AFRICAN HISTORIES AND MODERNITIES

PRISONERS OF RHODESIA

Inmates and Detainees in the Struggle for Zimbabwean Liberation, 1960-1980

Munyaradzi B. Munochiveyi

Prisoners of Rhodesia

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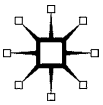

PRISONERS OF RHODESIA

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For my late Mum, Amai Sarah Munochiveyi, a strong-willed woman who refused to be bowed.

And for my dear family, my wife Rumbidzai Cindy Munochiveyi, our three sons Tino, Anesu, and Takunda, and our special daughter Sarah, all who have graciously filled a void in my life.

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Contents

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Glossary

Rhodesia	"Rhodesia" was Zimbabwe's colonial name from 1890 to 1979, in recognition of Cecil Rhodes, who engineered British settlers' occupation of the country. After the end of settler colonial rule in 1980, the country's name became Zimbabwe, in recognition of one of the country's pre-colonial empires, Dzimbahwe.
Township(s)	Urban spaces where the majority of Africans stayed
Salisbury	Rhodesia's capital city (now Harare)
Bulawayo	The second largest city in Rhodesia (and Zimbabwe)
Umtali	The third largest city in Rhodesia (now Mutare)

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES:

Youth League	An African political organization in the late 1950s
SR-ANC	Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (African political party), formed 1959
NDP	National Democratic Party (African political party), formed 1960
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union (African political party), formed 1963
ZANU	Zimbabwe People's African National Union (African political party), formed 1964
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (armed guerrilla wing of ZANU), 1970s
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (armed guerrilla wing of ZAPU), 1970s
RF	Rhodesia Front (An exclusively white supremacist Rhodesian political party led by Ian Douglas Smith that invoked and led the U.D.I.), 1962 and 1979
LOMA	Law and Order Maintenance Act (1960, amended 1963)

UDI	Acronym for the white minority Rhodesian government after its premier, Ian Douglas Smith, declared what he called "Unilateral Declaration of Independence" on the November 11, 1965, which meant declaring independence from imperial Britain.
Rhodesian Security Forces	Collective name for Rhodesian police, paramilitary crack units, and soldiers fighting against African nationalists and guerrillas. These forces included the Rhodesia British South Africa Police (BSAP), police crack units such as the Special Branch, the Criminal Intelligence Department (CID), and counterinsurgency military units such as the Selous Scouts.
Major Prisons	Salisbury Prison, Gwelo Prison, Chikurubi Maximum Prison, Khami Maximum Prison, Goromonzi Prison
Major Detention Centers	Gonakudzingwa, Sikombela, Wha Wha

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Suffering for the Nation: The Prison as a Site of Struggle during Zimbabwe's Liberation War

During conversations with former African political prisoners of the Rhodesian[1] colonial regime, "we suffered for this nation" was a common reflective phrase that informants used in order to claim their place within the narrative of Zimbabwe's anti-colonial struggle in the late-twentieth century. Indeed, "suffering" is a dominant analytical trope for most liberation struggle participants in Zimbabwean history. However, in the dominant narratives of this history, both popular and sometimes academic, the suffering of others is more visible and audible in comparison to other historical subjects' histories. This is not surprising because over the years, and since Zimbabwe attained political independence from colonial rule in 1980, those with politically legitimate and authorized claims to suffering have had unfettered access to both political and economic power in postcolonial Zimbabwe. The writing of Zimbabwean history, particularly nationalist history, has been in constant evolution and has demonstrated that it is indeed an intense exercise in inclusion and exclusion. The subjects of this study have lived on the fringes of this history for a long time, and this book seeks to tell the story of colonial Rhodesia's political captives, stories that have remained in the shadows of dominant nationalist and state narratives.

Between the early 1960s and 1979, African nationalists engaged in a protracted guerrilla war that ultimately ended white colonial rule in Rhodesia. The settler regime responded by imprisoning a large number of activists and those whom it suspected of being aligned with the guerrillas. However, to date, scholars, journalists, activists and partisans of the triumphant ZANU guerrilla movement who

have studied Zimbabwe's liberation struggle have focused almost exclusively on the guerrilla war itself. In this book, I am particularly interested in the histories and lived experiences of African political detainees and prisoners whose experiences and contributions towards the liberation struggle have been rendered invisible by dominant historical and state narratives. In fact, this is the first monograph to consider political prisoners and detainees as crucial historical subjects in the telling of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle history. As one historian noted about histories of political imprisonment in Vietnam, it may be that the capacity of prison walls to convey an illusion of isolation and separation from the wider community has discouraged historical investigations of political prisoners as crucial historical subjects.[2] But in the Zimbabwean scenario, it goes beyond the mere illusion of the prison as isolative: it is the dominance of the guerrilla narrative that has skewed histories of Zimbabwean nationalism to consider only a narrow set of historical subjects germane to this history.

Evidence gathered for this study suggests that the social composition of people who were imprisoned by Rhodesian security forces during the liberation struggle was quite diverse. Those detained ranged from guerrilla militants and political organizers, to ordinary men and women who were suspected of sympathizing or collaborating with the liberation movement. Through documenting the stories and histories of these incarcerated people, their experiences in Rhodesian jails, and the ways in which they struggled and coped in some of the most brutal detention centers of the Rhodesian regime, this book argues that detainees were important historical actors whose encounters and experiences with one of Rhodesia's repressive apparatuses—the prisons—deserve to be documented.

This book's central argument is that although political imprisonment during Zimbabwe's liberation struggle was an extreme version of the colonial experience that combined spatial confinement with curtailed freedoms, racialized abuse, racial segregation, and heightened repression, the prison was also a terrain of struggle, by which I mean that it was doubly a space of repression and subversion, and that political prisoners were capable of challenging and negotiating their incarceration. Three broad and interrelated questions frame this study: Firstly, in what ways did the Rhodesian regime frame and justify the political detention and imprisonment of Africans? Secondly, considering the brutal nature of Rhodesian incarceration during the liberation war, in what ways did incarcerated Africans cope and

adapt to the different conditions of Rhodesian jails and detention centers, and how did they seek to mitigate some of the devastating consequences of imprisonment and detention? Lastly, what was the cumulative effect of imprisonment and detention on incarcerated Africans, their families, and their lives in general? Whereas the first question seeks to understand why the colonial regime resorted to the penal option as a style of governance and as a repressive apparatus, the other questions focus on the penal experience itself. I seek to establish that although the Rhodesian prisons were centers of brutality, political detainees were not passive recipients of state penal terror as they actively negotiated, challenged, and subverted oppressive penal regulations. I also argue that, as political hostages of the Rhodesian regime, detainees played a crucial role towards dislodging colonial rule both as producers of powerful critiques of the colonial regime from inside the prison confines and as symbols of African resistance.

This book is mainly based on the experiences of political prisoners and detainees in Rhodesia's main prisons and detention centers, which included institutions such as Khami Maximum Security Prison, Chikurubi Maximum Security Prison, Salisbury Prison, Gwelo Prison, Gonakudzingwa Detention Center, Sikombela Detention, and Wha Wha Prison (see map 1). I suggest at the onset that writing about the experiences of those detained and imprisoned because of the liberation struggle is an important task because this adds to the multiplicity of historical subjects germane to the history of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. With regard to Zimbabwe's liberation struggle histories, scholars have noted the propensity of nationalist histories to suppress, marginalize, and silence other historical subjects while at the same time reifying the historical role of other (mostly elite) historical subjects.[3] Prisoners and detainees of the Rhodesian regime have suffered this fate both in Zimbabwe's liberation war historiography and in the public memories of the liberation war in post-colonial Zimbabwe.[4] This is perhaps because it has been difficult thus far to historicize political prisoners' contribution to the liberation struggle because as imprisoned people, they were supposedly "cut off" from the struggle for liberation. This study challenges this supposition because by introducing the prison as another terrain of struggle apart from guerrilla or combat zones, my work draws attention to an arena that historians had never considered as a space of resistance, confrontation, and negotiation in the telling of liberation struggle histories.

Historical Context

From the late 1950s to 1979, political imprisonment in colonial Zimbabwe was a consequence of the colonial Rhodesian authorities' high-handed response to Africans' nationalist and liberation struggles, whose foremost agenda was to dislodge white settler colonial rule. Although there were notable moments of anti-colonial struggles in the decades preceding the 1960s,[5] the mass-based African nationalism that seriously threatened to end colonial domination in Rhodesia emerged in the second half of the twentieth century. Furthermore, although the Rhodesian colonial authorities had always used imprisonment as part of colonial repression since the establishment of Rhodesia as a colony in the 1890s, widespread political imprisonment, detention, and intensified state repression of Africans occurred between the 1960s and 1970s, the period of the nationalist and liberation struggles.

In colonial Zimbabwe, like elsewhere in colonial Africa, the ideas behind African nationalism, such as African/black majority rule, self-rule, and independence, politically inspired African men and women from diverse social backgrounds to take part in all aspects of anti-colonial activities in both rural and urban Rhodesia.[6] In the late 1950s, the political geography of Rhodesia changed radically as young and educated Africans in Rhodesia's urban areas formed vibrant political parties that encouraged anti-colonial politics through mass-mobilization. Examples of such political parties in Rhodesia included the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (1957–1959), the National Democratic Party (1960–1961), the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). Although a small group of the African educated elite led these parties, it was the political activities of African urban workers, rural peasants, men and women, old and young, that were at the center of the growth of mass-based nationalism and liberation struggles in Zimbabwe.

Drawing upon their own individualized anti-colonial politics, African youths, workers, and peasants in urban and rural Rhodesia joined these new political parties in record numbers. As members of these political parties, Africans thronged numerous political rallies and gatherings particularly in urban Rhodesia, where African political leaders politicized their partisans with fine-tuned anti-colonial rhetoric. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, such political gatherings and rallies punctuated the everyday life of urban Africans. In Rhodesia's main urban areas, places such as Salisbury's Mai Musodzi

Hall in Mbare African Township, Cyril Jennings Hall in Highfield Township, or Stanley Square in Bulawayo's Makokoba Township, all became popular public spaces for African political rendezvous.[7] It was at these political gatherings and rallies that most Africans found resonance and meaning for their own anti-colonial ideas. Listening to the political rhetoric of their leaders inspired insurgent and anti-colonial political sentiments among the Africans and fired people's political imaginations. Furthermore, the political parties themselves encouraged people to join communities of political activists fighting against Rhodesian colonial rule and the political intransigence of the leaders of the Rhodesian regime who were averse to African majority rule.

It was within these communities of activists that politically committed Africans began challenging repressive Rhodesian policies. In urban areas such as the townships of Salisbury, Bulawayo, and Umtali, African political activists turned the once-tranquil urban environment into spaces of militant politics and civic disobedience. Activists protested against the constant proscription of African political parties by the Rhodesian authorities, and increasingly, African political meetings ended in violent clashes between African political activists and the Rhodesian police. In Salisbury's townships, occasionally the air was thick with tear gas, which the Rhodesian police used to disperse political gatherings of Africans. Stone-throwing youths frequently engaged in running battles with the Rhodesian police, whom they saw as symbols of Rhodesian repressive rule. Sporadic and spontaneous urban demonstrations erupted on a frequent basis in the African townships, and sometimes morphed into large-scale national defiance demonstrations, such as the *Zhii* demonstrations in urban Bulawayo that eventually spread to all major urban centers in Rhodesia. More seriously, African defiance in the urban spaces acquired the sophistication of organized militant attacks on symbols of Rhodesian rule. Groups of trained saboteurs, who were mostly youths and students, utilized a wide range of weapons such as petrol bombs or hand grenades, to attack Rhodesian buildings and infrastructure.

By the mid-1960s, it was clear that Rhodesia would never be the same peaceful colony that its white settler leaders touted it to be. The colony was on the verge of one of the bloodiest anti-colonial struggles in African history. Concerning Africans' 1960s urban protests and civic disobedience, Rhodesian authorities' reaction was swift and repressive. Rhodesian authorities, led by the ultra white supremacist Rhodesia-Front government, came up with a cocktail of repressive legislation and organized various regiments of the regime's police and military into a single unit called "Security Forces," all designed to

crack down on African political activists. Specifically, in the 1960s, the Rhodesian regime resorted to political confinement as a style of governance. Hundreds of African activists, after enduring sessions of state-sanctioned police torture, found their way into specially designated prisons and detention centers across Rhodesia. Their crimes ranged from belonging to a banned political party, participating in acts of civic disobedience and attacking the Rhodesian police or infrastructure, to making "subversive" speeches.

Rhodesian authorities anticipated that arresting and detaining the most vocal and active African political figures would work to intimidate African communities into submission and thus eradicate political dissent. However, the Rhodesian authorities underestimated African people's impatience with colonial domination. From the early 1970s onwards, the struggle against Rhodesian white minority colonial rule shifted from the urban to the rural areas. African militants, who thronged guerrilla bases within and outside Rhodesia, engaged the Rhodesian authorities through a protracted guerrilla war that rural peasants overwhelmingly supported. Rural men and women, young and old, drew upon their own traditions of resistance and traditional beliefs in African spirit mediums to encourage the guerrillas to intensify their military assaults on the Rhodesian forces.[8] Most importantly, rural peasants became the bedrock of guerrilla survival as peasant communities sheltered the guerrillas and provided them with valuable war intelligence about the movements of Rhodesian forces. Inevitably, like their urban counterparts, rural peasants also became victims of Rhodesia's confinement policies. In addition to the hundreds of thousands of rural inhabitants who were herded into so-called "Protected Villages," which were concentration camp-style spaces of confinement, many rural peasants also found their way to Rhodesian prisons and detention centers. Rhodesian authorities variously charged arrested peasants for "harboring terrorists," "cooking for terrorists," or "failing to report the presence of terrorists."[9]

Indeed, within the context of African nationalist histories, political confinement was certainly not a uniquely Rhodesian phenomenon. In many colonies across the continent, but particularly in settler colonies such as Rhodesia, Kenya, South Africa, and Algeria, colonial authorities deployed political incarceration as a style of governance in order to deal with the threat of African nationalist movements. In these colonies, African political activists were variously criminalized as terrorists (Rhodesia and South Africa), "spivs" or agitators (Kenya), or as bandits (in the case of Algeria's *la guerre révolutionnaire*). Buttressed by specially crafted sets of draconian security laws,

colonial authorities deployed the prison as a technology of control. In Rhodesia, the Law and Order Maintenance Act (1960) emerged as the principal security law that was responsible for the incarceration of thousands of ordinary African political activists. In South Africa, it was mainly the Terrorism Act (1967), in Kenya it was the Emergency Powers Act (1953), whilst in Algeria it was the Special Powers Act (1953). However, whereas colonial authorities in Kenya criminalized and detained whole communities of the indigenous Kikuyu ethnic group during the Mau Mau Emergency in the 1950s,[10] and whereas the French targeted Algerian freedom fighters for imprisonment,[11] in Rhodesia colonial authorities held urban political activists and rural peasant guerrilla supporters hostage. Furthermore, unlike in South Africa, where apartheid authorities mostly targeted prominent anti-apartheid activists for incarceration,[12] Rhodesian prisons were mostly full of ordinary, rank-and-file members of African political parties and peasant supporters of the guerrilla war.

This book documents the lives of these political activists who were imprisoned and detained by the Rhodesian authorities during Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. Before their arrest, these people's anti-colonial politics was fueled by individualized and collective understandings of African nationalism, which manifested itself in the different sorts of insurgent activities and civic disobedience in both urban and rural Rhodesia. As Rhodesia's hostages in prisons and detention centers, these people suffered bodily harm and torture, racialized abuse, banishment, and repressive incarceration. But their lives were far from being merely victims of Rhodesian repression: Rhodesia's prisoners were also capable of challenging and negotiating their own incarceration. This study argues that the histories of political prisoners and detainees are an important component of the liberation struggle history, and that as political activists and symbols of the Zimbabwe's anti-colonial struggle, political prisoners of the Rhodesian regime contributed towards dislodging colonial rule.

Historiographical Context

This text engages with three main bodies of literature, namely: liberation struggle histories, nationalist histories, and colonial imprisonment and confinement histories. At another level, this study is also intimately connected with Zimbabwe's postcolonial trajectory. Throughout the past three decades since Zimbabwe gained political independence in 1980, the ruling elites in Zimbabwe have used the country's nationalist history to disparage and exclude political

opponents, civic society, and younger generations from having any stake in nation building. A reading of Zimbabwe's dominant nationalist histories shows that just as scholars focus on a narrowly defined group of historical subjects (guerrillas, political elites, or peasants, present public memories of the liberation struggle are carefully crafted by state historians, through various forms of memorializing that history, in a way that parochially focuses on a small group of elite nationalists who are credited with having dislodged colonial rule. In the process, dominant state narratives have rendered invisible and inaudible the histories, lived experiences, and significant contributions of other historical subjects, such as those who were incarcerated by the colonial state.

At the end of the Zimbabwean liberation war in 1980, historians, with an understandable sense of scholarly sympathy and celebration of the end of one of the most racist and oppressive colonial regimes in Africa, immediately began the task of recording the history of Africans' triumphant liberation struggle. In a country whose history was distorted by different sets of colonial historiographies, liberation struggle historians seemed to be driven by an urgent need to rewrite the country's history. Their efforts were unmistakably part of the original Africanist agenda of writing "useable pasts," of giving a useable and meaningful history to a new African nation. For, as Habermas noted, "In a country without history"—or with a history in dispute—"whoever manages to give meaning to memory, define the concepts and interpret the past, wins the future."[13]

Accordingly, different sets of histories about the liberation struggle emerged, but with one theme in common, that is, the guerrilla war. In most of the early and dominant narratives of the liberation struggle, the guerrilla war, along with its chief protagonists—guerrillas, guerrilla leaders, and an undifferentiated group of rural peasants—took center stage. In this literature, authors subordinated or silenced all other forms of struggle against the Rhodesian colonial regime, and reified the guerrilla war narrative as singularly important in the telling of Zimbabwe's anti-colonial history. This bias towards guerrilla war, however, did not necessarily reflect the scholarly weakness of these histories, for most works were thoroughly researched and nuanced. The first of such works was David Martin and Phyllis Johnson's *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, a detailed account of the guerrilla war.[14] The book, which was based on years of research and on extensive interviews with Zimbabwean ex-guerrilla leaders, was quickly recognized as the most authoritative, and indeed authorized, account of the liberation struggle. The tone of the narrative

was triumphant and celebratory, and its historical subjects carefully selected to make prominent the roles of ex-guerrilla leaders in the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. Not surprisingly, the post-colonial Zimbabwean government, which consisted of most of Martin and Johnson's informants, made sure that the book was distributed to all secondary schools in the country. As the first of a long-line of liberation struggle histories that were to emerge in the 1980s, Martin and Johnson's narrative set the precedent in not only stressing the sole importance of the guerrilla war in the history of the liberation struggle, but also in presenting a narrow set of historical subjects germane to that history. This account marginalized other sites of struggle such as the urban African townships, the workplaces, the prisons, and others. In addition, its focus on a narrow set of historical subjects contributed to the ruling ZANU government's project of propagating an official version of the struggle for liberation, one that excluded other historical subjects such as Rhodesia's political prisoners, youths, women, urban workers, and others, but reified the ruling elites' indispensable role during that struggle. As David Moore noted a decade after the publication of *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, the book was the most "singular and celebratory narrative buttressing ZANU (PF)'s claims to power" as it "suppresses or down plays the contributions of" other historical subjects.[15]

Contrary to Martin and Johnson's narrative, my work seeks to uncover some of the hidden narratives of the liberation struggle, such as the stories of Rhodesia's political prisoners. In doing so, my works adds to other newer histories of the Zimbabwean liberation struggle that are based on previously hidden, silenced, and marginalized voices such as the ones that have focused on women (Chadya, 2004), women combatants (Nhongo-Simbanegavi, 1997, 2000; Lyons, 2004), urban workers (Raftopoulos and Yoshikuni, 1999), students (Mlambo, 1997), and others. Zimbabwe's liberation struggle history looks different when seen through the lens of multiple historical subjects, more complex, and holistic than narratives based on, and authorized by, a select group of political elites.

Other 1980s works on Zimbabwe's liberation struggle, although maintaining the same emphasis on the guerrilla war, focused on rural Zimbabwe, the site of the guerrilla combat zones. Specifically, rural peasants, who overwhelmingly supported the guerrilla war and hosted the guerrillas throughout that war, became the focus of scholarly attention. Two important works, that is, Terence Ranger's *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe* and David Lan's *Guns and Rain: Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*, which were

published concurrently, accounted for the liberation war through the lens of radical peasant politics and consciousness.[16] Whereas Ranger stressed the growth of peasant discontent arising out of the experiences of colonial conquest, land alienation, and authoritarian state interventions in peasants' agrarian lives as the chief reasons for peasant support of the guerrilla war, Lan stressed the close cooperation of spirit mediums and guerrillas in mobilizing peasant support for the war. As important as these works were in uncovering the bases of peasant support for the guerrilla war, these narratives ignored the different social backgrounds of the peasants. In other words, Ranger and Lan conceptualized of "peasants" as an undifferentiated group of historical subjects, whose motivations for supporting the guerrilla war were collective and similar. Ranger and Lan left no room for *individualized* assessments of colonial rule and individual/personal motivations for participating in the struggle for liberation.

Contrary to the homogenized historical subjects in previous literature, this text recognizes the diversity of the social backgrounds of the political activists who ended up in Rhodesia's prisons, and emphasizes people's *individual* passages within the meta-narrative of Zimbabwean nationalism. It stresses the need to move away from notions of a homogenized African peasantry (or urban workers), who drew upon homogenous sets of grievances, in order to support the liberation movement. In doing so, I agree with Norma Kriger's criticism of prior liberation struggle literature, particularly the literature on rural peasant participation in the liberation struggle. In her work, Kriger breaks away from the celebratory nationalist histories that stressed the nationalist leaders and guerrillas' mobilization of the "masses" to support the liberation struggle. In *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices*,[17] Kriger stresses peasant differentiation and individual motivations in her analysis of peasant support and participation in the liberation struggle. Although her analysis received scathing reviews from nationalist historians for its rejection of a collective peasant consciousness (and its focus on the coercive factor in mobilizing peasant support), Kriger's insistence on individualized constructions of anti-colonial politics remains important.[18]

Although Kriger's work was important in opening up the liberation struggle history to different critical interpretations, and to looking at that history from different vantage points, she also continued to reflect upon a narrow set of historical actors (guerrillas, peasants, nationalist leaders). In the last decade, however, new post-nationalist narratives have emerged from scholars who are challenging this particular parochial nature of prior scholarship. The most important

of these works began with the ones that questioned the andocentric nature of liberation war narratives. First, in a University of Oxford doctoral thesis, Josephine Nhongo-Simbanegavi seeks to reinsert women's voices into the liberation struggle.[19] She challenges the nationalist myth of the gender-liberation potential of the anti-colonial struggle and argues instead that guerrilla movements relegated women's participation in the liberation struggle to chores of the domestic and "feminine" realm: cooking, nursing, secretarial work, and carrying (rather than using) arms. In essence, Nhongo-Simbanegavi demonstrates how one guerrilla wing of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle, ZANLA, erased and silenced women as active participants in the liberation struggle. Similarly, Tanya Lyons's recent *Guns and Guerilla Girls: Women in the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle* argues that contrary to nationalist propaganda and representations during the war, male and female combatants were not treated equally.[20] Through 18 interviews with female ex-combatants, Lyons foregrounds a women's history of the struggle, which the glorifications and (mis)representations of nationalist discourse have largely obscured and silenced from popular discourse on the war. Also recently, Joyce Chadya, in her doctoral thesis "The Unrecognized and the Invisible: Gender and Internal Displacement during Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle, Harare, 1965–1980," again draws attention to the stories of rural displaced women during the war of liberation who, for a long time, had remained in the shadows of Zimbabwe's liberation war historiography.[21] Timothy Scarnecchia's recent study of urban African workers' activism during the nationalist period in Rhodesia also adds another critical group of historical subjects germane to Zimbabwe's nationalist history.[22]

This book builds upon these new post-nationalist histories, especially the thrust towards the inclusion of multiple historical subjects to the history of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. By writing liberation war prisoners and detainees of the Rhodesian regime into the history of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle history, this study work contributes to the task of uncovering a multiplicity of historical subjects and also draws attention to another terrain of struggle apart from guerrilla war zones, that is, the prisons. This work also challenges an insidious tendency by post-independence political elites of monopolizing liberation war history for its own ends, both in its political rhetoric and in practice. As recent events in Zimbabwe have shown, including the campaign rhetoric that President Robert Mugabe championed prior to his July 2013 re-election, the post-independence political leadership has thrived on manipulating liberation war history (and

other colonial histories), positioning itself as the sole "liberators" of Zimbabwe, and excluding other historical actors perceived as threats to its continued grip on political power for the past 33 years.

At a broader level, this book also builds upon recent attempts to write about imprisonment and confinement in Africa. The first comprehensive work towards this project is an edited volume comprising of mostly French-speaking West, East, and Central African case studies. In Florence Bernault's edited volume, *A History of Prison and Confinement in Africa*,[23] authors seek to historicize the development of the penitentiary in colonial Africa, and many begin the task of historicizing African experiences of confinement in different colonial contexts. As one of the authors notes, although prisons and punishment were central to the workings of the colonial state in Africa, relatively few historians have looked at the principles and practices of this often unpleasant aspect of colonial governance.[24] Scholarly interest has focused much more on questions relating to the framing and working of colonial legal codes and processes and it has been left largely to legal experts to comment on African colonial penal policies.

Of relevance to this study is Florence Bernault's framing of the histories of colonial incarceration. She suggests that penal incarceration in colonial Africa appears to have triumphed as an instrument of state power. Bernault's conclusion seems to draw heavily on Michel Foucault's theorizing of the genesis of the prison, particularly how the prison symbolized state power, and by extension, state hegemony. In *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, Foucault dwelt on the state's deployment of the prison as a "technology of control." Bernault adopts this framework and argues that in colonial Africa, colonial authorities introduced the prison as a technique of domination and subjugation. In this book, although I recognize the hegemonic effects of the prison, this study questions whether this formulation applies to Rhodesia's practice of political imprisonment during the liberation struggle. Specifically, by describing the Rhodesian prison as a terrain of struggle, it is suggested here that in their challenging, subversion, and negotiation of political imprisonment, political prisoners undermined the prison as a technology of control, and hence challenged state hegemony. Instead of passively accepting Rhodesian penal punishment and brutal reprisals, this study shows that political detainees of the Rhodesian regime viewed that punishment through the eyes of "suffering for national freedom." Thus, this book demonstrates that, instead of penal punishment achieving its intended goal of subduing and subjugating these rebel colonial subjects, it actually strengthened

political prisoners' resolve to challenge the colonial order. This revelation is important for colonial histories in general because, as other scholars have recently argued, the extent of the hegemony and power of colonial authorities in Africa has often been overrated and exaggerated. Fran Lisa Buntman's masterful appraisal of the political lives of South Africa's Robben Island political prisoners make this point even more emphatic.[25]

Sources and Methods

When I first conceived this project, I knew immediately that oral testimonies of ex-prisoners and detainees of the Rhodesian colonial regime would be indispensable to this study. That realization made me apprehensive about the possibility of writing such a history, particularly considering the current hostile political environment in Zimbabwe since the year 2000, which makes it politically risky and perilous for academics to research on issues concerning the politics of the liberation struggle and its outcomes. The fact that the ruling ZANU-PF[26] regime had politically marginalized and silenced liberation struggle era ex-prisoners through denying them due recognition for their contributions towards the struggle for liberation, and the regime's awareness of the festering anger of these former prisoners towards the ZANU-PF government, meant that going around Zimbabwe canvassing for ex-prisoners' oral histories was going to be a perilous undertaking. I was very nervous of going around the country looking for potential informants because of the real prospects of being confronted by overzealous ZANU-PF militiamen, many of whom are ex-guerrillas of the liberation struggle era, over my interest in ex-prisoners' testimonies. In Zimbabwe today, the guerrilla story of the liberation struggle is the only *authorized* account of the anti-colonial struggle for freedom, and anyone who seeks to undermine that account, or provide an alternative story, abrasively irritates the ZANU-PF establishment.

When I first arrived in Zimbabwe for my fieldwork in 2006, 26 years after the end of the liberation war, I quickly learnt that ex-prisoners of the liberation struggle period, who had long lobbied the Zimbabwe government to be recognized for their contributions towards the struggle for freedom, had been granted some form of financial compensation by the government. Their grouping, formally known as the Zimbabwe Ex-Political Prisoners, Detainees, and Restrictees Association (ZEPPDRA), had also been granted office space at the ZANU-PF Headquarters buildings. I quickly arranged

to make my way to these offices, hoping to meet easily with potential informants as opposed to going all over the country looking for informants. My strategy was to endear myself towards the leadership of ZEPPDRA and thus ask for their help in identifying potential informants.

Before I made my first trip to ZEPPDRA's offices, however, I learned that just prior to the moment that I was doing this research, there had been a leadership change within ZEPPDRA that had seen other militant and anti-ZANU-PF leaders of the ex-prisoners grouping getting replaced by a pro-ZANU-PF loyalist group of leaders. The former leaders of ZEPPDRA had been dismissed because they were allegedly confrontational with the government in demanding the same recognition as the government had given to ex-guerrillas for contributions and sacrifices towards the liberation struggle. Apparently, in recognition for their roles during the struggle, the government had given liberation war ex-guerrillas hefty payouts of Z$50,000 in 1997,[27] and guaranteed lifetime pensions. ZEPPDRA's previous leadership had demanded the same recognition but was snubbed and dismissed by the ZANU government. Media reports indicated that state security agents had trailed some members of this previous leadership, prompting a lot of them to skip the country and seek asylum in foreign countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States.[28]

When I arrived at their offices in August 2006, ZEPPDRA was now under new leadership, and ensconced at the ZANU-PF Headquarters in Harare. I approached the organization's liaison officer, Mr. Muchemwa, to explain my project and request for help in finding potential informants. As I was cordially talking to Mr. Muchemwa, who accepted my request and enthusiastically began telling me about his own liberation struggle political activism, his death sentence and subsequent life sentence incarceration at Rhodesia's Chikurubi Maximum Prison, a ZANU-PF official walked into Muchemwa's office. He immediately and impetuously questioned, pointing at me, that, "Since when do we have ex-detainees of his age? What is your business here?" I humbly described my research agenda and credentials as a Zimbabwean historian from a US university, and told him that I was attempting to locate ex-detainees for interviews about their experiences as political prisoners in Rhodesian prisons. Almost immediately, he burst into a frenzied attack on my person, accusing me of wanting to fish out information about the ex-political prisoners to pass onto the exiled former leaders of the association whom he accused of peddling falsehoods about ZANU-PF. I timidly

tried to impress upon this ZANU official that my sole agenda was to research and document the experiences of detainees and prisoners of the Rhodesian colonial regime for academic purposes, and that I had nothing to do with the politics of ZEPPDRA and ZANU-PF. This explanation only sparked more outrage: the official dismissed my credentials and said the mere fact that I was coming from the US to do this research was all he needed to hear in order to consider my research to be a ploy to infiltrate the association for the benefit of the "enemies" of ZANU-PF. He strongly cautioned Muchemwa, who was quiet the whole time, not to entertain any of my questions. In his uninterrupted attack on my person, he said that there was no way of determining my political affiliation, and that if I wanted to get any information about Rhodesia's ex-political detainees and prisoners, I must speak with high-ranking ZANU-PF leaders, most of whom he said were ex-Rhodesian political detainees and prisoners as well. I attempted to make this official understand that I was more interested in the stories of ordinary prisoners and detainees of the Rhodesian regime than in the political elite, but he emphatically told me, "No! You have heard what I said. Muchemwa, you have done good because you hadn't told him anything." With this statement, he exited Muchemwa's office. Visibly shaken, Muchemwa told me to do as the official had said because this official was his superior. In essence, Muchemwa told me that he could only talk to me once I had secured the approval of a high-ranking ZANU-PF official.

I knew at once that the memories that I sought to include in this study would be politically motivated, and that the testimonies would be deeply emotive. However, despite being prevented from talking to ex-political prisoners on my first day of visiting ZEPPDRA's offices, I was able to successfully endear myself to other friendly leaders of the ex-political prisoners association. They became my most invaluable resource as they provided me with addresses and locations of other ex-political prisoners, whom I visited and interviewed in the privacy of their homes both between 2006 and 2007, and on subsequent research trips between 2010 and 2013. In these private spaces, ex-political prisoners of diverse social backgrounds taught me about their political activism, their experiences in Rhodesia's jails and detention centers, and their lives beyond incarceration. These informants, most of them elderly and frail, spoke with a sense of urgency, and I immediately detected the political purposes of their memories. Indeed, there was no denying the veracity of their prison and detention experiences, which were repeatedly confirmed and corroborated by more interviewees. But just as most of my informants articulated

their penal experiences in detail, it was clear that most eagerly shared their stories with me as part of their effort to both challenge the post-colonial political elite's monopolization of liberation struggle history, and to insert their own experiences into the nation's history.

My use of oral testimonies for this thesis builds upon social historians' productive usage of this kind of historical evidence, which, for the purposes of this book, provides a view of the lived experiences of political detainees often absent from official written sources. In the testimonies I collected, for instance, ex-prisoners' oral testimonies challenge the common tropes of the Zimbabwean liberation war such as the ones that confine the liberation struggle to guerrilla war zones and rural areas. Indeed, listening to ex-detainees' experiences, for example, reveals the violence of the colonial state and the various methods of torture applied to inmates. However, these testimonies also reveal the ways in which prisoners were not simply victims of state-sponsored terror: prisoners tell stories of how they smuggled documents and letters in-and-out of prison, planned and executed prison breaks, fought back violent prison warders, befriended black prison guards in order to mitigate harsh prison conditions, and educated themselves through prison classes organized by other political prisoners, among other things. In other words, these oral histories reveal in many ways how Rhodesian prisons were not just mere spaces of confinement: they became spaces of struggle and contestation.

