

1975



AFTER THE COUP
OBSERVATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
OF PORTUGAL'S
AFRICAN COLON-

IES AND SOUTHERN
AFRICA

"There is no part of
the continent which has known
oppression and exploitation, and no
part which remain outside the pro-
cesses of the African
Revolution."

Nkrumah



AFTER THE COUP

By

Clyde Winters

Copyright © 1975 , Clyde Winters,
Published by the Black Cultural Center
and African Students Association of
Iowa State University. All rights
reserved.

AFTER THE COUP. OBSERVATIONS ON THE FUTURE OF PORTUGAL'S
AFRICAN COLONIES

Many observers of the recent coup in Portugal, where Prime Minister Marcello Caetano, and President Americo Thomaz, were deposed on April 25, 1974, and exiled to the Portuguese resort Island of Madeira, off the Atlantic Coast of North Africa, found optimism for future liberalism, and democracy in Portugal. In the case of its African colonies, the future, at least for the total withdrawal of the Portugues from Guinea-Bissau, which declared its independence last September, Angola and Mozambique, and Africanization of these countries before the summer of 1974, there was some doubt.

The reason for the doubt about a peaceful solution to the lack of African rule in the Portugues colonies, at least among those people aware of the situation there is that the Portuguese junta, in a sense do not really have control over the events taking place in its African colonies. Because, although they were supposedly wining their African wars the evidence suggested this was hardly the case. Also, due to the American interest in Angola and Mozambique, as sources for oil and mineral resources, as is Portugal for oil to supply its military forces fighting in Africa and consumption at home especially since the so called Oil Shortage. And the desire of Rhodesia and South Africa, to keep the war for Southern Africa in Mozambique, makes it almost impossible to have even imagined that the people of Angola, and especially Mozambique and Guinea-Bissua, where the freedom fighters have almost won their independence, to just lay down their arms and remain slaves in their own lands.

Gen. Antonie de Spínola, the most decorated hero of the African Wars, is responsible for the recent coup in Portugal. Though the young officers and ill paid white conscripts have always wanted Portugal to abandon the expense African Wars, which have lasted for 13 years and cost 5,000 white lives and probably two to three times as many blacks in the Portuguese aray, and \$6, billion, not until Spínola, wrote the contriversal book, Portugal and its Future, did the "liberal officers movement" which opposed Caetano's policy to-

wards its colonies, get the nerve to attempt a coup to end the rule of Marcello Caetano.

Gen. Spínola, who advocates a political solution to Portugal's African wars, not one which would guarantee total independence for the people of Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique, but one under which the colonies would join a federal structure giving "equal" status with the mother country is obviously aimed at preserving Portuguese rule in Africa under a new guise. The leaders of the nationalist movement in Guinea-Bissau, PAIGC, said the: "We cannot believe in the sincerity of Spínola. We know that if he speaks of self-determination for colonized people he is thinking above all of Portuguese colonialism." Cabral mocked that if a true democratic federation did develop between Portugal and its colonies, Africans would be in the majority and "one might end up seeking a black government in Lisbon. I'm sure Spínola wouldn't want a black government leading Portugal." Moreover, Spínola in his book and televised address to his people shortly after the coup told them he rejected any idea of surrendering the colonies. It was only natural then that when Spínola asked the Nationalists to lay down their arms in early May, if they were to join his proposed federation, in all three of the colonies "the chief guerrilla leaders have already declared their intention to fight on, regardless of the reforms promised by Spínola," which would basically strengthen Portuguese rule.

The inflow of American capital into the Portuguese colonies has not only provided Portugal's weak economy with foreign exchange necessary to cover its military expenditures, it has also made it imperative for Portugal to retain these colonies for the U.S., companies making profits in their colonies. Portugal receives part of the profits of every company that is given permission to operate in the colonies. In the Portuguese African colonies practically the only production remaining in the hands of the Portuguese is coffee-growing two-thirds of which goes to America. These profits, especially from Angola and Mozambique help keep Portugal in the black. This accumulation of foreign capital allows Portugal the flexibility to import military supplies as they are needed.

