

GUERRILLA WARFARE AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: IMPEDIMENTS FACED BY ZIPRA AND UMKHONTO WESIZWE.

Joshua Chakawa

Department of History
Midlands State University, Zimbabwe
chakawajoshua@yahoo.com

Vongai Z. Nyawo-Shava

Department of History
Midlands State University, Zimbabwe
vznyawo@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Zimbabwe Peoples' Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) was the armed wing of Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) which waged the war to liberate Zimbabwe. It operated from its bases in Zambia between 1964 and 1980. Umkhonto Wesizwe (MK) was the ANC's armed wing which sought to liberate South Africa from minority rule. Both forces (MK and ZIPRA) worked side by side until the attainment of independence by Zimbabwe when ANC guerrillas were sent back to Zambia by the new Zimbabwean government. This paper argues that the failure of ZIPRA and Umkhonto Wesizwe to deploy larger numbers of guerrillas to the war front in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) and South Africa was mainly caused by bio-physical challenges. ZAPU and ANC guerrillas faced the difficult task of crossing the Zambezi River and then walking through the sparsely vegetated areas, game reserves and parks until they reached villages deep into the country. Rhodesian and South African Defense Forces found it relatively easy to disrupt guerrilla movements along these routes. Even after entering into Rhodesia, ANC guerrillas had environmental challenges in crossing to South Africa. As such, they could not effectively launch protracted rural guerrilla warfare. Studies on ZIPRA and ANC guerrilla warfare have tended to ignore these environmental problems across inhospitable territories. For the ANC, surveillance along the Limpopo River and in the Kruger National Park acted more as impediments than conduits. The ANC also had to cope with almost all challenges which confronted ZIPRA guerrillas such as the Zambezi, Lake Kariba and various parks which Rhodesians always used as a first line of defense, but geographically speaking had a difficult task in South Africa where the environment was not favourable for guerrilla warfare.

Keywords: environment, savanna, guerrilla insurgency, infiltration, campaigns

INTRODUCTION

There are several impediments which worked against ANC and ZIPRA guerrilla warfare between 1967 and 1980. For both, these include the strength of governments they were fighting against, organizational skills, logistical support, the attitude of the international community, internal crises and the detention of the political leadership. The paper is fully aware of all these challenges but posits that for both guerrilla movements, the environment was indeed a major problem. For this paper, environment refers to physical conditions viewed in relation to the possibility of life (Brown 1993: 832). Both movements operated from Zambia which was not only independent but also friendly judging from the massive support Zambia gave to ZAPU in particular (Nkomo 2012: 147–164). Namibia was under the jurisdiction of South Africa and effectively controlled, hence guerrillas could not use her as an entry point. As for Mozambique, it was under Portuguese rule. Even when Mozambique did become independent, it was often bullied by South Africa against supporting ANC guerrillas. For example, on 16 March 1984, Mozambique and South Africa signed the Nkomati Accord (Gevisser 2009: 186–187). Under this agreement, Mozambique was to stop supporting and harbouring the ANC in return for South Africans' agreement to cease funding and training an insurgency which had plunged Mozambique into a disastrous civil war. Rhodesia which was still under minority rule, seemed to provide a logical route because when attacked, guerrillas were justified in fighting back an illegal regime. The major challenge for ZIPRA and the ANC was negotiating the Zambezi River itself walking long distances mostly through the forests and game parks until they reached villages. To add to ANC guerrillas' woes, they had to cross Limpopo River, Kruger National Park with its crocodile and hippo filled streams not counting the vast savannah grasslands dotted with trees. The results of these problems was that ZIPRA could not field as many guerrillas into the country as ZANLA did while the ANC was hardly able to field a forceful and numerous force because of geographical challenges. ZIPRA failed to cover as much ground as ZANLA mainly because of environmental problems posed by having to operate from Zambia. When Zimbabwe became independent, ANC guerillas who had entered the country alongside ZIPRA guerrillas were quietly sent back to Zambia as a way of preventing confrontation with South Africa.

