

# DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE INSTITUUT VAN INTERNASIONALE AANGELEENTHEDE THE SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

1934-1984



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Background Briefing No. 20

For SAIIA Members only - 1984  
Not for Publication

The Director of Programmes, Mr. Michael Spicer, visited Harare in late October and early November, and the following background briefing is based on interviews conducted there by him.

## ZIMBABWE

### 1) Politics

The central figure in Zimbabwean politics is unquestionably the Prime Minister Robert Mugabe. A man of considerable intellect and austere morality, his political philosophy is widely considered to be the product of a Jesuit education and a wide and deep reading of socialist authors and the fundamental Marxist texts during the long years of his imprisonment under UDI. Amongst ZANU cabinet colleagues he is the only convinced Marxist-Leninist. If he could, he would implement the principles of "scientific socialism": in short, transform Zimbabwe into a one-party socialist state in which ZANU fulfils the role of a classical vanguard party and the state owns the means of production.

However, the Prime Minister says that he finds the less centralised Marxist economies such as Yugoslavia to be the most interesting models for Zimbabwean development. This preference may be partly the product of the lingering distrust of the Soviet Union which supported ZAPU during the Rhodesian war and the close ties forged with East European states like Yugoslavia and Roumania which supported ZANU instead.

But it also seems to represent a realisation that the rigid centralisation and uniformity of the Soviet economy is inappropriate in Zimbabwean circumstances. The Minister of Information, Dr. Nathan Shamuyarira who, despite his ambition and cynicism, is still fairly close to the Prime Minister in ideological terms, admits that Chinese developments are followed closely, since that society has to deal with peasants at a lower level of development than the Soviet Union: "Chickens and goats rather than massive mechanised state farms". Shamuyarira puts the major goal of the Zimbabwean government as "giving the workers and peasants a better life than they have had in the past ninety years, and that means better housing, better services like water and electricity, and better education". To this end, however, the retention of major areas of the mixed economy is seen as necessary, in order to stimulate development. Shamuyarira cited Chinese Zones of Private Enterprise and Chinese courting of western investment as parallels (though his comments on western investment in Zimbabwe, referred to in Section 4 below seem to display a contradiction).

"Scientific socialism" is moderated therefore in theoretical terms. It is also moderated by practical constraints.

## 2. The Politburo

Robert Mugabe remains unchallenged as leader of the Party and country. Though he wields considerable power by virtue of this fact and his position is not devoid of the traditional attributes of power in African societies, he is constrained from translating his idealistic vision into reality by three main factors.

Firstly, he has a delicate task to fulfil in balancing the various Shona clan interests and the wide array of ideological positions within the Party. Beyond ZANU, which to all intents and purposes is a Shona institution, he has the task of trying to persuade the Matabele and the remaining whites to accept his idea of a one party state. (The Shona now form about 75% of the population of about 8 million, the Matabele and related Kalanga just under 20%, and the whites whose numbers have fallen from their peak of over 250 000 to ± 100 000, under 2%. Amongst the Shona, the Karanga clan or group comprise 40% of the total, Mugabe's influential Zezuru 25% and the Manica 10%).

Given the austere nature of his character, Mugabe is not a charismatic leader who leads from the front, but rather one who adopts a consensus approach. In order to give more content to his vision of a transformed Zimbabwean society and obtain a more ideologically committed Party leadership, Mugabe has urged the controversial Leadership Code on his reluctant colleagues, using grass roots support to push it through the Second Party Conference held in August this year.

But whether the Code can be more than a device to control overt corruption (as in the case of Minister Kangai) and abuse of office remains doubtful. Given the widespread interests of most Cabinet members in the private sector, the aim of forcing "the true socialist leaders" to relinquish their capitalist interests or resign their positions looks to be a dead letter. Whilst his Cabinet colleagues are prepared to go along with or actively employ socialist rhetoric for reasons of political expedience or ambition, their private interests and the response of an electorate that, apart from small sectors of the urban elite, is traditionalist and conservative, both act as a brake to the widespread implementation of ideology.