The U.S., has numerous business interest in the Portuguese colon-

ies of Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. In Guinea-Bissau, Exxon, has many rights for oil exploration there. In Mozambique, Texaco, Gulf, and other companies have exploration rights. There are also numerous U.S., mines there. In Angola, there are at least 28 U.S., firms mining coal. Guld oil is extracting more than enough oil to cover Portugal's needs, while Texaco, Mobil and Tenneco, are feverishly exploring for their own oil. Recently, Bethlem Steel, General Tire, and Coca-Cola have checked in, and American capital has also entered the fields of stockbreeding, fisheries, and banking. This desire for oil and mineral resources has caused a change in American foreign policy, from one center Asia, in the past, to Southern Africa today. Since Nixon became President, American policy-makers seem to have made three basic judgements: (1) Southern Africa is of strategic importance to the United States; (2) the best guarantee of stability on Western terms can be found in cooperation with the existing, white dominated regimes; (3) those regimes, in order to become more acceptable and more effective partners in maintaining stability, would be well advised to make some limited steps towards greater participation by Africans. This later point explains Spinoza's view in Portugal and its Future. There are two corollary judgements: (1) the disruptive 'liberation movements' must be contained while the reforms are given time to work, and (2) the cooperation with the white regimes must be 'low key' so as to minimize international criticism and domestic debate about the issue.

Whereas the U.S., has been a silent partner to Portugal and the minority Governments in the past, since the Yom Kippur War, when no other members of NATO, would allow American C-54 transport planes carrying military supplies to Israel and for Skyhawks rushed across the Atlantic to replace Israeli losses, to land in their countries even Congress member are supporting Portugal openly.

Now that the American base at Lajes, in the Azores has shown its strategic importance for any future U.S. arms airlift to Israel, the Portuguese are asking Washington, to openly show its backing of Portugal's policies in Africa. Consequently, the U.S., has stepped up its aid to Portugal, since granting it over \$400 million in loans to

renew its base in the Azores. Bruce Rudes, notes that it seems today that the 1971 negotiations between the U.S., and Portugal: "must be talked past each other, not frankly discussing their non-NATO motives---the protection of Israel and Portugal's three African colonies---in renewing the Azores bases agreement."

In 1974, when the U.S., and Portugal were again working on a new Azores agreement it was believed that the Portuguese would probably ask for more American support for its wars financial and military, e.g., weapons and equipment. Because the Azores are necessary for the survival of Israel if another war breaks out, the U.S., would have probably given Portugal practically whatever it wanted. A change in U.S., policy towards Portugal, was most evident last year when an Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act, that would forbid the use of U.S., arms in Portuguese Africa, was killed in Congress. For 12 years Washington has "adhered" to a policy of prohibiting American military equipment provided to Portugal through NATO, in her Africa wars. But after the Mideast War last October, and a visit by the Portuguese Ambassador Joao Hall Themido, in November 73, of senators sponsoring the bill, notably Sen. John V. Tunney (D - Calif.), whose name the measure carries, and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), the members of Congress because they were torn between their support for the Tunney-Young Amendment and their support for backing military aid for Israel, abandon the Tunney version, which would have baned sales of arms to Portugal for use in Africa. Since the recent leftist take over in Portugal the Portuguese have decided to withdraw from the African colonies.

Though the peoples of Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, would be satisfied by a political solution that gave them immediate political independence and self-determination, anything short of this was unacceptable. For whereas only three years ago the white Government of Southern Africa looked almost invincible, and the Portuguese were marking time in Guinea-Bissau, in 1974 the strategic balance throughout Southern Africa, tilted rapidly against the white regimes. And the PAIGC, which control 3/4 of Guinea-Bissau, which while still fighting to liberate itself completely from Portugal, declared its independence 24th of September 1973, and has

since obtained diplomatic recognition from more than 60 nations and membership in several United Nations agencies, clearly illustrate the weakness of Spínola's, early plan to end Portugal's African War. In May of 1974, the PAIGC announced it would talk to the Portuguese about ending colonial rule in Guinea-Bissau, and by Sept. 10, 1974, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau was created.

Eventhough only two years ago in South Africa, the security forces appeared to have mastered black opposition completely, by infiltrating the black political organizations there; the Portuguese had the FRELIMO forces isolated in the Northern provinces of Mozambique, where the majority of the people were Africans, and guerrilla activity was seriously curtailed in the provinces of Cabo Delgado and Niassa; and little sign of success of the guerrilla war in Angola, by 1974, the Portuguese were hard pressed to contain the African liberation movements.