But as I indicated earlier, these memories have to be treated carefully. Because these are memories that were recalled almost 30 or 40 years after the events, most informants' testimonies were obviously influenced by their post-colonial frustrations and disillusionment with ZANU-PF's deliberate silencing of their memories of the liberation struggle. In most of my conversations with ex-political prisoners of the Rhodesian regime, it was clear that the depth of their memories and emphasis on their horrid experiences in Rhodesian jails was meant to construct heroic narratives of *suffering*, sacrifice, and fortitudinous struggle for freedom's cause. As most of the informants were old and painfully aware that their memories will fade upon their deaths, their sense of urgency in telling this history was palpable. One informant told me how grateful he was for my interest in recording Rhodesian ex-political prisoners' memories: "I am so happy that you as young people are now showing interest in the troubles that we went through," he said. "No one else cares about how much we *suffered* for this country. You must help to write the true history of the struggle" (author's emphasis), he added.[29] Another informant, Enos Nkala, angrily charged at the current political elite for silencing their

histories and distorting the liberation struggle narrative to make it seem as though only those with ex-guerrilla credentials singularly *suffered* for freedom from colonial rule. Nkala, whom I interviewed in his Bulawayo home, declared that,

> I am a son of heroes and a self-made hero and have just completed 74 years of my life with a greater part of it spent in Ian Smith's[30] prisons and detention camps for the liberation of my country. President [Robert] Mugabe talks, imagines and believes that he and he alone brought about the freedom of Zimbabwe. He believes that some of us were sleeping at home with our wives while he was fighting; this nonsense must come to an end.[31]

This kind of oral evidence presents unique sets of challenges for the historian, particularly when one seeks to disabuse such memories of their political and posterity purposes. Valid questions about the objectivity of this kind of evidence can be raised, as well as doubts about the accuracy of clearly politically motivated memories. I suggest, however, that all memories of the past are subject to the present circumstances of informants. The challenge, I argue, is to be aware of the circumstances under which certain memories are invoked, particularly the politics of such memories. Memories, like history itself, are a social process and informants are historical actors in constant interface with their structural positions, personal contexts, and circumstances. As Michele Rolph-Trouillot reminds us of people's relationship with the past and present, "the past does not exist independently from the present. Indeed, the past is only past because there is a present."[32] In the Zimbabwean case, it is clear that various historical subjects tell different stories about their experiences of the liberation struggle: ex-guerrillas, who have been the principal beneficiaries of the post-colonial outcome and whose histories dominate nationalist narrative, tell the stories of those who won in history. On the other hand, victims of guerrilla and Rhodesian state violence (and incarceration) remember the liberation struggle differently, as the losers of the post-colonial outcome.[33]

Related to the evidentiary issues raised earlier, another challenge of retrieving and using these memories is the inherent silences that are typical of any set of historical memories. As other oral historians have shown, silences are always part of every form of memory, and that any set of historical memories are particular bundles of silences. I became immediately aware of the silences in my informants' memories when I asked certain personal questions such as ones that demanded

disclosure of the specific political crimes that people committed, or questions about prison sexuality. My own positionality as a young Zimbabwean male contributed to these silences. For example, in a situation where most of my informants were elders, and I was therefore cultural assigned the position of a "son," as per Shona culture, there were limits to the kinds of memories that I had access to. It was very impolite for me to ask questions such as those concerning prison sexuality, and even when I dared to ask these questions, I was constantly reminded of my cultural positionality as a "young son." Once, an elderly female informant was talking about how she was tortured by the Rhodesian police, and upon my probing for further details about her torture, she quickly reminded me that, "I cannot tell you some of the things that were done to my body or show you some of the areas that were burnt (during torture) *because you are my son*." (own emphasis)[34]

Other silences were the outcome of trauma and repressed memories. This was certainly clear during those interviews that were accompanied by emotional stress, such as in circumstances where interviewees broke down in tears. For example, once during an interview with a woman who was seriously tortured and traumatized by Rhodesian jailers, I asked her to describe her first day in prison, and she said,

> *MaiKadengu:* When we arrived at Chikurubi [Maximum Prison] . . . (she begins to cry and sobs uncontrollably).
> [MBM] So how did you feel the very first day that you got to Chikurubi?
> *MK:* (Continues to sob). *It is difficult to relive those moments. You see my son, for me to tell you exactly how I felt, you will be forcing me to relive those moments and that is a very difficult thing to ask of me* (own emphasis). We suffered, my son . . . I tell you my son, it is an evil thing to do anything bad to surviving ex-detainees.[35]

It was very clear in this case that some memories from this informant were going to be suppressed. Many informants who were traumatized by the various forms of violence and torture at the hands of Rhodesian security forces employed several tactics to avoid talking about these experiences. Clinical psychologists refer to these consciously suppressed memories of trauma as "repressed memories."[36] Psychology studies have shown that it is certainly common to *consciously* repress unpleasant experiences, and that this may well be a defense mechanism against constantly thinking about traumatic events. During my interviews, suppression of traumatic memories thus played a part in creating silences in the oral evidence. Some informants clearly did

not want to "relive" their memories through telling stories about their traumatic experiences. Mai Kadengu, for example, clearly did not want to "relive those moments (of prison trauma)," as she told me that asking her to talk about her prison experiences was "forcing me to *relive* those moments and that is a very difficult thing to ask of me." However, during other conversations with victims of Rhodesian police torture it was not easy for informants to suppress memories of violence because the visible physical scars of bodily harm that they carried could not be hidden. Some of my informants were men and women with spine-chilling injury scars on their bodies. Talking about these physical marks of violence was one way of retrieving memories of violence and the penal experience, as some explained to me why their mouths were toothless, or why they had one eye or ear, or why their faces were badly disfigured.

Although oral histories are the chief evidentiary source for this book, I also incorporated little-used sources into this study. During my archival research, I unearthed Rhodesian political prisoners' letters, most of which were smuggled in-and-out of prison. These letters were invaluable because they were the closest I could get to a source that was actually created at the moment of the making of this history. In other studies of prisons, penal scholars have mostly made use of a genre of political prison literature that includes prison diaries, prison autobiographies, and prison novels. Such literature was usually produced by elite and educated political activists whose writings were popular because of their political overtones. In Africa, the writings of such prison authors as Nelson Mandela (*Long Walk to Freedom*), Ruth First, Govan Mbeki (*Learning from Robben Island: The Prison Writings of Govan Mbeki*), J. M. Kariuki (*Mau Mau in Detention*), and *Ken Saro Wiwa* (*A Month and a Day: A Detention Diary*) are quintessential examples.

However, despite this literature's invaluable insights into the prison experience, it must be recognized that prison-authors typically make up only a small proportion of the overall prison population and hence their writings can never capture the fuller picture of political imprisonment. In the Zimbabwean case, there are only a handful of memoirs that address the prison experience written by political activists who spent time in Rhodesian jails.[37] Zimbabwean educated and elite political activists who passed through Rhodesian jails largely preferred to write about their roles in the guerrilla movements rather than their penal experiences. But in various public and private archives in Zimbabwe, I discovered piles of archived and scattered personal letters that ordinary and mostly uneducated political

prisoners wrote, most of which were addressed to organizations that gave legal or financial aid to political prisoners and their families such as the International Defense Aid Fund, Amnesty International, and Christian Care. These letters, written with personal anguish, fears, and with a litany of emotions, capture vividly some of the horrid and gruesome experiences in the state corridors of silence, as well as the detainees' broader critiques of colonialism. Because these letters were not written for popular consumption, unlike most prison literatures, they offer a unique entry point into the personal and immediate experiences of political imprisonment.

However, like the ex-prisoners' oral testimonies that I use, these letters are incomplete, subjective, and personal, and therefore careful interpretation of these sources is important. Because life in prison is so different from life outside, writings generated from the prison experience must be read from a different perspective. In using these letters to understand the prison experience, I am attentive to the silences and distortions in these sources. These deficiencies, however, far from rendering these sources useless, actually reveal the crucial perceptions, subjectivities, and the feelings and emotions of these historical subjects—something that is difficult to glean from other written, archived documents. Furthermore, more important than the words that prisoners wrote in these letters is the *agency* that political prisoners acquired through the act of writing in prison. I suggest that writing in prison (and smuggling out the letters) was a way for political prisoners to gain some form of power and to redefine the meaning of being confined in a hostile space. There is no doubt that writing in Rhodesian jails was an act of dissent, for many prison authorities forbade it, except for the allowed once-or-twice a month letters (which were subject to rigorous censorship).

But African political prisoners in Rhodesian jails wrote letters anyway, most of which were replete with anti-colonial critiques and others that exposed the brutalities of Rhodesian prison life. Many of these letters were smuggled out through friendly African guards and wardens, and found their way to human rights groups and the media both within and outside Rhodesia. These letters brought a powerful sense of agency to the prisoners, for through writing prisoners were neither completely powerless nor irrelevant. The struggle to retain agency in prison is an important phenomenon that is all too common in studies of political imprisonment, and prison writing is an important component of prisoner's agency. In his study of Indian political prisoners, David Arnold notes that, "Prison [writings] are paradoxically replete with a powerful sense of individual agency," and

that agency is essential to surviving the "prison ordeal" for political prisoners.[38]

For specific political developments in Rhodesia, court cases, and government penal policies, I make use of Rhodesian parliamentary debates, court records, and newspaper accounts. Despite the regime's efforts at keeping issues pertaining to political imprisonment under the lid, Rhodesian state officials often debated the efficacy of political imprisonment in their parliamentary meetings, and occasionally responded to journalistic inquiries in official regime newspapers. Court records also generated some documentation that recorded useful insights into Rhodesia's usage of legislative authoritarianism and the ways in which the regime justified the incarceration of its political opponents. For all their insights, however, these sources muzzle the voices of the political prisoners themselves and instead reveal the racial biases and political agendas of their authors. Nevertheless, these sources complement the other main evidentiary sources for this book.

Lastly, I made use of photographs, both for illustrative and explanatory purposes. Almost every chapter in this book has some photographs that depict Africans and white Rhodesians in different contexts that range from moments of African civic disobedience and protest in the 1960s and confrontations between protesting Africans and the Rhodesian police, to arrested African political activists and Africans in places of confinement. I collected most of the photographs for this book from the private archives of organizations that were in solidarity with African political activists and political prisoners during the colonial period.[39] Although these photographs are highly illustrative of some of the issues pertinent to this book, there are obvious challenges in using photographs as a source material or primary source. Sometimes the names of the photographers or dates when the pictures were taken are not recorded, and the descriptive captions on the photographs often reflect the political biases of the owners of the pictures.

In this book, I make use of these photographs through corroborating the events depicted in the pictures with other source material. Some of the theoretical issues germane to this thesis also inform that interpretation. For example, in the images that depict Africans in violent confrontations with the Rhodesian police, I see more than the victimization of Africans choking in police tear gas or running away from vicious police dogs. Instead, I see the determination of Africans in demanding political and social rights even in the face of police brutality. In pictures that depict Africans in detention, some

of the photographs are captioned in ways that portray African political activists as mere victims of Rhodesian policies of confinement, and yet when I showed some of these pictures to former political detainees their interpretations were different and often revealed more about how they creatively adapted to detention conditions. Indeed, there are more methodological considerations that Africanists must grapple with in using historical images as primary sources, and my use of photographs in this book modestly suggests some of the fruitful ways of exploiting historical images for illustrative and explanatory purposes.[40]

Book Overview

I have organized this book into six distinct but interconnected chapters. Chapter 2 provides the background to political confinement in Rhodesia. Among other things, the chapter introduces this book's main historical subjects, that is, the political activists from various social backgrounds whose political activism landed most of them in Rhodesian prisons and detention centers. I seek to understand these people's *individual* and personal understandings of African nationalism, particularly how ordinary men and women, old and young, in both rural and urban Rhodesia, formulated critiques of colonialism that propelled them to act in concert with those elite nationalists who formed and led African political organizations. The chapter also accounts for the growth of African militant opposition to Rhodesian colonial rule, beginning with the increasing urban African political and militant activism in the 1960s, and then the shift to rural political activism after the outbreak of the guerrilla war in the 1970s. The chapter concludes by demonstrating the Rhodesian state's increasingly repressive approach to African demands for independence and self-rule, particularly the criminalization of African urban political activities and rural peasant support for the guerrilla war. Imprisonment, specifically, emerged as a powerful tool of governance and as one way of responding to African demands for political rights.

Chapter 3 documents arrested Africans' passages through state-sponsored extra-legal arrests, torture, and violence between 1959 and 1979. Having variously defined African political activists as "terrorists," "thugs," and "saboteurs," the chapter documents the ways in which the Rhodesian regime deployed its authoritarian pieces of legislation, to round up African political activists and suspected supporters of the struggle for freedom. It argues that by increasingly relying on laws of political confinement in order to suppress African political

dissent, Rhodesian authorities hoped to both remove political activists from their communities and to suppress African political opposition through cultivating a political climate of fear among Africans. Most of the so-called security laws that Rhodesian authorities introduced created a judicially renegade environment in which Rhodesian security forces became a law unto themselves. In a volatile political environment where security laws were vague and crafted to criminalize *every* aspect of African political activity, Rhodesia's security legislation allowed for wide departures from accepted legal conventions. In the evidence marshaled for the chapter, for example, informants' oral and written evidence demonstrates how Rhodesian security agents gained notoriety for carrying out brutal interrogations in situations where victims were arbitrarily arrested and subjected to all forms of torture. The chapter demonstrates how, in an environment where an arsenal of state security laws enabled Rhodesian security forces "to take any action considered necessary to suppress 'terrorism,'" Africans suspected of and arrested for being involved in the struggle for liberation found themselves not only at the receiving end of gross violations of human rights during arrests, but also in Rhodesian jails and detention centers.

Chapter 4 follows up on the lives of arrested African political activists in one form of confinement that was available to the Rhodesian state: *detention*. The Rhodesian regime designed this form of confinement specifically for the holding of political activists who had not been charged of any crime in the Rhodesian courts, but whom the authorities wished to isolate from their communities. Detention was particularly meant to isolate known African political activists to remote and inaccessible parts of the country and thereby render political activists and supporters of the struggle for liberation politically, intellectually, and socially dead. By cutting prisoners off from the outside political world—by limiting visitations and withholding radios, newspapers, and other communication—Rhodesian authorities hoped that detention would short-circuit the circulation of anticolonial politics and ideas. However, the chapter argues that far from being centers of isolation, detention spaces failed to completely isolate and cut off activists from the political world of Rhodesia. I argue that despite Rhodesian authorities' concerted attempts to physically isolate African political activists to remote detention spaces such as Gonakudzingwa, Sikombela, and Wha Wha, detention centers were spaces in which detainees actively negotiated their incarceration and challenged rules of detention. I demonstrate for example how detainees were able to reorganize their detention spaces and creatively

negotiate significant say over the routines of their daily lives. For example, instead of conforming to the dreary and disempowering monotony of detention life, African detainees took advantage of their captivity to empower themselves through academic and political education, political debate, and to developing powerful critiques of colonial rule through writings that were smuggled out of prison. Thus, although being detained was a major infringement on the personal and political freedoms of African political activists, African detainees were more than defenseless and weak victims of Rhodesian repression. Oral histories of detention suggest that political detainees were protagonists who rejected the subordinate status to which Rhodesian authorities relegated them, and were capable of playing a role in the struggle for liberation.

The second form of confinement that this book discusses is *imprisonment*, a form of confinement that Rhodesian authorities reserved for those political activists who had been convicted of political crimes in Rhodesian courts of law. Chapter 5 tells the stories of African political activists who were held behind the fortified enclosures of jails such as Khami Maximum Prison, Chikurubi Maximum Prison, Salisbury Prison, and Gwelo Prison. Based on ex-political prisoners' testimonies and their writings, the chapter shows how African political prisoners confronted various forms of deprivation, regimentation, violence, and isolation in the state corridors of silence. In Rhodesian jails, African political prisoners had to contend with inhuman forms of punishment and discipline such as extended periods of solitary confinement, back-breaking hard labor, starvation, and others. During the years that African political prisoners populated Rhodesian prisons, the Rhodesian jail became a dark rictus of death in which badly fed and badly injured prisoners succumbed to horrid conditions of confinement. Furthermore, in these highly racialized spaces of confinement, African political prisoners and prison warders intimately shared the prison spaces every day in ways that transformed the Rhodesian jails into spaces of explosive violence, repression, and constant confrontation. The story of political imprisonment is not just about the victimization of African political activists, however. It is also about negotiation, resistance, confrontation, and the daily struggles of surviving, coping, and adapting to the conditions of Rhodesian imprisonment. The struggle to survive, cope and adapt meant, among other things, prisoners refusing to follow orders, making demands on jailers, launching protests such as hunger strikes, smuggling documents and letters in and out of prison, planning and executing prison breaks, fighting back violent prison warders, befriending black prison

guards in order to mitigate harsh prison conditions, developing and elaborating social and gender relationships, and educating themselves through prison classes organized by other political prisoners, among other things. I also demonstrate how Rhodesian prisons were intellectual spaces in which political prisoners developed and produced important critiques of the colonial regime, thereby undermining and delegitimizing colonial hegemony.

Chapter 6 reflects upon the world beyond the confinement spaces, and argues, among other things, that the effects of political detention and imprisonment were felt not only behind but beyond bars as well. The chapter also discusses the legacy of political confinement both in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe. First, I utilize the oral testimonies and prison letters of the detainees and prisoners to demonstrate the social effects of incarceration on prisoners' lives, their livelihoods, and their families. As the evidence suggests, women, children, and other vulnerable dependents of incarcerated prisoners and detainees bore the brunt of Rhodesian political imprisonment, as many were reduced to desperate levels of abject poverty. Furthermore, because the colonial regime never established any means of prisoner rehabilitation, many of the detainees or prisoners who were released intermittently before 1979 faced near-destitution in their lives out of prisons and detention centers. Lastly, in the period after Rhodesian colonial rule, I suggest that ex-political detainees and prisoners became the embodiment of post-colonial disillusionment as their stories, histories, and contributions to the struggle for freedom in Zimbabwe were silenced and marginalized by a political elite fixated upon monopolizing liberation struggle history for its own political ends.

CHAPTER 2

The Growth of African Opposition and Intensified State Political Repression in Rhodesia, 1960–1970s

This chapter documents the growth of African nationalist opposition to Rhodesian colonial rule and the intensification of state repression in the 1960s and 1970s. First, the chapter suggests that unlike the dominant nationalist narrative that stresses the critical mobilizing role of African nationalist leaders, in which ordinary people blindly followed the leadership of elite nationalists, I argue for a more nuanced understanding of the complex and often contested encounter and dialogue between ordinary rural and urban Africans on the one hand, and radical African political activists on the other. I stress that based on their personal experiences, many ordinary men and women in both rural and urban Rhodesia formulated critiques of colonialism that propelled them to act in concert with those elite nationalists who formed and led political organizations. In this process of political cross-fertilization and dialogue, neither were urban workers or rural peasants simply led from above or outside. Second, in the face of increased African political agitation and urban civic disobedience, the government intensified its long-term policy of arresting and silencing dissenting voices. This was not an entirely new policy, but the product of two mutually reinforcing conditions that necessitated the massive wave of political detentions in the 1960s. The first was the shift by African nationalists from reform-oriented political lobbying to armed struggle. The second was the ascension to power of the Ian Smith government and its declaration of independence from the British metropolis in 1965, which provided autonomy for this white supremacist regime to pursue repressive police-state tactics without British intervention. Thus, the shifting politics on both

sides of the political divide in Rhodesia explain the unprecedented intensification of state repression through political confinement.

I have organized this chapter into three broad but interrelated sections. The first documents the growth of African nationalist formations in the 1960s, with particular emphasis on the political activism of ordinary men and women whose involvement in the nationalist politics of the 1960s, and support of the guerrilla war in the 1970s, landed many in Rhodesian prisons and detention centers. This section suggests that by deciding to join mass-based African political formations, ordinary men and women became part of the emerging and growing communities of political activists who gave Zimbabwean nationalism its form and substance. The second section focuses on urban political and militant activism in the 1960s, which heralded the era of uncompromising opposition to Rhodesian settler rule before the outbreak of the 1970s African-led guerrilla war. The last section discusses the shift in African politics to guerrilla war and rural peasant support for the liberation war. That support led Rhodesian authorities to criminalize whole peasant communities on charges of aiding "terrorism."

The Emergence and Growth of African Nationalist Movements in the 1960s

The emergence and growth of African politics shattered long-held illusions of colonial "law and order" and racial harmony in Rhodesia, illusions that were also typical for other British settler colonies in Africa. The 1960s was an especially politically dynamic period in Rhodesia because, between 1953 and 1963, the colony was part of a Federal amalgam with two other British colonies, namely Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. This amalgamation created conditions for dialogue among emerging African nationalists from the three colonies, whose demands for political reform increasingly coalesced around the notion of African majority rule. Regional political strife in the 1960s was only avoided because the other two colonies of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland progressively worked toward African majority rule. Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland gained political independent status in 1964 after the break-up of the Federation in 1963. Northern Rhodesia became modern-day Zambia, and Nyasaland became Malawi, whilst Southern Rhodesia's reactionary white settler politicians rejected any notion of African majority rule. This Southern Rhodesian political intransigence was in violation of previous Rhodesian governments' commitment to progress toward

majority rule as was enshrined in a 1961 constitution that envisioned a gradual transition toward majority rule.[1]

It is partly in this context that African political movements in Rhodesia became hard-nosed in their struggle for majority rule and started seriously challenging defenders of white minority rule. One of the first African political organizations in Rhodesia was the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (SR-ANC), which was formed in September 1957 by young political activists belonging to a group called the City Youth League.[2] Although the Rhodesian government of the day tolerated it at first, they prohibited it less than twenty months later. During the brief period that its existence was condoned by the Sir Edgar Whitehead-led Rhodesian government, the SR-ANC attracted a membership of about 17,000.[3] This figure is, however, not a clear guide to the support it enjoyed. An African-led party, rejecting European tutelage, and voicing African aspirations, was at that time a novel concept for most Africans and only the most politically committed and bravest people joined. Others, particularly in the countryside, supported the SR-ANC silently. However, its strength was felt most markedly in the rural areas of Rhodesia where there was increasing African discontent arising out of the implementation of the infamous Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951. This was a land management law that empowered Rhodesia's rural native commissioners to enforce de-stocking in African-held land.[4] However, because livestock, particularly cattle, were an important resource in rural communities, the forced culling of their herds of livestock enraged many peasants, who then embraced the SR-ANC's opposition politics. Indeed, the leader of the Southern Rhodesia-African National Congress, George Nyandoro, observing the way rural peasants embraced the SR-ANC because of the effects of this infamous act, described that law as "the best recruiter Congress ever had."[5] The threat to the authority of the rural native commissioners posed by the growth of the SR-ANC was perhaps the strongest motive for its banning.[6] In fact, in February 1959, Rhodesian police seized the SR-ANC's assets and more than five hundred of its officials were detained.

The National Democratic Party (NDP) succeeded the SR-ANC in January 1960. The NDP's growth was even more rapid than its predecessor's. However, the party had a legal existence of less than two years. Its membership, about a year after its formation, was approximately 87,000[7] and growing steadily at the time of the ban, as was indicated by the size of African audiences at political meetings called by the NDP. The extent of the support it attracted during that period was reflected in the events of 1960 and 1961. In 1960, it

became clear that the Whitehead-led government seriously underestimated the popular support of the NDP and completely misjudged the mood of the African people. The arrest in mid-1960 of several NDP leaders led to serious riots in Rhodesia's major urban area of Salisbury—where some 20,000 Africans attempted to march to the center of the city—and subsequently in urban Bulawayo, Rhodesia's second largest urban area. These riots, the worst in Rhodesia's history, occurred some six weeks after a Rhodesian premier, Sir Edgar Whitehead, had described Rhodesia in a broadcast as "the still centre of the cyclone in Africa." A further indication of the mass basis that was established by the NDP was evidenced by the party's mobilization of its supporters in 1961 to reject a flawed Rhodesian proposed constitution meant to solve the majority rule question. Prior to the official constitutional referendum, which the Whitehead government later conducted amongst an almost entirely white electorate, the NDP conducted an unofficial referendum among Africans. About 400,000 Africans voted, and virtually all disapproved the constitution.[8]

As a result of its popularity, the NDP was banned in December 1961, but within weeks the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) filled the void. The development of ZAPU was again marked by massive attendances at its public meetings, and by the rapid gaining of members. In September 1962, the Rhodesian government, now led by the reactionary Rhodesian Front party, unsurprisingly declared ZAPU an unlawful organization. Its successor organization, the People's Caretaker Council, had a brief stint before it was also banned, just as another party, ZANU, which was formed in 1963 by disgruntled and prominent members of ZAPU, was also declared an unlawful organization within the first year of its formation.

However, instead of completely obliterating African political organizations, the Rhodesian regime's continued prohibitions of African political formations only propelled nationalist leaders to seek alternative routes to achieving the goal of black majority rule. Most importantly, in the mid-1960s ZAPU and ZANU began contemplating the armed-struggle alternative, as opposed to the SR-ANC or NDP's reformist or "negotiated settlement" politics. By the 1970s, armed struggle had become the call word for political change, and thousands of ZAPU and ZANU adherents thronged the exile guerrilla bases of these political parties in Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana, and later Mozambique. The goal of the armed struggle now went beyond the mere demand of "majority rule": the rallying cry for many a combatant became "total liberation."[9]

Although the guerrilla war front quickly became the most important site of struggle, political activists inside Rhodesia creatively established others, such as in the urban townships, in rural peasant communities, and in prisons and detention centers. Later, I turn to these people's activism, particularly the personalized nature of their political commitments to African nationalism. I demonstrate some of the ways in which ordinary men and women evaluated Rhodesian settler rule, developed personalized anti-colonial critiques, and finally decided to join nationalist movements.

Oral Histories of Nationalism in Colonial Zimbabwe

African nationalism in Rhodesia cannot be understood solely from the perspectives of the various African oppositional political parties and the narrow paradigms of elite nationalist agendas. Indeed, at the most basic level, African nationalism in Rhodesia, like other African nationalisms elsewhere in the 1960s, was essentially a reaction to white racial domination.[10] In the official narratives of Zimbabwean nationalism,[11] ordinary people who were political activists and supporters of the guerrilla war are parenthesized as the "masses," an undifferentiated group of supporters of the liberation struggle. The official, and sometimes scholarly, cast of characters who epitomize the growth of Zimbabwean nationalism is carefully crafted to highlight the central role played by those who organized and founded political parties, led the guerrilla war, and ultimately inherited state power at the end of colonial rule.[12]

I argue here, however, that a more productive analysis of the growth of Zimbabwean nationalism needs to go beyond the parochial framework of the African elite nationalist agendas and ideologies of a select group of "nationalists." By exploring the political lives and motivations of ordinary African political activists, many of whom ended up in Rhodesian prisons, I shift the angle of vision from elite narratives of the liberation struggle to those whose histories and contributions to the struggle have remained in the shadows of Zimbabwe's history. I suggest that we need to understand the growth and proliferation of nationalism as it was understood, debated, and embraced by ordinary men and women. Instead of making casual references to "the masses," I argue that it was the political activities of the workers and peasants, women and men, old and young, which were at the center of the growth of mass-based nationalism and liberation movements in Zimbabwe. It was their politics and their understanding

of the struggle for liberation that gave the country's nationalism its form and substance. It was their overwhelming support of the various nationalist parties that forced the Rhodesian regime to resort to confinement policies as a style of governance. And it was their political activism that landed many in Rhodesian prisons and detention centers between 1960 and 1979.

For many ordinary political activists who would later find themselves behind Rhodesian bars and detention centers, few understood the intellectualized notions of "African Nationalism" derived from Marxism, Communism, or any other "isms"; most just understood that there was something fundamentally wrong with the conditions of their existence in Rhodesia. I suggest here that African people's reasons for committing to the nationalist cause ought to be historicized as *individual* passages within the meta-narrative of Zimbabwean nationalism. Contrary to older claims of the nationalist school of thought that Africans, such as rural peasants or even urban workers, needed the educated elite's intellectual enunciation of nationalist and anti-colonial ideas in order for them to appreciate the need for a nationalist struggle, I suggest that based on the frustrations of their daily lives, peasants and urban workers developed their own powerful critiques of Rhodesian colonial rule, and were not merely led from above or outside. If we are to move away from notions of a *homogenized* African peasantry or urban workers who drew upon *homogenous* sets of grievances, and blindly supported liberation movements, I suggest that a discussion of the growth of nationalism ought to take into consideration the personalized assessments of the colonized. In other words, we ought to ask questions such as, for differentially situated ordinary men and women in Rhodesia, what did it mean to be a citizen? How did Africans from diverse social backgrounds conceptualize colonial authority? In what ways did people envision change, and by extension, paths to majority rule?

In conversations with ex-political prisoners of the Rhodesian regime, informants prefaced their political activism by giving elaborate personalized memories of the nature of their assessments of Rhodesian colonial rule and how they eventually became involved with African nationalist political formations. These memories, usually rendered inaudible and invisible in the meta-narrative of Zimbabwean nationalism, are important in understanding the various ways through which individuals constructed their own anti-colonial critiques. These oral testimonies, however, have to be understood from the perspective that they are post-colonial memories that are shaped by contemporary national politics, particularly considering the fact that many

ex-political prisoners at present feel marginalized in post-colonial Zimbabwean politics and in public memorializations of the liberation struggle. Because the triumphant post-colonial political elite in power have, over the years, narrowly shaped and constructed an exclusionary Zimbabwean national memory of the liberation struggle through selecting what this elite believes to be the central and seminal personages, events, issues, as well as institutions and organizations that are deemed to be indispensable parts of the liberation struggle narrative, people like ex-prisoners of the Rhodesian regime feel an urgent need to contest that narrow national memory. Thus, when these informants talk about their involvement in the nationalist struggle, their memories betray both a sense of political disaffection and exasperation, and an urgent need to insert their experiences into the nation's history. In the stories later in this book, for example, informants highlight their own political ideas before joining mass-based political formations, their own assessments of Rhodesian colonial rule, and their own political activism within the rubric of African political formations. I suggest that these memories represent an ongoing process of challenging narrow nationalist histories that muffle multiple voices, and that these dissenting perspectives open up different ways of interpreting the growth and maturation of nationalism and political activism in Zimbabwe.

To map the trajectories of African political activists within the metanarrative of African nationalism in Rhodesia, I foreground ordinary people's stories of their politicization with emphasis on the personalized nature of their involvement in African politics. I construct the notion of the "personal" based on the individual historical subjects' assessments of what it meant to be a Rhodesian citizen. Furthermore, I suggest here that the overwhelming majority of people who came to embrace African political activism felt personally and politically alienated from the Rhodesian regime's white settler politics. I argue that political alienation, as a personal feeling, was an important ingredient in the construction of personalized assessments of Rhodesian colonial politics. Based on the oral evidence that I draw from, to be politically alienated was to feel a relatively enduring sense of estrangement from the existing political institutions, values, and leaders. The politically alienated, therefore, felt themselves to be outsiders, trapped in an alien political order, and gradually came to embrace alternative and nationalist political dispensations that promised fundamental changes from the ongoing regime. In these oral histories, it is possible to detect various dimensions of alienation among people who later became political activists. These include such mental states

as powerlessness, normlessness, cynicism, meaninglessness, negativism, estrangement, apathy and anomie. African political alienation in Rhodesia, therefore, worked toward the construction of personalized nationalisms among many political activists, who could no longer be loyal and allegiant colonial subjects.

For Obed Mutezo, a peasant and migrant worker from the Nyanyadzi rural reserve, in Mt. Selinda district, going to prison for his involvement in the nationalist struggle was a destiny that he had already accepted from the moment he decided to join African political organizations that advocated for black majority rule.[13] But his first political experience did not happen as a result of listening to the oratorical political messages of elite nationalists. It occurred a decade before the formation of the SR-ANC, the first African political organization. Uneducated and impoverished in rural Mt. Selinda, in 1946 Mutezo decided to seek work as a non-skilled builder in a European firm based in the nearby Melsetter district. He quickly noticed that European builders doing the same work as he was were getting wages and remuneration several times greater than his own. He discussed the matter with his fellow African builders. They approached the company's white master-builder who told them bluntly that Europeans were paid higher wages because the law laid down that they must be paid no less than 7 Rhodesian Shillings 6 Pence (7s 6d) per hour, and that there was no such law for *native* builders.[14] According to Ndabaningi Sithole, Mutezo's biographer, "Mutezo noticed the emphasis on the derogatory word 'native.'"

In the evening of the day that Mutezo and his colleagues had approached their employer with their grievance, Mutezo and his fellow workers talked about forming a trade union of African builders and taking their complaints to the government, through the local native commissioner (NC).[15] Being uneducated, they asked a local African schoolteacher at a Catholic mission school to help them draft a constitution for their union. The teacher refused, fearing trouble with his missionary employers. But Mutezo and his friends later approached the Native NC for Melsetter with their complaints and were bluntly told, "*Natives* were not allowed to form trade unions and therefore could not bargain for wages." According to Mutezo, the NC further argued that in any case the government had made the law and there was nothing they could do about it. "If you do not obey the law I will have to tell the police," the NC concluded. Mutezo remembered this as his first encounter with the Rhodesia's white authorities.

A deeply spiritual man, and member of the American Methodist Church, Mutezo related his labor predicament with a sermon that

an African reverend had preached on a Sunday, following his visit to the NC with his friends. Mutezo remembered that the sermon dealt with the freedom of the spirit and freedom of movement. He heard the minister say, among other things, "The spirit cannot be free unless the body is free, and the body cannot be free unless the spirit is free." To Mutezo's sensitive ears, this meant that the type of racial discrimination that he was experiencing in the building trade must stop. He thought it chained the spirit and the body of the black man, but was surprised that the priest did not suggest any way out of these spiritual and physical shackles. Mutezo says he thought of the farmlands his ancestors had plowed and their graves that were now the private property of a local European farmer in terms of the 1930 Land Apportionment Act—the basic segregation law in Rhodesia. That was no freedom of movement for Africans, Mutezo quipped.

In 1947, Mutezo met and listened to the itinerant political activist, Benjamin B. Burombo, the most influential African politician and trade unionist at the time.[16] Burombo had come to the Nyanyadzi rural area to organize his British National Voice Association. In a public speech before a small audience, he appeared to provide some answers to Mutezo's questions. Burombo condemned the government policies of destocking livestock in African-held lands, and the removal of Africans from their ancestral homelands to dry and non-arable parts of the country to make room for European settlers who were then pouring into post-Second World War Rhodesia. Mutezo remembered that, "Burombo said the poor African was getting poorer and the rich European was getting richer, and strongly denounced low African wages and the denial of trade union rights. He suggested that Africans unite in order to fight these discriminatory practices." Mutezo agreed with Burombo's speech and took out a membership card at the end of the meeting, but the British National Voice Association lost momentum and ceased to exist in the mid-1950s.

In 1958, almost ten years later, the newly organized Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (SR-ANC) held a public meeting at Nyanyadzi that Mutezo attended. One of the SR-ANC officials present, Peter Mutandwa, gave a speech that resonated with Mutezo's religiousand political ideas. Mutandwa, who, according to Mutezo's biographer, never addressed a political rally without reading from the Christian Bible, read from the Old Testament book of Ezekiel:

> Thus says the Lord God: 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and

> stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great host. Then He said unto me, 'Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold they say "Our bones are dried up, and our people is lost; we are clean cut off." Therefore prophesy and say to them, "Thus says the Lord God: Behold I will open your graves, and raise you from your graves . . . I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land."'

Mutezo recollected how this passage resonated with his own nascent politics: to him the dry bones were the Africans who were scattered all over Rhodesia and who had lost any political coherence since 1896. Mutezo was immediately attracted to the SR-ANC and impressed by the fact that for the first time Africans were moving up and down the country organizing people to fight for their rights, and that many people were responding to the call. For Obed Mutezo, "the dry bones of Zimbabwe were coming together and God was breathing the breath of life into them." Mutezo also remembered another Bible passage that Mutandwa read from the Old Testament book of Micah that emotionally touched the 400-odd people who attended this rally:

> They covet fields, and seize them; and houses, and take them; they oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance. They hate him who reproves in the gate, and they abhor him who speaks the truth. Therefore because you trample upon the poor and take from him exactions of wheat, you have built houses hewn in stone, but you shall not dwell in them.

According to Mutezo, the men and women attending this rally related these words to their own situations. Those with fields that had been deliberately made smaller by the Rhodesian colonial regime in order to force them off their ancestral land to meet European demand for land, those whose day-to-day life had been exposed to countless humiliations of the job color bar, and those being constantly followed by thick shadows of legislated oppression "readily saw the wisdom of coming together and fighting for freedom and independence in the land of their birth." Mutezo also recalls that phrases from the rally such as "our country" became magical and fired the imaginations of the crowd. As for Mutezo, he immediately became an active member of the ANC, and developed into an important local political activist. He even got elected as a committee member of the local ANC branch. When the group was banned in February 1959, he joined its successor, the National Democratic Party (NDP), and again held a committee

member post in the party's local branch. Upon the NDP's proscription, he joined the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), and was the treasurer for the local branch, just as he also took up the post of district treasurer in the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), which succeeded ZAPU. By 1964, Mutezo said his "commitment to African nationalism and the cause of freedom had deepened and ripened."[17]

Obed Mutezo's experiences raise some critical points to note on the growth and proliferation of nationalism in colonial Zimbabwe. Firstly, ordinary people possessed intellectual assessments of their position as Rhodesian colonial subjects, such as Mutezo and his work-mates' attempts to seek redress for the apparent job "color bar" in their workplace. Of course, that was not the only expereince that made him rigorously question his Rhodesian citizenship. As a member of a community of the colonized, he obviously grew up knowing about the origins of colonial rule and that he was a colonial subject. But *personalized* experiences of colonialism provided unique moments for Mutezo to intellectually question white privilege, subordination, and racialism, and to develop a personal critique of colonialism. This personal intellectual work, I argue, was an important ingredient in Africans' decision to commit to the nationalist cause.

Secondly, Africans assessed organized nationalist political organizations through the lens of their own worldviews. As a deeply religious community, heavily influenced by Christian missionaries of the American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions who established themselves in their area since the late nineteenth century, the Nyanyadzi community, to which Mutezo belonged, assessed political party leaders in the Christian framework: leaders of African political formation were Godsent, spreading the message of hope, redemption, and liberation. These two observations framed the political agency and nationalism for people like Mutezo, in a way that fits with David Lan's observation of the enthusiastic participation in the liberation struggle by African communities that deeply believed in the indigenous religions of the *Vadzimu*, or "The Ancestral Spirits."[18]

For other Africans, small but deeply political encounters with Rhodesian policies influenced their political thought and nationalism. Consider Mordikai Hamutyinei's recollections of an incident involving his confrontation with Rhodesian authorities that left an indelible mark on his mind. Hamutyinei, a teacher in the rural schools of Gutu who later spent years in Rhodesian detention for his political activities, explained in his Shona autobiography[19] that, "The things that started to enrage my heart in colonial Rhodesia were very

small." According to Hamutyinei, a close friend of his hosted a wedding party in the late 1950s, and decided to buy clear bottled beer for people to drink and make merry. However, Hamutyinei's friend did this in secrecy, apparently in fear of getting into trouble with the Rhodesian police since African people were not permitted by law to partake of "European beer."[20] As a respected guest at his friend's wedding, Hamutyinei was offered a bottle of beer, and he leisurely drank it, walking around outside his friend's house. What he did not realize was that there were plain-clothed Rhodesian detectives who were monitoring people drinking "European beer." Hamutyinei was perturbed when a man suddenly took him on the side and said, "*Baba* (Mr./Sir), we have noticed how pompous you are. Can you show us any qualification that says you are allowed to drink this beer?" Hamutyinei panicked because he did not know of any form of "license" that was required for one to drink beer. Although he was a high school teacher and had attained a higher level of education, Hamutyinei says, "I never believed that a person could be arrested for drinking beer that you had bought with your own money, just because you were black."

