one. However, the formation of the Rhodesian Front government, led by Ian Smith, “did not believe in black majority rule ever in Rhodesia, not in a thousand years.”³⁹ In 1962, Nkomo delivered a speech to the UN Special Committee of Decolonization in which he addressed the country’s long history of prejudice. He claimed that his Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) party was not racist, but cared solely for racial equality in a country that allowed the locals to fight in wars but still treated them as subservient. Nkomo stated:

It was clear that the policies followed by the settlers were racist. I have said, and I must emphasize, that we of the Zimbabwe African Peoples’ Union and, indeed, the whole of the African population is not racist; we are not against any person. We are against the oppression of men by men. We never can and never shall tolerate such a policy.⁴⁰

³⁷ “Joshua Nkomo,” Obituary, *BBC News: World*, July 1, 1999.

³⁸ J.R.T. Wood, *So Far and No Further: Rhodesia’s Bid for Independence during the retreat From Empire, 1959-1965* (British Columbia: Trafford Publishing, 2004), 237.

³⁹ Institute of Commonwealth Studies. http://commonwealth.sas.ac.uk/libraries/rhodesia/road_to_udi.htm.

⁴⁰ Jane Samson, *The British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 265.

Nkomo wanted to restore the country to its African roots and rid the country of its European influence, a theme that had been prevalent since the late nineteenth century. Nevertheless, Nkomo was a revolutionary figure in modern-day Zimbabwe, even though he is often overshadowed by the tyrannical leader Robert Mugabe. In 1963 Mugabe broke away from Nkomo's ZAPU party, became the leading figure in the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) party, and subsequently plunged the country into a violent civil war. But the nascent nationalist movement was temporarily derailed by the formation of an African Federation that was, as Piers Brendon called it, "fatally flawed from the start."⁴¹

This federation of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland, came in the decades after World War II but its idea was not new. "As early as 1915, the British South Africa Company (BSAC) had proposed amalgamating Northern and Southern Rhodesia, citing the advantages of an enlarged African labour market and the opening up of commerce through the removal of trade barriers."⁴² A few more plans for African union were suggested after World War I, but none actually came to fruition, primarily because of the differences in economic success and in the demographics; Southern Rhodesia was greatly superior in terms of wealth and had more whites. Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland became subject to white rule, which represented only a fraction of their populations. Nonetheless, the Central African Federation came into existence in 1953, but due to internal turmoil, only lasted until 1963. "British Central Africa presented the gravest prospects of racial conflict. Since 1953 the British dependencies of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi) had been subjected to a federal government dominated by the virtually independent European minority in Southern Rhodesia

⁴¹ Brendon, 586.

⁴² Mlambo, 85.

(Zimbabwe). A quarter of a million whites were consolidating their rule over six million blacks.⁴³

Although the federation was something of a disaster, some benefits came from it, such as the building of the Kariba Dam, a hydroelectric dam on the Zambezi River between modern-day Zambia and Zimbabwe. The dam not only generated inexpensive power but became a popular tourist attraction, along with Victoria Falls, until Zimbabwe plummeted into a disaster.



Figure 5 Victoria Falls⁴⁴

Due to the falls, the big game hunting, and the National Park, the Kariba Dam area became one of the great wonders of the world.

As the federation deteriorated, a split in Southern Rhodesian politics emerged between the surging Rhodesian Front Party, headed by Ian Smith and Edgar Whitehead, the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia. Whitehead was a notable politician, but more importantly he was a friend of Roy Welensky, the Prime Minister of the Federation. Whitehead's leadership is noteworthy for alienating the white population as well as the black population, thus paving the way for the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (U.D.I.). Since Southern Rhodesia was a dominion or self-governing nation, domestic concerns were in the hands of its government. From

⁴³ Wm. Roger Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez and Decolonization* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 494.

⁴⁴ <http://www.zambiatourism.com/travel/places/images/falls%20rainbowcd2.jpg> .

the 1920s, “Southern Rhodesia was ruled by governments drawn from wealthy farmers and plantation owners who attended the interests of their fellow Europeans.”⁴⁵ Whitehead tried to reverse the way Southern Rhodesia’s politics operated, a move that ultimately led to his defeat in the 1962 election. He tried to introduce black representation into the political sector, which was a big mistake according to the bigoted, white supremacists who dominated the political scene. “Even Whitehead acknowledged that racial representation as such would be a departure from the normal practice in Southern Rhodesia.”⁴⁶ While Whitehead was trying to bring unity to the racially divided country, a new Southern Rhodesian constitution was instituted as was the case in the other federated countries as the federation collapsed. “Racial tension increased throughout the Federation, and in January 1959 there was widespread rioting in Nyasaland. By the middle of the following year, the British government concluded that the Federation in its original form was no longer viable...New constitutions were authorized..., which anticipated the formal dissolution of the Federation on 1 January 1964.”⁴⁷

In Southern Rhodesia, the new constitution led to a bitter divide between Whitehead and the general population.⁴⁸ Interestingly, Whitehead’s feelings about the status of the black population were highly ethical: he sought to integrate the black population into mainstream society by creating new social programs that offered the same opportunities given to the white population. Yet the response to his reforms created such a stir, revealing the level of racism in Southern Rhodesia.

The 1961 constitution further diminished the reserve powers of the British government and put in place new franchise arrangements that held out the

⁴⁵ Carl P. Watts “The United States, Britain, and the Problem of Rhodesian Independence, 1964-1965,” *Diplomatic History* 30 (2006):442.

⁴⁶ Philip Murphy, *Central Africa: Part II Crisis and Dissolution, 1959-1965* (London: The Stationary Office, 2005), 209.

⁴⁷ Watts, 441.

⁴⁸ J.W. Chikwaha, *A Crisis of Governance: Zimbabwe*, 17. The proposal was passed with 41,949 in favor and 21,846 against

prospect of African majority rule at some point in the distant future. Many Rhodesian Europeans felt that this was a sound enough basis for independence but the Prime Minister, Edgar Whitehead, recognized that the British government would not permit independence unless there was a genuine improvement in the social and political rights of Africans. He therefore introduced a legislative package that accorded Africans universal elementary education, greater access to agricultural land, and a gradual increase in political representation.⁴⁹

In a sense, this type of thinking was too progressive for the backward-minded leaders of Southern Rhodesia. Many, even among Whitehead's political followers, felt that he alienated the whites, causing him to be ousted in 1962 by the Rhodesian Front Party.