In Guinea-Bissau, the PAIGC, has successfully liberated 3/4 of the country and established schools and hospitals. Since the Spring of 1973, with more shipments of arms being made to the African nationalist, the liberation forces have been scoring numerous successes against the Portuguese. For example, the Soviet hand-held, heat-seeking SAM-7 missiles, had downed 20 Portuguese planes between March and September 1973. The Nationalist were so successful with the SAM-7, that during the Summer of 1973, the Portuguese grounded all their planes. Furthermore, reports indicate that 40 African nationalist have gone to Moscow, for pilot training, and that these men will probably be the nucleus of an Airforce based in Guinea-Bissau.

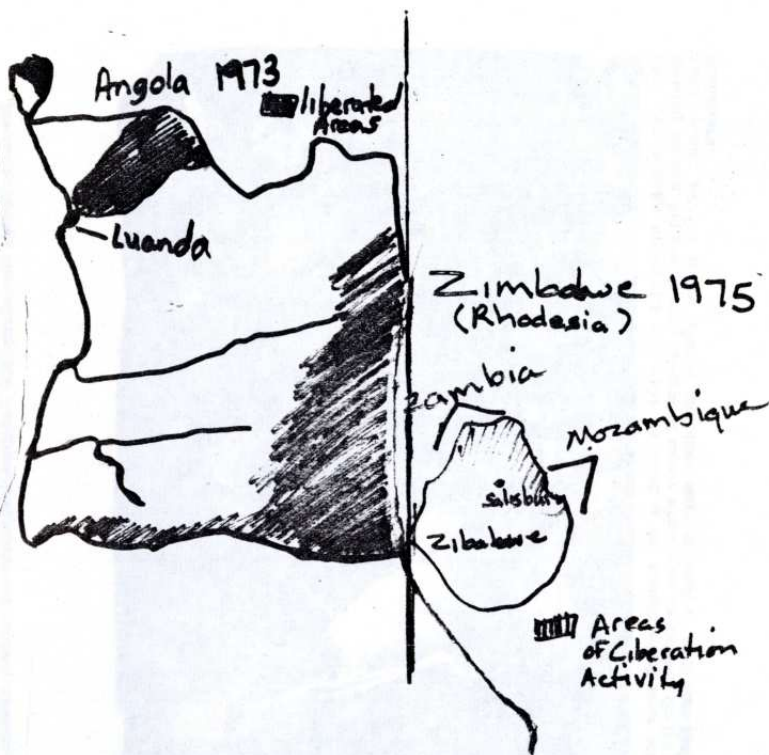
In 1974, the Portuguese army's morale was not high and even the most experienced officers there "do not envisage a war against the PAIGC guerrillas going on for another ten years. There is both boredom and war weariness," says a correspondent for the Africa Confidential. He adds that "By now however both the military in Guinea-Bissau and in Portugal, the massive development projects the Portuguese are trying to build in the south, to prepare the way, hopefully when completed, of more whites into Mozambique."

In September 1973, FRELIMO, the Liberation group on Mozambique began its attacks in the south, past the port of Beira. To show there determination to derail the Portuguese plans for a new dam in the Limpopo Valley, fifty bridges and a stretch of highway nearly 500 miles long; FRELIMO blew up three trains and destroyed an airplane on New Year's Eve, 1974. Since then they have begun attacking vital railways and road links. FRELIMO changed its strategy of establishing "liberated areas," to one of politicking the populace and attacking vital arteries of the Mozambique economy.

They have rocket luncers and had shot down some planes. But FRELIMO, in the Spring 1974, it was now maily concentrating on destroying the Cabora Bassa dam. In the Tete, where the Cabora Bassa dam is being built the liberation forces were striking convoys moving on the important road links. This was severly affecting the Rhodesian economy which sends many of its exports on this road. They were also blowing up trains running from Beira to Umtali, Rhodesia and to Malawi. Since, the Zambians have been sending the good out through black African countries, due to the Rhodesia blockade, Zambia does not care how much FRELIMO, attacks the trains traveling to Beira. Beginning in January there has been a dozen serious attacks on the railway. FRELIMO, has also began attacking the lines to Malawi, probably because the Rhodesians and Portuguese might believe they can safely send their goods on this line to supply Portuguese troops or for the export of Rhodesian goods.