The second instrument which Mugabe has employed to balance interests and consolidate his leadership of the Party is the Politburo, also established at the Second Party Congress. The Presidential Commission (under the Party Constitution consisting of the Party President and his Deputy, in this case the loyal Muzenda) chooses the Politburo - giving Mugabe enormous patronage. The following is a list of the fourteen members in rough order of seniority (though not of influence or capability), with clan affiliations, Cabinet Portfolio and Party post. The major criterion for selection to the Politburo seems to have been loyalty to Mugabe, a reiteration of African leadership principles. But some observers would emphasise the importance of regional (i.e. clan) balancing. The Zezuru need not necessarily be considered to be over-represented in view of their historical educational advantages, but the Karanga by virtue of numbers can never be overlooked.

Robert Mugabe (Zezuru)	Prime Minister	President
Simon Muzenda (Karanga)	Deputy Prime Minister	Vice Secretary and Deputy President
Maurice Nyagumbo (Manica)	Minister of State for Political Affairs	Sec. for Admin.
Enos Nkala (Ndebele)	Minister of National Supplies	Treasurer General
Herbert Ushewokunze (Zezuru/Ndebele)	Minister of Transport	Sec. for Commissariat and Culture
Emerson Munangagwa (Karanga)	Minister of State Security	Sec. for National Security
Didymus Mutasa (Manica)	Speaker of the House of Assembly	Sec. for Transport and Welfare
Nathan Shamuyarira (Zezuru)	Minister of Information	Sec. for Information
Dzingai Mutumbuka (Karanga)	Minister of Education	Sec. for Production, Construction and Development
Mrs. Teurai Nhongo (Zezuru)	Minister of Women's Affairs	Sec. for Women's Affairs
Ernest Kadungure (Zezuru)	Minister of State for Defence	Sec. for Youth
Lt. Gen. Rex Nhongo (Karanga)	Commander of the Army	Central Committee Member
Air Vice Marshal Josiah Tungamirai (Karanga)	Deputy Commander of the Air Force	Central Committee Member
Sydney Sekeramayi (Zezuru)	Minister of Health	Central Committee Member

NB. There may soon be a Cabinet reshuffle, and one member of the Politburo remains to be nominated.

Excluded from the Politburo were Edison Zvobgo, the ebullient but very ambitious Minister of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Edgar Tekere, the populist secretary of the Party in Manicaland, and Kumbirai Kangai, Minister of Science and Technology, who was heavily implicated in corruption. Nevertheless it is significant that the former two received the highest number of votes in elections to the enlarged Central Committee (from 30 to 90 members) at the Party Congress, and they therefore remain potent political forces. To that extent, the Central Committee has not entirely lost its significance as an independent power base, but the creation of the Politburo has significantly advanced Mugabe's ability to lead from the front. Along with the expansion of portfolios falling under the Prime Minister's Office, and reduction in the number of other Cabinet Posts, Mugabe has gone some way to assume the status of Executive President, which under a one party state he plans to become. Hence the apparent downgrading of President Canaan Banana, who is far less visible nowadays.

In the absence of any obvious challengers to Mugabe, the common view is that Emmerson Mnangagwa is the most able member of the Politburo. Not yet 40, he can afford to bide his time and meanwhile is well positioned by virtue of his control of the intelligence network and his close friendship with key military leaders.

Any speculation about coups in Zimbabwe is, however, idle at the moment despite the belief in some quarters that the Thornhill air base sabotage was the product of a misconceived and hastily disguised coup attempt. In the longer term, the position of a number of young brigadiers who have advanced rapidly after independence will be of interest. With no prospects of further promotion in the foreseeable future, such officers may become increasingly frustrated, especially if a deteriorating economy undermines their living standards. Further down in the ranks, more able junior officers can be expected to suffer similar frustrations and resent incompetent senior officers.

### 3. Zimbabwe Elections

To the constraints mentioned above, now somewhat reduced since the Party Congress, must be added the political framework established by the Lancaster House Constitution and the resistance of non-Party sectors of society to the major elements of ZANU's political programme.