Winston Field was the first Prime Minister of the Rhodesian Front Party. Field seemed like an ideal figure; he was well-established, well-liked, and was not a racist. However, the other members of the Party thought that Field's demeanor and policies were too similar to Whitehead's. At this point in history, the road to U.D.I. was chosen; it was just a matter of when the declaration would actually take place. Smith felt that Field did not accelerate independence; instead, he decelerated the move, giving the British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, Smith's sworn enemy, time to try and implement black leadership. London tricked Field into visits promising independence with the sole purpose of delaying that very act. Nonetheless, Field's position was undermined by his failure to make headway in negotiations for independence, and in April 1964 he was forced to resign by his own party's caucus. Field's replacement was his finance minister, Ian Smith, who was far less "gentlemanly" in his dealings with the British government than his predecessor.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Watts, 442.

⁵⁰ Watts, 442.

Chapter Three
Part One: The Road to Unilateral Declaration of Independence- Ian Smith,
Harold Wilson and the Struggle for Power

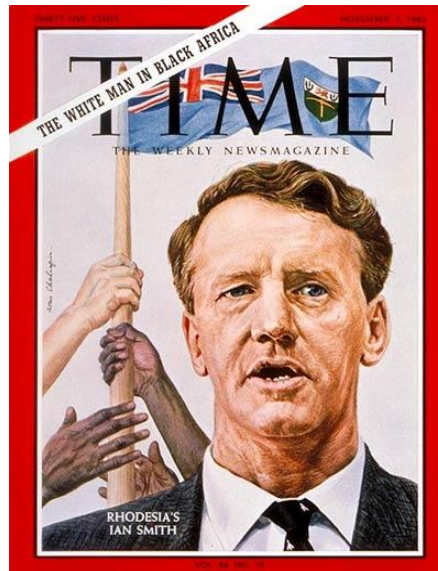


Figure 6 Ian Smith on the cover of *Time* shortly before U.D.I.⁵¹

When Ian Smith took office in 1964, an alarm was raised throughout Great Britain and the Commonwealth. He was seen as an extremist and a major threat to the goals of the British Commonwealth, among them black representation in government and equality in society. “Ian Smith had always campaigned for a ‘whiter, brighter Rhodesia.’ He maintained that when the white man first came to Rhodesia blacks couldn’t read or write. They didn’t even have their own language. They would not let their children go to school. They hadn’t even invented the wheel.”⁵² With this as his political platform, Smith immediately made sure his presence was well-known in London. Smith represented a change, not only in leadership, but in the values of Southern Rhodesia. The first leader to be born in Southern Rhodesia, he was a direct heir to Cecil Rhodes’ beliefs of white superiority. “The British were gradually getting the message that

⁵¹ “The White Man in Black Africa,” *Time Magazine*, November 5, 1965.

⁵² “Ian Smith: One Last Stand for Rhodesia’s White Warrior,” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 30 (2000-2001): 60.

this was more than the normal change of one PM for another. The entire character of the scene had been altered. For the first time in its history the country now had a Rhodesian-born PM, someone whose roots were not in Britain, but in southern Africa, in other words, a white African.”⁵³ In his autobiography, Smith recalls that his home was Southern Rhodesia, not Great Britain. During a meeting in London, Smith and the Labour Party, then in power in Great Britain, discussed the political future of Southern Rhodesia. As Smith claims in his autobiography, London said that if the people of Southern Rhodesia favored independence that should be the path on which the country embarked. Of course, this sounds like a perfect conversation between the two sides; after all, this came solely from Smith’s mouth, not the opposition.

To ensure that the minority was represented and had a say in the political action of the country, Smith and his advisors set out to ask the people what they wanted; this was a lot more complicated than it appeared. Smith wanted to make sure the chiefs and tribal members of the country were on his side, especially since they represented roughly 90 percent of the country’s population. As Smith said, “We would try to satisfy world opinion, but in the final analysis we would have to do what we knew was best for our country, and face the consequences.”⁵⁴ In Smith’s defense, he did create an organized system to investigate and test black opinion on the subject matter. However, this task was daunting because many of the black workers were aliens who came to Southern Rhodesia for the economic opportunities and a fraction of the population was illiterate, making it hard to create a fair voting system.

In Southern Africa, the tribal voice is the *indaba*, a large-scale conference. Southern Rhodesia organized an indaba to ensure a fair, ethical path toward independence:

Six hundred and twenty- two Chiefs and Headmen gathered in Salisbury on 22 October [1964] for the biggest Indaba ever held in the country. Eight nations

⁵³ Smith, 67.

⁵⁴ Smith, 80.

agreed to send observers: Australia, Austria, France, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Greece, South Africa. But Britain refused, although it claimed to be the responsible power. Once again we ask: how could we be expected to accept such deceit, especially when the traditions of the Indaba was such an important part of our history, starting at the beginning when Rhodes and the Matabele met in Matapos in 1893 and agreed to end their war.⁵⁵

Instead of attending the Indaba, the British leadership, most notably Harold Wilson and the Secretary of Commonwealth Relations, Arthur Bottomley, chose to meet with the nationalist leaders, whom Smith referred to as thugs. Nkomo was soon imprisoned because he was seen as a threat to the sovereignty of the people of Southern Rhodesia. In a bitter exchange, Smith and Nkomo clashed about their roles in the country. Ironically, each saw the other as a major threat. Nkomo says about Smith, “He was so arrogant and rude. I told him he was the biggest terrorist ever and asked him to put me back on the plane to Buffalo Range, and forget about me.”⁵⁶ Still, the British leaders wanted to see Nkomo and Ndabaningi Sithole, the founder of the ZANU party, because they, as Wilson described, were representative Africans, in his eyes destined to become the leaders of the country. British blatant disregard of whites greatly angered Smith. “Smith was astounded by such lack of sensitivity from a British minister, and it only added validity to the Chiefs’ claim that the British Government were conniving with the terrorists in their campaign of intimidation, arson and murder. This was only the first of many occasions when I had to make it clear to the British that they can no longer call the tune in Rhodesia.”⁵⁷

The relationship between the leaders of Southern Rhodesia and Great Britain was very heated; both exchanged letters that more times than not clashed with each other. The rivalry even extended to several invitations to meet followed by polite declines. “Over the course of the next eighteen months the governments of Britain and Southern Rhodesia conducted a series of

⁵⁵ Smith, 81.

⁵⁶ “Joshua Nkomo of Zimbabwe is Dead at 62,” *New York Times*, July 2, 1999.