As the balance of power in Southern Africa began to shift infavor of the African liberation groups in Mozambique we found whites with Muser rifles, shotguns and hand grenades, to protect themselves. In the bush, Portuguese soldiers were placed on the farms to protect there inhabitants. They were also given short wave radios or walkie talkies, to call for help if necessary.

Before the Portuguese decided to withdraw from Mozambique by 30th of June 1975. Attacks against Portuguese troops were increasing in intensity and scope all over Mozambique, and the South Africans, were even considering more forces to "assist" the Portuguese in their battle against FRELIMO. The military forces in Mozambique are



State of siege: Rhodesian farm children armed for an outing



FRELIMO CELEBRATED ITS EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF STRUGGLE BY ANNOUNCING THAT the war to liberate Mozambique from Portuguese colonialism and western exploitation. It had opened a new front in

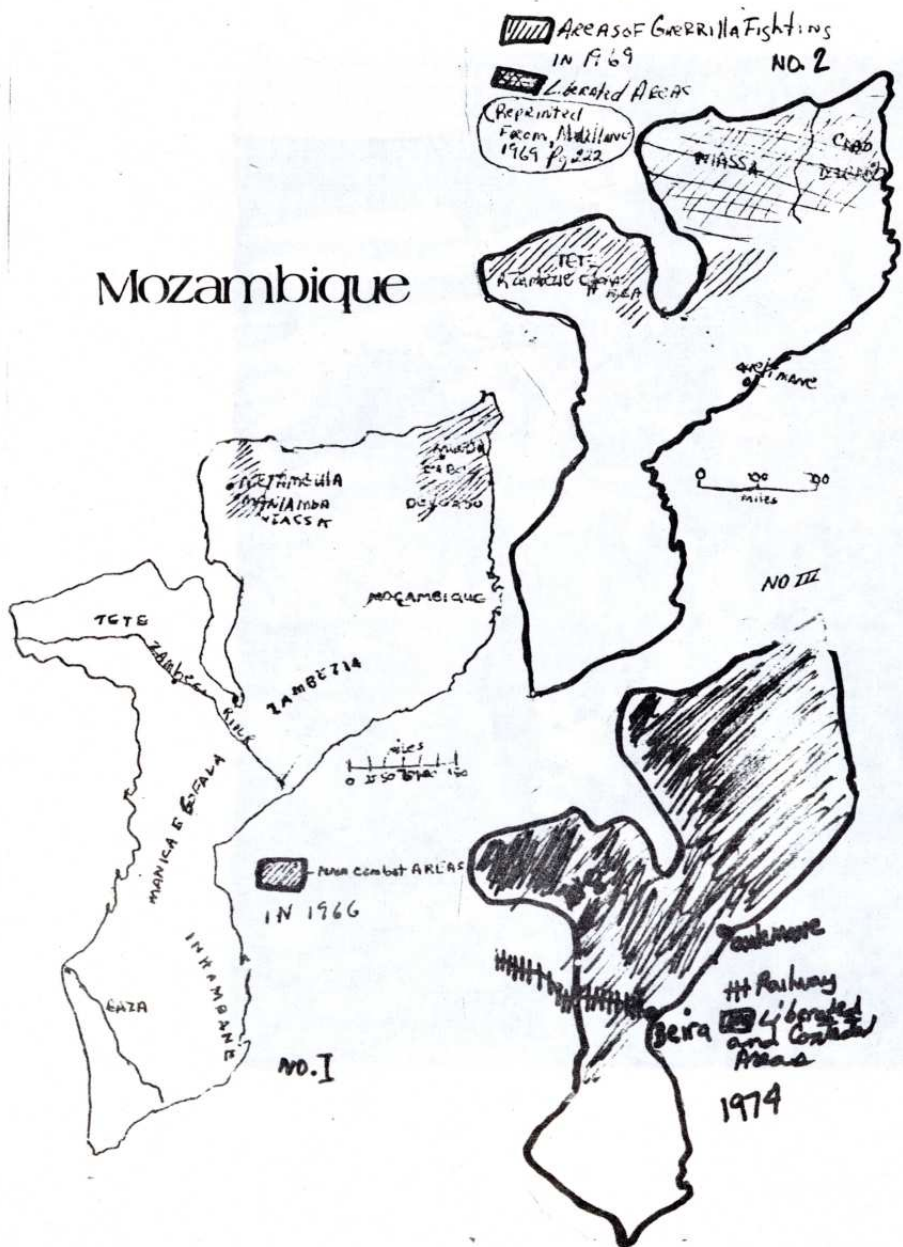


MEN AND WOMEN FIGHTERS ARE SIDE BY SIDE in this struggle which seeks not only liberating the land, but also changing the type of society which exists on the land. On the line of march, women ask few special privileges and often carry as much or more than their men counterparts.

ASSEMBLY OF MOZAMBIQUE GUERRILLAS



Mozambique



almost totally demoralized. A Newsweek reporter who visited Mozambique in March of 1974 reported that: "These days, however, it is not Frelimo but the Portuguese army that is showing distinct signs of strain. Ill-paid white conscripts count the time until their two years hitches come to an end and they can return to Portugal---hopefully in one piece." With FRELIMO forces striking throughout the country, mining the railways, waylaying buses, destroying aircraft and even raiding the Portuguese garrison at Inhalinga, in the Spring of 1974: "Even their officers are none too anxious to engage the enemy. Says one sarcastic critic of the military: "Have you ever heard of a Portuguese search-and-kill mission? They don't want to bloody their bayonets," says a Newsweek reporter. This reporter added that, "It is not cowardice or even war-weariness that has produces this malaise in the Portuguese forces. Rather, it is the sure knowledge that Mozambique is too large, Frelimo too determined and the African too thick to permit an eventual Portuguese victory."