In a heated exchange with the detectives, Hamutyinei asked one of them, "Why are we not allowed to drink this beer?" Impatiently, the detective retorted, "Excuse me, *baba*, but I am doing my job. Go and ask that question to those who enacted the law. It is not my job to go around educating people about why such-and-such law was enacted. Do you not know that this beer is only supposed to be taken by those who are highly educated?" According to Hamutyinei, in the middle of this confrontation, he felt "a worm of anger in my brain starting to move, irritating me," but he could do nothing. Other invited guests at the wedding came to hear the exchange between Hamutyinei and the detectives, with some audibly protesting against the disruptive behavior of the detectives, while others condemned Hamutyinei for taking the beer outside the home of the host of the party, in full view of the public. Finally, the detectives gave Hamutyinei a guilty charge and instructed him to go and pay an admission-of-guilt fine at the nearby police station. "From this day onwards," wrote Hamutyinei, "I started to view the white settler government with a resentful heart. My resentment was not confined to whites alone, but also toward those black police officers and detectives. I thought to myself that even these black police officers and detectives were enemies because they were the ones administering the repressive and racist laws of the Rhodesian government."[21]

In 1959, Hamutyinei joined the National Democratic Party, which he recalled as the "first political party to have an impact in the Gutu

rural area." As the leader of a local African Teachers' Association, Hamutyinei's influence strategically placed him at the center of the NDP's political activities in Gutu. His dabbling in political activism and trade unionism among teachers earned him respect in the area, and at the same time attracted the attention of Rhodesian secret police. When the NDP was banned in 1960, and its leaders bundled into detention, Hamutyinei and others remained outside for a while, communicating with the incarcerated officials and continuing its political work until his own arrest and detention in 1964.

Just like Mordikai Hamutyinei's personalized moment of political commitment to the nationalist cause, Oliver Muvirimi Dizha recalled how a youthful encounter with colonial officials moved him toward questioning the privileges of white Rhodesians. A future ZAPU adherent, political activist, and Rhodesian prisoner, Dizha narrated how his observation of colonial land policies in his rural home of Seke shaped his ideas about white minority rule in Rhodesia. According to Dizha,

> The first time I ever saw a white man was when I was a young man in my rural area in Seke. White land officers were forcing people to construct *madhunduru* (contour ridges). During this process, a young white man talked to me directly and used language that infantilized me and made me appear as if I was a 'boy' to him. I turned to my grandmother and asked her why this young white man was talking to me like that. She just told me that, 'Ah, those are the ways of *varungu* (white people), my grandchild.' This was my very first encounter with a white man and this encounter made my heart sink and be very restless. This white man was either younger or about the same age as me and yet he wanted me to defer to him as if he was my elder. That troubled me very much. Also, the reason why we were made to construct these contour ridges was that some of our land was being appropriated for white settlement. Later, white people took some of our land and we had to move. This pained me so much.[22]

Dizha left his rural home for the city of Salisbury where, as a displaced worker, he also joined ZAPU, one of the dominant African political formations at that time. A friend of his had told him about a ZAPU rally that was to be held in the African township of Mbare, and he agreed to attend. According to Dizha,

> When we went to the rally and listened to these men talking, who included Joseph Msika, what they said touched my heart. Joshua Nkomo was there too. I was impressed by the fact that these men

> talked against white minority rule, and that resonated with my prior thinking about the evils of white rule. That made me join the party, and within three months I was chosen for a secretary position at the branch level of the party.[23]

In fact, Dizha became an important political activist for ZAPU, as he later became one of the leading African saboteurs in Salisbury, orchestrating a series of petrol-bombing acts that were targeted at state infrastructure.

Many other Africans shared Dizha's experiences of racialized humiliation and dispossession, and these experiences nurtured strong feelings of alienation from the body politic. Lucas Jonas, for instance, who also later became a ZAPU adherent, political saboteur, and political prisoner, strongly believed that white privilege in Rhodesia was the cause of his poverty, and in his assessment, experiences of racial indignities made him politically conscious. In an interview, Jonas explained his assessment of his country's race relations and the reasons why he became a political activist in these words:

> We were treated as sub-humans in this country of our birth. Some of us saw it with our own eyes. We were literally worse than dogs—typically, for example, a white person would rather put his dog on his lap in the car whilst his black servant occupied the boot of an open-truck car. Even when it was raining and a black man was sitting in the boot of such a car, the white Rhodesian valued his dog more than a black person. The only reason for the existence of the black person in Rhodesia was that our mothers worked in white people's kitchens, whilst our fathers worked in their gardens and industries, receiving next-to-nothing wages. Even today, the poverty that we have has its origins in this history. When our fathers reached retirement age, all they received as pension were things like bicycles or watches. Witnessing and experiencing these things in colonial Rhodesia pushed some of us to sacrifice our lives and fight for our country's freedom from colonial rule. The white Rhodesian never liked a black person.[24]

In an interview, Henry Masunda, another political activist and future Rhodesian political prisoner, also echoed Jonas's assessment of race-relations in Rhodesia and the reasons behind his own political commitment to the ideals of self-rule. According to Masunda,

> I felt like a second-class citizen in my own country of birth. How could that be when this was my homeland, and that of my ancestors? Rhodesians refused to negotiate and yet these were the very people who massacred our ancestors! When they colonized this country, they

> had destructive weapons, and our ancestors had nothing. I agreed with those who thought it was useless to negotiate with Rhodesians and that the only solution was to violently dislodge Rhodesian colonial rule. I became involved in all sorts of sabotage activities in Rhodesia, particularly using petrol bombs to destroy government buildings.[25]

For other Africans, becoming politically conscious was a process of personally discovering one's place within Rhodesian society. Invariably, experiencing colonial indignities politically alienated many Africans from the regime's white settler politics. For example, as a young man living in Salisbury, Francis Chikukwa knew at an early age that his presence in that city was illegal.[26] From the late 1950s, until his arrest in 1966 on "terror" charges, Chikukwa had perfected the art of dodging Salisbury police officers, who constantly raided the townships looking for illegal tenants. According to the colony's urban influx-control laws, Africans living in the urban areas were there as sojourners – temporary laborers occupying urban housing as long as they proved to have legal employment and thus the legal right to stay in town. Otherwise, upon expiry of a labor contract, termination of employment, or retirement, authorities expected them to return to their rural homes, where they had the legal right to reside.[27] Chikukwa had come to Salisbury from the countryside to look for gainful employment and stayed with his maternal grandmother in Mufakose Township. But living in Salisbury was "hell," according to Chikukwa, because "*mabhunu* (white authorities) required us to have what they called 'Passes', or else we were arrested for 'trespassing.' If you did not have a parent with legal papers to stay in this town, you were arrested, and my friends and I were arrested almost on a daily basis here in Mufakose. If anything, that really hurt me: I used to wonder, how could I be treated like this in my own country of birth?"

In addition to constant running battles with Salisbury's municipality police in Mufakose, navigating the downtown streets of Salisbury looking for employment was a tall order for the young Chikukwa because "*mabhunu* forbade us from walking in the city center's pavements—you were supposed to walk in far-off roads away from their *madams* (white women). If you ever brushed shoulders with a *madam* or if she just screamed, you got twenty days in jail! *Mabhunu* did not allow us to simply walk in Salisbury's First Street."[28]

Chikukwa read voraciously on anything related to Africans' struggles against colonial rule in other African countries. "I was excited with the names and deeds of people like Jomo Kenyatta, the exploits

of the Mau Mau guerrillas, and others," he said. "I realized at that time that it was also possible for us fight *mabhunu* and defeat them. If others were doing it, so could we. I began to be politically restive and joined any African grouping that challenged the Rhodesian regime." In 1959, Chikukwa joined the National Democratic Party (NDP), one of the earliest African political formations. Although his personal circumstances and convictions spurred his enthusiasm for African politics, he admitted that his association with friends who were involved in African politics drew him into the world of nationalist politics. As he explained,

> My involvement with the NDP can partly be explained by this overwhelming feeling of wanting to be in solidarity with what my friends were doing—a kind of "mob-psychology" thing. What I did not realize at the time of joining these political parties, however, was that I was actually involving myself in something that would define my life. Between the years 1959 and 1961, the NDP was banned and un-banned, until our political leaders formed other parties such as the Zimbabwe African Patriotic Union (ZAPU), which my friends and I joined again. When one political party was banned, we simply joined a new one that succeeded the banned one. When ZAPU was banned, we were involved in the formation and proliferation of the People's Caretaker Council (PCC). At the time of my arrest, I was involved in this political grouping.

Thus, like other fellow political activists discussed earlier, Chikukwa's nationalism sprung from his own immediate situation—his own grievances, his own hopes, his own past, his own present. In reminiscences similar to Chikukwa's, Roderick Muhammad, another ZAPU adherent and future urban political activist, recounted how his experiences with colonial urban segregation laws in Salisbury hardened his political thoughts about Rhodesian colonial rule. In his words,

> Living in Salisbury was a nightmare for me because there were certain laws that restricted urban residency to people who were legally employed in Rhodesian towns. In addition, children over the age of 18 were not allowed to stay in town without being legally employed. I was staying with my mother and stepfather and this was considered illegal. I do not know where the Rhodesian authorities thought I was supposed to stay. Thus, in many cases I would move from one relative's house to another trying to dodge the Salisbury's Municipal police. One day I was hiding at an aunt's place and the Salisbury police came looking for me. They beat up my aunt so much so that I felt very pained. I

> went back to my mother's place and she told me that Rhodesian police did not allow me to stay with her. In fact, some Rhodesian police had come looking for me saying that I was supposed to join the Rhodesian army as an army recruit. It bothered me so much that I was considered a squatter at my own mother's place and yet I was expected to join the Rhodesian army. Some Rhodesian soldiers came and forced me to join the Rhodesian army but after a few months, I deserted the army and ran away. I began to live a life of hiding from the police and I found shelter with my friends in ZAPU (an African political party). Along with these friends, we began to be involved in acts of urban sabotage such as destroying shopping centers, stoning government buildings and cars, and other things.[29]

As much as these personalized experiences of Rhodesian colonial rule were important in nurturing individual anti-colonial critiques, joining the African political parties was particularly important because these parties provided an important community for those who were politically committed and it also gave substance and meaning to their personal critiques of Rhodesian settler rule. For Matthew Masiyakurima, for example, although he understood the colonial roots of his peasant poverty and the exploitative nature of his employment in Salisbury as a migrant laborer, it was after attending African political rallies that he came to see African people's potential of replacing white minority rule with black majority rule. Possessing the little education that his peasant mother could afford, Masiyakurima came to Salisbury in 1956 from his rural home in Marange to find work, and lived with his elder brother who was working as a "garden boy" for a white man. Masiyakurima later found a job of his own at a government-owned bus company, and it was during a workers' strike at this company that he heard of an African political rally in one of Salisbury's African townships. As Masiyakurima explained,

> The very week that I found work at the bus company, with less than four days on the job, co-workers embarked on a job-action or strike. Initially I was mad at my co-workers because I had not even received my first remuneration and yet these people were striking! I understood and even supported their reasons, but I needed my first salary. During the strike and as we were sitting outside the premises of this company near Mbare African Township, some people called us to a meeting at Mai Musodzi Hall in Mbare. I was curious to know who was calling for this meeting and what the agenda of the meeting was. As it turned out, this was the very day that the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress had been formed and this was the first inaugural meeting. At that meeting, there were some of the

leading African nationalists of the time such as Benjamin Burombo, James Chikerema, George Nyandoro, and this other man called Paul Mushonga. When these men took to the podium and began talking, I became very interested. At first, I could not believe what they were saying, especially this idea of self-rule. I said to myself, "What are these people saying—they want to rule themselves? How can that happen?" According to what I knew and what I had learned at school, no African could say: "I want to rule myself"! Well, I liked the idea and so I joined the party. In 1959 a friend of mine told me of another political meeting at a place called Cyril Jennings Hall in the African township of Highfield. When we got to that venue, we met a British MP called John Stonehouse, and the meeting was chaired by Daniel Madzimbamuto. Other African nationalists such as Chikerema and Nyandoro were also present. As chair of the gathering, Madzimbamuto informed us that Joshua Nkomo (leader of the party) was in Ghana attending an All People's Conference meeting that had been called for by Kwame Nkrumah. What surprised me though was the fact that this white man, Stonehouse, also spoke at the rally, encouraging us to pursue the idea of self-rule, although he cautioned that we must be prepared to be arrested and even die for that idea.[30] That really caught my interest. When the Rhodesian authorities banned the African National Congress upon Nkomo's return from Ghana in 1959, I was already devoted to the idea of self-rule. In 1960 when the National Democratic Party (NDP) was formed, I was already actively involved in politics even though I did not have an official position in the political organization. A Highfield chairman of the NDP later invited me to become the Organizing Secretary in our township and I took up the position. This position solidified my commitment to the idea of self-rule. When the NDP was banned at the end of 1960, our leaders formed the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) in 1961, and I took up a similar position in this new political party as the one I had in the NDP. That year, I also had the opportunity to meet Robert Mugabe, who had been elected Secretary for Publicity for the party mainly because of his legendary eloquence. However, ZAPU too was banned at the end of 1962 and African politics went underground.[31]

Masiyakurima's account of committing to the nationalist cause also underpins the *personal* nature of African nationalism. But joining political parties solidified already formed ideas of anti-colonialism, and African political formations provided an important community for political activists. Like other urban political activists, Masiyakurima became an urban saboteur, utilizing homemade bombs to destroy state infrastructure as a means of protest. When he was arrested in 1963, Masiyakurima and a group of his colleagues were well-known

urban saboteurs who left a trail of destruction in the Rhodesian cities of Salisbury and Umtali.

Similarly, Rueben Bascoe, a ZAPU adherent who joined groups of urban African political activists in his teenage years, explained how important attending African political rallies was in deepening his own political critique of Rhodesian colonial rule. According to Bascoe,

> The first public political meeting that I attended was the first SR-ANC's rally that was held in Mbare Township at Mai Musodzi Hall in 1958. I was very young at this time and I started following all African political meetings. Another follow-up meeting to the first SR-ANC meeting was held at Stoddart Hall in Mbare Township again, which was addressed by Michael Mawema, George Nyandoro, James Chikerema, and Morton Malianga. After attending many of these political meetings, I started deepening my thoughts about the ancestry of my poverty. At that time, I remember that I had never thought like this before, but these political meetings helped me to open up my eyes and see the causes behind my own poverty and the poverty of my parents. I realized that if we did not do anything, all that Rhodesia was going to bequeath people like me was poverty. I could see no other alternative to break the cycle of poverty that entrapped me. Education was not a viable option in Rhodesia because there were all kinds of bottlenecks for Africans in Rhodesia. Only a few people ever managed to attain useful education that really helped them climb the economic ladder. I therefore decided to follow the politics of these nascent African political parties.[32]

These life histories, therefore, all underscore the idea that relating one's own political thoughts to the rhetoric of African party leaders at rallies and political gatherings was an important part of the process of committing to the nationalist cause. Just as ordinary people were capable of establishing their own individualized and intellectual assessments of colonial rule, attending African political rallies and gatherings created an opportunity for people to find resonance and meaning for their critiques and ideas on Rhodesian minority rule, and also helped them to become part of a community of political activists fighting for the same cause.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, therefore, these people's commitment to dismantling the repressive colonial regime helped to give African nationalism in colonial Zimbabwe its militant outlook. Long before the shift to guerrilla war in the early 1970s, African political activists, particularly in urban Rhodesia, came to the forefront in confronting the Rhodesian regime through several forms of civic disobedience

such as strikes, demonstrations, boycotts, and acts of sabotage. In fact, I argue that Rhodesian authorities' decision to deploy legislative authoritarianism through a plethora of confinement laws was partly in response to the urban violence and African political activism of the 1960s. However, because of the heavy scholarly focus on the guerrilla war, the centrality of the 1960s African political activism and urban violence in the shaping of Zimbabwean nationalism and Rhodesian response has never been highlighted. This is despite the fact that the majority of the Africans who ended up in Rhodesia's prisons, and who served the longest prison terms, were actually arrested in the early 1960s, long before the outbreak of the guerrilla war. Later, I discuss the insurgent politics that urban African political activists played in furthering the nationalist cause, which inevitably attracted heavy repression from Rhodesian authorities.[33]

Rendering Rhodesia Ungovernable: African Political Activists in the 1960s—The Case of Urban Violence in Rhodesia's Towns

In the 1960s, Rhodesian urban areas became increasingly tense and unstable as African opposition to colonial policies became uncompromisingly militant. Through the 1960s, major urban areas became centers of militant politics and civic disobedience. For example, because of the constant proscription of political meetings by the state, restrictive rules of association, and the omnipresent threat of police violence, most gatherings ended in fierce clashes. Activists aggressively protested against the police's provocative presence at rallies and gatherings, their overbearing presence in the townships, and most importantly, the detention of their political leaders.

The first significant act of political militancy in Rhodesia was the July 1960 urban demonstrations, when political activists in the major urban centers called upon African workers to strike following the banning of political gatherings and the arrest of NDP leaders. Despite the strike's short three-day duration, it was one of the most effective and paralyzing actions of civil disobedience the country had ever experienced. Popularly known as "Zhii"[34] among Africans, these demonstrations were replicated in almost every major town. The demonstrations also triggered spontaneous waves of politically motivated violence that was to plague Rhodesia in the 1960s.[35] The Zhii demonstrations began in the urban areas of Bulawayo, which resembled other towns in its geography: African residential townships were clustered away from European suburbs and residential areas. As

in other towns, political parties had taken root in its townships since the late 1950s. By 1960, daily life was heavily punctuated by political rallies and gatherings. In Bulawayo, Stanley Square (also called "Lumumba Square"), located in the township of Makokoba, was the popular venue for political rallies. It was there, on July 24, 1960, that the "Zhii" demonstrations erupted.

On that day, the National Democratic Party (NDP) had called for a political rally at Stanley Square for 8 o'clock in the morning. Politically agitated Africans thronged the roads leading to Stanley Square, expecting to hear their political leaders speak on current African problems.[36] Without any warning or explanation, the Rhodesian police descended on the crowds, claiming that the government had banned the rally. As the police brutally dispersed the crowds, other groups of Africans regrouped and decided to demonstrate their anger at the ban by marching to downtown Bulawayo, its European sector. In the city center, according to the *Rhodesian Herald*, stone-throwing African "rioters" threatened to destroy every building in sight.[37] A battalion of heavily armed military police managed to prevent serious destruction of property through tear-gassing and beating up the crowds. Calm returned to the African townships at night. However, as Francis Nehwati remembers, NDP political activists used that night to mobilize Africans to demonstrate against the heavy-handedness of the Rhodesian regime in dealing with African political meetings. "Planning, consultations and intensive organization were carried on through the night," recalled Nehwati, and the following day "witnessed the worst waves of violence and disturbances" in the African townships.[38]

During the insurrections, demonstrators' grievances coalesced around a cluster of political issues, particularly the Rhodesian regime's violent reaction to African political meetings, the detention of NDP leaders, and the provocative presence of the police in townships. Long-term injustices, such as appalling living conditions, segregation, and the state's general neglect of townships also fueled these violent demonstrations. On the night of the first day of the riots, Nehwati remembers that African activists had instructed workers to strike, and as a result, the entire industrial area in Bulawayo came to a standstill, as factories remained closed. "Back in the townships," recalls Nehwati, "the acts of violence were more manifest and pronounced as Africans screamed and shouted 'Zhii!'":

> [We] destroyed everything that had anything to do with the central or local government. The targets for destruction included

> administrative buildings, beer gardens, newspaper works, bus shelters and shops, and any motor vehicles which were parked at the [town's] administrative offices. . . . Trains were stoned and attempts were made to burn the railway rolling stock at the Mpompoma marshalling yard. Railways had nothing to do with the African administration at large save that they were government-owned and as major employers of African labor [they] fell into the same category of what Africans regarded as 'blood suckers' or exploiters of African workers. By the end of the day, the town's administration had temporarily abdicated and the townships had literally fallen to the African masses. That was Zhii.[39]

Word of these demonstrations in Bulawayo quickly spread to other Rhodesian towns, and in Salisbury in particular, the ripple effects of the demonstrations gripped most African townships. Again, primarily organized by youthful political activists, the demonstrations turned violent in Salisbury. Workers living in the townships were also instructed by political activists to strike from work. Panganai Gilbert Mangwengwende, who was one of the organizers of the demonstrations, remembered,

> As youths, we felt that it was our job to enforce this strike. I remember that on the first day of the strike, some people in African townships decided to go to work in defiance of the call for the strike action. My colleagues and I mobilized ourselves to enforce this strike by beating up all those people who had gone to work and not heeded the strike. We waylaid most of them on their way from work and we confiscated their bicycles and threw away their groceries. We were overzealous, of course, but our mission was to ensure the success of this strike. The next day, the strike turned violent as the police descended on African townships intimidating people and throwing tear-gas canisters in order to disperse groups of people. My colleagues and I devised methods of braving this tear gas by always keeping containers of water that we used to wash our faces to neutralize the effects of the tear gas. As a result, many groups of youth activists never really broke up during police crackdowns—we made sure that we confronted the police and pelted them with stones. . . . During [the] township disturbance, my colleagues and I went to burn the grocery shops in Mbare Township, around the area called 'Majubheki'. We scorched many areas and this led to our arrests. Most of these shops and business premises belonged to white people and Asian businesspeople. We never damaged business premises belonging to Africans. The police swooped many African political activists and they took us to Salisbury Central Prison.[40]

During these urban disturbances, African youths, mostly unemployed and out-of-school, emerged as the most important element of these acts of civil disobedience, as they were the ones who organized and sustained township protests. As Rueben Bascoe explained,

> As the youths of the various political formations in Salisbury, we were at the vanguard of organizing various acts of violent defiance such as demonstrations and strikes. Our political leaders used to tell us that as youths, we were the life-blood of African politics in Salisbury. . . . As youths, we also enforced the various job strikes that were called for by our political leaders. We made sure that people heeded those calls to strike. This led to my first arrest, during the 1960 strike.[41]

After these riots, which left a trail of destruction particularly in the major urban areas of Salisbury and Bulawayo, African political activists initiated more programs of civil disobedience that rocked Rhodesia's urban areas in subsequent years. For example, in 1961 political activists planned another follow-up demonstration, which was led mostly by women from the NDP's Youth and Women's Movements. Protesting against a 1961 Rhodesian Constitution that further entrenched unequal racial representation in the county's parliament, and the continued arrest and detention of SR-ANC leaders, women in Salisbury and Bulawayo turned up in the urban streets in their thousands. The protest, which went on record as one of the biggest protests in which women took center-stage, paved way for further acts of civic disobedience.

By 1962, incidences of political militancy had spread across major urban areas. Urban administrators started compiling evidence of politically inspired disturbances in their towns that, according to their assessment, were "clearly designed to make urban areas ungovernable."[42] In Umtali, a major Rhodesian town in the eastern part of the colony, administrators recorded with alarm the violent effects of increasing militancy in that town between the years 1962 and 1963. In a 1963 annual report, for example, the director of African administration (urban) noted that, "I regret to have to report that in common with other [urban] centers, several disturbances occurred in Sakubva Township during the year; mostly politically inspired."[43] Sakubva was the largest African township in Umtali. In an interview, Victor Kuretu, a leading ZAPU and PCC political activist who lived in Sakubva during the 1960s confirmed that, "Oh, oh, oh, things were ugly those days."[44] He added, "Umtali became a war zone those days as all people—school children, women, and men—participated

in challenging the Rhodesian police."[45] Among some of the politically motivated incidents that the director of African administration singled out between 1962 and 1963:

> An unusual trend [in Umtali] was the appearance in schools of mob disobedience by pupils and an attempt to break down normal discipline and school administration. This happened at two schools sited on our boundaries (map provided in report). Whilst this was most disturbing, another unhappy feature was the stoning by pupils of school buildings, damaging many windows. Police trucks and personnel were also stoned on their arrival to restore order. In addition, whilst Council was considering the proposed Community School setup, bands of well organized youths, mostly illegal children trespassing in Sakubva . . . stoned the Chineta Road Shopping Center, the Sakubva Hall, Dangare Government School and St. Josephs Mission. Five juveniles were [arrested and] convicted of being members of the gang that did the damage. Unfortunately, due to lack of evidence, the adults responsible for the organized stoning were unable to be traced and convicted.[46]

Before state security forces meticulously planted spies and informers in Rhodesian townships, urban authorities did not have a clear idea about the people influencing such kinds of politically motivated militancy. Political activists, particularly the youths, continued organizing and urging people to engage in acts of civil disobedience such as the ones noted earlier. In Umtali, an interviewee who lived in Sakubva Township, confirmed how he was part of African political activists who planned and executed such acts of civil disobedience. Victor Kuretu, who was later arrested in 1964 for "mobilizing people to demonstrate and vandalize property in opposition to the government," was part of the People's Caretaker Council[47] local leadership in Umtali, a group that clandestinely spread subversive information in various ways, urging people to oppose the government. According to Kuretu, "we printed political pamphlets which we clandestinely distributed in African townships, made secret visits to people's homes urging them to join the struggle, and as a teacher myself in Sakubva Township, I incited my students to vandalize government property."[48] On the eve of his arrest, Kuretu had personally organized the printing of thousands of political pamphlets with subversive messages, which he distributed in Sakubva under the cover of night, with the help of his students. "The following day was explosive," remembers Kuretu, "as people woke up to find the streets littered with these pamphlets. People swelled into mobs and marched toward police stations to

demonstrate. On being confronted by the police, people picked up stones and attacked the police. That was the ugliest demonstration I had ever seen."[49]

In Rhodesia's capital, Salisbury, the townships increasingly resembled war zones in the 1960s. Activists successfully organized defiance campaigns there, which made the urban environment volatile. Activists belonging to banned political formations such as ZAPU, PCC, and ZANU mobilized people on various occasions to demonstrate and demand political rights, the release of their detained leaders, and generally to oppose white rule. In one of the biggest protests in Salisbury in 1961, women activists took to the streets to march against the continued detention of NDP leaders. Ruth Chinamano, whose husband was detained at Wha Wha Detention Camp along with other political leaders, led the action. A day before the demonstration, Ruth told a gathering of women, "All [of you] must be ready to put their children on their backs and follow their husbands to Wha Wha. We know that the men at Wha Wha are stronger in their conviction than before they were put there. If they have done wrong, they must be brought before a court of law."[50]

The following day, according to a contemporary source, "Tens of thousands of women with children on their backs surged into Salisbury City Center at the Prime Minister Edgar Whitehead's offices to register their protest." "Two thousand women were arrested," adds the source, "and put into Salisbury Prison, and this was only after ferocious police dogs had been set upon them and inflicted injury to many."[51] Many of the women arrested during this demonstration were reported to have refused to pay admission of guilt fines that were imposed by a court ruling, preferring to serve their jail sentences. However, their husbands came to prisons and paid the fines that secured their release.[52]

As the political situation in Salisbury became tenser in the 1960s, the most devastating acts of civil disobedience were those that occurred spontaneously, particularly in response to the police presence, which was provocative, or township policies. "The mere presence of a uniformed police officer in the townships was a recipe for violence," confirmed Matthew Masiyakurima.[53] It became commonplace, for instance, for political activists to confront symbols of the Rhodesian regime such as the police as a way of protesting the descent of Rhodesia into a police state.

In these confrontations Salisbury activists became well known for their confrontational tactics such as stone-throwing, some of which were vicious to the extent of warranting the use of deadly force by

the police. On January 29, 1964, for example, the *Rhodesian Herald* led with the headline: "Two Africans Shot Dead as Police Fire on Highfield Rioters."[54] On the previous day, apparently furious at the news of PCC leader Joshua Nkomo's conviction in a court trial on January 27, African townships—particularly Highfield, where many Salisbury political leaders lived—descended into orgies of violence. On January 28, activists mobilized Highfield residents to demonstrate against Nkomo's conviction. In order to ensure full participation, they set up roadblocks in sections of the township, and attacked vehicles and people perceived to be inimical to the demonstration. A contemporary journalist reported,

> In Highfield, cars were overturned and set on fire, buses were stoned and their windows smashed. The inside of one bus was littered with blood-stained stones and glass. . . . In the Canaan section of the township, I saw a van overturned and burning, and elsewhere in the township, overturned, derelict vehicles prevented cars and mobile [police] patrols from passing. Rioters used boulders, truck bodies, garbage tins and concrete pipes to block the roads.[55]

According to informants who witnessed this incident, Rhodesian police, based at the Machipisa Police Station in Highfield, apparently provoked further violence when they ordered crowds of demonstrating Africans to disperse, using tear gas. A fleet of the police reserve armored scout cars moved into Highfield, with patrolling groups of helmeted police carrying guns and accompanied by dogs. "That was a day of war, my son," remembered Highfield resident Masiyakurima, who participated in this demonstration, in an interview. "No one cared about the show of force from the police. All we wanted was the release of Joshua Nkomo, and all they gave us was tear gas and dogs."[56] That day ended with two African deaths, after trigger-happy Rhodesian police fired on a crowd of Africans hurling stones and blocking roads in a section of Highfield.

This violent incident in Highfield triggered other acts of civil defiance in other Salisbury townships such as Harari/Mbare, Mabvuku, Mufakose, and others. Rhodesian police were the prime targets of such acts of defiance. In the February of 1964, for instance, the number of press reports of "stonings" aimed at the police increased exponentially. In one incident in the Harari Township, police officers, attempting to break up a gathering of African youths in a beer-hall, sustained serious injuries after angry mobs of Africans stoned them.[57] Njodzi Rusere, a youth activist in the 1960s, confirmed that attacking

the Rhodesian police was one of the political activists' strategies to strike back against Rhodesia's heavy-handed response to African politics. According to Rusere, "My friends and I were involved in violently attacking Rhodesian police officers with stones in African townships. We were very good at using stones as weapons."[58] In the second largest Rhodesian city of Bulawayo, *The Chronicle* newspaper reported that in the February of 1964 "European constables were detained in hospitals after being stoned in Nketa Drive, Mpopoma Township, by a crowd estimated at between 1,500 and 2,000."[59] In this incident, police had used tear gas to disperse crowds of Africans who had turned out in the streets to greet and listen to ZAPU leader, Joshua Nkomo.

Other youth activists took extreme measures in attacking the Rhodesian police, such as selecting the notoriously brutal police officers for murder. Panganai Mangwengwende, a youth activist in the 1960s, made this revelation during an interview: "In 1963, I was involved in the murder of a police officer who had a reputation of harassing Africans in the Beatrice area, near Salisbury. My colleagues and I went to look for this police officer, and when we found him, we set him on fire, and he burned to death."[60]

Not all forms of protest were violent, however. During the 1960s, political African activists also organized boycotts of Rhodesian businesses and those run by known and perceived supporters of the government in African townships. Boycotts offered the opportunity to subvert the colonial economy at much lower personal risk. Organized and enforced by youth political activists in the 1960s, residents of Salisbury's African townships, for example, boycotted shops owned by the Municipality of Salisbury and those belonging to perceived government supporters. Shop boycotts in Salisbury were effective to the extent that perishable goods in most shops such as bread, milk, mealie-meal, and fruits went bad, and retailers recorded massive losses.[61]

Other organized acts of defiance by African political activists took extreme measures, such as petrol bombing buildings in Salisbury, which increased in the mid-1960s. Unlike other forms of civil disobedience that were mostly spontaneous, petrol bombing was meticulously planned and executed such that only a few activists were ever caught for committing these acts. In one highly publicized petrol-bombing case, which became the highlight of the widespread nature of such acts of defiance, Richard Mapolisa, a political activist belonging to a small political formation called the Zimbabwe National Party, made media headlines after police arrested him for petrol-bombing

a house in Salisbury. According to reports of the evidence submitted at Mapolisa's trial before the Salisbury High Court, Mapolisa had, on June 25, 1963 met a man called Cyprian who had discussed with him the need to "take action" against the white minority government. Cyprian had tried to obtain money from Mapolisa to buy petrol, and late that night made a wick for a petrol bomb. He asked Mapolisa to write out eight copies of a note calling for support for the ZNP and for black majority rule. After drinking at a local beer hall in Harari African Township, the two men went into a white suburb of Salisbury, where Cyprian threw the petrol bomb through a house's front window. It failed to ignite properly and the damage amounted to a broken window and a slightly scorched carpet that was later valued at a little over £17. The two men ran off, but on the following day Mapolisa was arrested and charged with setting or attempting to set fire to a white person's house.[62]

In similar cases of petrol bombing, African activists described their acts of sabotage as part of the emerging struggle for liberation against Rhodesian colonial rule. Most of these activists were youths, and as Rueben Bascoe explained in an interview, activists viewed this form of protest as "contributing to the new struggle for our liberation." According to Bascoe, "We formed small sections of youth groups that were tasked with making petrol bombs that were to be used in attacking government infrastructure. My friends and I used to meet at my parents' home to make these petrol bombs, and then we would decide which places to destroy."[63] Njodzi Rusere also remembered that as a youth activist, "My friends and I also started using petrol bombs as a weapon to destroy government buildings. It was the time for that, my son. It was war, and we thought that we were fighting for our freedom."[64] Francis Chikukwa, a PCC activist who was later arrested for petrol-bombing acts in Salisbury, also explained that in response to the arrogant refusal of Rhodesian authorities to grant majority rule and the constant harassment from the police, he joined a group of urban saboteurs in bombing strategic buildings in Rhodesia as a form of protest. Chikukwa explained that in 1964,

> Some of the first highly trained guerrillas came to our African townships, recruited and trained us as armed saboteurs. They taught us how to handle weapons and detonators at secret locations that were in the outskirts of the city of Salisbury, such as the hills of Kambuzuma Township. Soon after our training, we used explosives to bomb strategic buildings in the city of Salisbury. At one time, my group and I were

> involved in the bombing of a house belonging to Rhodesia's minister of law and order, Mr. Lardner-Burke. Almost everyday after coming home from work, my friends and I teamed up to strategize and attack buildings in the cover of the night. We also started attacking nearby farms, located on the outskirts of Salisbury. We would enter white-owned tobacco farms and destroy the crops, or just burn whatever we found on other white-owned farms. We went as far as Chiweshe, looking for farms to destroy. Later on we became full-time saboteurs, attacking farms as far as the Mutare and Rusape areas, where there were many farms.[65]

Another trained saboteur and ZAPU activist, Oliver Muvirimi Dizha, told me that, "I felt I had to do something practical towards our demands for self-rule," and confirmed carrying out petrol-bombings in Salisbury. According to Dizha,

> I joined and led a group of colleagues who were trained as saboteurs, and my car became very useful in all the bombing activities that we carried out in Harare (Salisbury's post-colonial name). Some of my colleagues included Oliver Bwanya, Mabhachi, and others. We used to first congregate at my home in Mbare Township, and then we would go to the outskirts of the city of Harare near an area called Seke, where we made petrol-bombs at a hidden spot along the riverbank of Masikandoro River. We made the petrol-bombs at that spot and then later took them back into the city with my colleagues. We executed many of what we called 'actions' in the city of Salisbury, such as bombing places like the Red Fox hotel and other places that went unreported in Rhodesia's public media. We believed that sometimes it was government policy not to report these 'actions.' We bombed such places as Red Fox in Salisbury, which was a white people's playground, a hotel of some sort where many white people congregated. The bombs destroyed that place to smithereens. This was in 1964. We used to do this almost every day.[66]

Rhodesian police later arrested Dizha in 1964 for masterminding petrol bombings in Salisbury.