⁵⁷ Wood, 242.

negotiations that ‘were really concerned with the cultivation of images for media presentation, since the two sides were too far apart for a real agreement to be practical.’”⁵⁸ Yet Smith created the Five Principles, which the British government wished to see satisfied for independence to be granted:

- (i) The principle and intention of unimpeded progress to majority rule, already enshrined in the 1961 constitution, would have to be maintained and guaranteed;
- (ii) There would also have to be guarantees against retrogressive amendment of the Constitution;
- (iii) There would have to be immediate improvement in the political status of the African population;
- (iv) There would have to be progress towards ending racial discrimination;
- (v) The British government would need to be satisfied that any basis proposed for independence was acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole.⁵⁹

While trying to legitimize these principles for the British government, Smith would not admit just how badly the country was segregated. According to Smith, “We had the happiest black faces in Africa. There was no racial discrimination, though whites did have some preferential status.”⁶⁰ This was the foundation of Smith’s argument for U.D.I. Even though there was segregation, the black population was relatively happy, mainly because of the economic benefits the country had to offer. As one journal points out, Smith was a master of illusion seemingly giving the black population everything they wanted without actually doing anything.⁶¹ For instance, blacks were allowed to attend white schools, but only if their parents bought land, or they could receive treatment at white hospitals but only if they could pay the bill in full. To Smith, these small concessions, if you could call them that, were evidence that the majority of the people were on his side and that the British leadership, particularly Wilson, was doing

⁵⁸ Watts, 442.

⁵⁹ Interview with Sir John Johnston, Oxford, 1965. Johnston was Great Britain’s High Commissioner to Rhodesia during U.D.I.

⁶⁰ “Ian Smith: One Last Stand for Rhodesia’s White Warrior,” 61.

⁶¹ “Ian Smith: One Last Stand for Rhodesia’s White Warrior,” 60.

anything and everything possible to foil his plan. Smith resented British leaders who traveled around Africa to garner support for opposing Smith. In his writing, Smith details one of the letters Wilson sent a black nationalist shortly before the elections in Britain, which returned the Labour Party to power. The letter said, “The Labour Party is totally opposed to granting independence to Southern Rhodesia as long as the Government of that country remains under the control of the white minority.”⁶² Clearly Wilson and Smith were at a standstill.

The last significant political argument between Smith and Wilson before the declaration concerned the promise that the British government had made to Southern Rhodesia during the Federation era. According to an agreement signed at Victoria Falls, Southern Rhodesia was to receive some economic aid because of the dissolution of the Federation. In a letter to Smith, the British government wanted to defer any sort of payment until the talks of U.D.I. ceased: basically, the British were blackmailing Smith into getting their way. The letter stated, “My Government feel it would be less than honest not to recognize that the talk of U.D.I. is bound to throw a shadow of uncertainty on the future relations between the two Governments. In the absence of any assurance on this subject the British Government think it would be preferable to defer further financial talks until it has been possible to clear the air by discussions on the political issues.”⁶³ Smith found this action cowardly and scandalous because the British were breaking a legal agreement. After more political banter between the two leaders, a party in London for the Queen, to which Wilson uninvited Smith much to the chagrin of the Queen, was the tipping point of the absurdity of these two leaders’ relationship.

⁶² Smith, 83.

⁶³ Smith, 84.

U.D.I.

The finishing touch to U.D.I. was another series of political exchanges between Smith and Great Britain. Smith altered the constitution by adding the requirement that a two-thirds majority of voters wanted independence. Smith, like any good politician, visited every portion of the country, hoping to appeal to the masses. According to Smith, his visits attracted mass audiences, creating a political awakening. Great Britain, however, was still not responsive to Smith's actions, prompting Smith to question the British Prime Minister once again: "What more did the British Government require to prove that the majority of people in Rhodesia wanted their independence under the present constitution? The Indaba of Chiefs and Headmen had given unanimous support, the referendum had given a positive affirmative vote, and now the general election had indicated total support."⁶⁴ Smith then sent a proposal to Bottomley but never received a response. Humorously, Smith quips in his autobiography that Bottomley was visiting the communist countries before dealing with Southern Rhodesia's issues. Even though Southern Rhodesia was not independent, Smith raises an excellent point that it was relatively more stable than most of the newly independent African countries. He stated, "When we have our independence we will also have what the independent countries to our north do not have, economic independence, without which there is no real independence."⁶⁵ This point speaks volumes because there really was no reason not to grant Southern Rhodesia independence--- except of course its apartheid.

Since its formation in the late nineteenth century, Southern Rhodesia had one of the strongest economies in Africa proving it was sufficiently stable to survive on its own, unlike many other African areas. At this point, the conflict between Smith and Wilson was just

⁶⁴ Smith, 90.

⁶⁵ Smith, 90.

personal. During an exchange between Smith and Bottomley, Bottomley had no idea about any proposals, i.e. the Five Principles, prompting many of the Cabinet members, even the cautious ones, to ask what more they could do. Meanwhile, Smith exclaimed that “I cannot go on much longer leaving the people of Rhodesia and the future of Rhodesia hanging in suspense.”⁶⁶

Finally, on November 11, 1965, Ian Smith officially declared a Unilateral Declaration of Independence, which illegally severed ties with the British Crown, and interestingly became only the second country successfully to break free of British hegemony illegally, the first being the United States in 1776. After more negotiations, Great Britain refused to recognize this U.D.I. Smith then defended his declaration:

His address to the people of Rhodesia said he had taken the action, ‘so that dignity and freedom of all may be assured.’ After the proclamation he explained: There can be no happiness in a country while the absurd situation continues to exist where people, such as ourselves, who have ruled themselves with an impeccable record for over 40 years, are denied what is freely granted to other countries.⁶⁷

Reaction

The declaration of independence created an international outcry deeming it highly unethical. Many countries, especially the United States and Great Britain, as well as the United Nations sanctioned Rhodesia, hoping to reverse the declaration. “U.D.I. caught the attention of the world. It was denounced at the United Nations, and African governments, led by Kwame Nkrumah, called on Britain to use force to end the rebellion; failing that, Nkrumah called for African states to unite their armed forces to the same end.”⁶⁸ Harold Wilson told a packed and solemn House of Commons that the Labour Government would not be sending troops to deal with the crisis. “Instead he announced a full-range of sanctions including ceasing all British aid

⁶⁶ Smith, 91.

⁶⁷ “Rhodesia Breaks From UK,” *BBC News*.