Though the Portuguese Government tried to make it appear as if the FRELIMO forces were seeking publicity by their attacks in Mozambique in the Tete province and elsewhere. A member of the DGS (Direcao-Geral de Seguranca, the Portuguese security and intelligence agency, formerly PIDM) noted as early as August 1973, that, "FRELIMO politicization of the Tete population has proceeded rather well. They move carefully and methodically. They over extended themselves once, in Niassa, and that's where their most serious reverses have been. In, Tete, they are able to recruit whatever manpower they need," says Inspector Gomes Lopes, DSG director of intelligence and counter intelligence in Mozambique. He adds that, "Normally, politicization precedes military activity by about 50 km. So when you hear about fighting around Vila Pery, the political roots are about 50 km farther South."

After the FRELIMO forces had stopped its emphasis on setting up "liberated areas" and aggressively pursuing an all out war against the Portuguese they became practically unstoppable. Michael Degnan, noted that even when the Portuguese are aware of an attack, like the one

at Nazombe base, is coming as in June of 1973, at least two weeks in advance they are hard pressed to stop the FRELIMO forces from their objective.

The pressure put on the Portuguese as late as September 1973, led one Portuguese officer to exclaim: "Some of us are tired now, very tired." And in April of 1974, one Portuguese officer told a News-week reporter, "Make no mistake Frelimo will be in the capital of Lourenco Marques one day."

To try and deter the determination of the Freedom Fighters, the Portuguese increased terrorist activity in the liberated areas of Mozambique, e.g., Wiriyanu. The situation in Mozambique, has caused fear to spread throughout Rhodesia, in the areas bordering the Tete province of Mozambique, and South African authorities were thinking about sending in more troops in April 1974.

As a result of the recent increase in military activity by FRELIMO forces in the Tete Province, ZANU forces (an organization composed of Rhodesian Freedom Fighters) have increased their raids in North-eastern Rhodesia. Eventhough, a few years ago Ian Smith, who leads the UDI in Rhodesia, said the Happiest Blacks in Africa, were in Rhodesia, today we find they are increasingly proving to be aggressively seeking to gain their independence. Now that the ZANU forces don't have to cross the Zambezi Valley (while entering Rhodesia from Zambia) which made it relatively easier for them to be captured by Rhodesian security police, because they can come directly into Rhodesia from Mozambique, the Rhodesians now face a classic guerilla war.

