

## Zimbabwe: Confronting the White Minority



**A**LTHOUGH it is a fact that the brutality of British colonialism succeeded in overcoming the forces of justice in 1903, turning the African territory of Zimbabwe into a dominion of systematic exploitation, this never meant the defeat of African resistance against the foreign invader: sufficient evidence of this are the Mashona and Ocatabele rebellions in 1895-97; the inception of the Southern Rhodesia Association in 1911, which struggled against tax payment and the eviction of peasants from their best lands; the League of African Voters in 1919, led by Jerry Sabantu; the Bantu Congress,

whose name was the African National Congress, in 1955-56; and finally, above all, the inception of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) which since August 1967, alongside the ANC of South Africa, has been engaged in armed struggle against western imperialism whose interests maintain Ian Smith's fascist regime in power.

In 1966 the first battles were staged in the northeastern, northern, and southeastern parts of the country, where the liberation forces inflicted heavy casualties on the mercenaries of Smith and Vorster. In the field of the military operations of the ZAPU guerrillas, the latest military operations may be summed up as follows: on January 5 and 6 last, the guerrillas put a patrol boat out of action in the Zambese River and killed three mercenaries in Makuti. On the 20th, after a successful guerrilla attack on the airport and the military camp of Victoria Falls, in the Wankie area, the Smith regime had to resort to the assistance of 700 mercenaries brought from South Africa. On the 24th the fighters assaulted a platoon of fusiliers killing four mercenaries — including the commander, I. J. Brading — northeast of Bulawayo. In the same zone another battle took place during which seven mercenaries lost their lives. The combatants lost one of their liaison officers; on the 26th of that same month the regime's security staff admitted the death of one of its agents, I. M. Annas, and acknowledged the aggressiveness of the freedom fighters. On more than one occasion ZAPU has denounced the criminal methods of

Ian Smith's soldiers who, before killing them, force prisoners to dig their own graves. Peasants who are suspected of collaborating with the guerrillas suffer the same fate. They run away from fascist repression and 3000 of them have fled to Zambia where the ZAPU takes care of them.

In these first confrontations between the revolutionary forces and reaction, two facts stand out at a single glance: on the one hand, the full support of the rural African population and that of the intellectuals and workers for the guerrillas; in fact, the active participation of the masses in the struggle is general; and, on the other hand, as may be logically expected, the agglutination of every internal and external ultra-reactionary force around Smith's white minority regime, foremost among them the fascist states of South Africa and Portugal and their NATO allies. The systematic bombings of the rural zones; the imposition of terror in the cities; the imprisonment, torture, and murder of the patriots have been the most outstanding features of enemy reaction. In the face of this situation the African people of Zimbabwe have cried: "Crime demands vengeance!"

The establishment of the so-called republic of Rhodesia by Ian Smith is nothing but the confirmation of the intentions of the white minority living in the country and, above all, of the racist leaders of South Africa on the one hand, and of Great Britain, the German Federal Republic, and other imperialist forces on the other, which aim at continuing to grab the wealth

of southern Africa. Hence the establishment of apartheid, the regime of systematic racist discrimination.

Full responsibility for the present situation of the people of Zimbabwe belongs to Great Britain. Its comings and goings through the halls of the UN Security Council will not save it. In this regard the metropolis has accumulated perhaps the most shameful background conceivable in its colonial history, with liberal, conservative as well as laborite governments. Remember Oman and Aden in 1946; Palestine in 1947; Malasia in 1948-59; Cyprus in 1955-59; Britain's role in South Africa against Namibia in 1949; its safari against the Mau-Mau in Kenya and more recently its participation in the Nigerian civil war. In order not to prolong the accusation, it will be enough to recall its unworthy role in the overthrow of Cheddi Jagan's government in British Guiana and its military intervention in a country of 5000 inhabitants, the Island of Anguilla — last year.

In fact, the people of Zimbabwe not only struggle against Ian Smith and Vorster but also confront imperialist monopolies which obtain enormous profits by exploiting the huge mineral wealth and submitting the African workers to an inhuman exploitation, thus enabling South Africa to spend 150 million pounds sterling on its army every year. In fact, the people of Zimbabwe are confronting 300 huge North American, British, French, and German enterprises which are operating in the country and are directed from New York, London, Paris, and Bonn.