By the mid-1960s, it was clear that African political activists in the urban areas had become increasingly more radical in demanding majority rule and political rights. As theaters of struggle, the Salisbury townships epitomized the kinds of battles colonial authorities would have to fight if they were not prepared to concede to Africans' political demands and give way to majority rule. However, as a way of diverting attention from the root causes of urban civil disobedience, authorities dismissed political activists as "gangsters"

and branded their acts of civil disobedience "terrorism." In a statement in the February of 1964, Salisbury's Mayor, Frank Clements, for instance, dismissed political demonstrations and other acts of defiance in African townships and in other parts of Salisbury as the work of "gangsters." Clements warned the Rhodesian government that, "gangsters were taking over in Salisbury's African townships," and compared conditions in the townships "with those during the worst years of 'gangsterdom' in Chicago or New York." In an alarmist statement, he declared:

> Before anything else can be done, the evil which lurks in the dark corners of the townships must the stamped out. The law-abiding inhabitants of the townships live in the constant shadow of fear. They are in fear of bodily harm. Stonings, beatings-up, petrol-bombings are part of their lives and not even small children are safe from violence. *The gangsters are taking over.* Shop-keepers . . . men and women of means or responsibility, face demands and threats just as happened during the worst years of gangsterdom in Chicago or New York. These incidents and these developments threaten our social order. If we allow, anywhere, the lawless few to break the confidence and trust of the law-abiding majority, then even more than heads will be broken. The order and life of our city will be broken too.[67] (My emphasis)

Other urban administrators in Rhodesia's towns concurred with this view, particularly because by the mid-1960s, the increase in incidences of African political militancy began to frustrate many Rhodesian politicians. Although the police and other security organs of the Rhodesian state could be looked upon to use maximum force in suppressing African dissent, at the end of 1963, Rhodesian politicians began mulling a harsher legislative response to African urban political militancy. In 1963, a leading Rhodesian political figure, belonging to a new reactionary and white supremacist party, the Rhodesian Front, although acknowledging the effectiveness of police force, urged Rhodesian officials to adopt authoritarian legislation in response to African political activism:

> Patient, courageous, relentless police work on the ground continues to be the central part of the answer to all this (i.e., African political urban militancy). But how patient should authority as such continue to be? Who have we to impress? Are penalties for minor acts of terrorism, as well as the major acts for which they set the stage, anywhere near effective enough?[68]

Thus, although Rhodesia stood apart, perhaps alongside colonial Kenya and South Africa, as the most policed settler colony in Africa, the political turmoil of the 1960s demanded more than just rigorous policing. Whereas before the 1960s the Rhodesian state only needed to publicly "parade" its police in African townships, as a show of power, which would indeed deter African dissent, during the 1960s that façade of power and force embedded in police parades faded. As one informant told me, "when we used to see the Rhodesian police before the 1950s, we trembled. We feared them with their guns and weapons. But during the 1960s, the police became nothing but provocative symbols of *mabhunu*. We had no fear for the police. It was us versus them."[69] Africans, therefore, demonstrated their impatience with a colonial government bent on suppressing majority rule by confronting the Rhodesian police. The threat or use of police force could not on its own put a lid on African political activism. Legislative authoritarianism and confinement, on the other hand, as envisaged by Rhodesian politicians of the 1960s, promised to be an effective panacea to African political militancy. As I will show in the next chapter, the security laws that would frame the politics of detention and incarceration in Rhodesia were very much in response to African political activism. But it was the outbreak of the guerrilla war in the mid-1960s that quickened the enactment and implementation of numerous repressive laws of confinement. It is to this shift in African politics to guerrilla war that I turn to.

Guerrilla War in Rhodesia and Confinement in the 1970s

The outbreak of the liberation war in the mid-1960s shifted the site of struggle from the urban areas to the countryside. On July 4, 1964, a white farmer from the eastern Rhodesian region of Melsetter was stabbed to death after his car was stopped at a roadblock that had been mounted by African guerrillas. He was to become the first Rhodesian white to be killed by African guerrillas since the 1897 anti-colonial rebellion. This incident marked the beginning of a 17-year liberation war, which was instigated by young and radical groups of nationalist leaders who were impatient with the older nationalists who cautioned against the use of arms to achieve majority rule. Uncompromising to the bitter end, exiled ZANU and ZAPU political leaders living in the neighboring countries of Rhodesia such as Zambia, Tanzania, and Mozambique (after 1974), began to plan and execute a guerrilla

war from the mid-1960s. By 1967, guerrilla attacks on Rhodesia had intensified, and a 1967 government report noted that:

> Rhodesian (African) terrorists receive training in a number of communist countries, including Russia, Red China, Cuba and Algeria, and also at camps in Tanzania. Irrespective of their place of training, terrorists invariably move from Tanzania to Zambia where they are billeted in specially constructed holding camps, established in the vicinity of Lusaka and within easy striking distance of Rhodesia. . . . Since the terrorist activity against Rhodesia was intensified about the middle of last year (1966), an ever-increasing number of armed men, of both the ZANU and ZAPU factions, have been infiltrated into this country from Zambia.[70]

Guerrilla attacks in the mid-1960s were sporadic, however, and the Rhodesian government's swift and apparent successful offensive against this first wave of the war gave the colonial state a false sense of victory and security.

However, beginning in 1972, the combined force of ZANU's military wing, the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), and ZAPU's military wing, the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), plunged Rhodesia into an intensified struggle that was to end only when white Rhodesians agreed to multi-party democracy involving the African majority in 1979. That war was essentially fought in Rhodesia's rural areas, where the guerrillas felt safe and sheltered. Ideologically, the countryside fit into the guerrilla armies' Maoist training: rural peasants were the water that gave sustenance to the guerrillas who were the fish.[71] Effective politicization of peasants prior to the intensification of the war in the 1970s created rural communities that sheltered and gave intelligence to the guerrillas in their war against the Rhodesian security forces.

Throughout the war, the Rhodesian regime regarded African guerrillas as "terrorists." Ironically, the regime's own methods of dealing with the guerrillas also cultivated a culture of terror. When Rhodesian forces encountered or captured guerrillas, they treated them as dangerous terrorist criminals, and death was the fitting punishment. Rhodesian security forces did not capture guerrillas for judicial justice: as "terrorists," the only justice that guerrillas deserved was instant capital punishment. P. K. Van der Byl, the Rhodesian minister of defence and foreign affairs underscored this policy when he told Rhodesian Guard Force recruits in 1976 in a pass-out parade[72] address that: "I hope before long you will have killed your first terrorist."[73] Encouraging another group of army recruits at a pass-out parade to

kill on sight, a Lt. Col M. D. Shute compared it to a soccer game: "Everyone wants to be the center-forward and score goals—everyone wants to kill terrorists."[74] Another Rhodesian official, P. Claypole, secretary for law and order, simply told a police recruits' pass-out parade that, when dealing with terrorists, "Don't be squeamish."[75]

As for the guerrillas' hosts, the peasants, the authorities were simply unsympathetic. As the war intensified, the government targeted rural communities that provided support for the guerrillas. A high-ranking official described the regime's policy toward supporters of the liberation struggle in these words:

> If [rural] villages harbour terrorists and terrorists are found running about in villages, naturally they (villages) will be bombed and destroyed in any manner which the commander on the spot considers to be desirable in the suitable prosecution of a successful campaign. . . . Where the civilian population involves itself with terrorism, then somebody is bound to get hurt and one can have little sympathy for those who are mixed up with terrorists when finally they receive the wrath of the security forces.[76]

In addition to violence and intimidation, peasant men and women also found themselves facing the confinement laws of Rhodesia. During Rhodesian forces' campaigns to round up "terrorists," rural inhabitants found themselves in a hopeless dilemma because, for those peasants living in what were called contact zones (i.e., battlefronts), they were caught in-between the African guerrillas and the Rhodesian Security Forces. Even though the overwhelming majority of rural peasants supported the liberation struggle in one way or another, peasants found themselves in the middle of the murderous violence inflicted by both the Rhodesian Security forces on perceived guerrilla collaborators, or by guerrillas themselves on so-called "sell-outs." In this hopeless limbo, if they were not killed by guerrillas or Rhodesian forces, most rural peasants ended up in Rhodesian jails and detention centers facing accusations of "supporting 'terrorists,'" "harboring 'terrorists,'" or "failing to report the presence of 'terrorists.'"

For all these "crimes," rural peasants could do nothing to avoid being caught on the wrong side of the law, because on the one hand, refusing to support the guerrillas—let alone reporting their presence to the police—obviously brought deadly vengeance on rural inhabitants from the guerrillas. Giving any information about them to the Rhodesian forces was referred to as "selling out." For many peasants, this label—regardless of it was true or not—was a sure death sentence, because guerrillas would not hesitate to kill them.[77] On the other

hand, failure to report guerrillas' presence or supporting them in any way brought deadly retribution from Rhodesian security forces. In a 1975 Rhodesian Catholic Commission report on the forces' violence in the rural areas, which characterized rural peasants as "the men in the middle," one rural peasant expressed this dilemma aptly: "If we report (the presence of guerrillas) to the police, the terrorists kill us. If we do not report, the police torture us. Even if we do report to the police, we are beaten all the same and accused of trying to lead the (Rhodesian) soldiers into a trap. We just do not know what to do."[78] Mai Kadengu, a rural peasant from the Rusape area, which was one of the deadly contact zones during the guerrilla war, confirmed this dilemma:

> Our rural area was one of those worst affected by the war because freedom fighters and Rhodesian soldiers occasionally clashed there and fought deadly battles. We were caught in-between them. Comrades (guerrillas) had established their bases in our area such that we knew where they were and constantly interacted with them. There was a big base for the guerrillas near our village and that is where the guerrillas constantly held what we called *pungwe* (all-night political gatherings designed to politicize the rural peasantry and ensure their support of the guerrilla war). On the day of our arrest and upon the arrival of Rhodesian soldiers in our village, many people fled the area, but for women like me with children on our backs, it was impossible to flee. I was one of the three women with infants on our backs among the people who were corralled by the soldiers. The soldiers alleged that we were harboring and supporting 'terrorists' in our rural area. But what could we have done? Both guerrillas and the Rhodesian soldiers came to our area with weapons of war, and we were defenseless and caught between them. We had no capacity to push away the guerrillas, nor could we fend off the soldiers. And yet we were accused of harboring one or the other. What could we have done? It was difficult.[79]

Mai Kadengu went on to serve a five year prison sentence with hard labor at Chikurubi Prison in Salisbury, which was one of the notorious jails in Rhodesia and infamous for harboring hardcore criminals. Her crime was that she and other members of her rural community harbored "terrorists."

However, although most rural peasants lived in this limbo throughout the guerrilla war, risking death and imprisonment, evidence suggests that they offered overwhelming support for the guerrillas,[80] which landed many of them in jail. Rural inhabitants across the generational spectrum acted collaborated with and supported the

guerrillas: young boys, acted as *mujibhas* (male collaborators, responsible for gathering intelligence and reconnaissance); young women occupied the role of *chimbwido* (female collaborator, responsible for bringing them food and other material needs); adult women, as their adoptive parents, took up maternal roles like cooking them food or washing their clothes; and adult men acted paternally as providers of their material and financial needs. These were the broad "criminal" capacities in which many peasants were caught and arrested. Refina Ratidzai Siniwa, a peasant from the Mt. Darwin rural area, explained how she was part of a group of women who actually cultivated support for the guerrillas in her area in the initial stages of the liberation war, and also cooked them food. A future Rhodesian prisoner, charged and convicted of "assisting 'terrorists,'" Siniwa explained the dynamics of peasant support for the war in her rural community in these words:

> A certain friend of mine in Mt. Darwin alerted me to the presence of freedom fighters in our rural area, and actually told me that guerrillas had come to her home and that she had slaughtered a cow to feed them. She told me how they had come to her home armed to the teeth with guns and everything. That friend of mine became well acquainted with the guerrillas and even knew where the guerrillas hid their weapons and where they stayed in the bush. She introduced me to these guerrillas, who were actually the first to come to our area, and I also came to know about the hiding places of the guerrillas and where they hid their weapons. I was very excited to be associated with the guerrillas. My friends and I actually devised a duty roster and took turns to cook for the guerrillas. Each one of us knew what to bring to our cooking areas. The guerrillas also knew the specific houses where they would go to collect food and other necessities such as blankets, clothes, and other things. When they came to collect these items, they left their weapons behind and came to our homes dressed and disguised just like civilians. No one ever knew that these people were, in fact, guerrillas. This was necessary at the beginning of the liberation war because most peasants in that area were yet to understand the need for a war of liberation. Gradually, though, we started to spread the word of the war and many of our neighbors began to understand why we were accommodating the guerrillas. Teaching people about the war was necessary at first because we knew that there were *vatengesi* (meaning "sell-outs") and so we needed to make the people understand the purpose of the liberation war first so that they could get to accommodate the guerrillas in our rural area. We developed a good relationship with the guerrillas—we would supply them with beef, chicken, and all kinds of food, blankets, clothes, and many things that they required.

> In return, the guerrillas plowed, cultivated, and harvested our fields. In most cases, they would just come and say, '*Amai* (mother), give us hoes, and we will do all the work in your fields.'[81]

In other circumstances, peasants were also involved in actual combat, helping guerrillas to mislead and trap Rhodesian soldiers, or to plant landmine bombs on roads frequently used by the Rhodesian forces. According to one peasant who was directly involved during the guerrilla war,

> My daughter was among other girls who had been taught by guerrillas to 'cook' landmines. What these girls would do was to cook millet *sadza* (thickened porridge), place landmine bombs in that *sadza*, and then cover it with sheep's hide. They would then go to the roads that were used by Rhodesian soldiers and dig the tarmac road in order to bury the landmines. There was a time when four Rhodesian vehicles hit one of these landmines, and all Rhodesian soldiers in those vehicles perished on that spot. [At other times] when we suspected that Rhodesian vehicles were going to be using the roads, we would coordinate with guerrillas, who would hide in the bush and shoot any Rhodesian soldiers who would have survived landmine blasts. There were three occasions that we successfully executed these actions.[82]

For rendering such support to the guerrillas, many rural inhabitants ended up in prison. Guerrilla war produced large numbers of political prisoners and detainees placing young men and women under constant police surveillance, as the Rhodesian authorities suspected many of intending to join the guerrillas in their bases in Zambia, Tanzania, and Mozambique. In fact, as will be seen in the next chapter, many were rounded up on the mere suspicion of having the intent to join the liberation war. Secondly, during the war, police and other security forces constantly suspected and arrested political activists inside Rhodesia for being recruiters of guerrillas. Being a political activist during the war became synonymous with being a "recruiter" of guerrillas, a crime that carried a death or life sentence. Thirdly, the war created communities of "criminals" in the rural areas where the guerrillas operated. Rural peasants in certain areas were individually or wholly targeted by the Rhodesian secret forces and arrested and confined for "collaborating," "harboring," "supporting," or "aiding" guerrillas. On the whole, the war created a dark political cloud in Rhodesia that directly influenced the widening of police and security forces' dragnets, leading to the arrest and confinement of many Africans.

In conclusion, the urban protests and rural support for the liberation war discussed in this chapter prefigured Rhodesian authorities' use of confinement as a method of repression. In response to the political activism of both urban Africans' and rural peasants' support for the liberation struggle, Rhodesian authorities invoked a litany of detention laws that were at the root of manufacturing political detainees and prisoners. I discuss this legislation and its effects in the next chapter, as it was responsible for the cumulative increase in political prisoners and detainees in Rhodesian jails and detention centers from the 1960s to 1979. The growth of African opposition in the 1960s and 1970s heralded a period of unprecedented detentions and imprisonment in Rhodesia.

CHAPTER 3

Getting Arrested: Oral Histories of Violence, Torture, and Arrest in Rhodesia, 1960–1979

Shamwari, ndakarohwa! *(My friend, I was beaten!)*

Interview with Oliver Muvirimi Dizha, Murewa Rural Area, Zimbabwe, October 17, 2006

Then they said these words: "We have arrested you because you sent three boys to Zambia to train as freedom fighters." I told them that their statement was not true. Then they looked at each other, and one of them said, "You will tell us the truth today." The (white) detective officer-in-charge then said to the (African) sergeant, "Take him to the slaughter house."

Transcripts of Interviews (Informant's name suppressed in the original document), Zimbabwe National Archives, MS 591/4 "Political Prisoners: 1975–80"

In the wake of growing African political opposition, and the outbreak of the guerrilla war in the countryside in the early 1970s, political imprisonment became an important tool of governance and repression for successive Rhodesian governments. This chapter demonstrates that, as a way of suppressing growing African opposition, Rhodesian authorities passed a plethora of preemptive security legislation that was largely responsible for *manufacturing*[1] thousands of political prisoners in Rhodesia between 1959 and 1979. I also show that although Rhodesian authorities framed these laws within the discourse of "anti-terrorism," these very laws were responsible for breeding state-sponsored terror and extra-legal arrests of thousands of Africans in both urban and rural Rhodesia. Furthermore, for many

African political detainees, the road to Rhodesian prisons and detention centers was fraught with violence and torture. In their oral testimonies, former Rhodesian political prisoners depicted the various methods of torture that were applied to their bodies by Rhodesian security agents while they were under arrest. Their stories, found in oral testimonies, court evidence, and written submissions by victims of torture, are important in reconstructing the experiences of being incarcerated.

This chapter explores arrested Africans' individual passages through state-sponsored extra-legal arrests, torture, and violence between 1959 and 1979. First, I argue that by increasingly relying on laws of political confinement in order to suppress African political dissent, Rhodesian authorities hoped to both remove political activists from their communities and to suppress African political opposition by cultivating a political climate of fear and a culture of terror. Furthermore, I suggest that this climate of fear and intimidation bred incidences of "selling out," whereby frightened Africans acted as Rhodesian authorities' informers who gave up other Africans for imprisonment. "Selling out," therefore, was simultaneously a way of coping with a brutal regime as well as enhancing its power.

Secondly, I suggest that a more nuanced reading of the evidence of violence and torture while under arrest reveals the ways in which Rhodesian authorities used torture on those they arrested in order to validate a particular pre-scripted anti-terror discourse. The authorities needed, and exploited, Africans' "confessions" in order to cast them as terrorists, thus justifying colonial repression. Rhodesian police used torture to extract incriminating confessions, and thus forced the incarcerated to become part of the scripting of their anti-terror discourse. Although others capitulated, many captured political offenders actively refused to validate Rhodesia's anti-terror mantra by consistently denying the accusations brought against them, despite the bodily harm that their captors inflicted on them. Furthermore, I also argue that penal violence and torture on arrested Africans went beyond merely harming the body and extracting "confessions." Rhodesian security personnel used torture both to dehumanize political activists through psychological and mental cruelty, humiliation, and sexualized violence, and to reach out to the groups of people to which the victims belonged. When the Rhodesian police released some detainees after sessions of torture, its visible marks on their bodies served as visual spectacles the power of the Rhodesian state.

Lastly, I suggest that despite the repression that accompanied their arrests and prosecutions, Africans were capable of challenging their incarceration and extra-legal arrests. Although Rhodesian courts largely colluded with the state's use of political imprisonment as a tool of governance, Africans were not hapless victims of Rhodesia's repressive prosecutorial system. In Rhodesian courts and behind the docks, arrested Africans challenged the repressive nature of colonial judicial authorities in a number of ways. Through giving misleading and conflicting evidence, feigning ignorance, hurling verbal insults at Rhodesian judges, drafting legal petitions, and mounting legal challenges, arrested Africans underscored the fact that their incarcerations were extra-legal and that Rhodesian judges and magistrates were acting in defense of white colonial rule. In most cases, however, none of this sort of protest and legal challenge yielded freedom for the imprisoned. However, I suggest that these challenges were important in establishing the agency of the prisoners, and also served to expose the duplicity of the Rhodesian judiciary in perpetuating settler colonial rule.

Detention Laws: Rhodesian Legislative Reaction to African Political Activism

In response to both the 1960s African militant urban political activism and the outbreak of guerrilla war in the countryside in the early1970s, Rhodesian authorities imposed a battery of detention and confinement laws. This legislation, which the Rhodesian security forces implemented forcefully between the 1960s until the end of colonial rule in 1980, were largely responsible for manufacturing thousands of political prisoners in Rhodesia. Since the early 1960s, successive Rhodesian regimes organized its Security Forces, the collective name for all its police and military forces, into a cohesive unit that was geared toward defending white minority rule. Rhodesia's security organs consisted of fully equipped and relatively fully staffed organizations such as the Rhodesian British South Africa Police (BSAP), the Crime Prevention Unit (CPU), the Special Branch, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), and several military and paramilitary crack units that were prepared to deal with the "terrorist" menace. At the height of the guerrilla war in 1976, a Rhodesian minister of justice, law and order declared that, "I put the maintenance of law and order first, last and in the middle as far as my duties are concerned."[2]

Until the late 1950s to early 1960s, Rhodesian security laws were neither that comprehensive nor draconian, particularly with respect to

the means with which to circumscribe the growth and proliferation of African political movements. Before the introduction of harsh security legislation, Rhodesia's self-defined image of an independent and civilized state limited the reach and power of the Rhodesian security apparatus. For example, at the end of the 1950s, the 1959 Unlawful Organizations Act and the 1959 Preventive Detention (Temporary Provisions) Act provided the only means of monitoring African political activism in the early 1960s. The Unlawful Organizations Act allowed the government's minister of law and order to declare any organization unlawful if it appeared that its activities endangered public order by appearing to "raise disaffection" or promote feelings of racial "ill will or hostility" within Rhodesia.[3] Armed with prohibition orders, the police and other security forces could only disperse meetings of those political organizations that the government had banned through the Unlawful Organizations Act. However, monitoring these organizations was a nightmare for the police because, upon being banned, African political parties in the 1960s simply re-registered their parties under new names, retained their leadership and political structures, and continued with their political demands for self-rule. In most cases, therefore, the police could do nothing but just maintain a close presence in African urban townships where most African political organizations held their political meetings. Nevertheless, despite the law's limited scope, between 1960 and 1965, 1,610 Africans were prosecuted and 1,002 convicted under this law.[4]

The other security legislation, the Preventive Detention (Temporary Provisions) Act, despite its seemingly harsh provisions, only provided for the temporary detention of individuals whose activities were "likely to endanger public safety . . . to raise discontent or disaffection among the inhabitants of the Colony," and the detention of individuals who were "office-bearers, officers or members of an unlawful organization."[5] Furthermore, the fact that the Rhodesian police could only detain political activists after receiving the consent and authority of the minister of law and order compromised the effectiveness of this security law. Whilst Rhodesian police arrested and detained several leaders of African political organizations in the early 1960s upon obtaining detention orders from the minister of law and order under the provisions of these two security legislations, ordinary rank-and-file members of African political organizations remained outside of Rhodesian prisons and increasingly became the vanguard for the struggle against Rhodesian rule. It was these ordinary political activists, mostly in Rhodesian urban areas, who almost rendered

Rhodesia ungovernable in the 1960s through their political activism and violent clashes with Rhodesian police and other security forces.

In 1963, however, a completely new and reactionary government came to power in Rhodesia, shortly after the breakup of the Federation of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland.[6] The Rhodesia Front (RF) successfully took power in Rhodesia, promising its white constituents that it would do all it could to defend white minority rule. Whereas the previous Rhodesian government led by Winston Field had appeared to be prepared to work gradually toward the idea of majority rule through its adoption of a 1961 Constitution that guaranteed this objective, this new RF government had only one thing on its agenda—perpetuating white minority rule.

Having won an election, in which Africans were prohibited from participating, the first order of business for the ruling Rhodesia Front was to tackle the threat of African majority rule. Both effectively combating incidences of politically motivated urban violence (see Chapter 2), and dealing with the threat of a pro-liberation guerrilla war featured prominently on the promises of the RF government to its white constituents. Most importantly, within a few months of coming to power, the RF regime promised to unleash a harsher legislative response to African demands for majority rule, widespread arrests and detentions of political activists, and the use of legalized police force in order to crush dissent. The RF cared less about the roots of urban militancy, which were, broadly, the need for political reform and ultimately African majority rule.

For the RF, African political militancy in whatever form was tantamount to terrorism and its instigators were *Communist* "terrorists," "thugs," and "agitators." In a confidential memorandum that was circulated to Rhodesian parliamentarians shortly after the Rhodesia Front came to power, then-Minister of Law and Order Desmond Lardner-Burke—in an uncompromising and authoritarian mood—declared:

> This Government . . . considers it vital in view of what is now happening in this country [referring to African urban political militancy] *to see that the laws are adequate, and if they are not then to have them amended.* It is not simply the "aim" of Government to ensure that peace-loving citizens may go about their lawful occupations unmolested by the threat of physical violence. It is a paramount duty. *Government dare not deviate even functionally from the strict maintenance of law and order.* Facile arguments about the alleged root cause of intimidation and physical violence and equally facile condemnation of so-called "Draconian measures" do not alter the case one iota. Citizens in this

> country, regardless of race, have an unchallengeable right to demand protection. The Government is bound to give it. *Whatever the root cause of terrorism, it must be stopped in its tracks, and stopped permanently and I say that one way is to have adequate and suitable legislation.*[7] (My emphasis)

In the same memorandum, the minister of law and order further asked RF members of the Rhodesian Parliament to "direct their attention to the . . . need for amending [security] legislation and put aside the other problems for debate at some other time."[8] For this minister of law and order, and indeed members of the Rhodesian government, passing harsher and deterrent amendments to Rhodesia's security legislation was the panacea to African political activism.

Accordingly, the Rhodesian Front turned its attention to the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act (hereafter, LOMA). First introduced in 1960, this act was the foundation of Rhodesian security legislation.[9] In its printed form, the original 1960 LOMA runs to 34 pages in the Rhodesian law statutes—34 pages descriptive of what Africans could not do and what would happen to them if they did. Described by one dissertator as the most drastic of Rhodesia's security laws, "in its scope and consequences,"[10] the LOMA became infamous for its propensity to generate and manufacture as many political prisoners as could satisfy the Rhodesian oppressive regime. In its original formulation, far-reaching provisions created a wide range of political offences and imposed strict limitations on all forms of African political activity and organization. For example, in the politically volatile years of the 1960s, according to the law, it was an offense for any person to make statements likely to "excite disaffection" against the government or expose the police to "contempt or disesteem." It was also unlawful either to wear clothing signifying association with a particular political organization or to sing any song or utter any slogan "which is likely to lead to public disorder." At the same time, the act gave authorities extensive powers to ban publications, prohibit public meetings, and search and arrest persons without a warrant. Security forces were also empowered, without reference to the courts, to restrict anyone considered likely to pose a threat to public order, either by denying that person access to a particular place (LOMA, Section 51a) or confining him to a designated area (LOMA, Section 50b).

The 1963 amended version of the LOMA first adopted two new stringent features that added to its far-reaching and severe effect. The first feature of the amendments to this security law was that, when it

came to the legal defense of the accused, the onus of proof was laid on the accused person to demonstrate his innocence, rather than on the state to show his guilt. The obvious consequence of this legal thinking was that the Rhodesian security forces were free to round up as many people as they could on mere suspicions of breaching the security laws of Rhodesia, and it was incumbent upon these victims of arbitrary arrest, and *not* their accusers, to prove that they were innocent.[11] Secondly, the Ian Smith regime amended LOMA, imposing mandatory sentences for certain offences, which left no room for judicial discretion. In essence, the law undermined and eroded Rhodesian judicial independence and, in fact, some liberal-minded judges resigned in protest to the introduction of and amendments to LOMA.[12] The mandatory sentences that came with this amendment covered crimes involving arson and the use of explosives (such as petrol-bombing), and these particular crimes were legislated to carry a mandatory death sentence (LOMA, Section 37).[13] Even the crime of stone throwing received a mandatory sentence of five years imprisonment. Another amendment of December 1974 also introduced the mandatory death penalty for offences connected with the recruitment of nationalist guerrillas (LOMA, Section 23A). Rhodesian authorities introduced mandatory sentences into LOMA because the majority of politicians, particularly those belonging to the Rhodesian Front, distrusted the historical pseudo-independence of the judiciary. After they assumed power in 1963, these politicians sought to bind judges' hands, especially when it came to cases of African political offences. In a parliamentary debate on the apparent ways in which LOMA was deliberately designed to undermine the independence of the judiciary, an RF Member of Parliament defended this legal travesty by arguing that, "a mandatory sentence, apart from any other reason, is prima facie an indication of lack of confidence by Government in our judges and our courts. *It must amount to that because [as] Government we are not content to let our judges… come to a decision in respect of the death penalty, but rather it is honorable members of this House (Parliament) who are in a better position to do so*"[14] (author's emphasis).

In essence, therefore, Rhodesian politicians took it upon themselves to not only formulate the laws that governed Rhodesia, but, in a de facto way, they also assumed the roles of judges and executors. A 1963 test case fully illustrated the extent to which LOMA compromised Rhodesian judicial independence. In a highly publicized case—the first African to be sentenced to death for his involvement in the petrol bombing of a house in the white suburbs of Salisbury in 1963—the presiding judge in the case expressed exasperation during

sentencing as he stated that the newly amended LOMA did not allow any form of judicial discretion. The accused was Richard Mapolisa, a political activist for a relatively small and insignificant group called the Zimbabwe National Party,[15] on trial for terrorism charges resulting from arson. On the day of his sentencing, after presiding judge, Justice Harthorn, who was also an Acting Chief Justice, had heard Mapolisa's defense—which was powerful since Mapolisa was not the actual person who had thrown the petrol bomb, and the bomb had not caused any casualty or damage except to scorch a carpet valued at a little over £17—Harthorn pointed out that under the newly amended LOMA, "legislation has seen fit to take away from the court any discretion in a case such as this. I am therefore obliged to pass the death sentence."[16]

With this test case concluded, the last semblance of judicial independence that had existed in Rhodesia was destroyed.[17] From this case, the mandatory death sentence provision in LOMA became known as the "hanging clause." Despite the fact that Rhodesia received so much condemnation from international human rights groups for this particular amendment of LOMA and the way Mapolisa's trial had ended, Rhodesian politicians celebrated this amendment and the results of Mapolisa's case. Rhodesian urban administrators, for example, enthusiastically welcomed the harsher amendments to LOMA. The Rhodesian director of african administration (urban) actually hailed the introduction of the hanging clause by declaring that urban councils in Rhodesia "[welcomed] the amendment to the Law and Order Maintenance Act with a hanging clause as the penalty for petrol bomb throwing." Shrugging off criticism of the extremities of the newly amended LOMA, and happy with their effective repressiveness, this official said:

> As was to be expected the "do gooders" amongst all races threw up their hands in horror at this legislation, but those of us who administer African Townships, usually under great pressure, welcomed this timely legislation in its purpose to counter this cowardly form of violence (i.e., petrol bombing). This legislation has brought much peace and calm to the daily lives of the people in living in the Townships. In actual fact we have never had it so good and the Government is to be congratulated on its firm and tactful handling of the situation, as are members of the B.S.A. Police and security forces for their very efficient and firm handling of these disturbances . . . and precautionary measures taken for the benefit and security of the people.[18]

Most relevant for this study was LOMA's Section 50, with its vague definition of "terrorism," that sent many imprisoned Africans

to the gallows for committing (or intending to commit) acts of terrorism. In brief, LOMA's Section 50, imposed the sentence of death (or life imprisonment, in special cases) for persons who, "with intent to endanger the maintenance of law and order in Rhodesia . . . or in a neighboring territory, commit any act of terrorism or sabotage." The official definition of terrorism was "*behavior* which has, or is likely to have, any of a number of results, including the use of force to bring about any social or economic change" in Rhodesia or in a neighboring territory, interfering with essential services, and so on, "causing substantial financial loss within Rhodesia to any person or the State" (my emphasis).[19] In effect, this section of LOMA gave so much discretion for the state to charge people with "committing acts of terrorism" simply because their "behavior" could be construed as terrorism. Again, the onus of proof of innocence of "intent to endanger the maintenance of law and order" lay with the accused.

One major consequence of LOMA was the sheer number of political prisoners that it generated (see Table 3.1). In 1967, in response to questions about the increasing number of detainees and prisoners because of this security law, the Rhodesian Minister of Law Order, Desmond Lardner-Burke, simply said, "My conscience is clear. I detained certain persons in the interests of law and order. The number is insignificant and they have only themselves to blame."[20] Between 1963 and 1980, LOMA stood out as the single most piece of colonial authoritarian legislation that manufactured the highest number of political detainees and prisoners in Rhodesia.

Another result of LOMA's far-reaching effects was the sheer number of civilians and residents of the so-called operational areas (areas of armed conflict) who were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment and even to death for actions that, while they pointed to the growing

Table 3.1 Selected security legislation and prosecutions in Rhodesia: 1964–1969

Year	*UOA prosecutions*	*LOMA prosecutions*	*EPA prosecutions*
1964	200	2,017	0
1965	147	726	52
1966	66	248	323
1967	44	177	148
1968	40	48	72
1969	8	11	n.a.

Source: Figures compiled from the *Southern Rhodesia Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. 76 (November 12, 1969), 1231–1234, and Vol. 76 (January 28, 1970), 1568–1576.

Key: UOA (Unlawful Organizations Act); LOMA (Law and Order Maintenance Act); EPA (Emergency Powers Act).

support for the guerrilla warfare, fell short of actually taking up arms. For example, at a single trial at the end of July 1976, a group working in defense of political prisoners reported that a total of 56 African farm-workers were each sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment for failing to report the presence of a group of guerrillas on their employer's farm. The owner of the farm, a white Rhodesian, who was also aware of the presence of the guerrillas in the vicinity of his farm, was not charged.[21]

As hinted above, the third consequence of LOMA and its subsequent amendments was the open compromise of judicial independence in Rhodesia. After years of sustaining the idea that the Rhodesian judiciary, despite its colonial roots, operated with a modicum of independence from political interference, LOMA put paid to all pretense of judicial independence. To this end, an African member of the Rhodesian parliament made this observation in the Rhodesian House of Assembly:

> In this country the judiciary is tied down by the legislation that passes through this House [of Assembly]. These judicial officers have to uphold the law of the country that passes through the House which is passed by the politicians, and in this case the politicians who are in power are of one particular political party (referring to the RF), without effective opposition. Whatever they desire to pass in this House goes through [and] *the judicial officers are not capable of being independent because they have to uphold the laws passed by the Legislature of the country.*[22] (My emphasis)

The Rhodesian Front government also passed other pieces of security legislation that complemented LOMA. The Emergency Powers (Maintenance of Law and Order) Regulations/Act (hereafter, *Regulations*) of 1966 plugged any loopholes in LOMA. Theoretically, the regulations were supposed to enable the Rhodesian state to temporarily declare a "state of emergency" at moments of serious threats to national law and order. But when the regulations were invoked in 1966 after the first African guerrilla attacks on Rhodesian targets, the Rhodesian Minister of Law and Order declared a state of emergency, and the regulations remained in force until 1979. Among other things, the regulations empowered the minister for law and order to use his ministerial discretion to order the indefinite (as opposed to temporary) detention of any person "in the interest of public safety or public order." In 1972 alone, the Pearce Commission, which was a state-appointed body of commissioners tasked with assessing opinions on political reform in Rhodesia, stated that in the two months it was

doing work in Rhodesia, 1,736 persons were arrested and detained under the regulations.[23]

Under the Emergency Regulations, African political detainees could be held for periods of indefinite duration, either in prisons or in detention camps that were specially established for holding political offenders. The regulations also provided for the short-term detention of suspected persons for interrogation purposes because, according to the regulations, security forces could arrest detainees without a legal warrant and hold them for periods not exceeding 30, or in some cases, 60 days. The legally allowable period of detention was, of course, just a technicality because the minister could, at his discretion, renew a detention order using the regulations. In many cases, detainees confirmed that they had received numerous *re*-detention orders upon the expiry of original or subsequent orders.