ZANU, has the support of many of the villagers in Rhodesia, and the security forces have began terrorist acts against local villagers to keep them from helping ZANU. In February on the Madziqa Tribal Trustland, huts and crops were burned by security forces. By 1974, Mozambique's Tete and Vial Pery provinces "Rhodesian paratroops on antiguerrilla actions inside Mozambique with orders to kill everyone they find, Portuguese Army Officers charged in a report," says Peter Niesewand, in the Manchester Guardian. This report says many massacres besides the one at Wiriyanu, which accounted for more than

400 persons being killed, were still taking place in Mozambique. On the out of the way farms in Rhodesia, farmers have been given guns and radios, to protect themselves from the Freedom fighters.

In South Africa, Prime Minister John Vorster was thinking about sending more troops to Mozambique and Rhodesia, in the hope the war for Southern Africa. In 1974, only time would tell when the South Africans would enter this war, on an even larger scale than they were then. Also with Rhodesia, already interested in attacking the ~~Tanzam railway being built by the Chinese which will give Zambia,~~ the ability to ship its goods from the port of Dar es Salaam, the South Africans fear it will eventually serve as a means to supply the liberation forces in Southern Africa, this being the case it is only a matter of time before Tanzania and Zambia will be brought into New wars in the area.

Since the United States businessmen in Portuguese Africa will not give up its holdings, especially since the "fuel shortage" and the recent oil discoveries in Cabinda. Plus with Portugal being the poorest nation in Europe, and dependent on its revenue from Angola and Mozambique to finance the Government, it was believed that Portuguese colonial rule would not peacefully end. And, if the Portuguese settle their differences with the Freedom Fighters in their colonies, the white minority Governments of Rhodesia and South Africa would find it increasingly difficult to cope with their own black insurgents.

Since the coup of 1974, much of the thinking concerning the Portuguese colonies and Southern Africa in general has changed. Whereas the leader of Portugal's Spring 1974 coup was Gen. Antonio de Spínola, once the national hero for his role in overthrowing the old regime, he has now been forced into exile in Brazil. And the 'Young Turks,' who rule Portugal are deeply influenced by young left-wing officers who are rapidly shifting Portugal into the Soviet orbit, since the attempted conservative military coup in March 1975. Today Portugal is run by a 200 man "Assembly," known as the "Military Revolutionary Council."

In Africa, the Portuguese have decided to give up all claims to

its African colonies. In September 1974, Guinea-Bissau was granted independence, and on 30 June 1975, Mozambique will become independent.

Portugal even decide to grant independence to Angola, its richest overseas "dependency." Angola which is inhabited by 5.7 million people, has the largest number of Europeans outside South Africa: 400,000. In economic terms it has wide ranging possibilities despite the war. Oil, diamonds, coffee, timber, wheat and sugar are its most important exportable commodities. In 1973, Angola had a record trade surplus of 5,868 m. escudos in 1972 and 19 m. escudos in 1973. And since 1966 Angola has enjoyed an average real growth rate of 6.3%.

Oil is increasingly becoming Angola's most lucrative and spectacular commodity. In 1975, it is expected that Cabinda, where most of Angola's oil is found will produce 450,000 barrels aday. The influence of the United States, South Africa, West German, French, British and the Japanese, makes it impossible to determine exactly how long peace will last in Angola.

In September, when Angola receives its independence the country will be ruled by a colliation of all the Liberation groups in Angola: Liberation Front for the Cabinda Enclave (FLEC), Peoples Movement for Liberation of Angola (MPLA), Uniao de Populacoes Angola (UPA/ GRAE), UNITA, FNLA. In recent months the FLEC, recognized as being a movement financed by outsiders and backed by Guld Oil and various bussinessmen in Angola, is trying to separate Cabinda from Angola. This led to fighting between the MPLA and FLEC in late 1974. Since then, the movements in Angola have united to bring about independence for Angola. Yet, due to the U.S. and South African interest in Angola shortly after independence, with the possibility of South African or even U.S. intervention in 1976.