⁶⁸ Richard Coggins, Wilson and Rhodesia: UDI and British Policy Towards Africa,” *Contemporary British History* 20 (2006): 370.

to and preferential treatment for Rhodesia, banning the import of Rhodesian tobacco and recalling the British High Commissioner.”⁶⁹

The United Nations had a precarious position in the Rhodesian crisis. The UN was established to protect world security; if it failed in toppling Smith’s government, the reputation and impact of the UN would decrease substantially. As J. Leo Cefkin stated in his journal entry, “Should a small white minority of 220,000 Rhodesians successfully defy the will of the UN, this will prejudice the future use of sanctions and will undermine the weight accorded the Organization’s actions.”⁷⁰ After intense negotiations, the UN aimed at ending the rebellion led by Ian Smith against the United Kingdom. The resolution was to isolate Rhodesia from the international community. “The Council determined that the situation in Rhodesia constituted ‘a threat to international peace and security,’ and, under Article 41, it decided that all Member States of the United Nations must apply sanctions to bar importation of a number of basic Rhodesian exports.”⁷¹ Wilson believed that an oil embargo was the necessary sanction. However, the sanctions did not have the political effect Wilson was hoping for, mainly because the Rhodesian Front blamed Wilson, not Smith, for the lack of resources.

Wilson and Smith later engaged in a series of negotiations to ease the tensions. The negotiations took place on a battle cruiser, the HMS *Tiger*. These peace talks show Wilson’s inability to resolve the issue; because he did not want to use force to remove Smith, he limited his bargaining power. Wilson did manage, to keep the Commonwealth together but failed to come to an agreement with Smith. “Nevertheless, while Wilson did succeed in keeping Rhodesia out of inter-party conflict in Britain, the failure to push Rhodesia’s constitutional development

⁶⁹ “Rhodesia Breaks From UK,” *BBC News*.

⁷⁰ J. Leo Cefkin, “The Rhodesian Question at the United Nations,” *International Organization* 22 (Summer, 1968): 649.

⁷¹ Cefkin, 649.

along the lines of multi-racial democracy left the issue to be resolved by other means and by other actors.”⁷²

Needless to say among the African countries, U.D.I. created an uproar, and many called for the invasion of Rhodesia. Still, Smith points out, the declaration did not lead to a social upheaval; the country was relatively calm, especially compared to other more turbulent African states; peace and tranquility, however, would be short lived in Rhodesia.⁷³

Part Two: Civil War, 1965-1980- The Beginning of the End of Rhodesia and Peace

After the signing of an Anglo-Rhodesian Agreement in 1969, the British ensured the continuation of white rule by promising only small concessions to the majority. This led to unrest in many of the urban areas, adding to a guerilla campaign that had begun in 1965. “This declining state of affairs had the effect of shaking white confidence in the U.D.I. project. The early 1970s were marked by two struggles. The first saw invigorated resistance to white rule in the urban areas, complemented by the escalation of the war in the countryside.”⁷⁴ Throughout the early 1970s, peace talks occurred, but all members of the black community rejected any sort of peace talks that ostracized them from mainstream society and still kept them as second- class citizens. This led to widespread violent demonstrations in all the big cities of Rhodesia. As Mugabe stated in an interview, “We began with non-violent struggle. When we understood this wouldn’t work, we changed our tactics to boycotts, strikes, and demonstrations. When these didn’t work we moved to sabotage against property without destruction of human life. When this failed, we decided on the armed struggle.”⁷⁵ The interesting thing about the Rhodesian-Bush

⁷² Coggins, 376.

⁷³ Smith, 118.

⁷⁴ Mlambo, 141.

⁷⁵ Samson, 267.

War was that until the 1972 not a single white person died in action, which shows that this was more of a guerilla war aimed at overthrowing the government.⁷⁶

The second conflict, and the real tragedy for the black independence movement, was the split between the ZANU and the ZAPU, which soon started fighting each other instead of white leadership.

In 1965, few of the key players in the Rhodesian saga foresaw the main elements of the unfolding Greek tragedy. Not only was black rule inevitable, but it was almost inevitable that, once they were allowed to get away with U.D.I., Rhodesian whites were unlikely to accept that fate without a considerable struggle. That struggle was bound to be prolonged, if, firstly, the black nationalist movement was to become divided, and, secondly, international pressures, especially sanctions, were not comprehensively applied. Black nationalists spent as much time fighting each other as combating Smith's troops.⁷⁷

The civil war that started in 1965 was a long, violent conflict between the guerillas of the ZANU and the ZAPU, each trying to assert their hegemony while simultaneously trying to combat the Rhodesian Front Party. After the declaration of U.D.I., the leaders of the ZANU and the ZAPU were imprisoned in an effort to make sure Smith's government was not affected by any dissidents. Within the nationalist movements, tensions were mounting as leaders such as Ndabangini Sithole were now being challenged by new men, among them Robert Mugabe, who was fast becoming the most influential nationalist in the country. Mlambo, a Rhodesian broadcaster and author, stated, "In ZANU, for example, Ndabaningi Sithole's position as president was challenged by a group of ZANU detainees, who appointed Robert Mugabe as the new leader of the party. Besides the division between the military and political leaders, the

⁷⁶ David Caute, *Under the Skin: The Death of White Rhodesia* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press; London: Allen Lane, 1983), p. 40.

⁷⁷ Paul Moorcraft, "Rhodesia's War of Independence," *History Today* 40 (1990).

political leaders themselves were divided along age, educational, ideological and even personal lines.”⁷⁸

Meantime, the combat against white rule continued. Mugabe stated in 1978 that the war was a means of achieving independence exclusively.

We view the armed struggle as a means of achieving peace in our country, not as an instrument for killing and indiscriminate violence. It is an instrument which we can use to make revolutionary changes. This had been made necessary by the fact that the colonial power (Britain) has handed over its role to the colonists that established a fascist order in our country, oppressing our people. The peasants have become poorer and the working class has been exploited to the point where the worker is almost a slave.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Mlambo, 145.

⁷⁹ Samson, 268.

Chapter Four

1980: Independence and the Rise of Robert Mugabe



Figure 7 A recent image of Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe⁸⁰

The war officially ended in 1980 after 15 years of fighting. The new country changed its name to Zimbabwe, a name that paid homage to its tribal roots. A general election was held in 1980, in which Smith, Nkomo and Mugabe all participated. Nkomo, who seemed destined to lead the country, played second fiddle to Mugabe, who gave off a powerful, innovative image that likened him to other revolutionary leaders, such as Gamal Nasser and Kemal Ataturk. Mugabe, stunningly, became the prime minister of Zimbabwe in 1980 and renamed his party ZANU Patriotic Front (PF). “He guaranteed white farmers that they had nothing to fear; he reappointed the heads of the Central Intelligence Organization, the police, and the army; and he appointed ZAPU leaders and whites to his cabinet. Mugabe won praise and international donor money.”⁸¹

⁸⁰ Mugabe.com

⁸¹ Norma J. Kriger, “Robert Mugabe, Another Too-Long Serving African Ruler: A Review Essay,” *Political Science Quarterly* 118 (2003): 308.