The assassination of Senator Moven Ndlovu, a member of the ZANU central committee and most senior government member yet to die violently, by dissidents in Beit Bridge in early November sparked off renewed anti-ZAPU rioting and threatened the improvement in both the political and economic atmosphere which many observers had begun to detect recently.

Prime Minister Robert Mugabe reacted to the assassination by dismissing the two remaining ZAPU members of his Cabinet, Mr. Cephas Msipa, Minister of Water Resources and ZAPU Secretary General, and Mr. John Nkomo, Minister of State in the Deputy Prime Minister's Office.

Though ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo had condemned all violence and specifically the assassination, Mr. Mugabe said that he could no longer have in his Cabinet "representatives of an organisation dedicated to a deliberate policy of violence and banditry, clearly meant to disturb our hard-earned peace and democratic order".

The move finally closes the door on any reconciliation between the former Patriotic Front Parties, at least before the general election, due to be held early in 1985. It is ironic that Msipa was widely viewed at the "dove" of the ZAPU movement who favoured seeking unity with ZANU prior to the election. Now the joint ZANU/ZAPU working committee on unity, in which Msipa was one of ZAPU's representatives, is a dead letter, and ZAPU will perforce have to follow Nkomo's preferred strategy of negotiating with ZANU from a position of strength, strength which Nkomo hopes to win in the election.

Apart from the impact that further violence stemming from increasing political tension may have on the status of the parties and the possibility that dissident activity may be renewed in the rainy season, the prospects for all the parties in the elections remain heavily dependent on such questions as the delimitation of the country into constituencies, and the polling method adopted. (The 1980 Election was held on a party list basis).

Whilst the ZANU government may be expected to organise the delimitation process in such a way as to maximise its advantage, the consensus amongst observers is that Prime Minister Mugabe will be reluctant in the face of international scrutiny and because of his preference for legality and constitutionality, to allow any blatantly intimidatory polling processes such as separate ZANU and ZAPU ballot boxes. However, adroit manoeuvring may reduce the number of seats in Matabeleland from 20 to a dozen or so.

Still the overall prospects for ZANU are uncertain. In view of the great emphasis laid on the drive for a one party state, nothing short of an improvement on ZANU's current 57 seat holding out of the 80 common roll seats, and an increase in the number of white independents from the twenty reserved white seats, will be seen as a victory for the Prime Minister.

Yet the recent results in the Bulawayo Municipal elections seem to point to ZAPU retaining a firm grip on the available Matabeleland seats unless they are very heavily loaded. Though there are some who believe that his heart is no longer really in the political struggle, Joshua Nkomo remains the unchallenged leader of ZAPU. His stature as the original nationalist and representative of the Ndebele people was reinforced by attendance at the ZAPU Party Congress held in Harare in October, which at an estimated 6.000, matched attendance at the earlier ZANU Conference. The only real challenger to Nkomo, and a leader who could galvanise both ZAPU and the 300 - 600 remaining active dissidents, is Dumiso Dubengwa, the ZAPU political commissar, but the Mugabe government shows no inclination of releasing him from his lengthy spell of preventative detention.

Bishop Abel Muzorewa, whose political fortunes fell sharply after independence, seems to have profited politically from his year-long imprisonment at the hands of the ZANU government. Welcomed by a large crowd of UANC supporters on his release in September, Muzorewa has been playing on the economic discontent of urban workers who have seen their living standards decline by 20% since independence.

The crisis of expectations building up amongst the electorate is detailed in full under Section 4 on the economy. The state of the economy provides the third major constraint on the implementation of socialist ideology. In early 1985, the numbers of unemployed are certain to grow dramatically. Whilst some of the unemployed youth may be unable to find a channel to express their frustration, enough are likely to gravitate to Muzorewa and Nkomo to enable them to underpin their present strengths and counteract ZANU pressures. Further, some sort of co-operation between ZAPU, the UANC and Ian Smith's Conservative Alliance seems quite possible, a trial exercise in the Bulawayo Municipal Elections between ZAPU and the white candidates having proved successful.

Finally, the Conservative Alliance has been encouraged by the response to their reregistration drive amongst whites and believe that they can win back many of the seats which have passed to independents, many of them by former RF members crossing the floor in Parliament. (There are 7 CA MP's and 13 Independents).