In Mozambique at Lourenco Marques, the capetal of the country, in September 1974, armed white rebels tried to take over key points in the city in a bid to stop FRELIMO from receiving power or 25 June 1975. But through the efforts of Portuguese troops and FRELIMO, the rebellion was halted. Since this outbreak of violence in September 1974, the transfer of power in Mozambique has proceed rapidly and

smoothly.

In an effort to delay a possible isolation of South Africa, and increase its security problems towards the end of 1974 and early 1975, Vorster began to attempt to bring about detente in Rhodesia, with the assistance of Pre. Kaunda of Zambia. One observer of South African policy sees the recent moves toward detente as "... just, to isolate the liberation movements; secondly to split the OAU; and third to appear as a reasonable peacemaker to the West." ~~Most African countries especially Nigeria and Ghana see these moves~~ by South Africa, as an attempt to give them time to prepare for an all out war possibly in Rhodesia, Mozambique, Namibia and Angola.

Detente proceeded rapidly in Rhodesia, with many of the leaders of the liberation groups being released from jail e.g., Jashua Nkomo leader of ZAPU and Ndabaningi Sithole, leader of ZANU. But in early March 1975, shortly after 8 a.m., Sithole was arrested in Salisbury. Many observers believed this move by Ian Smith, leader of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe (as the African Nationalist call it), would lead to a rekindling of rivalry between the various liberation groups in Zimbabwe. Eventhough, Ian Smith arrested Sithole, on charges he had plotted to assassinate his rivals in the Nationalist movement he had no evidence to support that accusation.

If Ian Smith, had hoped the black Nationalist in Rhodesia would be liable to fall for divide and rule tactics again he was absolutely wrong. Bishop Abel Muzorewa, leader of the African National Council an umbrella group of the Nationalist movements angrily canceled further political talks with Smith until Sithole was released. Robert Mugabe, Secretary-General of ZANU, the backbone of the Liberation units maintained that "Hopes of a peaceful settlement have been exposed as a pipe dream." And Lenunorth, he announced, "we will do nothing to interfere with the progress of guerrilla warfare."

K. Kannda, one of the principal supporters of detente in Rhodesia warned both Vorster and Smith after the arrest of Sithole that, "Zambia and the rest of Africa will have no choice but to support the armed struggle waged by liberation movements to climenate in-

justice, racial discrimination and oppression," if peaceful change is impossible in Southern Africa.

In December 1974, much of the fighting in Zimbabwe had been scaled down. But reports from Africa seem to indicate that the ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union) - ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) whose command was united in 1972, have begun to intensify the fighting in Zimbabwe. The monthly total of South Africa and Rhodesian military men killed in battle is increasing rapidly. And besides an increase in battles occurring on Zimbabwe's north eastern border with Mozambique fighting along the Zambian-Rhodesian border has also increased. After 1975, it is quite possible that since Sam Machel and Frelimo-Marxist and successful as a guerrilla group will not sell out ZAPU and ZANU. And with Ian Smith's arrest of Sithole, the OAU and Kaunda will not be able to pressure FRELIMO to halt ZAPU-ZANU raids into Zimbabwe while a political settlement is arrived at. If, along with the increased guerrilla activity along the borders and in the northeastern section of Zimbabwe continue, and Machel, more than likely opening the 800 mile border between Mozambique and Rhodesia to the nationalists; and the new state starts to apply full scale UN sanctions to Rhodesia, her denotation would be just. This state of affairs makes the possibility of all-out war between minority governments and black Nations in Africa by as early as 1976 more than mere conjecture. These moves by Ian Smith has led one analysis of the affairs in Zimbabwe to maintain: "All these calculations may add up to no more than a whites' fool's paradise but then the Rhodesian whites have been living in a fools paradise for a long time."

The population of Zimbabwe can be broken down to 250,000 whites and 5 million blacks. In official circles in Salisbury the atmosphere is heavy with gloom. Rhodesia's military budget is soaring and the income from tourism has been reduced to a dribble. White males and young families are fleeing the country in order to avoid military service, or to protect their families. The immigration of whites to Rhodesia has almost stopped completely. The spirit of defiance is not apparent amongst most whites in the urban areas of Rhodesia, where the manpower crisis has created widespread tension.

Although, the Rhodesia military is supported by South African elements due to its increasing dependence on black troops, whites are beginning to question the loyalty of its black troops.