At first, Mugabe seemed too good to be true, especially for a country that had just ended a lengthy civil war. One of the earliest and most decisive actions of Mugabe's cabinet was the attempt to unify the different tribes. Conflicts amongst the tribes had been relatively few since the peace negotiations involving Cecil Rhodes, but escalated after the power struggle between the ZANU and the ZAPU. Hoping to quell tension among the different tribes so he could move forward with the social reform of the country, Mugabe appointed Nkomo to various cabinet positions. However, Nkomo was fired and consequently humiliated in 1983, as Mugabe asserted more authority and started his police state. Charles Duke, a minister under Smith and Mugabe, writes, "We were aware of the rampant corruption, partisan media, injustices, nepotism, and related malpractices carried out in the country."⁸² According to Duke, Mugabe was inspired by Stalin's methods and tactics, ensuring a long tenure in office by creating of a one-party state

Mugabe's term as prime minister was somewhat successful, seeing an increase in economic growth after a rocky start. "At independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited an economy that exhibited both extreme characteristics of a relatively developed economy and economic backwardness and neglect of the majority of the people. This dualism (separate development) had arisen from the policy of white supremacy that underlined the colonial era."⁸³ The strength of the Zimbabwean economy was that it had several successful sectors, the most efficient being agriculture, mining and manufacturing, all of which accounted for half the gross domestic product of the country.

During the 1980s Mugabe's policies were largely socialist in orientation. In 1980 and 1981 the Zimbabwean economy showed strong growth of the GDP with 10.6% and 12.5%. From 1982–1989 economic growth averaged just 2.7% (1980–1989 average 4.47%). The white minority government maintained (with economic

⁸² Charles W. Duke, *Zimbabwe: The Land That Weeps* (Great Britain: Best Books Online, 2003), pp. 9-10.

⁸³ Staffan Darnolf, *Twenty Years of Independence in Zimbabwe: from liberation to authoritarianism* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 35.

sanctions) from 1966–1972 a 6.7% average growth rate and overall from 1966 till 1979 a 3.8% average growth rate.⁸⁴

Mugabe not only wanted to rejuvenate the once flourishing economy, but he wanted to lessen the bridge between the whites and blacks using socialist policies. “The government’s objectives were to implement policies based on socialist, egalitarian and democratic principles under conditions of rapid economic growth, full employment, price stability, dynamic efficiency in the allocation of resources, and to ensure that the benefits are equitably distributed.”⁸⁵ Like most socialist countries, Zimbabwe instituted free education for the population, a move that brought praise to Mugabe, but would ultimately and sardonically come back to haunt him because of the failure of his regime during his presidency. Mugabe’s reputation and leadership during his time as prime minister was astute.

As economic growth continued, Mugabe’s main success was improving the country’s social programs and creating better living conditions for the people. According to a 1995 World Bank report, after independence “Zimbabwe gave priority to human resource investments and support for smallholder agriculture,” and as a result, “smallholder agriculture expanded rapidly during the first half of the 1980s and social indicators improved quickly.” From 1980 to 1990 infant mortality decreased from 86 to 49 per 1000 live births; under age five mortality was reduced from 128 to 58 per 1000 live births; and immunization increased from 25% to 80% of the population. Also, “child malnutrition fell from 22% to 12% and life expectancy increased from 56 to 64. By 1990, Zimbabwe had a lower infant mortality rate, higher adult literacy and higher school enrollment rate than average for developing countries.”⁸⁶

⁸⁴ World Bank Report 1991, pp. 9–10.

⁸⁵ Darnolf, 40.

⁸⁶ “Zimbabwe Achieving Shared Growth,” World Bank, Retrieved 28 June 2008.

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 affected Mugabe, as well as other socialist leaders, because of the failure of socialism. Mugabe now had to reassess his policies and introduce a more innovative system. “With the demise of Russia as a super power, Mugabe had to rethink and rehash the dualism of his political doctrines fiasco...Mugabe’s ambitious socialist policies to raise the standards of living for millions of blacks without attaining control of the country’s economic productive sector was eventually to prove fatal to his ideology.”⁸⁷

During the 1990 election, Mugabe’s ZANU (PF) party won all but three of the seats in Parliament, showing his popularity, but also his rigging of the elections. Zimbabwe seemed to be a stable country, so tourism was popular in the 1990s, and the country seemed destined to be stable. However, many of the policies of that decade are the main reason why Zimbabwe is so volatile to this day. The re-structuring of the economy only propelled its collapse.

“Unemployment, compensation to war veterans and the land issue coupled to the recurrent droughts and maize shortfalls became serious concerns for Mugabe in the 1990s. The five year Development Programmes, co-operatives resettlement and growth point strategies were rejected by the ever increasing number of educated, unemployed youth.”⁸⁸As more and more people became educated, white collar jobs were overrun while the country’s economic foundation, its blue collar manufacturing sector, led to the rise of unemployment because more and more people wanted better paying jobs in the white collar sector.

Coinciding with the fall of the Soviet Union, Zimbabwe embarked on an economic program aimed at promoting higher growth by making the economy more free. The World Bank provided the funds needed to support a five- year plan known as the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP). “The main objectives of the program were (a) to reduce the central

⁸⁷ Duke, 40-3.

⁸⁸ Duke, 44.

government's fiscal deficit; (b) to promote liberalization of international trade and finance; and (c) to deregulate domestic markets, including the elimination of price controls."⁸⁹ Shortly after the program was implemented, Zimbabwe suffered a severe drought that forced the government to devote some attention to the crisis. "The 1991-92 drought was one of the most severe in recent memory across all of southern Africa."⁹⁰ The drought was one of the main reasons why ESAP failed, mainly because it increased spending while many people, especially the poor, were jobless as a result of the drought (*See Appendix*). "The drought and economic restructuring were associated with a serious economic decline between 1990 and 1996."⁹¹

"The failure to lower the budget deficit resulted in excessive monetary growth, inflation, and continued high interest rates (IMF 2001). These factors, in turn, slowed investment and placed particular hardship on the poor because of limited job creation and increased food prices."⁹² Many of Zimbabwe's current issues, such as staggering inflation and high unemployment, still plague Mugabe's leadership. For a country that is known for its fertile land and agriculture, the drought caused economic disarray, and the country has yet to recover.

The economic decline led to an increase in the level of poverty. "Extreme poverty increased dramatically in Zimbabwe during the 1990s. The prevalence of the poorest people rose by about 9 percentage points, representing about a 35 percent increase in the percentage of households below the poverty line."⁹³ The urban sector was hit the hardest. Virtually, no poverty existed in the urban areas prior to the re-structuring of the economy, whereas by 1995, the extreme poverty in the urban areas was a pressing social problem that needed to be addressed.