Mr. Mugabe and his government clearly have wide powers to influence the election result and all sorts of pressure may be expected on opponents in the meantime to neutralise their opposition. However, unless political violence deteriorates considerably, Mr. Mugabe is likely to resist banning opposition parties. The brutal campaign against dissidents in Matabeleland, now moderating, seems to have had decidedly mixed results in terms of undermining support for ZAPU.

Under present circumstances, the difficulties in the way of achieving an electoral victory in the terms set out above, look formidable. In the absence of such a victory, the gap between ZANU rhetoric on the one party state and the reality of lack of progress towards that goal will be a major embarrassment for government.

#### 4. The Economy

Some economic indicators have shown an improvement since 1983. Consumption is up in some areas, perhaps in part due to the increased income of the communal farming sector which in turning in 326 000 tons of maize in 1984 provided 40% of the total maize intake.

Exports have also made a strong showing in the first half of 1984 with improved performances in gold and ferrochrome, tobacco and cotton. However, the 40% improvement must be set against a 30% decline of the Zimbabwean dollar against the US dollar.

Manufacturing exports have to cope with a dollar that is overvalued in comparative terms. Given lower productivity, higher inflation and an overall higher cost structure, Zimbabwean manufactured goods are strongly disadvantaged in the South African market. There are signs of a little more flexibility on government's side, but minimum wage levels and the difficulty of firing labour are seen as strongly inhibiting factors by the private sector.

While government has been successful in restricting import levels, 1983 imports being 35% down on 1981 levels, the continuation of the squeeze is having severe effects on the manufacturing sector. The improved balance of payments position has thus only been achieved at the expense of draconian dividend restrictions combined with a tight rein on essential imports, both detrimental to the health of the private sector. In fact, some observers expect the manufacturing sector to decline by at least a third in the next five years, industrial output having already fallen by 8% in the first half of 1984. But some readjustment after the protection of the UDI years fell away, was inevitable.

With GDP falling by 3% last year and likely to fall more this year, inflation rising through the twenties and the government debt service ratio at 30% and rising, the prospects of concluding a new IMF agreement to replace the \$300 million standby agreement, suspended by the Fund earlier this year, do not look good. An IMF team is expected in Harare shortly, but the coming election looks set to render politically impossible the kind of cuts in government spending, particularly in the field of education and defence expenditure, that the IMF would regard as prerequisites for a new agreement. It is just possible, however, that an agreement could be concluded early in 1985 and kept under wraps (as the previous agreement was), until after the election.

There are now 1 020 000 Zimbabweans in employment, 25 - 30 000 less than 10 years ago, despite a population increase of 2 million. Per capita income is in real terms only at 1967-8 levels. One half the population is under 15 years of age, and the rapid expansion of educational opportunities, combined with an educational system and parental preferences which are very much white collar oriented, means that a flood of ill equipped but expectant job seekers is about to be launched onto the urban job market. Of the 80 000 1984 "O" level candidates, only about 5% can be expected to find jobs.

The prospects of relief being provided by foreign investment are negligible. About the only post-independence foreign investor, H.J. Heinz, is pleased with its investment, but the absence of an OPIC agreement and an investment code with what are regarded by foreign investors as satisfactory guarantees, have proved a deterrent to other investors.

It is probable that the views of more ideologically inclined Ministers like Nathan Shamuyarira who believe that multinationals would not invest in Zimbabwe even if it was more capitalist and western oriented, are more powerful than those of the financial technocrats like Finance Minister Bernard Chidzero who would be prepared to sign an OPIC agreement. (In political terms Chidzero's position is somewhat akin to what Owen Horwood's was in South Africa, in fact worse, since he is omitted from the Politburo. But apart from this lack of influence and his indecisiveness, there is the further worry among diplomatic observers and businessmen that Chidzero's Department is disintegrating). Though citing Zaire as an example of a pro-Western capitalist country which proves the rule is tenuous, there is an element of truth in what Shamuyarira says.