Cephas Msipa, for instance, found himself being re-detained in Wha Wha Prison because of the emergency regulations soon after the expiry of his detention in Gwelo Prison. According to Msipa, in his 1978 letter to Christian Care, a nongovernmental organization that took care of detainees' families whilst they were in detention:

> Once more I find myself in detention at Wha Wha Prison, not far from Gwelo Prison. I was taken from my house by members of the Special Branch at 03:30 a.m. on the 12th September. Until the 9th November I had hoped that my detention was temporary, but on that day I was served with an indefinite order which reads *inter alia* that, 'The making of this Order is based on a belief that you are likely to commit, or to incite the commission of, acts in Rhodesia which would endanger the public safety, or disturb or interfere with the maintenance of public order.'[24]

Another victim of the Emergency Regulations, D. M. Mbidzo, who was 62 years old in 1975 and detained in Wha Wha Prison, made this submission to another nongovernmental organization that helped detainees: "I have been at this place since the 30th of April 1975, having been transferred from Gwelo prison. In 1959 I was detained and I was released in 1961. In 1964 I was detained again for the second time, from 1964 to 1970. I was released in 1970 and re-detained again in 1973, up to now I am still here."[25] Misheck Mtetwa, who was detained at Gwelo Prison, also made this submission in 1976: "I have been languishing in prisons of this country for almost eleven years now for no apparent reason other than my political conscience. Having completed my ten-year sentence, I was detained again at Gwelo Detention Prison under the [Emergency]

Regulations."[26] Another detainee, Francis Mudiwa Gunda, wrote in a prison letter,

> I have been serving a prison term of eighteen years in imprisonment at Khami Maximum Security Prison, Bulawayo, for a political case since 1966. After finishing my sentence in September 1978, I was then served with the detention order the same month under the regulations. The order came from the Ministers of Law and Order. I then was taken to the above mentioned place and address (Wha Wha Prison), now as a detainee and am detained for an indefinite period."[27]

In 1978, as the guerrilla war intensified, the Rhodesian state imposed the Martial Law Proclamation of September 1978. At the height of the guerrilla war in Rhodesia, and especially in those rural areas perceived as populated by sympathizers of the guerrilla war, martial law was introduced to enable the Rhodesian Security Forces to commit any act that they considered necessary to stamp out terrorism. Specifically targeted at rural peasants, by September 1978, martial law was applied to almost 70 percent of rural Rhodesia, and by September 1979, 90 percent of rural Rhodesian was under martial law.[28] Martial law was responsible for a significant number of peasant political detainees and prisoners. Oral and documentary evidence documents that, because of the martial law, security forces could and did arrest and detain any number of people in rural Rhodesia, and for as long as they wished. In addition, in the rural combat zones, they could impound rural peasants' cattle, confiscate their assets without being accountable to anybody, beat up the local people, and raze their huts to the ground without any possible recourse against them. Furthermore, martial law created a rather hopeless situation because even Rhodesian officials argued that the only way to defeat terrorism was by engaging in tactics of that nature. In fact, in order to protect members of the security forces from being sued in either civil or criminal proceedings for their excesses in "rounding up terrorists," the Rhodesian government passed the Indemnity and Compensation Act, which gave the security forces sweeping powers "to take any action considered necessary to suppress 'terrorism.'"[29] In addition to wanton arrests and detention, many innocent men and women lost their property without any remedy available in law. Many of the thousands of prisoners in Rhodesian jails raised concerns about the "scorched-earth-policy" of Rhodesian security forces who would arrest people in martial law areas and at the same time destroy their property, leaving their dependents and relatives without homes, food, clothing, and other basic necessities.

Oral testimonies from some of Rhodesia's detainees confirmed this kind of scorched-earth-policy under martial law. Francis Mudiwa Gunda, who was detained at Wha Wha Prison, said that at the time of his arrest in his rural area, "All my cattle at my home were shot or gunned down and all houses were burnt."[30] Chishawa Chikadza, who was also incarcerated at Wha Wha Prison, said that, "Because my [rural] home area was a battlefield, I was arrested because I helped the freedom fighters (African guerrillas). How could I express the cruelties which the police did to my area? All my things or property were taken by the police."[31] Commenting on the desperate situation of numerous people who were detained and imprisoned under martial law, lawyers, Messrs Lazarus and Sarif, observed that in one martial law area of Nkayi district, whose residents were well-known supporters of the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA),[32]

> The situation continues to deteriorate and to our knowledge *over a 1000* [*sic*] people in the Nkai district alone are being held at a large detention centre. Some of them are tried through the Courts and others are released and yet others are sent to other detention centres in the country. We have no knowledge of what happens in other Martial law areas but would imagine that the picture is very much the same. . . . The picture is rather depressing but until there is a political settlement which is acceptable to a large majority of the people of this country we can expect this rather gloomy situation to obtain for the foreseeable future.[33]

I argue that these laws were key components in a wider, integrated system of state repression. As the evidence in this chapter will show, I suggest that collectively, these legislative pieces created a judicially renegade environment in which security forces became a law unto themselves. In a volatile political environment where security laws were vague and crafted to criminalize *every* aspect of African political activity, Rhodesia's security legislation allowed for wide departures from accepted legal conventions. For example, informants' oral and written evidence demonstrates how Rhodesian security agents gained notoriety for carrying out brutal interrogations in situations where victims were arbitrarily arrested and held in secret for long periods of time, without the normal protections of due process, *habeas corpus*, access to lawyers and the courts, proper indictment, and fair trial. Evidence also shows that torture and violence against African political opponents often went hand-in-hand with a fatal erosion or compromising of the judiciary and rule of law.[34] Furthermore, in an environment where an arsenal of state security laws enabled

Rhodesian security forces "to take any action considered necessary to suppress 'terrorism,'" Africans suspected of and arrested for being involved in the struggle for liberation found themselves at the receiving end of gross violations of human rights during arrests, with no legal recourse.[35]

Getting Arrested: Oral histories of Arrest in Urban and Rural Rhodesia

On February 20, 1964, sensational news of a countrywide swoop of what the Rhodesian government termed "agents provocateurs" dominated Rhodesia's print media.[36] Between 1963 and the early months of 1964, Rhodesian police had begun rounding up thousands of African political activists in the urban areas of Rhodesia and secretly detaining them in prisons across the country. Furthermore, the media also revealed that prior to these arrests, the Rhodesian government had secretly prepared special detention camps for those caught in the dragnet.

The largest of these detention centers was a place called Wha Wha in the Rhodesian town of Gwelo. "Hush Hush at Wha Wha as the Thugs Are Moved In" was the lead headline of the state-owned *Chronicle* newspaper on February 20, 1964. The paper informed its readers that

> Prison Warders from all over Southern Rhodesia have been drafted to Wha Wha, the former rehabilitation center near Gwelo. They will take charge of *thugs* rounded up in the new sweep to end terrorism. European and African police, who will guard the *thugs* behind a 15 ft. fence, have been told their special duty will last least three months. . . . How many [thugs] have already been admitted has not been revealed, but it is known that four lorries, each carrying about 12 Africans and their kit, arrived at Wha Wha today from Salisbury. It is understood that more will be arriving within the next few days.[37] (My emphasis)

Another state newspaper, *Rhodesia Herald*, led with the headline "First Restricted Men Arrive at Wha Wha," and revealed the same day (February 20) that the minister of law and order, Clifford Dupont, "announced yesterday that 'young *thugs* known to the authorities' had been removed from trouble spots and placed under restriction." "This had been necessary," the paper continued, "to protect the African population who were suffering from intimidation and robbery by *terrorists* and *hooligans* who were making their lives a misery."[38] The

Chronicle's editorial piece underlined the fact that these detentions were part of the Rhodesian state's policy of stamping out African political activism—it declared that through these detentions "the Government has demonstrated conclusively that it will not stand by and see *gangsters* defy every civilized decency in the townships."

Both papers reported that the Rhodesian government would not release any further information about the operation and the centers of detention, and a wall of silence was constructed around issues concerning political detention. Indeed, since 1964 no detailed government documentation concerning the detentions was ever disclosed to the public except for measured and cautious official responses in the state-owned media and in Rhodesian parliamentary debates.[39] Whenever Rhodesian authorities were probed on issues concerning African political prisoners, official responses were always evasive. For instance, between 1964 and 1979, official responses in Rhodesian parliamentary debates to issues concerning African political imprisonment were restricted to answers such as these: "It is not considered to be in the national interest to disclose this information at the present time," or "It is not considered in the national interest to divulge this information," or "Mr. Speaker, it is considered it is not in the public interest that I should provide the information requested."[40] In one instance, when an African parliamentarian asked the Rhodesian minister of law and order for statistics of detained African politicians awaiting trial for organizing political meetings, the minister simply dismissed the inquiry by saying, "I regret I am unable to answer the hon. Member's question because I do not know what he means by the term 'African politician.'"[41]

This wall of silence meant that documentation regarding African political imprisonment and detention from the Rhodesian state's perspective is scant, both then and now. Available evidence, however, indicates that among the urban political activists who were rounded up by Rhodesian security forces beginning in 1964 were those involved in armed sabotage activities, political activists trained in sabotage and subversive activities, and active supporters of banned African nationalist parties. Beginning in the early 1970s when the guerrilla war broke out, those arrested and detained also included Africans suspected of having the intention to join the guerrilla war as active combatants, those suspected of recruiting guerrillas, and people suspected of harboring and offering assistance to guerrillas, particularly rural peasants.

To be sure, prior to the Rhodesian police's crackdown on political activists in the mid-1960s, Rhodesian intolerance to political dissent

had already led to the arrest and detention of leaders of African political formations. On the basis of new security legislation passed in the late 1950s, and in response to the growth of African nationalist agitation, Rhodesian security forces started rounding up leading political activists such as the ones who were known for leading African political parties, organizing political meetings, or for being actively involved with banned political parties. Available evidence suggests that this was part of the regime's strategy of suppressing Africans' anti-colonial politics.

In the late 1950s, for instance, the activities of the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (SR-ANC) alarmed the Rhodesian government. Formed in 1957, and as the first African opposition political party to seriously challenge the colonial order, the SR-ANC and its leadership gained notoriety for stoking discontent and resistance in Rhodesia's rural areas. Rural Native Commissioners in Rhodesia, who were the nominal heads of colonial administration in Rhodesia's rural districts, noted with alarm the many incidences of peasant protest and resistance that arose from the political activities of the SR-ANC in rural Rhodesia. Native commissioners across Rhodesia sounded the alarm at the intrusion of ANC politicians into rural areas particularly because, in their thinking, rural peasants were politically "unsophisticated" and thus were bound to unreasonably act on the rhetoric of ANC politicians and rebel against the colonial government. For instance, the Rhodesian chief native commissioner himself, who was the highest ranked overseer of "Native/African Affairs," summed up this opinion in a warning to the government in 1959:

> This ANC . . . began to reach out tentacles to the rural areas during 1958, probing about for grievances and local talent on which to fasten and then cleverly evoking an emotional response out of which local branches (of the ANC) were created. In six [rural] districts we have witnessed a gradual intensification of soapbox oratory which was so characteristic of weekends in the urban areas, we have viewed with increasing concern the effect on unsophisticated peasants of violent and lurid speeches.[42]

In response to the activities of the ANC, the Rhodesian government immediately invoked the 1959 Preventive Detention (Temporary Provisions) Act in order to justify the detention and arrest of ANC leaders without charge. Furthermore, owing to the violent 1959 political unrest in other territories of the Federation of Rhodesian

and Nyasaland to which Southern Rhodesia belonged, the government declared a State of Emergency. During that emergency, the Rhodesian security forces specifically targeted political leaders of the SR-ANC. Edgar Whitehead, the Rhodesian premier at the time, told the Rhodesian parliament that the rounding up of ANC leaders was part of his government's efforts to "remove this *canker* in our body politic" ("canker" meaning the ANC). As the first wide-scale detentions of political offenders in Rhodesian, the 1959 detentions were a harbinger for future decades of intensified state repression in which political imprisonment figured prominently. More importantly, these detentions revealed the already advanced state of Rhodesian intelligence and surveillance, and confirmed the intense white commitment to curbing nationalist protest.

These initial arrests of African political leaders seemed to be part of the Rhodesian government's strategy of removing political activists from their communities in order to short-circuit the circulation of anti-colonial politics. This was certainly the perception of those African political leaders who were the first to be detained in the late 1950s and early 1960s, particularly considering the triviality of their political "crimes." For instance, the most common reasons that Rhodesian authorities gave to justify the detentions of these political leaders were usually vague and circumstantial. Enos Nkala, one of the leading nationalists who was detained at this time, said in an interview that, "When we were detained in 1959 and in the early 1960s, most of us never really knew why were detained. Some police officers who came to arrest us could not even clearly articulate the reasons behind our detentions." One of the common reasons for detaining African political leaders was the content of the speeches that most of them made at political gatherings and rallies. As Nkala revealed, most African political leaders ended up in detention in the early 1960s after Rhodesian authorities had criminalized their speeches at political gatherings or rallies. He said,

> Well, the common charge was 'making subversive speeches.' But none of those who arrested us could even clearly spell out what was 'subversive' about our speeches. The laws were such that anything you said could be interpreted as subversive and so on. We were first arrested in 1959 when the ANC was banned, and then other political leaders also got detained when other subsequent parties such as the NDP or ZAPU were banned. After a brief period of freedom, when ZANU was banned in 1964, most of us (in ZANU leadership) were all bundled into detention again.[43]

During the 1959 arrests, Rhodesian authorities never bothered to give any reasons for detaining African political leaders. As Maurice Nyagumbo wrote in his autobiography,

> [When] the police collected me on 26 February [1959]…we were sent to [a Salisbury] police depot where we found the ANC stalwarts who included Chikerema, Nyandoro, Mushonga, Edson Sithole, Daniel Madzimbamuto, Moses Ayema, Robert Marere and many others. Naturally, we were concerned as we did not know why we were being detained. The police who arrested us did not bother to tell us what was happening.

Nyagumbo and his colleagues only got to know that they had been detained under a state-of-emergency order through newspapers that African prison warders smuggled into prison for them.[44] Edgar Tekere, another SR-ANC leader, was also oblivious of the reasons for his arrest by officers of the Special Branch in the March of 1959. It was only after being taken to Salisbury Central Police Station for questioning that he was told the reason for his arrest: "The reason for my arrest was that a receipt for money—some ten pounds—that I had donated to the Party (meaning SR-ANC), had been found in a raid on the Party offices."[45]

By 1963, most leaders of African political formations were either in detention or had been temporarily released from detention. Of the few who remained outside, in most cases it was only a matter of time before they too were nabbed. Joshua Nkomo, who was arguably the foremost nationalist leader, having presided over the formation and leadership of the SR-ANC, NDP, ZAPU, and PCC, had managed to elude detention until April 1964. According to Nkomo, "Finally, despite my hard-won expertise in the details of the law, [the Rhodesian authorities] found a charge that they thought they could make stick against me." As he explained in his autobiography,

> I made a speech on lines that were familiar enough. I described the political structure of our country, saying that power was reserved by a group of fellows who collected our property and divided it up among themselves. I meant, of course, the government. I further stated that the government was chosen not by us, the people, but by a small group called the electorate who were concerned to maintain their wealth and privileges. The law said criticizing the government was fair game, but that criticizing white people was subversive. Since I was criticizing the electorate, and that electorate consisted almost entirely of white people, the government decided that they could probably get a conviction.

> They charged me with subversion: I was convicted in the magistrates' court.[46]

Nkomo appealed his conviction and was released on bail, but three days later Rhodesian authorities arrested him and sent him into detention at Gonakudzingwa Detention Camp. Like many other political leaders, Nkomo was to become a free man again after a decade.[47] Similarly, Robert Mugabe, a prominent ZANU leader, found his way into detention after declaring in a speech in 1964 that, "This fascist settler cowboy government is preparing to unilaterally declare Rhodesia independent from Britain for the settlers to subject millions of Africans to slavery."[48] Rhodesian authorities promptly arrested him for "making a subversive statement within the hearing of others."[49] Like Nkomo, Mugabe only became a free man again after a decade in detention.

However, contrary to Rhodesian authorities' intentions, taking African political leaders out of circulation from their communities did not short-circuit the flow of anti-colonial ideas. In fact, the detention of these nationalist leaders became one of the most important political grievances that fueled political unrest in townships. As I demonstrated in the previous chapter, in the 1960s, urban spaces quickly descended into political chaos as African political activists confronted Rhodesian authorities through various acts of civic disobedience. Urban political disturbances in the early to mid-1960s were clear evidence of the failure of the authorities to stem political dissent through detaining its leaders. In order to deal with this growing opposition, authorities continued to choose to confine those leaders and supporters of nationalist parties. Relying on the regime's authoritarian security legislation and an already established and elaborate intelligence surveillance system, highly organized security forces moved to round up activists in the urban areas and bundled them into detention centers or prisons.

In the urban centers, police officers from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), the Special Branch, the Police Reserves, and the Crime Prevention Unit—or notoriously known as "The Dicks" to most African township dwellers—which consisted of mostly black plainclothes officers— were responsible for rounding up activists. In early 1964, a few months after authorities had secretly set up several detention centers in Rhodesia in preparation for the widespread confinement of political activists, Emmie Sifelani Ncube and her friends found their way into detention because of their political activities as ZANU youths, which put them at the forefront of organizing

political demonstrations in Salisbury's most volatile African township of Highfields. On the day that she was arrested, Ncube had heard rumors that some of her friends in ZANU had been arrested, but she had to gone to work anyway, hoping that she was not among the targeted activists. As she explained in an interview,

> On the day that I was arrested, I had just returned home from work, and I was still wearing my work uniform. Before I could do anything, I heard a small child shouting to me, saying police trucks had surrounded my home. This was in the African township of Highfields. I looked outside and saw four police trucks surrounding my home and many police officers holding guns. The police shouted my name, and I came out and announced that I was Emmie Ncube. They unceremoniously told me that I was under arrest, and that I was not supposed to take anything from my house but to just get into one of the police trucks. However, I demanded to know why I was being arrested, and the police told me that I was a 'terrorist' and an agitator against the government. I asked them why they were harassing me when there were many other political activists, and the police told me that other police officers were also rounding up those other political activists. After the police refused that I take a few items from my home, they shoved me into a truck and demanded that I sign a detention order. I refused to sign the document because I had not carefully studied it and immediately one of them hit me hard with a rifle butt on my mouth, and I spit four teeth. My head started swelling from the beating. There were white police officers, but the one who hit me was African. The police held us in the main Salisbury Prison.[50]

Ncube was later transferred to a detention center called Connemara in the Rhodesian town of Gwelo that had cells for women. Her arrest and that of many other African political organizers in the urban townships in 1964 revealed that, despite the Rhodesian police's own intelligence about the activities of African political activists in the townships, it was apparent that the police also relied on a network of African informers who lived in the townships. In African urban communities, these informers were known as "sellouts" or *vatengesi*. Although it was difficult to know the identities of these sellouts, most political activists blamed sellouts for their incarceration. Rueben Bascoe, a ZAPU activist who became a jailbird for much of the 1960s and 1970s, believed that sellouts instigated his initial arrest. According to Bascoe, "I was first arrested in Salisbury in 1964 after some sellouts told Rhodesian secret police, i.e., the Criminal Investigation Detectives (CIDs), that my friends and I were involved

in organizing a violent strike in our township. The police came to our homes and arrested a lot of us."[51] Victor Kuretu, another ZAPU activist in the urban town of Umtali who was also arrested in 1964, blamed his incarceration on a network of police informers in Umtali's Sakubva Township who monitored the activities of African political organizers. According to Kuretu,

> There were informers who had been planted by the police in all urban African townships. You could not do anything that was not reported to the police by these informers. On the day that I was arrested, what happened is that in the morning people woke up and found the streets of Sakubva Township in Umtali littered with political pamphlets that contained political messages meant to mobilize and incite people to oppose the government through boycotts, demonstrations, and the like. Informers rushed to the police and said I was responsible. When the police picked me up, several witnesses were lined up to accuse me of being the one who gave them the pamphlets to distribute in the township. I did not even know many of these people . . . but they fingered me as the one who was urging people to rise against the white regime.[52]

Although many of my informants said they did not know the identities of most of these "sellouts," rumor and speculation about the identities of police informers was always rife in African townships. Whilst some township dwellers believed that informers were people who did not actively participate in township politics, others believed that activists from rival political formations deliberately gave information to the police in order to undermine the political work of other African political parties. However, and more importantly, considering the intense fear and intimidation that Rhodesian police operatives instilled among Africans in the townships, some Africans who feared being victimized or incarcerated by the Rhodesian police also involuntarily acted as police informers. According to Mathew Mangoma,

> The Rhodesian police used to find vulnerable people in our townships whom they intimidated with all sorts of threats of violence and forced them to become their informants concerning the activities of African political organizers. I knew of a woman neighbor who was a widow who was approached by police from the Special Branch and who told her that they would rape her daughters with impunity if she did not agree to be an informer.[53]

Oral evidence also suggests that other political activists, after having been arrested and tortured in police custody, would be released

from prison by the Rhodesian police after agreeing under duress to work as undercover police informants within African political organization. For instance, in an interview, Thomas Chirise said that,

> After my arrest in Gwabalanda Township (Bulawayo), the police tortured me severely to the extent that I thought I was going to die. I was released from jail after two days of torture and only after agreeing to work as an informer for the CID. The police gave me specific instructions to report to the CID offices every week with new information about ZAPU activities in the Bulawayo townships. After about a month of giving false reports to the CIDs, I fled from Bulawayo to my rural home in Gwanda.[54]

Aside from activists who were arrested in the townships in the 1960s because of their roles as organizers of various acts of civic disobedience such as strikes, boycotts, and demonstrations, other activists were arrested because of their involvement in extremely violent sabotage activities. In urban areas such as Salisbury, for example, petrol bombs were an increasingly familiar feature of attacks on Rhodesian government buildings and other properties in the 1960s. Oliver Muvirimi Dizha and his colleagues in ZAPU were among some of the underground saboteurs who utilized petrol bombs to attack state-owned buildings in Salisbury. In 1964, after a string of petrol-bombings in Salisbury, Dizha and his friends found themselves in police custody after Rhodesian security personnel intercepted their car at a roadblock. Inside the trunk of the car were prepared petrol bombs, which Dizha's colleagues were carrying to downtown Salisbury to commit what they called "actions." Apparently, Dizha, who was the most knowledgeable in evading police detection and who owned the car, was not with his colleagues when the police discovered the petrol bombs. But since the car belonged to him, and after his colleagues had professed ignorance about the bombs in the car, the police hunted down Dizha. However, since Dizha did not know that police had arrested his colleagues, he was unaware that the police were after him. As he explained,

> The morning after the police had discovered the petrol bombs in my car, I ignorantly made my way to my home in Mbare, oblivious of whatever had transpired the previous night. When I got home, I asked my wife why my friends had not returned my car, and she just said she knew nothing and had not seen any of my friends. I felt my hairs rising, my friend, and I feared that those boys had been caught! I had no idea what was going to happen, in case my friends were in police custody.

> I did not know whether to go to my workplace, or to our ZAPU offices. I just shuddered and did not know what to do. I later decided to go to Oliver Bwanya's workplace—one of my colleagues who were with my car—but his fellow workmates told me that he did not turn up for work that day. Late in the day, I met a friend who came to me and said he had seen my car parked at the police station. I literally stuttered as I asked him if he knew anything about 'something' in the car's trunk, but he knew nothing. I decided to go back home, and I slept the whole afternoon. At around 4:15 p.m., top police officers from the CID section came to my home. I knew their names as Sam and Magama, and both were Africans. They told me that they wanted to take me to the police station to answer some questions. I already knew the issue, and so I went with them to the Main Charge Office in Salisbury.

Dizha and his colleagues faced the death sentence in a Rhodesian court of law since the use of petrol bombs was a crime punishable by death under the newly amended LOMA. After a court trial, Dizha escaped the death sentence by some legal technicality, while some of his colleagues were executed.

Similarly, Francis Chikukwa, who was arrested in 1966, gave testimony of how he was arrested as part of a group of saboteurs in Salisbury who, in addition to using petrol-bombs, were also trained in the use of special explosives such as hand grenades. Already by 1966, Chikukwa and his colleagues had caused considerable damage to a lot of Rhodesian infrastructure in Salisbury and in other areas such as white settler farms near Salisbury. Apparently, Chikukwa was arrested after the Rhodesian police had arrested some of his colleagues who cracked under police torture and interrogation and implicated him. But Chikukwa still managed to evade arrest for some time because the Rhodesian police did not know his true identity. This was because among his friends, Chikukwa was popularly known by his *nom de guerre*, "Mau Mau," which made it difficult for the police to track him down. However, on July 23, 1966, the police arrested him, and as he explained,

> When the Rhodesian police arrested me, some Rhodesian security men had come to my workplace inquiring about my whereabouts. Among the police officers were some African police officers that I already knew by name such as Sgt. Mbanga, and another man that I knew as Sam. These police officers knew for a long time that I was involved in sabotage activities, but they did not know my true name. Some of my arrested comrades had told them that my name was "Mau Mau," and they had gathered details about my workplace. That very day that the police came for me, I was already making plans with some

> of my friends to skip the country to Zambia to join other liberation war fighters. But on that day, a group of five Rhodesian soldiers, five members of the Criminal Investigations Department (CID), and four *mabhunu* descended on my workplace with information that I was a trained saboteur. I immediately knew that a colleague who was in my group of ten saboteurs, Prayer Mpakami, who had been arrested a few days earlier by the Rhodesian police, had spilled the beans. These Rhodesian security men confronted me with my real name, and I knew that there was no way they could have known me except through my arrested colleague. These men, armed to the teeth, took me away from my workplace in a police jeep vehicle to Salisbury Prison.[55]

Like Dizha, Chikukwa was sentenced to death under LOMA, but he escaped the gallows because he was underage. He went on to serve a life sentence at Khami Maximum Prison.

Guerrilla War and Arrests in the Urban Areas and the Countryside, 1970–1979

After the outbreak of the war in the early 1970s, the numbers of Africans in Rhodesian prisons and detention centers rose exponentially. Both rural and urban Africans faced imprisonment for any number of crimes ranging from attempting to skip the country to join African fighters, recruiting young men or women to join the guerrillas, or giving shelter, food, or supporting the guerrillas in any way that Rhodesian authorities deemed "aiding and abetting terrorism." In the mid-1970s, for example, there was rampant recruitment of young men and women from the urban townships for the guerrilla movement than at any other stage since the beginning of the armed struggle. During the early stages of the liberation war, a steady stream of adolescents and youths from the rural areas, most of whom were unable to get permits to live and work in the country's main industrial urban centers, provided the bulk of the guerrilla forces. In the mid-1970s, however, reports of young men "disappearing" in African urban townships became rampant. A 1976 journalistic investigation by a British writer, Peter Earl, revealed that in some African townships of Salisbury, men were even leaving good jobs to join the freedom fighters using the northeastern parts of the country as a passage route to Mozambique. In his survey, Earl concluded that "Some of the more volatile of the ten [African] townships surrounding Salisbury have proven to be deadly breeding grounds for the war now being fought in Rhodesia, so much so that [in] a number of the African locations, the urban population has dropped markedly."[56] Commenting on the

sudden drop in the numbers of mainly male youths in African townships, an African journalist remarked at the time that, "Take a look at the streets [in African townships] and remember what it used to be like: All the men have gone."[57]

Among urban Africans, knowledge of guerrilla recruitment was extensive in the mid-1970s. Oral evidence suggests that even those who chose not to join the liberation movement were capable of describing the finer details of the system. According to one informant, "It was easy to slip across the Rhodesian border (coming from Salisbury). Most of them (i.e., potential guerrillas) went up by bus, usually to Umtali (a northeastern Rhodesian town on the border with Mozambique). From there, it was just a short walk, and they were out of Rhodesia. Often, the bus drivers took recruits from Salisbury without their having to pay. It was one of the advantages of being a freedom fighter."[58]

In the 1970s, therefore, Rhodesian security forces rounded up many Africans on charges of either intending to join the guerrillas or aiding young people to slip out of the country to become guerrillas. Bus drivers were arrested "for giving aid to terrorists." Ordinary people were picked up in private cars or, as in the case of a group of black students from the University College of Rhodesia, in trains.[59] Special Branch informers were prolific in detecting people intending to leave for the war, even though Rhodesian authorities remained gravely concerned with the large numbers of people making the trips undetected. In 1977, Lucas Jonasi, who had been a longtime ZAPU activist in Salisbury, made up his mind to skip Rhodesia and join ZIPRA guerrillas operating from Botswana and Zambia. After being satisfied with the intricate details of the recruitment operation, Jonasi approached a reputed recruiter and requested to be included among the next-on-line young men and women to be transported to Botswana. But his journey was ill-fated: somewhere along the way out of the country, Rhodesian operatives intercepted the vehicle that was taking potential guerrillas to Botswana. In an interview, Jonasi explained his arrest this way:

> In 1977, I was part of a group of 24 recruits that traveled from Salisbury. We left Salisbury by train, arrived in Bulawayo, and stayed in Mzilikazi African Township at the home of nationalist leader, George Silundika. That group consisted of young men and women. After we had been briefed by our intelligence people that the road to Botswana via Plumtree was now safe for us to travel, we packed ourselves into a Peugeot truck and started the journey. However, along the way, we

> came upon a snap police roadblock that was not there when our reconnaissance people surveyed the road earlier. The roadblock had been set up near Khami Ruins, and we had no way of avoiding it. A few of our colleagues were captured there, but I managed to escape along with other comrades. We went back to Bulawayo that night, and our recruiters instructed us to go back to Salisbury to hide. But some of those people who had been captured cracked under police interrogation and gave information to the police that led to the arrest of our recruiters here in Salisbury and in Bulawayo. Our driver had also been arrested on the day of the roadblock encounter. Now, because the people who knew how to arrange the journey to guerrilla bases outside the country had been arrested, it became difficult for us to plan to skip the country and join others in battle. All along, we had relied on these people for guidance. As we were in hiding, those captured comrades continued to give information to the police, and this finally led to our arrest in Salisbury's Chitungwiza Township where we were hiding. The police arrived at our hideout at midnight and surrounded the whole neighborhood. They ordered all male occupants who were in houses in that neighborhood to come out and assemble at an open space. When we saw the harassment of all these people, we felt that there was no need for us to cause such chaos, and so we gave ourselves up to the police. The police already had our names, and as soon as they had identified us, they started beating us senseless. We were then taken to Salisbury prison.[60]

Rueben Bascoe, another potential recruit, had his plans to flee Rhodesia to Zambia aborted after the Rhodesian police learnt from informers in Salisbury's Highfield Township that groups of young men and women were leaving for guerrilla bases outside the country. As Bascoe explained,

> I decided to skip the country and join other guerrilla trainees outside the country in 1966. A local recruiter organized us into a group of about twenty boys, and he told us to go and assemble at a house in Highfield Township and wait for a bus that would ferry us to Lusaka, Zambia. We stayed at that house for three days, but later heard that the police had impounded the bus that was supposed to come and transport us to Lusaka. Some people had informed the police that this bus was being used to transport guerrilla recruits from Salisbury to Zambia. The bus driver confessed this to the police after being tortured severely. So, on our third night in Highfield Township the police just came unannounced and surrounded the home that we were staying awaiting the bus. Twelve people escaped arrest, but I was arrested along with the other eight boys. There was no way of denying that we intended to join the guerrilla war. We were all taken to Chikurubi Maximum Prison.[61]

As these testimonies reveal, whenever Rhodesian authorities arrested people intending to join the guerrilla war, everyone involved in aiding their passage was also arrested, that is, recruiters, drivers, and others. For instance, Mathew Masiyakurima was a reputed guerrilla recruiter in Salisbury, but he fled to Umtali in 1972 after learning that the police were looking for him. He had previously spent time in detention at Gonakudzingwa Detention camp, and he had no intention of going back into confinement. However, as a well-known ZAPU activist, Masiyakurima became a useful conduit for potential guerrillas passing through the border town of Umtali. It was during one botched passage of potential guerrillas to Mozambique that landed Masiyakurima in jail. As he recalled in an interview,

> Whilst I was in Umtali, a group of three young men and two women from the midlands town of Que-Que intending to cross the border and join the guerrillas in Mozambique came to me with instructions from a fellow activist…to consult me for advice on how to cross the Rhodesian border to go to Mozambique. I gave these young men and women my advice since I knew the borderland terrain. However, somehow these boys and girls got lost on the way to Mozambique and fell into the hands of Rhodesian soldiers. The soldiers tortured them until they confessed that it was me who had given them advice on how to cross the border and get to Mozambique. Two days after their capture, the Special Branch police came to my home in the African township of Sakubva. I asked them what had happened, and they just promised me that, "You shall speak! You are busy doing the work of recruiting people to join the terrorists!" I was immediately taken to a police station.[62]

In some cases, however, the Rhodesian police arrested anyone suspected of being a potential guerrilla or of aiding the slippage of potential guerrillas even without strong evidence to prove the crime. For example, Nare Nyati, a renowned traditional healer and herbalist in Bulawayo's Magwegwe Township, was arrested on March 19, 1978 by the Rhodesian police on recruiting allegations on the grounds that she "encouraged and assisted a large number of young African boys and girls to proceed to Botswana and Zambia to receive guerrilla training." According to a statement that was made by her lawyers at the time,

> The State will allege at the trial that Miss Nyati in her practice as a Herbalist dispensed certain medicines to these youngsters which medicines it will be alleged would give these youngsters good-luck and

> immunity from arrest by the Security Forces of Rhodesia. Although this charge would look ridiculous, the Prosecution and the Police took a very serious view thereof and remanded Miss Nyati to Khami Prison, and were then instructed to make an application for her admission to bail. As a matter of practice, an application for bail in matters of this nature is normally refused because there is always a fear that the recruitor would himself (or herself) abscond and not stand trial.[63]

In another case that the same lawyers for Nyati handled, Rhodesian police arrested an 18-year-old boy, Auboke Dube, in 1978 in rural Plumtree[64] for contravening Section 24 (2) of the LOMA by "attempting to leave the country to undergo terrorist training." His lawyers managed to establish the fact that at the time of his arrest, Dube was a pupil at the Mzilikazi Secondary School in Bulawayo, and had apparently been sent to his family's rural home in Plumtree to raise money for examination fees that were due, and also to find a new school uniform. When he was arrested, the boy was proceeding to his brother who was employed in Plumtree in order to raise these funds, and he had a note to this effect. He was nevertheless arrested by the Rhodesian police on the train. The lawyers also noted that the boy made a "confession," apparently after the police had assaulted him.[65]

In rural Rhodesia, authorities ubiquitously criminalized peasant communities for supporting guerrillas in the 1970s. The major reason for this was that most guerrilla bases were located where the fighters felt safe—under the cover of the bushes—and they depended the peasants' material support. Since the African-led war was the gravest security threat to colonial rule, authorities shifted their attention from the urban to the rural areas and deployed every military intelligence tactic to track down both the guerrillas and their supporters. Like in the urban areas, in addition to Rhodesian security forces' own intelligence, a network of local informers was crucial in order to prosecute the war. As one study of the guerrilla war in Zimbabwe shows, evidence of informers or sellouts was rampant in the countryside. Norma Kriger's study identifies such issues as petty jealousies and peasant differentiation as having fueled incidences of selling out in rural Rhodesia.[66] However, Kriger failed to note some of the involuntary ways in which peasants became informers. For example, considering the intense fear and intimidation that the Rhodesian forces instilled among peasant communities, some rural dwellers resorted to being informers in order to save their lives. There is overwhelming evidence that the levels and extent of Rhodesian forces' violence was heavily felt in the rural areas where peasants were subjected to gross

spectacles of murderous violence and bodily torture.[67] In such circumstances, therefore, some peasants involuntarily opted to become Rhodesian forces' informers in order to escape harm.

Among some of the ways of containing peasant support for the guerrillas, Rhodesian authorities confined whole communities to concentration camps that were called "Keeps" or "Protected Villages," or arrested individual peasants who were sent to prisons and detention centers. Refina Siniwa was one of those peasants who were caught on the wrong side of Rhodesia's war law. As a resident of Mt. Darwin, a guerrilla hot spot, Siniwa and some of her friends had welcomed guerrillas since the beginning of the liberation war and participated in every aspect of supporting them: cooking their food, washing their clothes, and harboring them from the Rhodesian soldiers, among other things. In 1976, however, when the war was very intense in most parts of rural Rhodesia, Siniwa and some of her colleagues were arrested and charged "for supporting, concealing, and harboring terrorists." They were also charged under LOMA's Chapter 65, Section 51 (1) (c) for "failing to report the presence of terrorists." As Siniwa explained,

> A group of *vatengesi* (or sellouts) informed Rhodesian soldiers that I was one of the people who cooked for *magandanga* (terrorists). The *vatengesi* gave Rhodesian soldiers details about how I supplied guerrillas with food, blankets, and other things. They even said that I gave shelter and harbored guerrillas. They also told them that my whole homestead was involved in sheltering guerrillas. This is what led to our arrest. After sellouts had passed information to Rhodesian soldiers about my activities, soldiers descended on my homestead. They searched the whole homestead, and found piles of clothing and blankets, which I had obtained from some friends in Salisbury for the guerrillas. What I used to do is when I went to Salisbury to visit my husband, I would ask fellow political activists to donate clothing, shoes, blankets, and other things that I knew guerrillas needed. I would then go back to my rural home with these things and distribute them to the guerrillas. When the Rhodesian soldiers came in 1976, the time when the war was really intense in our area, these are the items that they found at my home.[68]

Siniwa was arrested along with her son, daughter, and several nieces and nephews.