The paper first gives the methodology and then a brief overview of the physical environment of the area from the Zambezi River across to the Limpopo River. This will be followed by an analysis of what that geography may imply for a guerrilla army bearing in mind that South of the Sahara, vegetated areas are crucial for a successful guerrilla operation. Ways in which the natural environment cost both ZIPRA and MK during the 1960s are discussed with a view of explaining how this eventually compelled SADF to operate in Rhodesia in a bid to keep both forces beyond the river. Throughout the 1970s, both guerrilla movements revised their approach but were not quite able to overwhelm these environmental realities.

METHODOLOGY

Information for this paper was collected mainly by gleaning through published sources with a view of establishing environmental challenges faced by guerrillas as they went to the front or returned from the front. Useful interview information was provided by Sharp Shooter who was one of the commanders during the Sipolilo campaign. Similarly, Dumiso Dabengwa provided information related to the planning of these campaigns. A few other former ZIPRA and ZANLA guerrillas were also interviewed.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE CONFLICT

Between 1967 and 1980, ANC guerrillas who were based in Zambia entered Rhodesia on their way to South Africa by crossing the Zambezi River and then traversing across parks and game reserves before reaching any homesteads. Once in Rhodesia, dispatched guerrillas were also expected to negotiate their route until they found their way to South Africa (Sharp Shooter, Interview 24 August 2012). The task was in comparative terms a little bit easier for ZAPU guerrillas, because they had reached the front. It is pivotal at this stage to review the geography of conflict tracing it from Zambia right into South Africa for purposes of analysing challenges posed to guerrilla warfare by physical impediments from the rear to the operational area.

The natural environment of Hurungwe, Kariba and Sanyati districts is more understandable by following it from the Zambezi valley to Hurungwe District. The highest point in Hurungwe is Nyangawe hill which is 1 411m above sea level (School atlas for Zimbabwe 1985: 8–9). The Zambezi valley is about 40km long before one gets to these ranges of hills. In the valley itself, the lowest average temperatures are usually around 25 degrees Celsius. The valley is infested with tsetse flies and malaria carrying mosquitoes. This makes it clear why cattle-keeping was not commonly undertaken in the Zambezi valley. The valley discussed above was not densely populated by people both during the war and to date. It has a number of game parks and reserves such as Kariba, Mana Pools National Park, Chewore Game Reserve, Charara and Matusadonha. Most of the Western side of Hurungwe is occupied by the Kariba Dam which is a huge man-made lake. The lake was a major impediment to guerrilla infiltration. Crossing into Zimbabwe was done either through the Southern edges between the Zambezi National Park and Milibizi River or to the extreme North-West. To get to people's homes, guerrillas had to cope with the threat of wild animals, poisonous snakes, debilitating temperatures, critical shortage of water and more dangerously, alert and watchful Rhodesian soldiers and game rangers.

In terms of vegetation, the journey along the valley and the escarpments looks unsuitable for guerrilla warfare. It is largely Mopani savanna woodlands which become bare during the dry season. As such, Bhebe points out that traversing the vast, unpopulated and sparsely populated Zambezi valley and escarpment where they were easily spotted by the enemy and forced to fight battles which they had hoped to avoid

was a serious challenge to guerrilla war effort (Bhebe 1999: 24). Such environmental impediments explain why ZANLA infiltration in the north was made to coincide with the rains 'when green foliage could provide better cover for the guerrillas, when water would be plentiful and when the Rhodesian advantage of mechanized mobility would be reduced by flooded rivers and roads that turned into treacherous quagmires' (Martin & Johnson 1981: 19). The vegetation to the North West was different to that on the Eastern border of Mozambique which was mostly forest and mountainous with good air cover (Nkomo 2001: 32).

Several rivers dissect areas which the ANC and ZAPU guerrillas were supposed to cross along their journey within Rhodesia. Among the major rivers are Tengwe, Musukwi, Badze, Sengwe, Sanyati and not mentioning the Zambezi itself. Zambezi and Sanyati were infested with crocodiles and hippos. Rivers that flow in the northerly direction include Rukomeshi, Chewore, Chavava, Tsororo and Murereshi. To the extreme east outside Hurungwe is Angwa River. When in flood, these rivers did hamper movement particularly in the rainy season. Apparently, the annual rainfall average for Hurungwe is 800mm (School atlas for Zimbabwe 1985). Though dissected by many rivers, Hurungwe has only one major tarred road from Kariba to Chirundu and another shorter one from Makuti to Kariba. The rest are dirt roads connecting major service centres such as Mudzimu, Kazangarare, Kapfunde, Nyamhunga and Tengwe. Until the peak of the Zimbabwean liberation war between 1975 and 1980, Binga was not even connected by a gravel road. The need to curtail guerilla activities led to the construction of the road.