After independence, multinational companies were bound to use different criteria to Western governments in judging Zimbabwe. The latter regarded Lancaster House and the transition to independence as a political success story which had to be fostered by Western aid in the interests of regional stability and also because of the potential demonstration effect a successful multi-racial society might have on South Africa.

To the former, Zimbabwe was just another independent African state, whose admittedly more sophisticated economy and larger markets were offset by concerns about the economic policies of the Mugabe government.

In contrast to private investment, which Western diplomats in Harare believe will only gradually follow on satisfactory investment arrangements, bilateral and multilateral aid has been extensive and effective. The largest contributor is the United States, despite the poor state of Zimbabwean/US relations, and its diplomats believe the aid is more effectively utilised in Zimbabwe than almost anywhere else in the world. This is because the high local content in projects means that aid money is circulated in the Zimbabwean economy and not simply re-exported to overseas suppliers. As one Western diplomat commented to me: "As long as the private sector does not throw in the towel, Zimbabwe with all its agricultural potential should be able to weather the storm of its transition from a colonial society to an independent state".

Yet the determination of the private sector must be open to doubt. Faced by one of the highest tax rates in the world (43% of the total wage bill goes to government, as opposed to 15% in a country like Hong Kong), the rate of white emigration has only slowed by a couple of hundred a month to 1 000 per month. Current estimates are that the white population will stabilise at 65 - 80 000. The new breed of expatriates who fill many of the gaps lacks commitment to the society, and blacks who fill the rest are by virtue of lack of previous training and too rapid promotion, inexperienced. There is, as in almost all such situations, an increasing amount of tax evasion and corruption.

## 5. Agriculture

The state of agriculture in Zimbabwe is the brightest spot in the economy at the moment and gives the greatest hope for the economic progress and development of Zimbabwean society.

This is the one sector where the government seems truly committed to maintaining the mixed nature of the Zimbabwean economy. No doubt the fact that the Commercial Farmers' Union is widely considered to be an extremely well led, disciplined and effective lobby has contributed to this posture.

In contrast to most other African countries, Zimbabwe has since independence reduced state intervention in the commercial agricultural sector, lowering state subsidies for basic commodities and granting regular increases in producer prices. Combined with a reasonably firm policy on such issues as squatting, 4 500 of the high figure of 6 000 + commercial farmers have remained on the land, accounting for 13,6 million acres of land as opposed to 16,2 million at the highpoint of white land ownership. Actual production yields have improved to the point where Zimbabwe is amongst the top three nations in the world.

The influence of the widely respected, enormously enthusiastic and energetic Minister of Agriculture, Denis Norman, in retaining white confidence must rate highly. And although admitting that his colleagues in the ZANU Cabinet may regard him as no more than a useful adjunct, it does seem as if his persistence has its effect.

Norman believes that government is largely right in seeing rural development as the key to resolving many of the nation's most pressing problems. But he believes that the communal farming sector should receive greater government attention at this stage than resettlement of the landless and displaced families.

The 850 000 commercial farmers, who occupy 41,5% of the land mass of Zimbabwe (an area that was fixed at Lancaster House) have increased their contribution to total agricultural product by 250% in the last three years. Norman's strategy is to encourage this sector further and provide greater incentives by improving extension services and by taking the market place to the production areas. Though both goals are hampered by shortage of funds and manpower, much has been achieved. The number of commercial farmers receiving cash credits from the Agricultural Finance Corporation has risen from 48 000 to 70 000.

Secondly and most dramatically, the establishment of grain and cotton depots away from road and railway lines and in production areas has been, in Norman's view, one of the prime factors accounting for increased output.

These depots are being established at a rate of 3 - 4 per annum, and point to the growth of the agricultural industry which could be one of the factors preventing a mass exodus from the rural areas. For example, the very favourable response to establishment of a cotton depot <sup>in</sup> a remote Midlands area four years ago, led to the establishment of a ginnery this year. The earnings of the whole project could reach Zimbabwean \$30 million. Such funds by and large would stay in the area and contribute to broad development by providing rates and taxes to local authorities.



Norman is particularly enthusiastic about cotton as a crop - it is drought resistant, labour intensive, has to be sold rather than consumed, has important by-products such as vegetable oil and lint which can be used as protein for stock feeds, and is a major foreign currency earner. This year communal farmers produced 40% of the cotton crop, too.