In other peasant communities, the mere existence of guerrillas in their area was all the reason that Rhodesian authorities needed in order to criminalize every peasant living in the area. Mai Kadengu,

who resided in the Rusape rural area during the war, said in an interview that on the day that she was arrested, every peasant in the area was shocked when Rhodesian forces just invaded their villages and started arresting people, accusing them of harboring terrorists. In an interview, Kadengu recalled that,

> If I remember well, it must have been in the April of 1976 when the Rhodesian security forces arrested us in the Rusape rural area. I remember that I had just accompanied my husband to board a Salisbury-bound bus. As I was returning from accompanying my husband, we met Rhodesian soldiers along the way, and they told us that our whole village was under arrest. Our rural area was one of those worst affected by the war because freedom fighters and Rhodesian soldiers occasionally clashed and fought deadly battles there. As civilians, we were usually caught in-between the fighting. Comrades (freedom fighters) had established their bases in our area such that we knew where they were and constantly interacted with them. There was a big base for the guerrillas near our village, and that is where the guerrillas constantly held what we called *pungwe* (all-night political gatherings designed to politicize the rural peasantry and ensure their support of the guerrilla war). On the day of our arrest and upon the arrival of Rhodesian soldiers in our village, many people fled the area, but for women like me with children on our backs, it was impossible to flee. I was one of the three women with infants on our backs among the people who were corralled by the Rhodesian soldiers. The soldiers alleged that we were harboring and supporting *matororo* (terrorists) in our rural area. . . . On that day, Rhodesian soldiers shot about six people to death, including a young woman who had just given birth two weeks earlier.[69]

In several other rural districts, many women were also arrested for cooking for terrorists and other crimes associated with coming into contact with guerrillas. In the December of 1978, Rozinah Ncube, who resided in the Kezi District where ZIPRA guerrillas had bases, gave evidence of how she and her friends, in order to feed guerrillas, had slaughtered cattle that they had obtained from a white settler-owned farm. Apparently, since peasants in Kezi were historically poor from the time white settlers decimated and confiscated their herds of cattle in the 1890s when white settlers militarily defeated Africans and colonized Rhodesia, Kezi peasants had very small herds of livestock. According to Ncube, ZIPRA guerrillas operating in the area occasionally instructed peasant women in Kezi to obtain cattle from neighboring white settler-owned farms in order to provide the guerrillas with food. According to her testimony in a Rhodesian court of law, Ncube said guerrillas based such instructions on the belief that

white-owned cattle were "*inkomo zabobabamkhulu*" which meant, "the cattle of our grandfathers (meaning forebears/ancestors)." Court evidence against Ncube and her friends showed that the women collected one cow from a white settler farm, and based on this act, were charged with stock theft, cooking for terrorists, and failing to report the presence of terrorists. A magistrate convicted all the women and sentenced them to nine years imprisonment.[70]

In Sipolilo District, another ZIPRA operational area in Matebeleland, Rhodesian soldiers also rounded up peasants whom they suspected of supporting guerrillas. In 1979, for example, evidence suggests that Rhodesian military authorities in the area received information regarding terrorist activity or the terrorist involvement of the locals. According to a contemporary assessment,[71] perhaps the authorities did not have any direct evidence against peasants in the area and therefore proceeded by just arresting any locals in sight. Some of the people arrested were peasant brothers Levit and Benchard Katumba. According to a petition that their lawyers drafted in 1979, Rhodesian soldiers arrested the brothers because they were found grinding corn at their father's grinding mill. Soldiers immediately concluded that the resultant corn meal was meant for guerrillas. According to the written evidence,

> [On] Friday 1st June, 1979, Benchard Katumba was approached by 7 European members of the Security forces whilst working at the grinding mill, with his younger brother Levit. One of the soldiers asked if he was Benchard and he replied that he was. He was asked something in Shona. Immediately after he replied, the soldier hit him in the face with the butt of a gun. He fell to the ground and was struck in the chest by another soldier. In the [grinding] mill there were buckets of unground mealie grain (corn) and of the ground meal. The soldiers accused the brothers of grinding meal for the "terrorists." They poured diesel over the mealie grain and meal and set it on fire.[72]

The Rhodesian soldiers dragged the brothers to a Special Martial Court[73] in the area, where a white judge sentenced them to death based on "confessions" that were obtained after the soldiers had thoroughly tortured the two. In another case in the same area, two peasant boys identified as Bibo Chitedza and Duster Katanha were among the people who were arrested in Sipolilo and, based on their "confessions," they were also sentenced to death by a special martial court for the crime of assisting guerrillas.[74] All four boys were incarcerated at Chikurubi Maximum Prison and were awaiting execution at the time that their lawyers drafted clemency petitions for them.

Furthermore, Africans who traveled during the liberation war from urban areas to their rural homes to visit kinfolk also found themselves behind bars as political prisoners or detainees, based on a variety of suspicions by Rhodesian authorities. For instance, Peter Chitsote, who resided in Salisbury's Glen Norah Township, decided to visit his rural village in Mrewa after hearing from a woman and a friend who had recently visited his rural area that there had been a "contact" (Rhodesian military vocabulary for an armed conflict with guerrillas) near his rural home. Since his informants told him that many people in the area had either been injured or killed, Chitsote immediately headed to Mrewa, wishing to know whether his parents and relatives had escaped harm. On arrival in Mrewa, Rhodesian police, who accused him of having been present during the so-called contact, immediately arrested him. The police took him to Mrewa Police Station where they further accused him of being a *mujibha* (male guerrilla collaborator). According to Chitsote's written testimony in a February 1979 petition for clemency,

> [At the police station] I was made to lie on the ground, face down, whilst being questioned about the matters I set out hereinafter (in the petition). I was hit several times with fists and clapped hands on the face. I denied the allegations made against me. I was then blindfolded with a piece of red cloth but, before this, I had noticed a fan belt (rubber-like belt) and a walking stick in the room. I was hit several times on the buttocks with what felt like the fan belt. I continued to deny the allegations made against me. I was then struck twice on the head with what I presumed was the walking stick. One blow landed on my skull and I still have a dent as a result of it. The other blow landed on my left cheek and this left a mark. My nose started to bleed. As a result of these assaults perpetrated upon me, I admitted the allegations made against me. As I shall more fully explain hereinafter, I deny the allegations but admitted them to the C.I.D. details as a result of being beaten. After I confessed, the C.I.D. details took off the blindfold. They went away for a few minutes and, when they returned, they told me to sign a statement. The statement was not read to me and nor did I have the opportunity of reading it. I signed it in the presence of the two details.[75]

Rhodesian police later brought Chitsote before a special court martial on January 4 1979, where he was charged with "failing to report terrorists and assisting terrorists." Although he pleaded not guilty, a C.I.D. police officer who had interrogated Chitsote handed the court the statement that Chitsote had signed and claimed that Chitsote had made the statement freely. As a result, the special martial court judge

quashed Chitsote's challenge of the statement and handed down the death sentence. At the time Chitsote wrote this testimony in the form of a legal petition for clemency against the death penalty, he was incarcerated in Chikurubi Maximum Prison.

Other rural arrests during the war arose from everyday interactions between rural residents and the guerrillas, which Rhodesian authorities deemed as evidence of "supporting terrorists." For example, in Gwanda rural area, Lufaya Ndlovu was imprisoned for selling hides in Bulawayo, and with the money he received, buying a pair of shoes that he later handed to a so-called terrorist.[76] Rhodesian police also charged David Sibanda with assisting a group of guerrillas because they had given him $6.00 to proceed to Bulawayo to buy them cigarettes, Both men were charged in a court of law under LOMA's Chapter 65, Section 51 (1) (c) for "failing to report the presence of terrorists." Court documents indicate that a magistrate who handled the case sentenced the two to three years in prison on September 11, 1979, and both were jailed at Khami Prison.[77]

Lastly, during the war, Rhodesian authorities targeted young African men for arrest for refusing to answer to the regime's "call-up" or military draft. Many young men, convinced that fighting on the Rhodesian side was tantamount to fighting against the cause of African freedom from colonial rule, refused to join the Rhodesian Security Forces. In 1978, for instance, Rhodesian police arrested a group of 265 Unity College of Education students in Bulawayo for refusing to join the so-called call-up and for staging a demonstration against it. In a press statement that the students released, but that the police confiscated before they had handed it to the press, the students defended their act of demonstrating against the call-up. The statement read, in part,

> NO GENUINE MAJORITY RULE NO CALL UP FOR BLACKS
>
> The present government has no legal mandate from the populus [*sic*] to make decisions for them and to be defended by them. Therefore we find Call-Up abhorable [*sic*] to defend the present government. It's an immoral exercise for brothers to fight against each other. The war has got to be more objective so that we defend the nation when there is a genuine common enemy.[78]

The boys were convicted and imprisoned for refusing call-up and also charged under the LOMA for demonstrating against the draft.

The various situations narrated above constitute the several circumstances in which most Africans in the urban and rural areas of Rhodesia found themselves in jail or detention during the liberation

struggle. By rounding up political activists and perceived supporters of the liberation struggle, Rhodesian authorities envisaged that the incarceration of Africans was a means to an end, namely, European hegemonic control, which was at the time under threat from politically restive Africans struggling for majority rule. Later, I document some of the ways that Africans passed through the Rhodesian judicial system, emphasizing that although many faced torture and unfair court trials, Africans were not mere victims of judicial authoritarianism, as they actively resisted and challenged their own prosecution.

"Just Admit it!": Torture, Violence, and Passages through Rhodesian Prosecution

In 1976, an African member of the Rhodesian parliament challenged the Rhodesian minister for law and order to respond to allegations that Rhodesian forces routinely used torture on political detainees and prisoners; the minister categorically declared, "I can only state that such an allegation is preposterous and this, I regret to say, is typical of the unsubstantiated and quite unjustified allegations which are made against the security forces from time to time on the most insubstantial of bases."[79] Such Rhodesian official denials flew in the face of overwhelming evidence that physical violence, particularly torture, was an overwhelming experience for the majority of Africans arrested during the liberation struggle. Torture and violence, for example, figured prominently in many former prisoners' memories of their incarceration during Zimbabwe's struggle for freedom. For purposes of this study, I define and understand torture as "the deliberate infliction of violence, and through violence, severe mental and/or physical suffering upon individuals. It may be inflicted by individuals or groups and for diverse ends, ranging from extracting information, confession, admission of culpability or liability, and self-incrimination to general persuasion, intimidation, and amusement."[80]

In this section, I suggest that in the Rhodesian context, torture partially revealed the political struggles in Rhodesia in which the state was desperate to clearly identify and secure control over a subaltern and racially defined category of "terrorists," "thugs," or "agitators." In Rhodesian war parlance, the brand "terrorist" (and its variations) was given to those Africans who challenged the state's monopoly over the use of violence to demand political and social rights. Accordingly, those Africans known to be political activists or active supporters of the liberation struggle placed themselves outside the rule of law

and were, by definition, "terrorists."[81] Using the excuse of "fighting terrorism," therefore, Rhodesian forces felt justified to use torture, collective punishment, demolition of Africans' houses and property, and illegal detention. Torture, specifically, became a common experience for arrested Africans because Rhodesian police and other security agents believed that torture was efficacious in gaining intelligence about guerrilla movements, political crimes confessions, and an interior knowledge of African political activism. I suggest, however, that Rhodesian officials also tortured in order to extract confessions that validated its discredited anti-terrorism discourse. As a regime that refused to acknowledge that Africans were engaged in a struggle for basic social and political rights, and demeaned that struggle as manifestations of Africans' violent depravity, arrested and tortured Africans provided Rhodesian forces with the "confessions" the authorities needed to validate the claim that African political dissent was tantamount to terrorism. Oral evidence also suggests that although Rhodesian forces' torture was primarily targeted at arrested Africans, the Rhodesian forces also aimed to reach the groups of people to which torture victims belonged by leaving visible imprints of bodily harm as a warning against opposing the white minority regime.

In 1977, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Rhodesia (CCJP) compiled a report detailing the specific methods of torture that Rhodesian forces applied to arrested and accused Africans. The report defined and explained the forms of violence perpetrated by Rhodesian forces in this way:

> By 'physical violence' is meant beating with fists, fan belts (rubber-hoses), wooden planks and sticks, the application of electric shock instruments to sensitive parts of the body; placing a plastic bag over a person's head until the person becomes unconscious, or nearly unconscious, for lack of air; placing a wet towel over a person's mouth and nose to produce similar effects; suspending a person by his feet to which a rope is attached which is hung over the branch of a tree; the person, with his hands tied, is lowered into a drum filled with water until the head is submerged; after a short while the person is raised and allowed to breathe before being lowered again; the process is repeated several times. A common and widespread form of beating is slapping about the head—referred to as 'skull-bashing' in Rhodesian security force jargon. Certain individual members of the security forces have developed their own personal sadistic techniques which may involve pulling out tufts of hair, inflicting pain to private parts; forced drinking of large quantities of water until vomiting occurs; etc.[82]

Oral evidence corroborates such practices, and reveals the ways in which Rhodesian authorities used torture to validate the regime's anti-terror discourse. Francis Chikukwa, a ZAPU activist arrested on "urban terror" charges, gave a chilling account of his torture experiences in the hands of Rhodesian police who coerced him into "confessing" his crimes. According to Chikukwa,

> As soon as I arrived at Salisbury Central Prison, a police officer yelled at me saying, 'So you thought you were clever! We have been informed of everything that you did.' The first to interrogate me were black police officers, and it seemed as if that was the standard procedure. White interrogators came to me later. These black police officers were under instructions to extract confessions through beating us severely. They told me that they had arrested me under the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act, and demanded to know my role in the sabotage activities in Salisbury involving bombs. I flatly denied everything and any accusation that they laid before me. Immediately I was hit with a rifle butt on my mouth, and one of my teeth (*he shows me the tooth*) was broken. They continued to lay accusations onto me . . . [but] I vehemently denied the accusations. I knew that if I had said anything about ever handling bombs, the police would have automatically branded me a 'terrorist.' So I stuck to my denial stance. They removed me from the interrogation cells, directed me to an underground cell, and locked me up. The following day they took me to a secluded part of Salisbury's Hunyani Dam. I had iron cuffs on both my hands and feet. When we got to some site near the dam, the police directed me to dig a shallow grave, and they shoved me into this pit and buried me with mounds of earth. . . . The police officers told me that they wanted to bury me alive and that I was going to die a slow and painful death. The soil near this dam was sandy, and it was hot on the skin. After some time, my interrogators dug me out of the grave and demanded to know where we kept our weapons . . . but I vehemently denied any knowledge of weapons. One police officer fired a shot in the air, trying to strike me with fear. They buried me again into that grave and only left my head out. They tied my head to a rope that was connected to a helicopter, threatened to lift me up, and kill me through hanging. The police again demanded answers from me, but I kept quiet. One of them then used the butt of a riffle to assault me on my face. I resolved at that moment that if I were going to die, I would die without divulging any information that could lead to the deaths of some of my comrades. I continued to deny everything, until they tied sandbags to my feet and took me to the middle of Hunyani Dam. My hands were still cuffed when they started sinking me violently into the waters of the dam. My head was still tied to the helicopter, which was moving up-and-down, periodically dunking me into the water and lifting me up from the

> dam. My rural-based knowledge of swimming helped me to control my breath so as to avoid drowning. After this episode of torture, they started interrogating me again, now accusing me of involvement in the burning of a bus in the city of Salisbury. I thought to myself that after having escaped being accused of the more serious offense of handling bombs, I would rather agree to this lesser charge of torching a bus. So I agreed and told them that "Yes, I was involved in the burning of the bus." They continued laying more accusations . . . [but] I stuck to the lesser charges of burning a bus.[83]

During his ordeal, Francis Chikukwa knew exactly what the Rhodesian authorities wanted to hear from him, that is, a "confession" that would justify and validate Rhodesia's anti-terror campaign. However, like many arrested political activists, Chikukwa chose to endure torture and in the end misled the Rhodesian authorities about his involvement in sabotage activities in Salisbury.

Other activists gave evidence of passing through special Rhodesian prisons that seemed to have been specifically set apart as torture chambers. One such place was Goromonzi prison, just outside Salisbury. Lucas Jonasi, who was arrested in Salisbury on charges of attempting to skip the country to join terrorists, gave evidence of how Rhodesian police at Goromonzi prison made it clear that the prison was a place of torture, and that to escape harm, arrested Africans had to confess their crimes and implicate others. According to Jonasi, who was arrested along with other potential guerrillas, Rhodesian police blindfolded them and took them from Salisbury prison to Goromonzi prison:

> When we got to some destination, we later learned that the police had taken us to Goromonzi prison, a place that was notoriously known as a torture chamber for political offenders. When our group arrived, we were placed at the prison's center area or courtyard, and we saw one person who had just been savagely beaten before we arrived. I personally doubt if that person ever survived because he showed signs of severe beatings. He could not walk, and he was oozing blood from several orifices. We whispered a question to him about what happened, but he only managed to say, 'This is a place of death.' We just sat there feeling very afraid, until the police came. They told us, without mincing their words, that we were at Goromonzi to be severely beaten until we told the whole truth about our activities. These police officers also told us that they had already captured our colleagues and that they had every information about our activities. They took one of our colleagues to a room that had a person who had been savagely beaten by the police. The police told our colleague that if we wanted to avoid such beatings, all we had to do was to confess and tell the truth, and

> then all the police would do was to prepare dockets for our imprisonment and court trial. But we did not want to go to prison, and we told ourselves that it was better to be beaten than to go to jail. Those people were professional torturers, my son.[84] We were beaten as if we were being murdered. I am sure that these police would at times beat people to death. Our confessions were crucial for the trial of our recruiters because the crime of recruiting was considered a serious crime, and those convicted were condemned to death. We knew this, and this was another reason why we were prepared to brave the beatings. If we had confessed and gotten convicted in court, we only faced a long time in jail, but our recruiters faced death. We wanted to avoid this. . . . We were collectively beaten, savagely beaten, but we did not say anything. On the third day, considering that we were now badly injured, we had no choice but to speak. We admitted that we were part of the people who were going for guerrilla training.[85]

Although Jonasi and his colleagues "confessed," they too fully understood that Rhodesian authorities needed them to participate in scripting Rhodesia's anti-terror discourse. Braving torture, these political prisoners actively refused to validate that discourse up to the point when they thought they were nearly dying.

In the rural areas, Rhodesian forces violently intimated and tortured peasants suspected of supporting and harboring terrorists in an effort to criminalize whole peasant communities. Refina Siniwa, arrested along with members of her household and other friends in her rural community of Mt. Darwin, remembered how Rhodesian forces beat up whole groups of arrested people in order to extract even false confessions. According to Siniwa,

> The police would beat us while accusing us of cooking for and harboring terrorists. In full view of others who were arrested, we were called individually for beatings and the police would place a coffin by your side, as if to say that is where we would end up in. They would beat us with all sorts of weapons. Sometimes they would heat up metal irons and apply them on us. As you can see, my son, I do not have teeth in my mouth. A police officer used the butt of his rifle to hit me in the mouth, and all my front teeth went flying in the air. They treated us as if we were not human beings—they burnt me with hot iron rods, and I can show you some of my wounds (*She partially lifts her clothing to show me some nasty burns on her body*). I cannot show you some of the areas that were burnt because you are my son (*She continues to show me parts of her body that have burnt markings*). I never divulged anything, but I pleaded with them to kill me and told them that torturing me was pointless because I knew nothing. Guerrillas had told us that it did

not matter whether we told the soldiers what we knew or not—the difference was the same because the soldiers were still going to kill us.[86]

Other arrested Africans were not so brave, however. Many capitulated after enduring grueling sessions of torture, and gave confessions that authorities used for their conviction and imprisonment. For instance, Bibo Chitsedza, arrested along with many other peasants in the Sipolilo District by Rhodesian soldiers on allegations of harboring terrorists, after being tortured confessed that he was a *mujibha* (guerrilla collaborator) and was sentenced to death on the basis of his confession. According to his written testimony, which was a plea for mercy petition to the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Chitsedza revealed,

After our arrest, the Rhodesian soldiers took us into an incomplete store building, either individually or more that one [at a time]. When it was my turn to go into this building, I found one girl in there already, and I was directed to a counter. I was then asked such questions as the following: "Where do terrorists keep their guns" [and I was told] "Admit you are a trained terrorist." I do not know where terrorists keep their guns, and I am certainly not a terrorist, trained or otherwise. However when I persisted in my denial, what appeared to be terminals leading from some electrical gadget, were attached to each of my ears. A soldier in attendance appeared to turn the handle, thereby causing me tremendous pain. In fact, while this was being done to me I urinated in my pants, I could not control myself. I was being accused repeatedly, of having been trained as a terrorist at St. Bernard's, and because of this electric treatment, I eventually admitted that I had been trained at this school. The girl I found in the building, was also subjected to this electric treatment. . . . The next day I was again taken into the uncompleted store building, where I was accused of owning a gun. I answered that I did not have a gun, and the soldier attending to me insisted "you must have one." The electric treatment from the previous day was repeated, and again I urinated uncontrollably, and while this electric treatment was being applied to me, allegations of moving from farm to farm killing Europeans were put to me which I knew nothing of, and because of the pain I eventually admitted the allegations. . . . On the following day, I was taken to a separate room within the building, and again I was accused of being a terrorist. I denied that I was a terrorist, and a different electrical gadget was now used on me. This different gadget was attached to my genitals, and when it was operated, it caused me to experience unbearable pain in my genitals. In addition to this I was struck across my shoulder with a piece of leather thong usually used for spanning oxen. In the circumstances, I was left with little option but to admit all the allegations that were being put

> to me. [Also] before appearing at the Special Courts Martial, I was warned by soldiers against going back on my statement. In the court, the allegation put to me was that I had stayed with the terrorists for seven months. I was still very scared and I admitted the charge. As a result, I was convicted and sentenced to death and twelve cuts.[87]

Admitting to Rhodesian forces' allegations, accurate or not, validated Rhodesia's anti-terror discourse. Torture victims like Chitsedza became quintessential evidence that justified Rhodesia's repressive policies such as incarcerating its political opponents. Through torture and violence, Rhodesian authorities also targeted other groups of Africans who witnessed the torture of other Africans or who saw the injured bodies of tortured victims in order to deter them from participating in anti-colonial struggles. Following are four transcribed oral histories of torture and violence I recorded, as unfiltered evidence of the nature and purposes of torture in Rhodesia during the liberation struggle. Some informants requested the suppression of certain details.

Oral Histories: Annexures

Victim A

[After my arrest] I was taken to the police camp where I was detained for 14 days, isolated and on poor food. No interrogation was done to me. What I could hear were screaming of people who were [being] beaten. After 14 days I was taken to ___ and released. I was rearrested a few days later and taken to ___. I was brought before a member of the Special Branch. He said "How many boys did you send for terrorist training?" I said "I do not know anything about sending boys." He picked a long walking stick and threw it right at my chest like a spear. I then suddenly fell backwards and collapsed. I was then taken to a small room where I was unhandcuffed and ordered to strip off my clothes. When I hesitated, four police started to strip me off. I was left completely naked. I was handcuffed again. As a whole there were [now] seven police who surrounded me. A black cloth was dressed on my head, and I was blindfolded. All of them had something in their hands—sticks and hosepipes. Without asking me a question, they began hitting and kicking me. One voice said, "We are going to kill you today. Tell us how many boys you recruited." I told them I did not recruit anybody. They continued beating me until I felt eventually that I was losing strength. As I started screaming from pains, one sat on me and tried to close my mouth and got

hold of my throat in order that my screaming should not be heard. Suddenly they began electrifying me. From this moment, I became unconscious. How this beating and electrifying ended I really cannot tell because I completely lost consciousness. I just found myself in water that had been poured on me—still naked and handcuffed. I could not sit. I felt a sharp pain below my diaphragm, and every part was just painful.

Then an African policeman came in. He asked me to plead guilty and agree because, he said, he had collected from the whites that if I did not agree it was better to beat me to death. I told this policeman that it was very difficult because I knew nothing—even if I tried to create a story it would eventually differ with false information they were told. He continued to say that I must just agree that I have recruited boys, in order to save my life. I asked him to tell me the allegation so that I should relate it as they had falsely got it in order to save my life. He admitted he also did not know the false allegations. Suddenly a door was opened. As I was blindfolded, I could not see how many policemen got in, but one jumped on me and began stamping on me, jumping high and coming down. This story I cannot clearly relate because I just became unconscious.

This torture by means of fists, shoes, hosepipes and sticks in addition to electrifying me started at 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

When I gained consciousness for the second time I could hardly sit or lift any part of my body. One of the white police had to suspect that they had broken one of my ribs, because when they tried to sit me, I could not sit and felt a sharp pain at my left side of the chest. As I was bleeding through the mouth and nose, it became difficult for me to breathe; they brought me water and washed my mouth and throat and forced me to gargle water. They raised me and sat me on a chair, and two policemen supported me so that I should not fall. They brought me some food, but I failed to eat.

Then about 3 p.m. they brought me the story: the reason why they had arrested me and tortured me so much. The false allegations were, it was understood to them that I had recruited 11 boys—in actual fact they said I received these boys from ___ (also arrested) and I had to transport these boys to a certain man called ___ (who at the moment was also arrested), and this man took these boys to the Botswana border.

He continued to intimidate me that I should agree to these allegations. I tried my best to explain that such a thing never happened. He continued to say that I may be becoming stubborn with a belief that if I am beaten to death I will go to heaven. He said there was no Jesus or

heaven or life after death. He then said today was my last day. It was the moment I should ask Jesus to deliver me if He was powerful.

Then another policeman came and began all different tortures, especially the electrifying system. Helplessly and mad-like and confused of the torture I was overpowered by the pains of the flesh, and I had to admit just to typical lies and false accusations. This time they began beating my bare feet because they had realized that my body was already severely damaged, and I could die. Finding that even if I tried to say this and that, it was not corresponding [to the security police story], surely, I realized, that they also saw that I knew nothing. So what they had to do was only to lead me. "You did it like this and like this." What I could do was just to admit all these false allegations they were putting against me. This information was typed, and I just had to sign. I never believed I could live, so I just ceased to care about what could happen ahead. I was then taken to custody for the night. I was carried to custody because my feet could not stand me.

(On the basis of the prisoner's "confession" statement, he was charged under Section 23a of the LOMA, which related to recruiting guerrillas and was an offense that carried a mandatory death penalty.)

Victim B

I was arrested on ___, following the absconding of schoolboys from the school the previous week. The following morning, [I was taken] to ___ CID (Criminal Investigations Department) offices. I was taken to the white man who introduced himself as the member in charge of the CID. This man said to me that he had heard all about my activities in politics and that the absconding schoolboys had been recruited by me to go for terror training. I declined having any knowledge about the disappearance of the schoolboys. This man strongly warned me that if were not prepared to accept the charge of recruiting, I would do so under extreme circumstances—of torture. He told me in plain words that the Special Branch [police] had the right to hit and kill me as long as I did not cooperate with them. That is, by admitting what I have no knowledge of. I insisted that I had no knowledge of boys who leave the country in order to go for terror training. He then said to me, "You are a criminal worthy of the worst treatment."

I was taken to a small storage room. They said to me, "You are stupid. We have respected you enough. You will tell us. You will

admit you recruited." One of them took handcuffs, put them on me tightly with my hands right to the back of my body. I was pushed to sit right on the floor. A black material sewn in a pocket-form was placed in such a way that it completely covered my head to the level of my neck. It was pulled tightly to make a complete blindfold. It was difficult for me to breathe. Most of the time I breathed through my mouth. I also found myself in complete darkness. They started asking me where the boys were. Where I sent them. I again declined having the knowledge of the whereabouts of the schoolboys. They told me that since I was a member of the ANC, I must be involving myself in recruiting of boys to go for training. They started beating me with hosepipes under the feet and also with baton sticks. I was also kicked, hit with fists, sticks and palms. I was told that this type of thing would continue until I admitted. But I told them it is difficult to accept what I have no knowledge of. I was told that many have started by refusing but ended up accepting. After three hours, the handcuffs and blindfold were removed. Late that afternoon, I was taken back to the cells. The following day, the same thing happened during interrogation. Statements made by the police themselves were brought, and I was told to sign. On refusing to do so, I was beaten and threatened with shooting. In the end, I decided to sign the statement to free myself from daily harassments. I was kept in the cells alone and refused any communication with my family and relatives. For at least a week, I stayed alone. After this, I was joined by three friends who had also been badly beaten. One told me how he was stripped naked, tied to a tree, and beaten. It was an atrocious and brutal act. All were forced to sign false statements. They were just hit and asked to admit even to names of people they never saw. At this small [police] station, we stayed for 30 days. We washed our bodies twice. We were really treated like criminals of the worst character, innocent as we were. We were suffering for the membership of ANC and nothing more.

Finally, I can sum up by saying that the worst things people experience at this moment is torture. Many are being subjected to electric shocks and other forms of torture. All this is being done by detectives of the so-called Special Branch. The other thing is that those who become sick or were sick were given little or no attention. Much can be said, but I can say that our people are being killed and subjected to unknown tortures.

(This prisoner was discharged for lack of evidence, but was subsequently served with an indefinite detention order under the Emergency Powers (Maintenance of Law and Order) Regulations.

Victim C

[After my arrest], I was taken to the police camp where I was locked up in a cell on my arrival. I spent a night there but was not interrogated. On the next day, we left the camp to __. At 1 p.m. we arrived at __.

At 2 p.m., a (white) detective officer-in-charge came together with his African detective sergeant. Then, they pointed to a picture of Joshua Nkomo that was hanging on the wall. Above the picture there were three letters written "ANC," and they said, "Do you know this man?" I answered that I know him. Then they said these words: "We have arrested you because you sent three boys to Zambia to train as freedom fighters." I told them that their statement was not true. Then they looked at each other, and one of them said, "You will tell us the truth today."

The (white) detective officer-in-charge then said to the sergeant, "Take him to the slaughter house." I was taken to a small office with a large table and one bench and a number of chairs. Then, six strong detectives came, of whom two were white and four were black. The detective officer-in-charge told me again that I had recruited three boys and sent them to Zambia, and I had carried a large number of about ten boys and sent them to ___, so that he could send them to Botswana. I rejected all these fabricated allegations. Then, the detective officer-in-charge said the following words: "We have tried to arrest you for the last three years and we failed, and today we have found you. If you want to save your life you must agree to all we shall ask you, but if you want to die you may refuse all we ask you. Turn to the wall and think for three minutes. Decide if you want to save your life or not." I was given three minutes to ponder. Then I was ordered to turn to the CID officers and tell them that I had sent the boys to Zambia. I turned and told them that I had not sent any boy to Zambia. They shouted, "Don't waste our time! We shall show you today!" I was ordered to take off all my clothes. I was blindfolded with a black cloth and handcuffed, hands and legs.

Then beatings, electrifications, and all kinds of torture were inflicted on me. It is rather difficult for me to express the pains I suffered under that torture. Some beat me; others electrified me on my bare feet, and some trod on me with their boots. All the time they said, "Tell us the names of people you sent to Zambia." One of the African CID officers said, "Unless you say something, we shall kill

you today." It then dawned in my mind quite clearly that they would kill me. Now, my resistance to stand firm on the truth that I had not done anything of what they were accusing me began to fail. I began to say any name which came to my mind. I then said, "Don't kill me. I agree that all the people whom you say I recruited I have done it." They said, "Tell us their names, and we shall stop beating you until you tell us not less than ten names." I then said any name which came across my mind. As I was saying all the names, one of the CID [officers] was writing the names. Then, another said, "Stop, he might die." They removed the handcuffs from both my legs and hands. They uncovered my head, and they told me to wake up and sit.

I tried to sit up but failed. Then, two of them held me on both arms and raised me up and placed me on a bench, but I could not sit. I fell flat on the bench. One of them held me and prevented me from falling to the ground. One of the officers tried to intimidate me and said, "If you do not sit up, we shall beat you again." I tried to sit but failed. He then ordered the African CIDs to dress me, then said, "Let him rest for some time." After about 45 minutes, the officer came and said to the African CIDs "How is he getting on?" They replied "We think that he will be alright." He said, "Give him some food. He must be hungry." Then, one of the African CIDs led me by hand to the water tap where I washed my head and hands. It was about 5 p.m.

On the following day, I was taken to be beaten again. I was placed in the hands of three African CIDs. A list of names was brought to me which had about 15 names. They told me that those were the names of the people I had agreed that I had recruited when they beat me. Then, they wanted me to tell them the parents of the people whose names appeared on the paper. I told them that I only said those names so that they should not beat me. As I read the names, I realized that two names of my children appeared on the list. The third name was that of a girl who was working for us, one was the name of an evangelist, the other was the name of a teacher. Two were Sunday school children, and some of the names were those of local children. As the CIDs kept on asking many useless questions, I decided not to talk to them. They asked me where those people were, and I told them that I knew that when I was arrested, those people were at their homes. But they told me that I had already sent those boys to Zambia. I told the CID that this allegation was not true. They told me that if I refused to agree with them, they would beat me again. I told them I would not agree to their lies.

They started to beat me again. My face was hit against a steel table until I began to bleed at the mouth and nostrils. For every question I answered negatively, I received a beating on my back or on my head. At last, I said to them "You have beaten me enough, forcing me to agree to false accusations. Now I challenge you that if it is true that I sent these three people, we must go together and find out if these people are not at their homes." Then they stopped beating me, sent me to the tap for washing the bloodstains, and sent their land rover to find the three men. They brought one of them; another, I was told, had gone to his home at __, but they were satisfied that he was there. The third one, I was not told whether they found him or not, but hoped that they found him.

One day as I was in my cell, I saw one of the boys whose name was on the list washing the police cars. I asked the CID sergeant why they did not ask the boy, before asking me, if ever I had spoken to him about going to Zambia. I also asked him where the other two boys were. He retorted, "What have you to do with them? It is not your business." I told him that this was unfair because they had beaten me, saying that I had sent these boys to Zambia. However, after they had stayed with one of the three boys for some time, they released him, after beating him. They tried to force the boy to agree that I had recruited him, but he refused, so they beat him and sent him away.

I had stayed in a small storeroom, in solitary confinement, for 30 days. No one was allowed to speak to me. My wife and my daughter came but were not allowed to see me.

The worst and most humiliating conditions I ever experienced in my life were at the ___ police station at the hands of the CID. It was at __ where I learnt for the first time in my life that the CID Special Branch is the most cruel, evil department which does not want honest people who can tell the truth. It is my conclusion that many innocent people have suffered in the hands of these evil men. It won't surprise me if I hear that some innocent people have lost their lives through these people. I am further worried because their treatment to people might cause problems in relations in the future. It was at __ police station where I saw the devil at work. I ask you to pray for me so that I may be able to forgive these men.

It has been very difficult to write everything they did to me during my stay at __.

(On the basis of this prisoner's "confession" statement, he was charged under Section 23a of the LOMA, which relates to recruiting guerrillas and was an offence that carried a mandatory death penalty. Subsequently, however, he was acquitted and discharged for lack of

evidence. He was then served with a detention order of indefinite duration under the Emergency Powers (Maintenance of Law and Order) Regulations and sent to a detention center.)

Victim D

The police were threatening that they were going to shoot me because my husband was an enemy of the government. They said if I was not killed, I would be detained for life. Early in 1979, things got worse. My husband was no longer able to come home. The security forces threatened to shoot him. In February, early in the morning, the security forces surrounded the business premises with guns. They ordered me out and all the workers. We were put into a truck and carried to a detention in the TTL. The detention center consisted of a number of small buildings surrounded by a fence. There were about 100 other detainees: women, girls, boys, and men. We were put into a small room about 12 feet square without windows, containing 30–40 other women. We were without blankets, without food. There was no water to wash. The toilet was a hole outside. We were detained under the martial law regulations. They accused me of feeding freedom fighters, and of failing to report the presence of freedom fighters. They pointed out that I was able to move around the area freely, whereas the security forces could not. The rooms were so crowded at the detention center that you could not stretch your legs. You could not lie down to sleep but just had to sit up day and night. You could not change your clothes nor wash. Food was cooked in a common dirty pot. The mealie meal (i.e., ground corn flour) was mixed with stones and dirt. We were given one meal a day. During the night, all the young girls were taken by the police. They were beaten every day. They were raped every day. They were forced to accept that they were cooking for freedom fighters. They security forces openly said that if the "boys" (meaning guerrillas) raped them, why should they not do the same. There were both black and white members of the security forces at the detention center, which was also a rest camp for the security forces. We were forced to run every morning. Some were fainting. After running, we would be interrogated once more. The interrogation was carried out by black troops. Every day we would wash, cook and collect firewood for the security forces. The men detainees were digging holes and carrying stones on their heads. They were clearing the place, taking off the trees and putting in fences. The security forces wanted to make the place clear so that they could see anyone moving in the neighborhood.[88]

Challenging Prosecution: Political Prisoners' Passages through Rhodesian Courts

The above experiences of the political detainees' defied all standards of civility. Many tortured Africans suffered psychological and mental cruelty, humiliation, shaming, sexualized violence, and attacks on masculinity and femininity. Nevertheless, they were more than just simply victims of Rhodesian penal terror. In Rhodesian courts and behind the docks, arrested Africans challenged the repressive colonial judicial authority by speaking out against their incarceration. Through legal petitions, legal challenges, and plain verbal insults to Rhodesian judges, arrested Africans underscored the fact their incarcerations were extra-legal and that Rhodesian judges and magistrates were acting in defense of white-settler colonial rule. Political crimes defendants also colluded with each other in misleading the courts through giving conflicting and negating evidence, which sometimes placed prosecutors' cases into disarray. In essence, arrested Africans were not hapless victims of Rhodesian penal repression.