⁸⁹ Jeffrey Alwang, Bradford F. Mills, and Nelson Taruvinga, *Why Has Poverty Increased in Zimbabwe?* (Washington, DC: World Bank Publications, 2002), 5.

⁹⁰ Alwang, 9.

⁹¹ Alwang, 11.

⁹² Alwang, 8.

⁹³ Alwang, 13.

“Several explanations emerge for the observed increase in poverty during the 1990s. These include (a) inadequate investments in physical and human assets and (b) lower rates of return to existing assets,”⁹⁴ all of which have made Zimbabwe the land that weeps, a title the country has borne since the latter half of the 1990s.

Another catastrophe plagued Zimbabwe, making it, as Charles Duke appropriately titles his book, *The Land That Weeps*. An HIV epidemic swept across Zimbabwe in the 1990s and devastated the country. “Since 1990, HIV/AIDS has slashed the average life expectancy in Zimbabwe from 61 to 33 years and there are now 1 million children in Zimbabwe who have been orphaned due to AIDS-related deaths. In other words, one in five Zimbabwean children is an orphan as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis.”⁹⁵ There are three main reasons why the virus was able to spread so quickly across the country. First, many people did not know of the virus, which allowed it to become widespread. Second, the government did not tell the people how to avoid the virus, and lastly, the people who had the virus did not receive the proper drugs needed to slow down the virus. The result is “the world’s sixth largest population of people living with HIV/AIDS—1.3 million of a total population of 11.3 million.”⁹⁶

As devastating as the HIV crisis was in Zimbabwe, Mugabe was only blamed for not seeking proper protection for those affected by the virus. However, while the virus spread, Mugabe embarked on land reform, the centerpiece of his dictatorship. Land reform became one of the biggest problems for Mugabe as he tried to reverse his declining popularity. “President Mugabe said that Zimbabwe’s current land ownership was unequal. He claimed that whites made

⁹⁴ Alwang, 20.

⁹⁵ James Elder, “HIV/AIDS: A deadly crisis each day in Zimbabwe,” UNICEF.org, 28 October 2005.

⁹⁶ Yvonne Thorpe, *Zimbabwe* (Australia: Macmillan Education Australia, 2010), 20.

up 1 percent of the population, but still owned 70 percent of the farmland. Because food was Zimbabwe's main export, this meant that whites controlled most of the income from overseas."⁹⁷

Since 1980, Mugabe had promised to reallocate the land equally amongst the blacks and the whites, hoping to decrease the amount of land the white minority controlled. In 1965, the whites seized control of the majority of fertile land and forced the blacks onto poorer, more arid land. Under the Lancaster House Agreement, signed in 1979, white landowners were protected by a provision, which stated that their land would not be distributed for ten years. The purpose of the Lancaster Agreement was to redress the colonial legacy of land ownership in the country, meaning a fair, equal distribution. After the Agreement ended in 1989, land began to be distributed; however, little changed. "By 1997, however, much of the more fertile land remained under control of a few thousand white farmers. Moreover, much of the land that had been distributed, remained in the hands of the black elites, and was not accessible for lower-class Zimbabweans."⁹⁸ Land reform seemed to be stagnating and did not provide Mugabe with the type of success he sought, namely that the redivision in land ownership would be complete by the 1990s.

At independence, the Government of Zimbabwe sought to redress the inherited colonial legacy of glaring and skewed racial inequalities in land distribution. Yet, between 1980 and 1990 Government managed to acquire only 3.5 million hectares and resettled 71,000 households. The communal areas still remained congested, overstocked and overgrazed. Pressure was mounting on Government to accelerate its land reform programme.⁹⁹

Under mounting pressure by 2000, Mugabe tried to revitalize his administration, especially after he was defeated at the polls, the first loss in his political career. Mugabe

⁹⁷ Thorpe, 22.

⁹⁸ <http://www.hrcr.org/hottopics/zimbabwe.html>.

⁹⁹ <http://www.zimembassy.se/documents/Land.pdf>

proposed to speed redistribution by seizing land. He would “compensate the farmers for improvements on the farms, such as buildings and equipment. The former colonial power, Britain, would pay the farmers for the land they had lost.”¹⁰⁰ Mugabe was trying to correct what he called an historical wrong, but the British government did not take responsibility for compensating white farmers. Meanwhile, Mugabe’s supporters invaded white-owned farms, threatening revolution if the land was not handed over, and reversing Mugabe’s original goal of a tranquil country of equality.

The land reform program, known as the Fast Track, has been a highly litigious topic since its inception, mainly because of the tactics Mugabe used for redistribution. Mugabe claimed that the land rightfully belonged to the blacks, citing the hostile relationship between the settlers and King Lobengula dating from the late nineteenth century. However, the language Mugabe used is very racist, making him no better than Ian Smith, his long-hated rival. “The ruling party’s nationalistic ideology was recast in more authoritarian, selective and racialised notions of citizenship... Mugabe narrated the land struggle as part of a longer and broader history of anti-imperialist and pan-Africanist struggles, casting the opposition and civil society groups as Western surrogates in them.”¹⁰¹ In doing so, he alienated the white population, the emerging Labour party, farmers, and all other sectors of society except for the war veterans who reaped the benefits of his policy, stealing land that was already owned.

One of the defining legacies of the land reform program was the amount of violence by the dueling political parties, Mugabe’s and the Movement for Democratic Changes (MDC), who opposed Mugabe’s administration. The controversial 2000 election, notable for rampant corruption, widespread violence, rape, torture, and death threats, was one of the leading causes of

¹⁰⁰ Ish Mafundikwa, “Zimbabwe’s Controversial Land Reform Started Ten Years Ago,” Voice of America, February 16, 2010.

¹⁰¹ Mlambo, 213.

instability in Zimbabwe to this day. Mugabe barely squeaked out a win in the 2000 election, beating Morgan Tsvangirai. “Both (2000 and 2002) elections were conducted under the cloud of enormous electoral discrepancies, and the electoral issues contested by the opposition in these elections were still being contested in the 2005 general election won by ZANU (PF).”¹⁰²

Interestingly, MDC came extremely close to defeating Mugabe. As a PBS news article from 2000 states, “Zimbabwe's opposition came out of the shadows and into the sunlight today. The movement for democratic change was narrowly defeated, but still regarded its 57 seats as a victory over President Mugabe.”¹⁰³

The re-election of Mugabe, especially under the corrupt practices of the 2000 election, sent shock waves across the international community, especially the United Nations. Documents released years after the election show. “The United Nations offered Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe's president, unusual incentives to step down from office in 2000, according to leaked US diplomatic cables reported in a UK Sunday paper, *The Observer*. Kofi Annan, who was the head the UN at the time, is said to have offered Mugabe a retirement deal including a safe haven overseas and a financial package funded by Gaddafi, the Libyan leader.”¹⁰⁴ Ironically, given the recent events surrounding Muammar Gaddafi, Mugabe does not keep the best company; instead his closest allies on the world stage are generally seen as just corrupt and violent as he is.