But the resettlement of ex-guerrillas and the landless, which was a major political commitment of Government, presents a different picture. The official explanation for the resettlement of only 35 - 40 000 families of the target of 162 000 set out in the three-year transitional development plan adopted after independence (now abandoned) is the drought. But it is clear that the target was wildly optimistic and that the inexperience of many of the families as farmers, as well as shortage of funds, would prove to be a major stumbling block.

There is some question as to how many families are actually awaiting resettlement; it is not at all clear how the target figure was arrived at, and representatives of the commercial farmers (though not disinterested on the subject) doubt the existence of large numbers of families awaiting settlement. However, the end of 1984 will see the last of the ex-guerrillas off the government payroll and employment or land will have to be found for them.

Land as a political question remains a burning issue subject to populist pressures. Given the burgeoning population, it will be necessary for agriculture, agricultural industry and industry and commerce all to expand to absorb the number of job seekers. The communal lands alone are heavily overstocked and overpopulated. Norman believes that agricultural output will have to double in the next 12 years to meet the population growth, but also believes that it can be achieved as long as there is sufficient investment in utilising water resources. He believes that Zimbabwe has the best river system in Africa for agriculture. With irrigation many areas can produce two crops a year - and the sugar areas have the highest yield in the world. But all of this requires investment of an order that in the present international situation and Zimbabwe's own political situation, will be hard to attract.

##### 5. Relations with South Africa

Though the fundamentals of the bilateral relationship have not changed, it is apparent that the two countries have reached an understanding on the conduct of the more sensitive aspects of the relationship. Prime Minister Mugabe's long-standing and firm policy of restricting assistance for the ANC to political and diplomatic support has in fact become the model for changed policies towards the ANC in such countries as Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho.

Prime Minister Mugabe continues to hold the line on prohibiting direct contact between Ministers of the respective Governments, which would convey the sort of political recognition of Pretoria he is determined, as a firm opponent of apartheid, to avoid. Yet there is a wide range of contacts, official and unofficial, beneath this top level.

Particularly noteworthy is consultation on security matters of interest to the two parties. The understanding that exists between the two states on mutual security is not formalised in any instrument like the Nkomati Accord, but the procedures for dealing with border incidents, questions of South African involvement with dissidents or ANC operatives using Zimbabwe as a transit route, are established, and potentially dangerous situations can be and are therefore defused.

There are, of course, still differences. South Africa has requested the right of hot pursuit of ANC operatives and asked that the Zimbabweans in the Northern Transvaal from whom the so-called "Super ZAPU" are evidently drawn, be granted an amnesty and reintegrated into Zimbabwean society. Zimbabwe has refused on both counts saying the latter must be screened and charged before re-integration.

Nevertheless, "Super ZAPU" activities emanating directly from the Northern Transvaal or via Botswana have almost ceased since February when the two Security Forces met at very high level in Zimbabwe. And most of the problems of the economic relationship which surfaced in 1980 - 1981 when political relations were so poor, have disappeared. Whilst the respective states of the two economies prevent trade from positively flourishing, co-operation in the commercial and agricultural fields and transport matters is good.

In fact, from the South African side, there is a relaxed attitude to continued rhetoric hostile to Pretoria, which is in stark contrast to earlier more belligerent responses. Though Pretoria would dearly welcome political recognition of the type formally conveyed by Mozambique through the Nkomati Accord, and informally by countries such as Zambia through their contact and negotiation with South African leaders, there is a willingness to accept that this is not possible in the short term: "There is no chance of closer political ties in the foreseeable future" is the generally held viewpoint.

Zimbabwean Ministers, however, recognise that Pretoria's relatively relaxed attitude is not the product of altruism, and that South Africa has carefully retained the levers to pressure Zimbabwe, such as the ability to stir the pot more actively in Matabeleland, should Zimbabwe's co-operation at practical levels diminish. Such dependence is clearly distasteful and accounts for some of the remaining tension.