Although African political offenders could rely on good legal counsel provided by human rights organizations such as the International Defense Aid Fund, Christian Care, or Amnesty International, the compromised nature of the Rhodesian judiciary made it difficult for arrested Africans to receive fair trials in Rhodesian courts. In most cases, despite the hard work by defense legal counsels of pointing out loopholes in the Rhodesian prosecution's cases, court judgments on political offense cases were usually *fait accompli*. In order to challenge their prosecutions, therefore, political offenders creatively worked the judicial system themselves in order to escape prosecution, evade being charged for serious offences, or negotiate for reduced sentences. Francis Chikukwa, for example, managed to evade the prosecution's charge of "handling weapons" after he successfully feigned ignorance about ever encountering weapons. Despite the fact that the prosecution had several weapons as exhibits or evidence, Chikukwa maintained that he did not know that the materials in court were weapons. According to Chikukwa,

> During trial, we would tip each other to mislead the prosecutors and feign ignorance. At one time, the prosecutors asked me if I could identify a gun that they produced in court, as evidence that I had knowledge of weapons. I feigned ignorance and told the Magistrate that I did not know this strange-looking piece of metal and wood. The prosecutor charged at me, saying, "Are you sure you do not know that this is a gun?" I told the magistrate that this was my first time looking

> at a gun. We did these kinds of things so as to influence the outcome of the trial. I only agreed to the charge of torching a bus, and that was it.[89]

Other Africans, whom the prosecution would have brought to Rhodesian courts as "witnesses" to testify against other arrested Africans, simply embarrassed the prosecution by giving conflicting and misleading evidence. For example, in a July 1978 "terrorist recruitment" case in which Rhodesian police accused Miriam Nare Nyathi of recruiting an unknown number of young African boys and girls for guerrilla training in Botswana and Zambia and then giving these youngsters some "muti" (medicine) to enable them to be immune from arrest or detection by the Security Forces, the prosecution lined up the "recruits" as witnesses against Nyathi in Rhodesia's High Court in Bulawayo. According to Nyathi's lawyers, the prosecution touted its case against Nyathi on the strength of their "witnesses." But, as the lawyers documented,

> Quite dramatically and rather unexpectedly, the witnesses denied that they had been recruited by Miss Nyathi at all and stated that far from proceeding to Botswana and Zambia for guerrilla training, they wanted further education and better job opportunities in those countries. They made allegations of assault by members of the Rhodesian Police Force and had to be impeached by the Prosecutor.[90]

Based on the witnesses' conflicting testimonies, the presiding judge had no choice but to discharge Nyathi.

Furthermore, arrested Africans and their lawyers challenged the accuracy of the evidence and the illegal ways that it was obtained. In particular, they highlighted the violence and torture that political prisoners suffered. As the Rhodesian High Court reported in the *Rhodesian Law Journal* of 1966, "an increasing proportion of our courts' time is spent on trials within trials, investigating the admissibility of the accused confessions [submitted by Prosecutors]."[91] These "trials within trials" occurred because, according to Rhodesia's Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act (1926), its Section 280 clearly stated that: "Any confession of the commission of an offence and any statement which is proved to have been freely and voluntarily made by an accused person while in his sound and sober sense, and without having been unduly influenced thereto, shall be admissible in evidence against such accused person if tendered by the prosecutor."

But, in many instances, arrested political offenders entered Rhodesian courts limping on broken limbs, nursing visible bodily

injuries, unable to speak because of beatings, bandaged, and generally looking harassed. In such circumstances, most judges were too embarrassed to admit the prosecution's evidence. For example, Lucas Jonasi remembers how a magistrate who presided over their trial lashed out at the police and the prosecution for bringing to court visibly injured defendants and rejected the prosecution's claim that its evidence was "untainted." According to Jonasi,

> The police prepared a docket and arranged for us to be taken to Marondera for court proceedings. During trial, one of our colleagues told the presiding Magistrate that the police had beaten us in order to confess to crimes that we did not commit. Our injuries were visible and the magistrate found it difficult to overlook the fact that . . . the evidence before him was because of forced confessions. He ordered the police to take our whole group back into police custody whilst he studied the evidence.[92]

In several cases, judges threw out cases where the evidence against political offenders was obtained through torture. However, in Jonasi and his colleague's case, the police took advantage of the magistrate's moratorium of their trial to further intimidate the arrested political offenders. As Jonasi explained,

> The magistrate's order to the police to take us back into custody was a grave mistake because instead of being sent to a remand prison, we were placed into the custody of those police officers who had beaten us. When we returned to police cells, that colleague of ours who had raised the objection in court concerning our forced confessions was taken by the police and severely beaten for embarrassing the police in court. The police took him from our group around midnight of that day and only returned him to our cells around 4 a.m. We all thought our colleague was going to be killed. When the police returned him to the cells, we noticed that he could not talk, and we decided not to bother him by asking too many questions. The police knew that they had seriously injured our colleague, and they delayed bringing us back to court because they wanted this person's injuries to heal in order to avoid further complications to our trial. This took about two weeks, and then the police came to us and threateningly asked if we still had anything to say before they took us to court. They then instructed us to sign some paper and then took us again to court. On this second appearance in court, we had now spent a total of 41 days in prison, and this was illegal. . . . The magistrate just asked us if we agreed to the list of crimes that the police had brought before him. We told the magistrate that we agreed with the list of crimes

> brought forward against us by the police. He also asked us if we had freely given our testimonies to the police, and we said, "Yes." The magistrate then handed down sentences of between 8 to 10 years in prison. The police took us away to Marondera Prison to serve our prison sentences.[93]

The fact that Jonasi and his colleagues were incarcerated at the end of their trial must not obscure the importance of their objections in a Rhodesian court. Because they raised the objection to the ways that Rhodesian police obtained their evidence, Jonasi and his colleagues managed to expose the extra-legal means with which the Rhodesian prosecutorial authorities obtained convictions against political offenders in courts of law.

In numerous petitions that reached the offices of the Rhodesian prime minister, political prisoners also highlighted the adulteration of the judicial system, whereby political offenders were convicted on trumped-up charges and tainted evidence. Many of these petitioners faced heavy sentences such as the death penalty or life imprisonment. Benchard Katumba, for instance, who had been arrested by security forces in rural Sipolilo and accused of being a *mujibha*, revealed that he had been violently coerced into confessing to a political crime. In a lengthy petition, Katumba narrated how he was intimidated into "confessing" that he handled weapons for the guerrillas and concluded by asserting,

> On my appearing before the Special Court Martial, and just before entering the Court, I was warned by the soldiers that if I went into Court and went back on my statements, I would be taken back for more electrical treatment (meaning torture by electric current). This had a terrible effect on me. I was petrified and in Court, I simply admitted the charges that were put to me. As a result, I was convicted of "possessing arms of war" and sentenced to death.[94]

Another petitioner, Duster Katanha, also highlighted the adulterated nature of the evidence used for his prosecution and conviction by a Rhodesian court. He, too, narrated at length how the security forces tortured him into admitting a "terror" charge that the police ordered him to agree to in court:

> I eventually appeared before the Special Courts Martial and while I was before the Court, the interpreter warned me against *kupikisana ne dare* (arguing with the Court). I told this man that I had been forced to make a statement, and the interpreter advised me

> that the Court did not accept what I was saying. I mentioned the assault leading up to my confession, but I was advised that I was not believed. I was therefore convicted, and sentenced to life imprisonment as well as twelve cuts. I am innocent. I have not committed any offence. . . . During my interrogation I had all sorts of vague allegations being thrown at me, which I initially truthfully denied, and eventually admitted because of all the assaults, threats and intimidation being directed at me. No reliance can be placed on the confessions, on the basis of which I was convicted. In all the circumstances, I humbly beg that the prerogative of mercy be exercised in my favor, that the conviction and sentence of life imprisonment and twelve cuts be set aside.[95]

These petitions, whether they were effective in securing freedom for the petitioners or not, punctured holes in any claims of the integrity of the judicial process. Arrested Africans' challenges to judicial processes cast the authorities themselves as perpetrators of terror, as opposed to the regime's claims that purveyors of terror were the guerrillas and supporters of the struggle for freedom.

In some instances, groups of Africans convicted in Rhodesian courts of law who faced imprisonment or the death penalty were more defiant and openly insulted Rhodesian judges and magistrates. Behind the courts' docks, arrested Africans made defiant colonial critiques that undermined the legality and morality of their prosecutions. Francis Chikukwa, who had just been sentenced to death along with six other colleagues by a Rhodesian magistrate in the Salisbury Magistrates' court for crimes related to "armed sabotage," said this in an interview:

> [In the court] we were not shaken at all. In fact, we were happy and jubilant and as a group, and we actually started taunting the magistrate, shouting all sorts of insults at him. We told him off—"You dog! Fuck off! Bloody bastard! Do you think we are afraid of dying? If we die, we don't care because we will die for our country! This is our Zimbabwe! We will die!" Those are the kind of statements we made [to the magistrate].[96]

Consider, also, Horace Nyasika's statement to a judge in Salisbury High Court during a plea session. Speaking on behalf of his fellow political activists who had been captured in 1966, Nyasika defiantly told the judge from the dock that, "We are not prepared to plead or to be tried by this court . . . we consider ourselves not criminals, but prisoners of war."[97] In the Bulawayo High Court, a captured ZANU

guerrilla made this anti-colonial critique behind the docks after the judge asked him to speak:

> The African people of this country know that I am fighting for the truth, and the whites living outside Rhodesia know that I am fighting for my rights. Some whites in this country sympathise with me but they are afraid to go against their brothers. Because we are not accepted as sons of Zimbabwe, we are insulted by being called terrorists. If this word means a wild person who kills other people, what is the white man to be called, since he came into this country armed and killing people and he is still doing so? While I am fighting for the truth, the white man is fighting for the wealth of Zimbabwe.[98]

In similar fashion, another captured ZAPU guerrilla made this submission in the Salisbury High Court:

> What I know, my Lord, is that members of the Police Force are employees of the Government. What I have been doing is to fight against the Government. Therefore, I was doing something the police force disliked. Hence, their false stories in court. And I know that the court is an institution which belongs to the Government that I am fighting against, so it will not surprise me if the court disbelieves me as well![99]

I suggest that these statements that arrested political offenders made before Rhodesian judicial officials were not just plain statements of defiance, but also personal critiques of Rhodesian colonial rule, particularly the regime's authoritarian penal policies. These statements also created a record for posterity and an alternative people's narrative of their political activism.

Other court challenges by arrested Africans went beyond merely making statements behind the docks in Rhodesian courts by actually mounting constitutional challenges against their prosecution. One such notable court challenge was that of Daniel Madzimbamuto, whose court case exposed the illegitimacy of the U.D.I. government and even threatened to overturn its constitutionality.[100] In a legal challenge that was played out in both the Rhodesian courts of law and imperial Britain's privy council, Madzimbamuto's court case arose out of his detention in 1965. Since Madzimbamuto was in detention in Gwelo Prison, his wife, Stella, took the role of appellant and identified the Rhodesian minister of law and order, Desmond Lardner-Burke, as the respondent.

The case, which the Rhodesian legal fraternity referred to as the *Madzimbamuto v. Lardner-Burke* lawsuit, occupied several hundred

pages of law reports full of jargon too complex for the lay reader.[101] Madzimbamuto's challenge against his detention attracted a lot of curiosity because it threatened to set a precedent for the release of all illegally detained African political offenders. Even more importantly, it threatened the constitutionality of the newly inaugurated Rhodesian U.D.I. government. Apparently, Rhodesian authorities had detained Daniel Madzimbamuto under a state of emergency shortly before the new government of Rhodesian Premier Ian Smith announced its Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965. The declaration stated that Rhodesia had become an independent sovereign state, that is, independent from imperial Britain, and therefore proclaimed a new Constitution ("UDI Constitution") to replace the previous 1961 Constitution ("Old Constitution"). Under the Old Constitution, the state of emergency under which Daniel Madzimbamuto was detained was due to automatically expire after three months. As that deadline approached, the Smith government extended its duration in order to, in part, retain those individuals detained under the previous emergency. Madzimbamuto was one of these detainees.

Stella Madzimbamuto, accordingly, brought a legal challenge on behalf of her detained husband in the General Division of the High Court of Rhodesia at Salisbury on June 28, 1966. Her application was remarkably simple: she asked the court to declare that her husband's detention was illegal and for his release. Stella Madzimbamuto's arguments were that all actions and laws made under the UDI Constitution lacked legal validity in light of the existence of the Old Constitution, which the British, as the imperial authority, had declared as the constitution that had the legal mandate and that the declaration of UDI was void and of no effect. The reality on the ground, however, was that, for all intents and purposes, the Smith regime retained effective control of the country, including the civil service and the security structures.

After lengthy legal deliberations in the High Court, including an appeal, the very legality of the new UDI was put under legal scrutiny. In essence, the Madzimbamutos' case acquired a new dimension, as it effectively challenged white settler Rhodesian rule on the one hand, and Daniel's detention on the other. The new Rhodesian regime placed its judges in a very difficult situation, for the case asked presiding judges to make a hard decision: declaring the UDI regime illegal, or upholding its actions and hence the legality of Madzimbamuto's detention. The case was legally and politically dicey, such that some Rhodesian judges resigned in protest against the arm-twisting tactics

of the Rhodesian government. One final influential judgment on the case, however, sought to declare the UDI regime's actions as legal and valid. J. P. Quénet, one of the High Court judges, concluded the court's judgment by declaring:

> I am satisfied the present Government is the country's *de facto* government; it has, also, acquired internal *de jure* status; its constitution and laws (including the measures here in question) have binding force. I am also satisfied both detention orders were properly made.[102]

On the contrary, however, the Privy Council ruled in favor of Madzimbamuto, holding that the actions of the Smith government lacked legal validity. It further stated that it was not for the Rhodesian judges to recognize the acts of an illegal regime. This was, however, a theoretical victory for the Madzimbamutos since Rhodesian judges and their government refused to accept the decision of the privy council. In reality, therefore, although the international community dismissed the UDI regime as rogue and illegal, and the UN imposed sanctions on the regime, white settler rule continued, just as the further detentions of Africans continued. Concerning the final judgments by its own judges, the regime may have earned a pyrrhic victory over its African political opponents such as Madzimbamuto, but that meant little because the legal challenge seriously brought into question its very legitimacy as a government. Madzimbamuto's appeal stands out as an example of the ways in which arrested Africans confronted their detentions and critiqued colonial rule.

This chapter has documented Africans' passages within Rhodesia's prosecutorial and judicial system. Rhodesian authorities' use of repressive laws and the confinement of Africans served to secure control over a subaltern, racially defined category that comprised the majority of the population.[103] This chapter also suggested that through detaining and arresting Africans for political crimes, Rhodesian authorities envisaged that the incarceration of Africans was a means to an end, namely, European hegemonic control, which at the time was under threat from politically restive Africans struggling for majority rule. Furthermore, I also argue that by resorting to the confinement option, colonial prisons participated in the establishment and reproduction of permanent confrontation between Africans and Europeans. As a style of governance, the carceral option left no room for negotiation,[104] nor did it aim at solving social or political tensions in a politically

volatile Rhodesia. This is why, for many Africans who passed through Rhodesian prisons, being arrested and detained was both part of the broader African struggle against white minority rule, and a personal struggle for political and social rights. The next two chapters reflect on these struggles within Rhodesian detention centers and jails, and argue that despite the repressive nature of Rhodesian confinement, Africans were not mere victims of Rhodesian penal repression.

CHAPTER 4

Life in Detention: Oral Histories of Confinement in Rhodesian Detention Centers

This chapter discusses the experiences of African political activists confined by Rhodesian authorities to remote and specially designated detention centers across Rhodesia, from the early 1960s to 1979.[1] In these detention centers, African political offenders confronted varying degrees of deprivation, control, and isolation. Unlike the prisons[2] that held African political offenders convicted of political crimes in Rhodesian courts of law and sentenced to serve time in jail, detention centers held those Africans not charged with any crime or tried in court. In the wake of increasing African political activism in Rhodesia, newly amended and legislated laws in the 1960s allowed Rhodesian authorities to impose detention orders on any persons who, in their opinion, posed a threat to the maintenance of law and order.[3] Africans actively involved in nationalist political organizations, or those suspected of actively supporting the struggle for liberation, but who did not commit any prosecutable crime, risked being detained as "saboteurs," "agitators," or "provocateurs." In essence, African detainees were "prisoners of conscience"[4] whose only crime was that of holding political opinions that were contrary to the Rhodesian regime. Detention was thus an especially repressive form of confinement that Rhodesian authorities deployed to restrict their political opponents whom they could not prosecute in courts of law.[5]

Rhodesian authorities used detention and imprisonment to both remove political activists from their communities and to suppress African political opposition to white minority rule. However, whereas some political prisoners could hope to serve out their prison terms and regain their freedom, the majority of political offenders served time through "detention orders" under Law and Order Maintenance

Act's (LOMA) Sections 50 and 51 and faced indefinite confinement in remote centers across Rhodesia.[6] From the regime's perspective, detention went beyond merely removing political activists from their communities; it also isolated them in inaccessible parts of the country, thereby rendering them and supporters of the struggle for liberation politically, intellectually, and socially dead. By cutting their opponents off from the outside political world by removing access to radios and newspapers, deprovng them of communication, and limiting visitations, Rhodesian authorities hoped that detention would short-circuit the circulation of anti-colonial politics and ideas. Out of sight, African political activists and their active supporters would no longer foment anti-colonial activities that had led to urban political unrests and rural peasant opposition. As Joshua Nkomo—one of Rhodesia's long-time detainees—noted, "The objective [of detention] was to cut us off from the world, to make it forget us and us forget it."[7] Michael Mawema, another political activist who spent a decade-and-a-half in detention, noted that "[By placing us in detention], I think the government thought we would lose complete contact with society."[8]

This chapter argues that detention spaces failed in their objective to completely isolate and cut off political activists and supporters of the struggle for liberation from the political world of Rhodesia. Despite authorities' concerted attempts to physically isolate African political activists to remote spaces, detainees actively negotiated their incarceration and challenged rules of detention. First, I suggest that through reorganizing the detention spaces and taking control of them, detainees creatively negotiated significant say over the routines of their daily lives. For example, instead of conforming to the dreary and disempowering monotony of detention life, they took advantage of their captivity to empower themselves through academic and political education and political debate, and to develop powerful critiques of colonial rule through writings that were smuggled out of prison.

Secondly, contrary to contemporary human rights literature that constructs Rhodesia's detainees as defenseless and weak victims of Rhodesian repression, oral histories of detention suggest that political detainees were protagonists who rejected the subordinate status to which Rhodesian authorities relegated them, and were capable of playing a role in the struggle for liberation. Reading some of the detailed reports by local and international human rights defenders about life in Rhodesian detention centers, political detainees come through as victims of state-sanctioned depravation, physical and psychological abuse, and inhumane treatment.[9] Despite the significance

of such reports, particularly considering their legal standpoint, the language of these reports nevertheless constructs the detainees as objects of pity and as innocent—not only of criminal guilt but ingeniously simple and, like children, incapable of responsible action.[10] Such reports illuminate little about the experiences of Rhodesian detainees because their authors' agendas were limited to denouncing the illegality of detention and the mistreatment of detainees according to standards of international law, the country's own legal standards, and common decency. Although some of these human rights defenders' information came from detainees themselves, the accounts they solicited were only those of mistreatment and the illegal nature of such detention. It was not clearly essential—nor even appropriate, one might argue—that these human rights groups detail the political activism of their subjects or their active *resistance* in confinement.

By using oral testimonies to paint a different picture of life in Rhodesian detention, I read detainees' oral histories as subaltern testimonies, which reveal that although detention subordinated these subjects to the deprivations and limitations of confinement, detainees acted as protagonists through resisting detention regimens.[11] Resistance, in particular, was key to the survival of these detainees and also accounts for the fact that detention failed to strip activists of their political commitments to the struggle for liberation. For purposes of this thesis, I understand the notion of resistance in several slightly different ways. First, and most basically, resistance in detention meant securing basic conditions of mental and physical survival. If, for example, detention threatened life or sanity, detainees tried to prevent these dangers. To do so, mental adaptation and resistance were key to their endurance. Such things as defiance and various forms of protest against regulations constituted this type of resistance.

Acts employed by detainees to ensure physical and mental survival developed into a second type of resistance, which responded to the negative and psychological effects of imprisonment. For example, in Rhodesian detention centers, in order to resist the state's attempts to render them intellectually, politically, and socially dead, detainees developed an academic, political, cultural, and even sporting life. These were important forms of resisting the state's intended purpose of prostrating African political detainees because they defined the nature and quality of detention life, as well as day-to-day organization of their world, and more importantly, they also created a counter narrative to the "terrorism" discourse of the colonial state.

Thirdly, again growing out of resistance in order to survive, detainees struggled to maintain their political identity and activism

in detention in order to shape politics inside and beyond the detention centers. Obtaining contraband news through smuggled radios or newspapers, for example, was a refusal to submit to the authorities and was a positive step toward challenging the "inside–outside" divide that detention (and confinement in general) created. Other detainees, particularly influential political leaders, smuggled out political critiques of the colonial regime and even directed outside anti-colonial activities.

This chapter, therefore, posits a different perception of Rhodesian political detainees' experiences. Indeed, political detention/imprisonment featured prominently as a method of choice for other colonial powers battling anti-colonial insurrection. In Kenya, Caroline Elkins described the British detention sites of Mau Mau political activists, the "world behind the wire," as she called it, as spaces of "social death."[12] But as this article argues, far from being spaces of social, political or intellectual death, Rhodesian detainees creatively constructed positive political lives that challenged the isolative intent behind political detention. As Derek Peterson noted in a revisionist essay on Mau Mau detainees,[13] colonial political prisoners were capable of challenging their incarceration in ways that defied colonial authorities' attempts to render them intellectually, socially and politically dead.

The Terrain of Rhodesia's Detention Centers and Life in Detention 1960–1970s

In the mid-1960s, Rhodesian authorities unveiled three areas that were specially established to restrict and detain persons who, in the opinion of the Rhodesian Minister of Law and Order, presented a threat to the maintenance of law and order or whose activities were considered subversive. Whereas before 1963 Rhodesian authorities only focused on detaining leaders of African political formations in existing prisons using laws such as the Unlawful Organizations Act (1959) or the Preventive Detention (Temporary Provisions) Act (1959), and there was no need to establish new detention areas, after the declaration of an Emergency in 1964 and the consequential arrests of hundreds of African political activists, newer centers of detention had to be established. In addition to detention provisions in the LOMA, the 1966 Emergency Powers (Maintenance of Law and Order) Regulations generated an enormous number of Africans who were detained for political reasons. The purpose of detention, according to a Rhodesia's minister of law and order, was to cut off African political activists from circulation in their communities. Whereas

previously, authorities could restrict political activists from entering or exiting certain areas in Rhodesia, newer and repressively sweeping security laws gave authorities the tools to round up as many political activists as they could and detain them in specially designated detention centers. As the minister of law and order remarked:

> Without the new emergency laws I can do nothing except restrict him (meaning political activists) to an area, but with the emergency I can put him in detention *to keep him away and out of circulation.* This is most necessary with saboteurs, because when we are investigating the cases of saboteurs they must obviously be kept out of circulation.[14]

The sheer number of Africans detained as a result of these laws was exacerbated by the fact that political detainees' length of stay in detention centers was usually "indefinite," meaning that at the expiration of a detention order Rhodesian authorities could impose another one. The Rhodesian minister actually touted this aspect of detention, as he was on record for having remarked in the Rhodesian parliament that, "every time he (the detainee) comes out, I can restrict him again."[15] To accommodate the increased upsurge in African political detainees, Rhodesian authorities established three major centers of detention: Wha Wha Detention in February 1964, Gonakudzingwa Camp in April 1964, and Sikombela Camp in June 1965.

The geographical location of these detention centers was striking in that they were all established in remote and inaccessible parts of the country. Gonakudzingwa, for instance, was in the extreme southeastern parts of Rhodesia, near the border with the Portuguese colony of Mozambique, located within the expansive wildlife zone of Gonarezhou, an area that was home to big fauna such as elephants, lions, buffalo, and rhinoceroses. By any measure Gonakudzingwa was unattractive for human habitation. Temperatures in this area could soar to peaks of 118 degrees F and, with an annual rainfall of between 16″ and 20″, the area was exceptionally dry. Additionally, with an altitude of only 1,000 feet, this part of Rhodesia was much lower, and consequently hotter, than the rest of the country. Malaria was endemic to this region, too.[16] Detained political activist Victor Kuretu recalled,

> When I first got to Gonakudzingwa, I remember wondering whether we were still in the same country or not. The place was unbearably hot,

> and we used to pass blackish sweat during the first days. The water there was not good—when we boiled the water, we would remove some whitish residue which looked like lime mineral. . . . We had problems with wild animals at Gonakudzingwa because it was located within the Gonarezhou wildlife reserve. At night and early morning, lions would roar very loudly. We also saw elephants roaming very near to our camp.[17]

Another detainee at Gonakudzingwa, Oliver Muvirimi Dizha, recalled,

> That place was very hot, to the extent that you could easily add tea leaves to the tap water and drink hot tea! The water there had what we thought to be lime-mineral because after bathing, your whole body became whitish. So you could have taken a bath but you ended up looking worse off. Gonakudzingwa also had all sorts of wild animals such as lions, and we would hear the lions roaring. So if one thought of going out alone, most certainly the lions were going to eat you. Perhaps the [Ian] Smith regime put us there because there were lions in that area, which also acted as our 'guards.' If the lions had eaten us, Smith would certainly be absolved and say maybe we were trying to escape.[18]

Many Gonakudzingwa detainees were convinced that the location of the detention center in such a remote area was no accident. They believed that Rhodesian authorities placed them in a wild and remote area to deter them from escaping. Joshua Nkomo, the ZAPU leader who was detained there, was convinced that authorities knew that no one would dare to attempt escape because "The lions and elephants made sure we did not run away."[19] For many detainees, the idea that wild animals were there to "guard" them and prevent them from running away was tenable since initially, the only police supervision at Gonakudzingwa was from a little frontier police post on the Rhodesia/Mozambique railway line called Villa Salazar, and from another Portuguese-Mozambique police outpost called Malvernia.[20] With little police supervision, therefore, Rhodesian authorities left it to wild animals to guard the detainees.

In his autobiography, Nkomo writes with humor of incidents of detainees' encounters with dangerous animals. He recalls, for example, how his two friends, Joseph Msika and Stanislas Marembo, had developed a habit of taking early morning walks around the Gonakudzingwa detention area. "One morning they met a lion," recalled Nkomo, "a big male on the path, and they came flying home." Nkomo also

recalled that on another day, all detainees at Gonakudzingwa left the detention camp to go to the nearby police post, and when they returned, they found a herd of big wild elephants looking thirstily at a water tank inside the detention camp. "We took to our heels . . . back to the police post," remembered Nkomo.[21] Nkomo later remarked that, "The animals [that lived around Gonakudzingwa] were dangerous, but not hostile by intent. . . . It was their jungle, not ours. But nobody was going to escape while they were around."[22]

Sikombela detention center resembled Gonakudzingwa in terms of remoteness and environment. Sikombela was situated in thickly wooded country, in Gokwe District, some 60 miles to the northwest of the Rhodesian town of Que Que. Here too, rainfall was low and temperatures very high for human habitation. One of the first detainees described the camp in June 1965 this way:

> The nearest road . . . about six miles away from the camp, is the road from Que Que to the Gokwe District Commissioner's office . . . Most visitors get lost. Those who come by bus are dropped off seven miles away. When they arrive, some have had to spend the night in the bush. Others have given up before getting here . . . It is hot; the vegetation is dominated by that sign of dryness, the *Mopani* tree. The eastern side teams with zebra; a lion roared near us the other day and elephants . . . visit occasionally. The nearest house is five miles away and outside the detention area.[23]

Like Gonakudzingwa, at Sikombela there was initially minimal surveillance of detainees. Informants recall that prior to November 1965, Rhodesian police only visited the detention camp once or twice a week to deliver food rations and perform roll calls. There was less need for constant supervision because, like Gonakudzingwa, no detainee would dare to escape via the jungle with dangerous animals. Sikombela was thus geographically isolated, whichworked well for Rhodesian authorities' plans to isolate detained African political offenders. As one detainee recalled, "Sikombela was an isolating place—it was as if we were in a foreign and unknown country."[24] Another detainee remarked that upon arriving at Sikombela, "I was surprised by the extreme heat at this place. We were just dumped there, and later we realized that we were in an unforgiving jungle (*rimuka*) with no signs of human habitation. We noticed very big trees that appeared to have been uprooted and broken by elephants. There were just three barracks."[25]

Mordikai Hamutyinei, a long-time Sikombela detainee, recalled in his Shona autobiography that as one of the first detainees to arrive at

Sikombela, they were stunned to notice that Rhodesian authorities had abandoned them in a jungle in which everyone was easily disoriented. "When we first arrived at Sikombela, one of our fellow detainees, George Simbi, suggested that we move around in the jungle that we had been dumped in so that we could at least know our surrounding areas. We agreed with him and we started walking around in that jungle." At one point during that walk, a rabbit ran across and the whole group of detainees scattered all over chasing after it. In the melee, Mordikai recalled getting cut off from the rest of the group, and all of a sudden became a lonely figure in the bush. "I tried to shout for my friends but no one heard me. I could not tell which way was west or east. As the sky got darker, I began feeling very afraid." But the nightly dark saved Mordikai because he was able to see fire cracks at a distance, and he immediately knew they were from the detention camp. After arriving at the camp, Mordikai said "Everyone laughed at me, but we all now knew that we were isolated, cut off from the world we knew."[26]

Wha Wha was the least remote detention area, since it was close to the main Salisbury-Gwelo road and railway, and was near the Rhodesian town of Gwelo. Nevertheless, like Gonakudzingwa and Sikombela, Wha Wha was also in the bush. Because it too was an ad hoc detention camp that was established in an area that was formerly a rehabilitation camp for "vagrants," vast expanses of bushy areas had to be cleared in order to accommodate the hundreds of detainees who were sent there starting February 1964. Edgar Tekere, who spent time at Wha Wha as a detainee recalled that, "At Wha Wha, the detention camps were unlike conventional prisons: they had no walls, no bars, but were located right in the bush. We knew that anyone who tried to walk away would not survive the journey. We named the place 'Snake Park' because of the number of snakes infesting the camp."[27] So for purposes of isolative detention, Wha Wha, too, was remote enough for Rhodesian authorities to dump African political offenders.

In terms of the built environment at all three detention camps, the Rhodesian government had constructed makeshift barracks and huts with minimal amenities for survival. At Wha Wha, for example, there were two types of accommodation: barracks that measured $60' \times 15' \times 10'$ for the accommodation of sixteen people, and huts that measured $14' \times 11 \times 5.6'$ that accommodated two to three people. As Picture 3 shows, both the barracks and huts were made out of galvanized iron sheets, which is the worst building material for human habitation because it traps heat (in summer and during the day) and cold (in

winter and at night) inside the living rooms. Detainees at Wha Wha described these barracks and huts as "ovens in the day and refrigerators at night."[28] Mathew Mukarati, a detainee at Wha Wha recalled that, "During very hot summers, it was better to sleep outside than in those 'ovens' as we called them. We were literally cooked alive in the tin barracks. The choice, therefore, was to either be 'cooked' inside the tin barracks or to sleep outside whilst mosquitoes fed on you. Many chose to sleep outside. During winter and some nights, it was by God's grace that we did not freeze to death."[29]

At Wha Wha, detainees complained that over time, in addition to the bad accommodation, barracks and huts became overcrowded as more political offenders were detained. Michael Mawema, who arrived at Wha Wha in April 1965, remembered that, "Wha Wha was a very poorly organized place in terms of facilities for detainees. There were three corrugated iron blocks and about half a dozen rondavels (huts) made out of corrugated iron with dust floors, barely enough to accommodate us."[30] Barracks that were supposed to house 16 people ended up accommodating up to 25 people. In order to solve the accommodation woes at Wha Wha, detainees actually built their own pole and dagga/clay huts that had the dual advantage of being insulated against heat and cold, and of providing private quarters for those who did not favor sleeping in barracks. At Gonakudzingwa, the building material for detainees' barracks was equally bad such that in March 1965, the roofs of two barracks there blew off and detainees had to sleep outside for a fortnight.[31] Many detainees at Gonakudzingwa also opted to construct their own accommodation.

Furthermore, the detention camps lacked the basic conditions for daily survival and social reproduction, by which I mean those daily activities and material provisions important for the maintenance of daily life. With no access to outside help, detainees' lives bordered on deprivation and impoverishment. For example, many detainees were barely clothed. Perhaps because these detention centers were set up in an ad hoc fashion, the government declined any responsibility to provide detainees with clothes. It was curious that authorities made no provision for clothing in its detention centers considering that fact that for many detainees, the only clothes they possessed were those that they were wearing when arrested. Unless their families were able to make it to the remote detention centers and provide replacements for their worn out clothing, detainees had no prospect for any other supply. Human rights groups that attempted to send parcels of clothes for detainees were frustrated by Rhodesian authorities, giving rise to

speculation that it was the government's intention for detainees to live lives of deprivation and poverty. For example, at Christmas in 1965, members of the human rights group Christian Action sent a bulk parcel to Gonakudzingwa, which was returned by authorities with instructions that for the parcel to be delivered, its contents had to be divided into a number of small parcels, and these were to be posted separately.[32] After several other frustrated attempts to help detainees with clothing, Christian Care approached government officials demanding that the state provide detainees with clothes, but the government's reply was that only approved welfare and voluntary organizations could meet this need. One such approved organization was a white women's group called the Guild of Loyal Women, which was known for providing clothes for prisoners. However, when Christian Care approached this organization, its officials said that, "they could supply second-hand clothing to whites and Asians in prisons only and would not consider extending their help to "Kaffirs" (Africans in detention)."[33] At Gonakudzingwa, the need for clothing was acute since the extreme heat there made garments wear out more quickly. Many detainees at that detention center were thus barely clothed. Charles Murambiwa said in an interview that, "There reached a time when we were more or less naked. Most of our clothes were in tatters, and we felt like animals."[34]

Inside the sleeping barracks for detainees, blankets were in short supply at most detention centers. The official bedding allowance for detainees was four blankets per person at Wha Wha and Sikombela, and three at Gonakudzingwa. These official allowances were barely adhered to, particularly during those years when the detention centers held more detainees that they were originally intended to hold. Picture 5 shows some of the sleeping quarters at Wha Wha, and the striking feature is the absence of beds. With limited provisions for blankets and the absence of beds, detainees had to sleep on hard concrete or dusty floors in poorly constructed barracks. A Wha Wha detainee wrote about his sleeping conditions in 1965:

> The old and dirty blankets, torn in most cases, and fur-like [sleeping] mat we use as the bed are far from being a normal bed. . . . The bedding is so hard that our bodies are painful. Most of us are not accustomed to such type of bedding. The floors are of brink covered by a layer of dusting smelting so that in addition to poor blankets, lack of sheets, etc. we breathe dust right through. The floors are not smooth and that makes it more painful to sleep on such a floor. . . . In asking for beds, sheets, etc. we are not asking for a privilege. We are asking for normal

> sleeping conditions, which we have at our homes. They may not be as decent, but they must be tolerable.[35]

Detainees in all three detention centers also faced daily struggles to feed themselves. Since the Rhodesian government's penal personnel was spread thin across the colony's many prisons, detainees had to organize themselves to cook their own food. All the authorities did was to deliver food to the three detention centers in bulk, either once every week or every few days. The official daily food ration for detainees in April 1966 was:

> 14 oz maize flour plus 7 oz rice *or* 21 oz maize floor
> 11 & half oz green vegetables *or* 1 oz dried beans
> 2 oz shelled ground nuts
> 4 oz fresh vegetables
> 5 oz fresh meat; 1 oz powdered skimmed milk; 1 oz margarine/dripping; three quarter oz salt; 2 oz sugar; and a quarter oz coffee or tea.[36]

As with all other provisions, this official daily food ration was rarely adhered to. In 1965, for example, detainees at Wha Wha actually went on a five-day hunger strike before they were given meat, fresh vegetables, and cooking oil as a regular ration. At Gonakudzingwa, detainees complained that on occasions that meat was delivered, it was so rotten that it was inedible. At Sikombela, detainees received their food rations once every other week, and in order to prevent perishables from rotting, detainees resorted to sun-drying food items such as meat and vegetables.[37] The limited quantities and absence of some critical nutritious food items meant that detainees' diet was monotonous. Furthermore, cases of malnutrition were evident considering some of the common diseases in detention camps such as pellagra, beri beri, and scurvy.[38]

The world of detention camps, therefore, was not only isolating and uncertain, but was also characterized by deprivation and impoverishment. In addition, just before the Rhodesian government of Ian Smith declared its Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from imperial Britain in November 1965, a state of emergency was imposed, which radically changed the conditions of detention in the three centers. For example, whilst before 1965 they were not enclosed encampments, which meant that detainees could walk freely within their restricted zones, after 1965 security fences and barriers were erected in order to prevent them from walking outside their tightly monitored

spaces. Heavily armed police with vicious dogs became a feature of all detention centers. Rhodesian authorities also instituted rigorous censorship of all incoming and outgoing mail, newspapers, and educational materials. Michael Mawema, who spent time in Sikombela detention camp recalled these changes in an interview and said that,

> After 1965, we who were left at Sikombela were now under patrol; the police and dogs patrolled the area and made sure we found no way to communicate with the outside world. They took our radios…so that between December 1965 and June 1966 we hardly knew what was happening outside, although we kept one radio that the police never knew was inside. Then as things changed, our treatment changed, too. Sometimes for weeks we went without rations. They withdrew tea, sugar, butter, milk, bread and we were left to eat *sadza* and whatever they gave us. Prior to the UDI, they had of course withdrawn all these facilities, but since we were able to communicate with the [local] peasants, they were able to supply us with whatever we lacked. We would also receive money from outside….We could sneak things into the camp. But after UDI, there was no way. It was from this time that many people started suffering from malnutrition because we didn't have sufficient food.[39]

The world of detention after 1965 closely resembled that of concentration camps, as detainees became subject to all sorts of deprivations, intimidations, and harassment. Cases of recalcitrant detainees being taken to unknown destinations and "disappearing" became rampant. Kuretu, who was a detainee at Gonakudzingwa recalled,

> After 1965, I was so afraid because no one could be certain about what was going to happen tomorrow. We all felt very insecure at that place because some of our colleagues who were released or ordered to go to another place of detention just disappeared, or we never heard what happened to them, or we heard rumors that something bad had happened to them. So we were always thinking that: What if I am ordered to go somewhere and then I disappear, too? We were always anxious and insecure."[40]

However, although one cannot underestimate the fact that detention centers were places of isolation, impoverishment, and heightened insecurity, there is a whole other story that needs to be told. It is the story of how detainees creatively coped and adapted to their conditions, and the ways in which they struggled and resisted the debilitating consequences of isolative detention. This is the story that I now turn to.