¹⁰² Mlambo, 215.

¹⁰³ http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/africa/jan-june00/zimbabwe_6-27.html

¹⁰⁴ Jamie Doward, “Wikileaks Cables: UN offered Robert Mugabe a lucrative retirement overseas,” *The Guardian*, December 18, 2010.

Conclusion



Figure 8 A political cartoon of some of Mugabe's shortcomings¹⁰⁵

In an article of *The Economist* in 2002 concerning the welfare of the people, Mugabe claims that only the greedy are complaining. The author of the article, however, states otherwise: “Zimbabwe’s president claimed that his programme of seizing land from white farmers and giving it to his supporters was a great success. In fact, it has not been the greedy that have been complaining, but the hungry, and because Mr. Mugabe’s policy of persecuting the country’s most productive farmers has created a terrible food shortage, there are rather a lot of them.”¹⁰⁶ The situation in Zimbabwe is rather serious, as many people in the country are struggling to provide food and shelter to their families. The current situation is a direct result of the Fast Track land reform of 2000, a move that, in many ways, will be Mugabe’s most enduring legacy because of the destruction and chaos it has wreaked upon the country. Part of the problem with the land reform was that many unskilled workers were now in control of the farming duties, a main source of G.D.P and economic vitality in the country. While tension between the settler population and the black population has been an ongoing conflict since the founding of the

¹⁰⁵ http://www.un242.com/?attachment_id=376

¹⁰⁶ “Mugabe’s famine,” *The Economist*, August 12, 2002.

country, Mugabe has completely changed the social dynamic of Zimbabwe, with the white population now struggling because of land confiscation. “While in 2000 there were some 4,500 white commercial farmers occupying 11 million hectares of land and producing over 70 per cent of agricultural output, by 2008 this number had been reduced to approximately 500. By 2005 the remnants of the white farming community were fragmented and powerless and the production, economic contributions, financial clout and institutional effectiveness of the white farmers had been eliminated.”¹⁰⁷ The loss of skilled farmers and workers has led to roughly five million people needing food assistance because of the food shortages, which seem to be a recurring theme in the once thriving agricultural sector.

The crisis in Zimbabwe has become an international topic, especially among the British Commonwealth, an organization that tries to promote stability for the greater good of nations. The Commonwealth is mostly composed of former dominions and colonies, except for Mozambique that joined for the perks of British law. Zimbabwe, over the last few years, has become a hot topic during the Commonwealth meetings. In 1991, the members of the Commonwealth met ironically at Harare (the capital of Zimbabwe) and composed the Harare Declaration. The Declaration stated:

- We believe that international peace and order, global economic development and the rule of international law are essential to the security and prosperity of mankind;
- We believe in the liberty of the individual under the law, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of gender, race, colour, creed or political belief, and in the individual's inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which he or she lives;
- We recognize racial prejudice and intolerance as a dangerous sickness and a threat to healthy development, and racial discrimination as an unmitigated evil;

¹⁰⁷ Mlambo, 216.

- We oppose all forms of racial oppression, and we are committed to the principles of human dignity and equality;
- We recognise the importance and urgency of economic and social development to satisfy the basic needs and aspirations of the vast majority of the peoples of the world, and seek the progressive removal of the wide disparities in living standards amongst our members¹⁰⁸

In 2002, the Commonwealth suspended Zimbabwe for a year because the member states felt that the recent elections were seriously flawed, thus not meeting the standards of the Harare Declaration. This move greatly angered Mugabe, who immediately reacted by quitting the Commonwealth altogether, a move that still stands to this day. The decision of the Commonwealth greatly affected some of the member states, some agreeing with Mugabe with others lauding the move. Helen Clark, the former Prime Minister of New Zealand, stated that, “It is not a crisis for the Commonwealth, but it is a crisis for Zimbabwe.”¹⁰⁹ Mugabe felt that his country was treated unfairly by the big players of the Commonwealth and that is why he quit. Given Mugabe’s track record, especially over the last decade, the Commonwealth was completely in the right to suspend Zimbabwe following the precedent of 1961 when it suspended South Africa because of apartheid and did not reinstate the country until the 1990s. Thus, by not complying with the standards that all Commonwealth members must accept, Zimbabwe was completely in the wrong and deserved the harsh penalty it received. Speaking in 2010 to allAfrica.com, a man tells the writer Bertha Shoko about the poor conditions in the country: “Our roads are poor, we do not have that many clinics and schools, we have no bridges and these are the many issues that concern us a people.”¹¹⁰ The crisis in Zimbabwe is a sad tragedy given the once successful history,

¹⁰⁸ “Harare Commonwealth Declaration,” *Commonwealth Secretariat*, 20 October 1991.

¹⁰⁹ “Zimbabwe quits Commonwealth,” *BBC News*, December 8, 2003.

¹¹⁰ Bertha Shoko, “Zimbabwe: So Rich Yet So Poor—The Sad Reality of Communities With Mineral Resources,” AllAfrica.com, April 17, 2010.

promise of Mugabe and all the struggles the black population went through to topple Smith's racist regime. As a *New York Times* Op-Ed states, "Worldwide pressure forced the Rhodesian regime to give up power three decades ago. Now we need similar pressure, from African countries as well as Western powers, to pry Mr. Mugabe's fingers from his chokehold on a lovely country."¹¹¹