The tight grip that Pretoria wields on transport and communication routes, whilst the conflict in Mozambique continues, contributes to Zimbabwe's ambivalent attitude to Nkomati. It is of direct interest to Zimbabwe that the Nkomati Accord should work in the sense of removing the security threat to its road and railway links running through Mozambique, but the potential political spin-off for Pretoria is most unwelcome.

Finally, Zimbabwe's relations with her neighbours have a bearing on relations with South Africa. Many observers point to the unfavourable impact of Prime Minister Mugabe's perceived personal and national arrogance on neighbouring states. Also the political direction of Zimbabwe as articulated by Mr. Mugabe is out of step with the general rightward trend of other black states. Such factors complicate regional co-operation in groupings like the SADCC and the PTA, over and above practical problems such as the similar product profiles and general lack of foreign currency shared by countries in Southern Africa.

## 6. Conclusion

This analysis may present a somewhat bleak picture of prospects for Zimbabwe, but it should be remembered that a similar analysis of South African prospects would turn up a not entirely dissimilar picture. In fact, apart from the one major and over-riding political difference, the problems that the two countries face are remarkably similar (though, of course, different in degree): rapidly growing populations; the increasing numbers of underskilled and frustrated school graduates from educational systems that are expanding but have

inappropriate curricula and poorly trained educators; the rapid growth of governmental bureaucracy (in Zimbabwe from 46 000 in 1979 to 87 000 in 1984) and excessive state spending; the threat of growing state intervention in the economy; inflation rates that attack the competitiveness of industry and exports; the impact of the international recession and strong US dollar on commodity prices and exports; the cost of over-large defence establishments; the serious impact of a prolonged drought on the economy.

Whilst it is easy to point to the problems of Zimbabwe, that often obscures the achievements of the state and the difficulty of choosing and implementing appropriate policies. The entire spectrum of those interviewed, from white Conservative Alliance MPs to radical ZANU members pointed to the relatively good state of individual race relations, though admitting ethnic tensions. And all felt that it was a major achievement to have moved from a bitter and bloody conflict that engulfed the entire country, to a relatively stable and peaceful society where violence was limited.

It is clear that neither unalloyed capitalism nor pure socialism will resolve the problems thrown up by the pluralistic nature of Zimbabwean society and the uneven development of the various sectors of the population. The big question is the right mix, and that is a problem confronting many countries today. Certainly Zimbabwe cannot afford a population growth rate of 4% per annum, and will have to take drastic action if the whole of society is not to be permanently impoverished. And whilst its emphasis on rural development is probably correct in both political terms and developmental terms, its agricultural strategy needs to present a sophisticated mix between the needs of the landless or newly resettled, the communal farmers and the white commercial farmers. Only the latter two will in the foreseeable future produce enough food to provide for the needs of the growing population and through exports, earn the valuable foreign currency to balance the declining contribution of the manufacturing sector.

Much therefore depends on the conduct of the election in 1985 and its result. A one party state as an ultimate rather than proximate goal may be a viable proposition, but forcing the pace will undermine both domestic and international confidence to the extent that Zimbabwean development will be permanently retarded.

As far as whites are concerned, a further decline in numbers seems inevitable. But there is reason to believe that as their numbers grow smaller, so their contribution will be increasingly valued and relied on by government. A large number of whites are accommodating themselves to living in an independent black African state where they are politically powerless but increasingly valuable. Many now consider themselves as Zimbabweans first and foremost rather than whites and in future may be content to be represented in Parliament on the basis of interest groups as advocated by Independents such as Chris Andersen, the Minister of State and Public Service.

That process may take time to complete, but there is a sense in which the continued existence in the meanwhile of both the Independents and the Conservative Alliance serves a useful if not vital purpose. The former act as a bridge between black and white, and the latter expose corruption and abuse of power; in other words they act as one of the few checks and balances on government power.

The probability of further violence, with the political dilemmas it poses for government, and the growing expectations of the people continue to create problems for the future. An inclination towards authoritarian responses and more rhetoric, while socialist preferences are confounded by economic realities, will not help a government faced by these unpalatable circumstances and choices. But unfortunately that seems to be the easiest route to follow.

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November, 1984