In South Africa, forests cover only 1% of the land mass and they are found on the higher and wetter slopes of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal Provinces (How Stuff Works: Geography of South Africa). Otherwise, at lower elevations and in the Limpopo Province, there are large tracts of tropical savannas. Grass covers much of the plateau. Further, in the Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces is the Kruger National Park which occupies more than 19 000 square kilometers. Animals here include lions, leopards, elephants, buffaloes, rhinos and others. The streams in the park are infested with crocodiles and hippopotami. South Africa sprawls across 1 221 030 square kilometers. Its West coast is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean and its East Coast by the Indian Ocean. North West along the Atlantic coast stretches the vast Namib Desert (Boehm, Armstrong & Hunkins 2000: 545). From the border of Mozambique right into Namibia, the area is all savanna grasslands. Generally, grasslands cover most of the Republic merging into the thorn veld in the northwestern Cape and into the bushveld in Limpopo Province (Hutchenson 2012: 1133). Tropical savannas exposed guerrillas to both air and ground strikes. In the parks, security was tight. Added to this was the danger of being attacked by wild animals.

THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE LIBERATION WAR

Environmental challenges led to the failure or defeat of ANC/ZAPU guerrillas who engaged with Smith's soldiers in the Wankie Game Reserve and Sipolilo respectively. Some guerrillas actually got lost while looking for safe water holes because security forces had surrounded the few available (Raeburn 1981: 86). According to Sharp Shooter, who was one of the commanders in the Sipolilo Campaign, once guerrillas had been attacked, walking back to Zambia was a monumental task. He claims that some of the survivors in this attack were eaten by crocodiles in the Zambezi River, bitten by poisonous snakes or succumbed to diseases as they tried to negotiate their way back. This clearly shows that both the ANC and ZAPU had not fully geared their guerrillas for the environmental problems. Raeburn has pointed out that the Wankie Game Reserve through which ANC/ZAPU guerrillas infiltrated from Zambia was depopulated and inhospitable. Furthermore, guerrillas were continually inconvenienced by inadequate maps, lack of food and water. Among the factors raised concerning the failure of ANC/ZAPU guerrillas was recklessness – the heavy figures of 8-boot-patterns left by guerrillas in the uninhabited game reserve made tracking by Rhodesian troops easy. This is in addition to the problem of leaving communication to chance. Referring to the same campaign, Bhebe shows that ZAPU had no bases from which it could launch its campaign. In addition, poor discipline led to one of the ANC guerrillas refusing to walk all the way to Limpopo and instead choosing to travel by lifts which lead not only to his own capture but also of the exposure of his whole group. Bhebe (1999: 27) concludes that traversing the vast and sparsely populated Zambezi valley and escarpments where they were easily spotted by the enemy, was an uphill task for guerrillas. That Rhodesians were aware of the Zambezi impediment is reflected in a hit song mocking guerrillas which was composed in 1977 by a South African artist John Edmond. It went as follows:

I saw a big fat crocodile
I said I see you eat in style
But the croc said man it's easy
I catch the terts as they swim the Zambezi

I saw a big mugandanga
He set in ambush for a car
And much to his surprise
The car was full of RLIs (Rhodesian Light Infantry)

I saw a Hippopotamus
He was making a lot of fuss
There was something stuck in his throat
It was a terr in a blown up boat