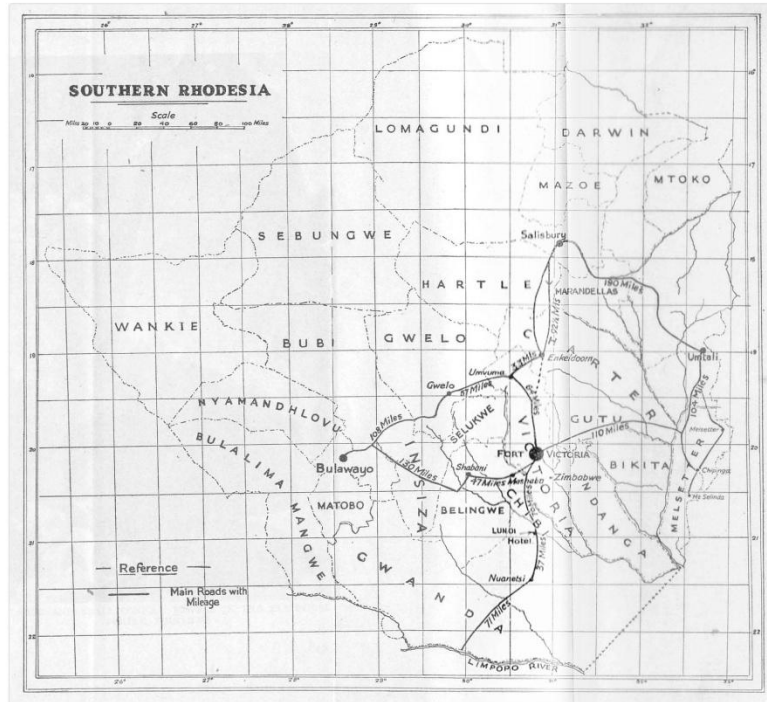
¹¹¹ Nicholas D. Kristof, "Postcard From Zimbabwe," *New York Times*, April 7, 2010.

Epilogue

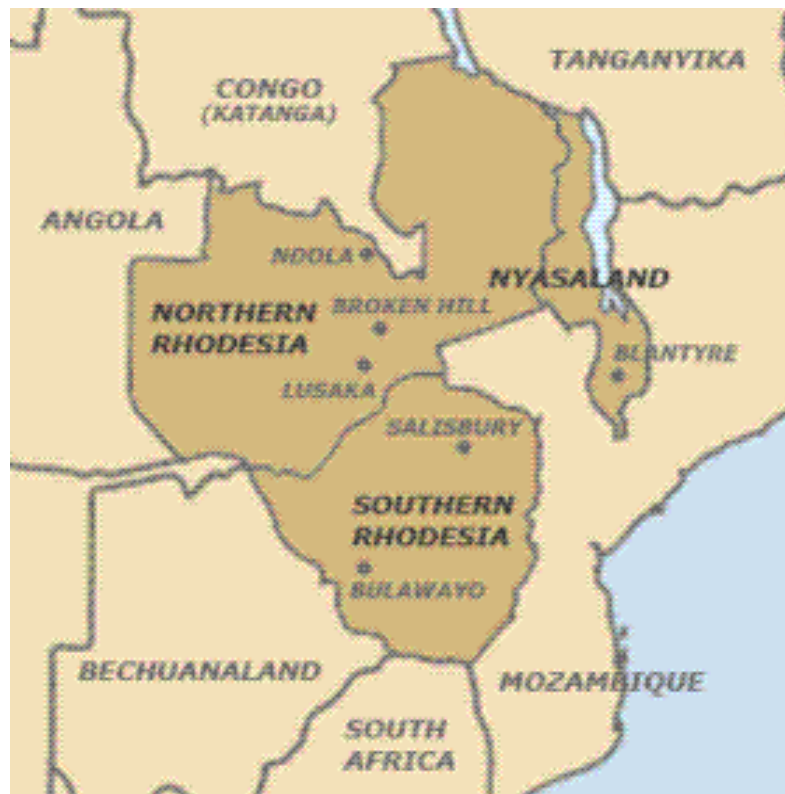
Over the last few years, the coalition government in Zimbabwe has tried to reconcile the differences with Great Britain, possibly because of the current state of the country and the added perks of being a Commonwealth member. An article written in London's *Telegraph* in 2009 talks about the actions Zimbabwe needs to take if it wants to be reinstated: "British officials ahead of Friday's meeting said yesterday that they thought there was some progress on reforms in Harare, but they needed to be more solid before firm commitments of a return to the Commonwealth can be countenanced."¹¹² Even though it is 2012 and Zimbabwe is not yet back in the Commonwealth, the talks of a possible reinstatement are encouraging to those who have endured Mugabe's tyranny all these years. The future of Zimbabwe will be an interesting one to keep an eye on, especially since President Mugabe is old and there have been a few reports of his declining health. An article written on January 12, 2012 by the *Zimbabwe Independent*, claims that Mugabe is having trouble finding the proper successor, thus leading to internal divisions amongst the ZANU (PF).¹¹³ Zimbabwe is definitely a country to watch.

¹¹² Andrew Porter, "Zimbabwe set for Commonwealth return by 2011," *The Telegraph*, November 24, 2009.

¹¹³ Faith Zaba, "Mugabe in Dilemma Over Successor," *Zimbabwe Independent*, January 12, 2012.



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¹¹⁴ <http://www.philatelicdatabase.com/africa/southern-rhodesia-map-1930/>

¹¹⁵ http://www.unostamps.nl/country_southern_rhodesia.htm



Figure 9 Maps of Zimbabwe throughout its history: Figure 1: Southern Rhodesia; Figure 2: The Federation; Figure 3: Present Day Zimbabwe

¹¹⁶ http://www.britishcrowns.com/Colonial/Southern_Rhodesia/Southern_Rhodesia.html

Table 1. Evolution of Zimbabwean Policies, Fiscal Years 1990–96

Year	Key events	Agricultural price policy ^a	Macroeconomic policy ^b	Poverty, health, and education policy
1991	ESAP Severe drought begins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phased elimination of controls on trade between smallholder areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget targets announced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Development Fund (SDF) established
1992	Severe drought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government continues to intervene in maize markets • Price controls lifted on all but two fertilizers; government continues to manage imports through permits • Subsidies to marketing boards grow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiscal deficit grows to 9.6% of GDP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased user fees at government health facilities (fees not retained by collecting unit) • School fees established • School and health fee assistance for low-income families begin under SDF • Supplementary feeding program and grain loan scheme introduced
1993	ESAP reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grain Marketing Board (GMB) monopoly seller status restricted to large mills • High official producer price announced to promote planting • Maize meal subsidies removed • Subsidies to marketing boards fall by 83% (from Z\$786 to Z\$135) • Consumer prices decontrolled • Cotton marketing board eliminated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Foreign Currency Accounts introduced • Fiscal deficits remain high during remainder of period 	
1994	Second drought begins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GMB monopoly seller status eliminated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange control regulations relaxed; by end of year, exporters allowed to retain 100% of export earnings 	

Table 1. (continued)

Year	Key events	Agricultural price policy ^a	Macroeconomic policy ^b	Poverty, health, and education policy
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market-determined exchange rate formally adopted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government articulates Poverty Alleviation Action Plan (coordinated by Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare)
1995	Second drought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All fertilizer price controls ended • Subsidies to marketing boards eliminated 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees at rural health facilities abolished

a. Main source: Townsend 1999.

b. Main source: IMF 2001.

¹¹⁷ Alwang, 6.

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