Of course, it was not the norm for guerrillas to swim across the Zambezi, but instances of their canoes capsizing having disastrous consequences were a glaring reality. The Zambezi was to the Rhodesians a clear first line of defence and they utilized it effectively. Joshua Nkomo once lamented the challenges that his guerrillas had to face by choosing to operate from Zambia. He summarizes that on average, guerrillas took 30 days, often against strong opposition, to get to the front and then 30 days back, if they used up their weaponry. On the contrary, the border of Mozambique which ZANLA used, provided, an excellent setting for guerrilla operations. In his words, the border is mostly mountainous with good air cover. He concludes that these tactical realities led to different behaviour of the two armies (Nkomo 2001: 166). It is an exaggeration that the journey to the front took as long as 30 days. After all, ammunition dumps also existed outside the Zambezi Valley. Central to the statements is that these environmental changes saw ZIPRA failing to send in enough guerrillas. As a result, it was to be accused by ZANU and even Rhodesians of husbanding its forces outside the country to wait for an opportune moment when ZANLA and Rhodesian forces had tired each other out (Horne 2001: 261). Although ZAPU tried to rebuff the allegation, it stung and stuck. Up to the present day, many ZANLA war veterans still feel so, but in practice, ZIPRA also fought ferociously on its fronts and scored various victories. It is commonplace however, that the winning party normally discredits the loser. For example, many former ZANLA guerrillas interviewed in 2013 are of the opinion that it was them who fought the war and not ZIPRA.

Guerrillas devised strategies for their survival during the long journey to and from Zimbabwe or Zambia. In one encounter, a group of ZAPU guerrillas had to survive on berries, roots and the sour jelly of *malala* fruit and when they were short of water, they sucked the wood of that tree which was abundant in the area (Raeburn 1981: 108). All these are bush crafts which guerrillas had to learn in order to survive in the harsh environments. For those who had some rural orientation this was not too demanding a task.

In mid 1967, ZAPU entered into an agreement with the ANC to undertake joint military operations (Sibanda 2005: 186–187). This culminated in the infiltration of ANC/ZAPU commandos into Wankie and then Sipolilo. In August 1967, 90 ZAPU and ANC guerrillas entered Rhodesia near Victoria Falls. In early 1968, 123 ZAPU/ANC guerrillas again crossed the Zambezi near Chewore and in July, a force of 91 again crossed the Zambezi (Moorcraft & MacLaughlin 2011: 32–33). These became the backbone of the Wankie and Sipolilo Campaigns. The Wankie and Sipolilo Campaigns by ANC/ZAPU reveal clearly that the natural environment was a great obstacle to guerrilla penetration. Both the ANC and ZAPU had made their reconnaissance with a view of determining the logic of deploying foot guerrillas across the Zambezi. In 1965 Dumiso Dabengwa and his team were tasked to map and test physically as many crossing points as possible on the Zambezi River from Kazungula in the west to Feira in the east (Bhebe 1999: 27). As soon as these points had been identified, local fishermen were

hired to transport one or two ZIPRA personnel at a time if circumstances would permit. Dumiso Dabengwa (Interview 4 October 2013) himself recalled that he physically mapped the river and was injured by a falling boulder from a cliff as he tried to cross the river during the mapping exercise. Similarly, in 1966, Joe Modise, commander-in-chief of the Umkhonto Wesizwe (MK), based himself in Zambia and with ZAPU military commanders, conducted reconnaissance work in Rhodesia. The result was a decision to operate jointly which was agreed upon in June 1967. Under that arrangement, the main MK column would march to South Africa on foot through the Rhodesian bush while the second and smaller column of MK would be part of a ZAPU unit. They would move east and then set up a base at Lupane inside Rhodesia so that it would be used in future as a transit base for MK (Van Driel 2003). The decision to use Rhodesia was in part influenced by the lack of preparedness on the part of the Botswana government to use their country as a passage for ANC guerrillas. Moreover, Namibia was effectively under South African rule and had the Caprivi Strip as a border being a desert which would pose serious challenges to insurgents.

Crossing the river was in itself a mammoth task. There were deep gorges, currents were swift, and the cliffs themselves were frightening. They all crossed between 31 July and 1 August 1967. The planners had grossly underestimated the number of days ANC guerrillas would require to traverse the whole country. Planners of the march calculated that it would take the marchers 12 days to reach the South African border if they were to head in the direction the crow flies (Van Driel 2003). By the 7th day, the group was already experiencing serious problems having run out of both food and water. The further they moved away from the Zambezi, the drier the land became, the scarcer water became and their desperate situation intensified.

ANC/ZAPU guerrillas and Rhodesians began to fight on 14 August 1967. Guerrilla forces were either killed or captured by the Rhodesians, or interned and later convicted by the Botswana authorities for illegal entry (Lodge 1983: 299). At the end of December 1967, there was yet a second incursion of ANC/ZAPU guerrillas which successfully remained undetected for 3 months inside Rhodesia until fierce fighting with the Rhodesians began in March 1968 and stretched into June. A third incursion attacked a Rhodesian military camp. It would seem to be a gross underestimation that the guerrilla planners were unaware of the challenges which their moves would bring upon the guerrillas, given the fact that they were highly trained. The question at hand was that they were making a statement to the OAU Liberation Committee that their men were actually engaging or fighting the enemy. It was and has normally hardly been the case that military and political leaders go to the front to fight the enemy physically. They deploy the worker and the peasant to go out and die in dangerous environments.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE BATTLES

The forces which were deployed into Rhodesia were negotiating their way through unfamiliar territory coupled with inadequate maps of the specific routes they were

supposed to take. In the end many ANC/ZAPU guerrillas were killed or captured by the Rhodesians or interned or later convicted for illegal entry by the Botswana authorities. Owing to the absence of maps, most of those who were arrested in Botswana were not even aware that they had crossed the border. Other ANC/ZAPU guerrilla survivors became members of the CIO in Rhodesia or BOSS (Bureau of State Security) in South Africa (Ranilala *et al.* 2014). Only a few were able to find their way into South Africa. The bio-physical threat was realistic and a great impediment to the insurgency war in South Africa. What made the South African case even more unique was the forced relocations and dispossession of land of the African population. This meant that most rural areas were large expanses of sparsely populated land but nevertheless occupied by whites who in most cases were indifferent to the ANC cause. As such, negotiating their way through such lands was suicidal.

One of the consequences of the Wankie and Sipolilo battles was the deployment of the South African Police into Rhodesia (Ranilala *et al.* 2014). The logic was to keep the so-called terrorists north of the Zambezi so that any battles would be fought away from South African soil. In the wake of the ZAPU/ANC incursion, Pretoria sent 2 000 men into the Zambezi Valley. By 1969, 2 700 South African troops were in the valley (Moorcraft & MacLaughlin 2011: 32). As the Rhodesian bush war intensified, fears that ZIPRA would cross many MK guerrillas led to massive deployment of the South African Defence Forces (SADF) as well as military hardware. They made sure that the first line of defence namely the Zambezi River and its environs were well-secured. From 1970 onwards, the entire line from Lake Kariba to Mozambique was manned by South African troops. The Zambezi itself was patrolled by South African boats, jets and helicopters. Military camps had also been erected along the Zambezi River.

Between 1970 and 1975, the ANC changed tactics and began transferring its guerrillas through formal borders using forged documents (Lodge 1983: 299). This was an attempt to circumvent physical challenges posed by crossing armed men through Rhodesia where reaching South Africa would remain a dream. Again and again, once in South Africa, some of the guerrillas were arrested. For example, one of the veterans of the 1967 campaign, James April was arrested in 1971 in Durban. The ANC was not the only liberation movement to experience these problems. The PAC was facing the same challenges in trying to transfer their guerrillas from Zambia. Neither SWAPO of Namibia nor the Botswana government would provide that free passage. PAC guerrillas could not filter through the Caprivi Strip because it was well-defended by SADF while Machel of Mozambique was not quite friendly to the PAC because of its association with UNITA. The PAC tried to rally Swaziland in the 1970s but again this was a failure.

There was great disillusionment among guerrillas over the failure of the ANC leadership to provide a safe route to South Africa. This was despite the restlessness on the part of guerrillas demanding to go to the front after their training. The organization was criticized for abandoning some of its captured cadres who were incarcerated in Rhodesian jails. Such criticisms led to the temporary suspension of Chris Hani who was one of the veterans in the 1967 campaign (Ranilala *et al.* 2014). ZANU praised

the courage of the insurgents, but was quick to point out that the ANC should fight the South African regime in South Africa rather than on Rhodesian soil because by doing so, it was encouraging Pretoria to bolster the northern frontier. By the late 1970s, Thabo Mbeki was realising that if elections were to be held in Rhodesia, it was highly likely that ZANU-PF would win. He thus maintained an informal relationship so that in the event of a ZANU victory, ANC guerrillas would find a safe passage (Gevisser 2009: 300). The decisions by sections in the ANC to endear themselves to ZANU were not as popular with both parties. It appeared that up to 1980, the ANC continued to look at ZANU as *the enemy*. Oliver Tambo once called it the ‘spurious stooge of the imperialists’ (Gevisser 2009: 300). ZANU-PF complained that the ANC only started liking them after they had won the 1980 election. The relationship was worsened by the dissident problems from 1982–1986. Owing to the close association that the ANC and ZAPU had enjoyed, it appeared dangerous to assist ANC guerrillas.

The bio-physical impediments compelled ZIPRA to transfer ANC guerrillas and their arms including heavy weapons such as tanks into Zimbabwe during the ceasefire period and into the beginning of 1980. Technically, these were to appear as ZIPRA arms. The decision was arrived at by ZIPRA leadership with the realization that the ANC would only have one border to cross. According to the former ZIPRA Chief of Intelligence, Dumiso Dabengwa (Interview 4 October 2012), the new Zimbabwe government was compelled under the threat of military action by the apartheid South African regime to ensure that there were no ANC guerrillas on their soil. Resultantly, MK guerrillas were picked up from assembly points and quietly returned north of the Zambezi River. When ZAPU arms caches were eventually discovered, it was difficult for ZAPU to prove that part of the consignment belonged to MK. They had not informed the government of that development when MK cadres were sent back to Zambia. The government had no way of proving that indeed some of the arms were intended for use by MK.

There are many political arguments being advanced in independent Zimbabwe castigating ZIPRA commitment to the war effort. For example, in a foreword to a book by Martin & Johnson (1981: v) the then prime minister Robert Mugabe argued that the pace of the revolution was set by ZANU and ZANLA while credit may be given where it is merited to ZAPU and ZIPRA for their complementary role. This part is developed from the realisation that ZIPRA did not deploy as many guerrillas as ZANLA did during the war. Such arguments ignore the environmental impediments against using Zambia as a rear base. Joshua Nkomo (2001: 166) recalled that Zambia was a difficult base to operate from because

the frontier along the valley of the Zambezi River swelled from the early 1960s onwards by the creation of Lake Kariba behind its huge dam. The river valley was a strong first line of defence for the Rhodesians. Then south of the river lie ravines and high bare hills then a wide expanse of open bush, with semi-desert set with a maze of landmines.

The Zambezi was more of a barrier than a conduit. Often ambush along the river was easy. Carol Thompson (1985: 44) has noted that many men and material never reached the Rhodesian side of the river. In addition, supply lines were more difficult to maintain than one that depended on long marches under the cover of foliage. Crocodiles along the river took a heavy toll on crossing guerrillas. According to Nkiwane (Interview 23 August 2012), hippos also toppled canoes resulting in imminent deaths. Rhodesian soldiers developed a tendency of shooting at hippos to make them angry so that they would not hesitate to attack any human being entering the river. They did the same with buffaloes along certain routes if they had information that guerrillas might pass through the area. Should a guerrilla try to shoot the attacking animal in self-defence, that had a tendency to alert Rhodesian and SADF whose camps were dotted along the Zambezi valley. In addition, poisonous snakes bit guerrillas who often had no medical kit to deal with the challenge. In short, much as the environment might have worked against ZIPRA, it did help ZANLA partly contributing to the latter's victory in 1980. Challenges brought by the physical geography and how it was manipulated by both guerrillas and their enemies had radical consequences. Both MK and ZIPRA began to train their men in urban guerrilla warfare so that if they found their way into towns, they would start their insurgency in areas where the enemy was strongest.

CONCLUSION

The paper has demonstrated that until 1980, the physical environment greatly impeded ZAPU and MK guerrilla warfare. The Zambezi River and valley in this case was the major source of the problem for guerrillas. Environmental challenges encouraged Pretoria to establish a close military co-operation with Rhodesia so as to prevent the war from being fought on South African soil. ZAPU was plagued by the challenges emanating from the Zambezi River and valley right until the coming of independence in 1980. Owing to environmental problems, ZIPRA could not field as numerous guerrillas as ZANLA did. As such, ZIPRA was accused of keeping the bulk of her forces outside the country waiting for an opportune moment to crush both Rhodesians and ZANLA. The allegation is still hard to shrug off. Environmental factors prolonged the war of liberation in South Africa. All forces fighting against the apartheid regime were headquartered outside the country hence faced similar daunting tasks. MK leadership began to send a few trained guerrillas into the country to organize and win hearts and minds. The ZAPU commissariat was not quite able to do the same. This meant that throughout the war, ZIPRA guerrillas would not be campaigning effectively for their political party. ZAPU's legacy was spoiled by the fact that due to the long distance before they could get to people, many battles were fought in areas which were not inhabited by people. As a result, such battles went unreported meaning that their commitment to the war remained largely unknown. More important, towards the end of the war ZIPRA tried to create a conventional army and confront the enemy directly but they were short changed by the Lancaster House Agreement. Again in both cases, Botswana could not compensate for

the challenges faced by the two forces because it economically depended on Rhodesia and South Africa in addition to her very weak military power.

REFERENCES

- Bhebe, N. 1999. *The ZAPU and ZANU guerrilla warfare and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe*. Gweru: Mambo.
- Boehm, R. G., Armstrong D. G. & Hunkins F. P. 2000. *Geography: The world and its people*. New York: McGraw.
- Brown, L. 1993. *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Chikomba. Interview. ZANLA war veteran, Chinhoyi, 16 March 2013.
- Dabengwa, Dumiso. Interview. Large City Hall, Bulawayo, 4 October 2013.
- Edmond J. 1977. *Phase II: Troopie Songs: No war has ever been won by forces of evil*. Johannesburg, Brandstand Publications.
- How stuff works*. Geography of South Africa. Retrieved from geography.howstuffworks.com/Africa (accessed 31 May 2014).
- Gevisser, M. 2009. *A legacy of the liberation: Thabo Mbeki and the future of the South African Dream*. New York: Macmillan.
- Hutchenson, A. M. 2013. *South Africa: Physical and social geography in Africa south of the Sahara*. London: Routledge.
- Horne, G. 2001. *From the barrel of a gun: The United States and the war against Zimbabwe*. Harare, SAPES Trust.
- Lodge, T. 1983. *Black politics in South Africa since 1945*. London: Longman.
- Martin, D. & Johnson P. 1981. *The struggle for Zimbabwe*. Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House.
- Moorcraft, P. & McLaughlin, P. 2011. *The Rhodesian front war: A military history*. Johannesburg, Ministry of Education, Zimbabwe. 1985. *School atlas for Zimbabwe*. Stockholm: Esselt Map Service.
- Ngwaru. Interview. ZANLA war veteran, Village 7 B, Chinhenga, Nyanga, 8 January 2013.
- Nkiwane. Interview. ZIPRA Veterans Trust, Bulawayo, 23 August 2012.
- Nkomo, J. 2011. *The Story of my life*. Harare: SAPES Trust.
- Raeburn, M. 1981. *Black fire: Accounts of guerrilla war in Zimbabwe*. Gweru: Mambo.
- Ranilala, R. M., Sithole, J., Houston, G., & Magubane, B., 2004–2013. The Wankie and Sipolilo Campaign in South African Democracy Education Trust in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, pp 479–540. Retrieved from http://www.sadet.co.za/docs/rtd/vol1/sadet1_chap12.pdf (accessed 4 December 2014).
- Sharp Shooter. Interview. ZIPRA Veterans Trust, Bulawayo, 24 August 2012.
- Sibanda, E. M. 2005. *The Zimbabwe African People's Union 1961–87: A political history of insurgency in Southern Rhodesia*. Trenton: Africa World Press.
- Thompson, C. B. 1985. *Challenge to imperialism: The frontline states and the liberation of Zimbabwe*. Harare: ZPH.

Van Driel, N. The ANC's first armed military operation: The Luthuli-detachment and the Wankie-campaign, July–September 1967. Unpublished MA dissertation, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, 2003. Retrieved from <http://www.sahistory.org.za/content/chapter-two-brief-history-context-zapu-guerrillas> (accessed 31 May 2014).