Surviving Detention: Reorganizing Space and Resisting Isolation

However remote and harsh, the evidence suggests that the detention centers were spaces in which political prisoners actively negotiated their confinement, challenged the rules of detention, resisted and creatively adapted to the harsh detention environment. Constituted as spaces of political, social, and intellectual death, political detainees reconfigured the detention space, their relationships, and daily practices to subvert the colonial state's objectives.

Throughout the duration of the liberation struggle, no official details about the exact numbers of political detainees existed. On security grounds, Rhodesian authorities repeatedly refused to divulge information concerning political detainees. For example, as late as 1977 questions were still being raised in Rhodesia's parliament by concerned African members of Rhodesia's House of Assembly about the exact numbers of political detainees. When a Mr. Maposa raised this question in September 1977 in parliament, the Rhodesian minister of law and order told parliament that it had "never been Government policy to disclose information relating to the numbers of detained people, and it is not proposed to alter that policy now."[41] Nevertheless, partial counts at several intervals by detainees themselves revealed that at any given time each of the three detention centers had hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of detainees. In March 1965, for example, head counts by detainees in Wha Wha indicated that there were 84 people in detention, 118 at Sikombela, and 325 at Gonakudzingwa.[42] Collectively, at one point in the late 1960s, an internal head count by detainees from the three camps put the number of inmates at over 3,000.[43]

Although these figures say little about the social composition of detainees, oral histories indicate that the social composition of detainees was quite diverse, as the previous chapter also suggested. Leading African political activists, such as leaders of African political formations, shared the detention space with ordinary political activists and supporters of the liberation struggle such as peasants, workers, and youths. As Mordikai Hamutyinei observed during his brief stint in Wha Wha, "In detention, there were boys who had surreptitiously gone to China for training as saboteurs. There were also elderly peasants who had been detained because they had influenced other peasants not to take their livestock to government dip tanks. There were others who had been caught vandalizing a dip tank. There were also top leaders of ZANU."[44] My own informants reflected this broad

spectrum of social backgrounds. Unlike in the prisons, however, the detention space was overwhelmingly male. In a way, this reflected the patriarchal nature of Zimbabwean nationalism, but also exposed the gender-bias of the Rhodesian authorities whose conception of the political offender was stereotypically andocentric. In the heavily patriarchal and paternalized colonial world of Rhodesia, the political offender, the "thug," "provocateur," "saboteur," or "terrorist" was universally male.

For many first-time detainees, being dumped at these isolated and remote detention centers was a disconcerting experience. Feelings of bitterness, disorientation, and fear were nearly universal. Cephas Msipa, who was himself detained at Wha Wha, recalled that, "Most of the detainees did not know why they were there (i.e., in detention)."[45] Many had not been charged of any crime, and others had been charged in court, found not guilty, but still sent to detention. Still others others arrived at detention centers traumatized, nursing broken limbs and torture injuries. Victor Kuretu, who had been tortured by Rhodesian police and beaten severely on the soles of his feet as the police forced him to confess that he was a political activist, remembered that when he arrived at Gonakudzingwa six months after being tortured, "I remember that my feet became greenish or bluish in color. Dead skin began peeling off the soles of the feet. In that condition, and not being convicted by any court of law, I was now a detainee. That hurt me so much."[46]

However, detainees quickly realized that being bitter would only breed disaffection and affect their morale, and eventually lead to political apathy. Maintaining high morale was critical to survival. For instance, older detainees reconfigured the meaning of detention by impressing on newer arrivals that being there was similar to "fighting for black majority rule."[47] In an interview, Dizha said,

> When I arrived at Gonakudzingwa, people like Joseph Msika, Joshua Nkomo, and Josiah Chinamano[48] were already there. The first thing they told our group of new detainees was to be happy that we had joined other cadres fighting for black majority rule. I immediately refused to be weighed down by sad feelings of having left my family, and became ecstatic to be in the company of comrades.[49]

Mathew Masiyakurima, who was also detained at Gonakudzingwa, said that, "On my arrival, Stanislaus Marembo, who was one of the leading nationalist politicians at Gonakudzingwa, welcomed me. Other colleagues that I knew from Harare (Salisbury) were happy to

see me and everyone jovially welcomed me. Thus, instead of being bitter about my detention, I arrived at Gonakudzingwa in high spirits."[50] Mordikai Hamutyinei wrote in his Shona autobiography that when he got to Wha Wha,

> I was welcomed with loud whistles and honorary clapping of hands as if I was a hero coming back from a victorious battle. I was taken aback with such a welcome and I wondered why these comrades were happy that I had been detained. Leopold Takawira (a leading ZANU nationalist) immediately took me on the side and started talking to me about the political activities of those outside detention. . . . No one pitied me for having been detained. Ndabaningi Sithole (ZANU President) even said to me, 'You have joined other real men. Everything will be fine.'[51]

Therefore, from the beginning, mentally adapting to the idea of being detained in a politically positive attitude was crucial to survival in detention. Not only were detainees asked to recommit to the ideals of the struggle for liberation in detention, but also conceiving detention as a space of struggle built cohesion and solidarity among the detainees, which was also critical to surviving detention. Detainees clearly understood that by sending them to detention, Rhodesian authorities hoped to dilute political activists' political commitments, in addition to isolating them from their communities. Mental resistance to isolative detention was an important basis of maintaining political relevance.

With regard to the physical space of detention, as isolating and remote as the detention centers were, detainees creatively reconfigured and reorganized the detention space and, when they could, redefined its restrictive boundaries. The first aspect of the physical space that detainees sought to reorganize was the boundaries of their detention space. As indicated earlier, during the early years of detention, Rhodesian authorities did not deploy significant security personnel to guard the detainees. Authorities hoped that by virtue of the remoteness of the detention areas, particularly those located in jungle areas with dangerous animals, no detainees would dare to escape or wander away from the detention camps. But the Rhodesian authorities miscalculated the isolative nature of those detention camps since over time, and with no police supervision, detainees started going out of their restriction areas to meet with local peasant communities who lived near their camps. Joshua Nkomo remarked at the Rhodesian authorities miscalculation by saying that, "[At Gonakudzingwa] the government had evidently not thought what the effect would be of

putting us away in that remote place, almost without supervision."[52] Victor Kuretu, who arrived at Gonakudzingwa before the 1965 radical changes in detention conditions, remembered how detainees used to traverse detention boundaries and go looking out for local communities to politicize and incite against the Rhodesian authorities. He recalled that

> At Gonakudzingwa, before 1965, there was no fence and we could go out of the restriction area into the neighboring Tribal Trust Lands (African rural areas). I remember that we used to go out and meet with the local Hlengwe or Shangani people who lived in that area. When we received our food rations, which came every Wednesdays and Saturdays, sometimes we had excess food, and we would take this food to these local people because they were always hungry due to persistent droughts and the unfavorable environment they inhabited. Later, our relations with these people alarmed the government, as the authorities thought we were now politically influencing the Shangani whom they regarded as a 'peace-loving people.' This is partly why guards were later sent and a fence was erected to limit our movements.[53]

At Sikombela camp, before 1965, detainees also frequently violated their boundaries in search of local rural communities. Edgar Tekere remembers that, before 1965, "At Sikombela we were much freer. The young people would go into the local village to drink and find girls, and the villagers would come into our camp, and we would politicize them."[54] Enos Nkala, who was also detained at Sikombela concurred by saying that, "Some [detainees] would actually go out to drink and come back (*laughs*). At first, we were not even guarded. I really do not know how they thought they could monitor us."[55]

Beyond transgressing their boundaries, another important aspect of reconfiguring the detention space was the ways in which detainees came up with their own ways of governing the interior space. Although almost all the detainees who were the first to be detained in the early 1960s had passed through Wha Wha regardless of their political affiliation, Rhodesian authorities later separated ZAPU and ZANU detainees. ZAPU cadres were largely detained at Gonakudzingwa, whilst ZANU followers were detained at Sikombela. Although it was unstated, it is reasonable to infer that Rhodesian authorities hoped that by separating political activists along party lines, it would be difficult for both ZANU and ZAPU activists to form formidable political alliances. Nevertheless, in those detention spaces, detainees developed their own ways of governing their spaces, which drew upon the political hierarchies of their own political formations. Victor

Kuretu, who was a ZAPU organizing secretary before being detained, said that at Gonakudzingwa detainees transplanted ZAPU's leadership hierarchies and codes of conduct in order to maintain political commitment and solidarity among detainees. According to Kuretu,

> I stayed in the same camp as [Joshua] Nkomo (ZAPU's leader), and I remember he told us at our arrival that we had to run the detention camp along the lines of a "government." Some of us who had administrative posts in our party were given the task of running the administrative needs of the detention camp. We kept intricate records of every inmate, with details about their names, places of origin and so forth. We generated a number of records that filled books, some of which we received from well-wishers.[56]

Running the Gonakudzingwa camp "along the lines of a government" was clearly a rejection of the limits of detention rules and the isolative nature of confinement in a remote zone of the country. And keeping "intricate records of every inmate" meant that detainees were involved in the project of pinning down not just the identities but also loyalties of each and every political inmate at Gonakudzingwa.

Reorganizing the governance of detention space also revealed the political imagination of detainees. Nkomo recalled in his autobiography that,

> [At Gonakudzingwa] We took control of our own lives, set up our own camp government and ran it as a practical course in democratic administration. The camp was run by the central committee, whose members acted as the chairmen of specialized committees for education, reception, hospitality, and so on. The committee secretaries ran day-to-day business, carrying out policy and reporting back on the people's reactions to it.[57]

Nkomo, as the leader of ZAPU, was recognized by all detainees as the head of "Gonakudzingwa Government." Mathew Masiyakurima remembers that detainees actually set apart a set of huts within Gonakudzingwa that detainees referred to as the "State House" where Nkomo and other leading ZAPU elites would meet with visiting journalists and other foreign visitors, at a time when Rhodesian authorities still allowed visitations.[58] Setting apart a space called "State House" revealed the ways in which detainees at Gonakudzingwa imagined the political future of Rhodesia. "State House" was the name of the official residence of the Rhodesian prime minister, and defining a space within Gonakudzingwa as "State House" had the

obvious implications that sometime in the future, the ZAPU leadership would occupy that highest political space.

At Sikombela, reorganizing the governance of detention space both served practical purposes and revealed the political imagination of the detainees. As a ZANU-dominated camp, Sikombela detainees owed their allegiance to their ZANU leaders, who prescribed the manner in which that camp was governed. As part of governing their detention space, in Sikombela, for example, the ZANU leadership in detention organized what they described as a police force, whose purpose was to maintain discipline and order among detainees. Edgar Tekere, a high-ranking ZANU official who spent time in Sikombela, explained that, "By 1965 in Sikombela, we now numbered around 400, and the need to maintain discipline became evident. We decided to set up our own police force, which we called the 'Zimbabwe Republic Police,' ZRP, for we were going to create a Republic. The presiding officer was Leopold Takawira," along with other police officers who assisted him.[59] Just as discipline was important in detention, perhaps to maintain political focus, Tekere's testimony also reveals the ways in which the ZANU leadership imagined the political future of Rhodesia. As Tekere says, the Sikombela police force was called the "Zimbabwe Republic Police for we were going to create a Republic." Perhaps it is no coincidence that at 1980, after the defeat of the Rhodesian regime, ZANU leaders indeed created and led that "Republic of Zimbabwe," and ironically, the post-independence police force in Zimbabwe is called the "Zimbabwe Republic Police"! But, for their time in detention, by developing their own ways of governing detention space and ways of running their everyday lives, I suggest that detainees elaborated an incipient political and social order in the heart of the repressive apparatus meant to destroy African political activism. Such a conclusion is even more powerful when one considers the ways in which detainees designed their own lives along activities such as daily educational routines, political education, and leisure activities. I discuss these activities later in this section.

At Wha Wha, detainees met regularly to deliberate on issues affecting their camp. With a mixture of detainees from almost all African political formations, Wha Wha detainees stressed the need to overcome party affiliations and to come together to set their own rules of daily life in detention. "We had no choice but to forge alliances as ZAPU, ZANU and ANC adherents. Democracy was the form of governance at Wha Wha. We selected our own leaders through collective voting and negotiation," remembered Mabasa Chirwa.[60] Informants who passed through Wha Wha all remember the popular

mass political meetings in a "Zimbabwe Barrack" where detainees met to discuss politics, detention conditions, and the political future of Rhodesia.

Through developing their own rules of governing the detention space, detainees in all three detention camps won significant say over their daily lives, and most importantly, maintained their political commitments to the ideals of the struggle for liberation. Governing their own space also revealed their political imagination with regards to a future post-Rhodesian, black majority ruled state.

Perhaps no other activity exemplified the extent to which African detainees in all three detention centers significantly controlled their everyday routines than the organization of educational classes. Detention centers may seem to have been unpropitious sites for academic pedagogy, but in Rhodesia's, education was the single most dominant daily activity. African detainees acquired a wide range of academic achievements ranging from basic literacy, high school diplomas, and even university degrees. I suggest that education for them was central to both their personal and political struggles. At the personal level, those detainees who had missed acquiring formal schooling outside detention, due to all sorts of colonial barriers, enthusiastically embraced education in detention as a way of making up for their deficiencies. Peasant detainees who had never been to school because of a combination of rural poverty and colonial barriers to education were able to put pen to paper for the first time in their lives in detention centers. Others, who had only acquired high school diplomas but never got the chance to pursue tertiary education, acquired university-level diplomas by studying via correspondence. Even those who had university diplomas went on to read for another one, in pursuit of academic excellence. At a personal level, this kind of learning was a victory against colonially prescribed barriers to African education that ensured that only a small proportion of Africans had access to formal schooling. Education provided a unique platform to empower oneself, to defiantly demonstrate that without colonial barriers to African education, Africans were capable of acquiring academic credentials similar to those held by colonially privileged white Rhodesians.

Since there were no stringent controls on the kind of education detainees could disseminate and acquire, at least before 1965, political education deepened the detainees' understandings of their own political struggles. Those detainees who read and could understand politically charged and radical texts in detention shared their political thoughts with their colleagues. Peasant and urban workers shared and debated their life experiences in conversations about the political

conditions obtaining in Rhodesia and the political future of their country. Leading nationalists, most of them educated outside Rhodesia, politically schooled their partisans and political followers on issues ranging from the meaning of theoretical nationalism to deeper issues of imperialism and the black struggle. Many ordinary detainees, with various backgrounds and personalized understandings of nationalism, were able to find resonance with such political education in detention. As evidence later shows, these different kinds of education were part of the everyday routine of detention life. Whereas Rhodesian authorities imagined political detention as some sort of isolative experience meant to rehabilitate the colonial rebel, thug, or terrorist, detainees lived their everyday lives in detention edifying their intellectual and political lives. I also suggest that by educating themselves, African detainees demonstrated their determination to resist the deprivations and isolation to which detention subjected them. Detention was not a place of intellectual or political death, despite Rhodesian authorities' intentions.

Mordikai Hamutyinei, who spent time in Sikombela detention, underlined that in Sikombela, formal education was "what we ate, drank, and slept, day and night." In his Shona autobiographical recollections, Hamutyinei remembers that when he arrived at Sikombela with the first group of ZANU adherents, ZANU leaders Ndabaningi Sithole and Leopold Takawira told detainees that Sikombela was to become a place of "advancement, beyond what the Rhodesian government could offer to Africans"[61] According to Hamutyinei, "If ever I witnessed determination, it was in Sikombela. We leant and read the whole day and would spend the night reading books with candlelight, just so that we could leave detention holding on to something useful in life. Education was our way of life in detention."[62]

Such determination to acquire formal education was relatively the same in other detention centers. In Gonakudzingwa, Victor Kuretu remembered everyday life at Gonakudzingwa in these words: "We had timetables of how to productively spend our days. Mondays to Fridays were busy days for learning and teaching for everyone. We reserved Saturdays for leisure activities such as playing football or doing other things." Academic education in detention was conducted by detainees themselves, meaning that those detainees who had some teaching experience or who had acquired some form of higher education were responsible for teaching other detainees. Victor Kuretu was one such teacher and he recalled that:

> Those of us who were teachers [before being detained] were drafted into the education program for detainees. We taught a number of people,

> some of whom were illiterate but who later came out of detention very literate. Some of the detainees we taught ended being able to write letters to their wives, requesting them to come and visit them. Most could not believe it when they were able to write letters! It was sort of a miracle for them, and many would cry. Sometimes it was heart-wrenching, to see fully grown men who had never known how to handle a pen write their first words on paper. That is what we were doing in detention. We taught detainees every level of education, depending on what level one had attained before coming to detention. Some, particularly those with some form of higher education, even attained higher level education such as law degrees and others. Before my arrest, I had only reached the Form Two level (lower secondary school level), but I went ahead and did my "O" Levels[63] (middle-secondary school level) and even passed courses on the British Constitution, commerce and accounts. I would do my own schooling later in the day, after I had taught others doing lower-level schooling. We used materials from Amnesty International, Christian Care of Rhodesia, etc. Joshua Nkomo also used to write to other well-wishers to provide us with additional educational material. We accomplished a number of things during those days, even though our lives were difficult there.[64]

Cephas Msipa, a highly educated detainee at Gonakudzingwa, was elected as the Secretary for Education who presided over the content of the education curriculum for detainees. According to Msipa,

> We liked to think of our detention camp as "Gonakudzingwa College." In the camp, I was elected secretary for education and had a committee of four. We encouraged almost everyone to undertake some kind of studies. About three-quarters of the men were following correspondence courses. I organized classes ranging from literacy training right up to GCE Level. The number of teachers in the camp continued to increase, which made the studies easier to organize. When I left, the number of detainees had risen to 140, of whom more than 20 were teachers. When I got to the camp, some were unable to read or write. When I left, they were able to write home to their families. In addition to academic work, we also ran agricultural classes.[65]

Just as detention teachers worked hard to teach their fellow detainees, they were also proud of their own work and the accomplishments of their students. Oliver Muvirimi Dizha, who was an accountant by training and a teacher in Gonakudzingwa, prided himself for having taught courses in accounts to many detainees. In an interview, he recalled,

> I taught many students there in detention, some of whom are now prominent people in this country (i.e., in post-colonial Zimbabwe).

> I taught accounts to many detainees at Gonakudzingwa. I taught effectively because people outside sourced educational material from donors, which we used effectively for our education in detention. I taught accounts from the elemental stage right up to the advanced stage. I taught even people who are now higher up in the current government. Many people with various educational diplomas today who passed through detention centers obtained those diplomas in detention.[66]

In an interview, Mathew Masiyakurima, who spent time in Gonakudzingwa, seemed to express gratitude to those detainees who dedicated their time to teaching detainees like himself who had little to no formal education. Masiyakurima, whose peasant grandmother failed to raise enough money for fees for him to go school beyond the middle elementary school level, came out of Gonakudzingwa an accomplished man. "In a way, the fact that I was sent to detention was a blessing in disguise. Some of us were not literate at all, because when we were children, our parents could not afford to send us to school," said Masiyakurima in a very low and sad voice. He added, "But I became a beneficiary of detention education" and elaborated:

> When we were at Gonakudzingwa, Comrade Cephas Msipa was the one responsible for the education of detainees and he told us that education was compulsory for everyone. So as for myself, I started with doing Standard Six—remember I told you earlier I had only gone up to Standard Four (middle-level elementary grade). I passed that stage and then did my RJC (Rhodesia Junior Certificate—a lower secondary school diploma) whilst I was in Gwelo Prison, again under the tutelage of Msipa. Some of our tutors were students from the University College of Rhodesia who had also been incarcerated. I attained all my educational qualifications in prisons with excellence. I could have attained my "A" Levels (Advanced Level Certificate—a higher school diploma) if it was not for the fact that we were released from prison in 1979.[67]

In Sikombela detention center, formal education also was central to detainees' everyday lives. One "education officer" there recalled,

> I was one of those people who was selected by other detainees to be an Education Officer. Before my arrest, I had been a secondary school teacher. My job was to compile lists of all the academic books that were needed in Sikombela and to follow up on every detainee to make sure that everyone was making progress with their academic courses. Leopold Takawira was the Chief Education Officer, although Robert

> Mugabe later took over as the head of the Department of Education.[68] As teachers, we took turns to teach detainees. There were teachers who taught beginning from Grade 1 (the first grade in elementary school) right up to "O" Level. Then there were others like Edson Sithole who were reading for higher degrees. These people usually read for these degrees on their own at night, after dedicating their whole days to teaching others. There was absolutely no one who was not doing academic work in Sikombela. Our education usually went smoothly, and you could tell that everyone gave their maximum effort. Many slept reading with candlelight.[69]

Sikombela detainees went a notch further in their quest for education by setting up classes for local peasant communities. This was possible before 1965, when detainees could transgress their detention boundaries and when local peasant communities could also come and interact with detainees within the limits of Sikombela camp. Detainees' outreach educational efforts were targeted at peasants' children, most of whom could not afford to attend school or simply had no school to go to. According to Edgar Tekere, human rights organizations such as Christian Care provided detainees with the educational material for detainees' own use, which in turn they used for their outreach education curriculum and classes for local peasant communities' children.[70]

Education reveals a couple of aspects about detention life. As the evidence suggests, education was a significant activity for detainees' everyday lives. As a daily activity, education and studying filled time that would otherwise have hung heavily on the prisoners' hands. Indeed, education helped detainees to transform the debilitating passage of idle time into an intellectually productive activity. Furthermore, the fact that detention education was an activity that detainees organized themselves demonstrates a particular form of detention resistance. Although the Rhodesian authorities did not object to the detainees' right to pursue formal education in detention, the authorities provided little to no material support for detention education. Through their own efforts, inmates in detention centers obtained reading and studying material from human rights organizations such as Amnesty International, Christian Care, and the International Defense Aid Fund. These organizations also paid for fees for correspondence examinations with distance learning institutions.

I suggest that detention education demonstrated resistance in the sense that such education, although it was generally aimed at improving detainees' own skills, also worked as an affirmation of detainees'

political and ideological commitments. According to Rhodesian authorities, detention was aimed at reforming or rehabilitating political offenders' rebellious and unacceptable notions of a post-Rhodesian, post-colonial, and African-ruled nation. But to the contrary, these detainees described their education as foundational for participating productively in a new and imagined post-colonial nation, one that would require the skills of all African people in forging a productive post-Rhodesian nation. "In Gonakudzingwa, Joshua Nkomo told us that education was important for political activists since we were the ones who would lead the new Zimbabwe," recalled Thomas Murape who spent time at Gonakudzingwa.[71] Detention education was thus consciously oriented to a future that was antithetical to Rhodesian political visions. It was education with a vision of a new society that detainees expected to create at the end of their struggle.

Furthermore, although there were a few educated detainees, many were unschooled. The Rhodesian education system was organized in such a way that only white schools were heavily funded, and education for white children was compulsory by law. African education, on the other hand, was grossly underfunded, and education for African children was not compulsory.[72] Therefore, many adult Africans only had educational qualifications that ranged from the elementary to middle-level secondary education. Rhodesian authorities seemed content with offering them minimal skills training, which made sense in their color-bar job market where whites occupied all skilled professions, and the majority of Africans performed non-skilled jobs. In detention centers, detainees upset this order of things by pursuing the formal education that they could never acquire on the outside. Many who had no opportunity to go to school in their youth, or whose education was cut short due to the artificial bottlenecks in the Rhodesian education system, demonstrated in detention that given a chance, they could just as well acquire higher-level educational qualifications. Demonstrating that they could learn was in a way an affirmation of their capability and their worth as human beings. Detention education offered self-empowerment and radically exposed the racially artificial inequalities in Rhodesia that made sure that only whites obtained the highest educational qualifications as opposed to Africans. From the perspective of Rhodesian authorities, this was certainly one of the unintended consequences of political detention.

Besides acquiring skills and educational qualifications, education in detention also worked as a catalyst for exchanging political ideas among detainees and also informed some insurgent writings. Debate was perhaps the natural culmination of gathering political

activists in enclosed restricted areas in which they could freely interact and exchange ideas. As longtime Gonakudzingwa detainee Cephas Msipa noted, detention life was conducive for political reflection and debate. Whilst in detention at Gonakudzingwa, Msipa observed that, "[Detention gives those who are detained] a period for reflection so that they can see the weaknesses in society. Politically it is good in that those in restriction take a greater interest in political trends than those outside. The art of discussion and criticism is well developed."[73] A Sikombela detainee also noted that the wide range of debates in detention occurred among detainees from diverse social backgrounds who shared their individualized nationalist thoughts. "People from the rural areas shared with their urban counterparts their political experiences and vice-versa," observed Barney Chakaodza.[74] He recalled that, "Those of us who were not studying at night would gather over a bonfire and debate about Rhodesian politics. It was a learning experience as people leant to appreciate the different political backgrounds of many Africans in detention." In Gonakudzingwa detention camp, ZAPU nationalist leaders organized a series of political lectures that gave an opportunity for the detained African political leadership to share their political thoughts with other detained adherents of African politics. In an interview, Victor Kuretu recalled attending some of these political lectures and their content:

> At Gonakudzingwa, Nkomo used to lecture us once a month and then others like Joseph Msika, Lazarus Nkala and others lectured us on select days of the week. I remember one lecture by Msika on nationalism, which he gave for about three weeks. It really intrigued me because he traced the roots of fighting for freedom from the days of slavery in the US. This is what made some of us really appreciate that even though we were in detention, we were still fighting for national freedom.[75]

Political debate in detention also had the ability to influence the struggle for freedom beyond the world of confinement. For example, in Sikombela detention camp, political debate among the detained ZANU leadership yielded the first nationalist agreement and resolution to wage a guerrilla war as a way of fighting for freedom. The ZANU leadership that I interviewed emphasized the fact that the 1970s African-led guerrilla war in Rhodesia was mooted and planned in Sikombela by the detained ZANU nationalists. Those who were in ZANU leadership in Sikombela in 1965 remember exchanging arguments and thrashing out the resolution to go to war with the Rhodesia regime. These debates finally culminated in what the

detained ZANU leadership called the "Sikombela Declaration." Enos Nkala, a high-ranking ZANU official who spent time at Sikombela, explained that,

> As the ZANU leadership, we used to meet and strategize in detention. In one of our meetings, we took a resolution that we should send an elaborate document to those activists who were outside of detention, which would lead to the creation of a War Council under the chairmanship of Hebert Chitepo (ZANU's chairman who was exiled in Zambia). After some deliberations among ourselves as ZANU's leadership, we managed to come up with this resolution. We called it the "Sikombela Declaration." We typed the resolution since we had typewriters at Sikombela, and we smuggled out that document.[76]

Edgar Tekere, another ZANU official at Sikombela, also recalled this debate and the outcome of the "Sikombela Declaration." Specifically concerning the final typed document, Tekere said that, "This Declaration was typed out and duly signed by Ndabaningi Sithole (ZANU's President). Then I was given the responsibility of keeping it safe until an opportunity arose to smuggle it out. . . . At a later time, we had a visitor named Bango, a trade unionist who traveled frequently to Lusaka, Zambia. It was decided to entrust the Declaration with this man, who duly traveled by rail to Lusaka and delivered the Declaration to Herbert Chitepo in person."[77]

Political debates in detention therefore, apart from edifying the political commitments of detainees, also formed the basis for formulating political positions and statements that were circulated to other activists outside detention through smuggling networks in detention, particularly after the introduction of more restrictions beginning in 1965. In the next sextion, I expand on this as I focus on some ways that detainees employed to gain access to the outside world. The section also complements the discussion about the everyday life by focusing on other aspects of detainees' daily life such as leisure and the politics of radio listening.

Resisting Isolative Detention: The Politics of Leisure, Radios, and Smuggling

Although education formed the basis for most daily activities in detention, in addition to their classes, detainees also put on skits and cultural performances during their self-designated leisure time, listened to radios, and wrote letters, among other activities. Ordering their time into separate days of study and leisure, or structuring times

to read and to listen to radios, was an important survival strategy for detainees because it undermined the dreary and unordered nature of Rhodesian detention life. Leisure time figured prominently in the daily lives of African detainees, not only as a pastime but also as a way of resisting the debilitating effects of isolative detention. Detainees also resisted isolative detention through listening to radios, which was a forbidden act after 1965. Smuggling material in and out of detention camps also undermined the Rhodesian authorities' intent to cut off detainees from the political world in Rhodesia.

Just as detainees set apart time for education as a way of organizing their everyday lives in detention, designating time for leisure also ensured that detainees spent their days occupied. As one detainee who spent time at Sikombela remembered, "When we arrived in detention, everyone agreed with Ndabaningi Sithole and Leopold Takawira when they said 'Men, Life is what you make it. If we do not find ways of entertaining ourselves, no one is going to come and see whether you are happy or to ask if you are happy.'"[78] As a way of coping with the isolative conditions of detention, leisure was an important activity for detainees such that they intentionally reserved particular days of the week to engage in leisure activities. According to Gonakudzingwa's Victor Kuretu, "Mondays to Fridays were busy days for learning and teaching for everyone. We reserved Saturdays for such as playing football or doing other things."[79] At other detention centers, weekends were also reserved for leisure. I suggest that ordering days of the week in this way enabled detainees to control the passage of time, something that is usually difficult in situations of confinement. Because many detainees did not know when they would come out of detention since most detention orders were "indefinite," planning for activities according to time and days was crucial to maintaining control of time and even sanity in confinement.

In Sikombela, apart from studying, sporting activities formed the bulk of the leisure activities during weekends. Soccer was the most favorite sport for Sikombela detainees. In his Shona autobiography, Mordikai Hamutyinei offers a dramatic and vivid description of the first soccer match at Sikombela:

> One of the ways that we devised to suppress depressing thoughts of being in confinement was to engage in sports. One of the sports that we decided on playing was soccer, and we requested for soccer balls from outside detention. After we received these balls, we cleared an area and made it into a soccer field. On the first day of playing the game, no one wanted to be left out of the competing teams. . . . Even the elderly ZANU nationalist [Leopold] Takawira came running to

> the soccer field wearing a pair of shorts, which made him look like a young man. The mere appearance of Takawira on the field uplifted everyone and people began to cheer even before the game started. . . . It was such a jovial day on that soccer field. Many other detainees who joined the game had never played soccer in their lives. Apart from our own cheer, the only thing that was absent here were women ululating because there were no women in Sikombela. In the middle of the game, everyone wanted the elderly Takawira to score, and one of our colleagues, Moses Mvenge, arranged for Takawira to score. Takawira struggled with the ball towards the goal posts but managed to come up with a shot at goal and scored. The old man jumped into the air hysterically and we all fell to the ground laughing. If anyone had visited us on this day the obvious question they would have asked is: "Are you still involved in the struggle for self-rule?" But I can assure you that no one would have answered that question because everyone was enjoying themselves![80]

Hamutyinei also added that on Saturday nights, detainees at Sikombela decided to reserve time for what they called "Happy Night" during which political discussions would be dropped. It was a night for many activities such as choral singing, traditional dances such as *Mbakumba* and *Muchongoyo*, and other leisure activities.[81] At Gonakudzingwa, leisure nights also included musical and dance performances. According to Oliver Dizha, "During our spare time, we engaged in activities like playing the *ngoma* (the African drum) and other activities. Some of us liked to play the *ngoma* on Tuesday and Friday nights. We also played the *mbira* (Shona traditional musical instrument), and I was one of the people who played the *mbira*."[82] At Wha Wha camp, Tafirenyika Mushamba said that during weekends, "We tried to spend our spare time performing traditional dances. I especially liked traditional dances, which included *Mbakumba*, *Muchongoyo*, *Jerusarema*, and *zvigure* or *Nyau* dances that were performed by detainees of Malawian descent. We could even go out of the detention fences to play soccer with the detention wardens."[83]

I suggest that these leisure activities were not merely meant to cope with the loneliness and isolation in detention. Indeed, recreation in detention must have been an important form of solace for detainees. But engaging in leisure activities was also an act of undermining the intent behind isolative detention. By finding time to "enjoy" themselves, detainees carved out emotional freedom in circumstances of bondage and confinement. As the next chapter on life in Rhodesian prisons demonstrates, political detainees and prisoners were acutely

aware of the political implications of either showing signs of emotional despair or signs of emotional strength, which leisure activities reinforced. Enos Nkala, a Sikombela detainee, stressed the fact that "It was important for us to remain jovial and emotionally healthy. Taking time off our books and political talk soothed our pain and frustration against the fact that we were in detention."[84]

Listening to the radio provided both entertainment and, most importantly, a way of challenging the "inside-outside" divide that detention created. For the most part, detainees were interested in listening to news concerning the political developments in Rhodesia and the views of the international community about the Rhodesian political crisis. Before 1965, Rhodesian authorities allowed radios in detention centers. However, shortly after the declaration of the State of Emergency in 1965 that paved way for UDI, Rhodesian officials ordered the confiscation of radios from political detainees as a way of further isolating them from the outside world. But radios were so important for detainees that they found ways of either concealing some receivers when others were confiscated, or smuggled small radios into the detention camps. As the evidence later suggests, surreptitiously listening to news from radios (or interpreting news from censored and government-owned newspapers) was a form of refusal to submit to the effects of isolative detention by actively keeping in touch with the outside world.

In detention, radios provided an important outlet to the world beyond the wire, and as one detainee put it, "The radios were our lifeline. . . . Listening to the radio was like looking through a telescope at a planet far beyond our reach."[85] Radios were particularly indispensable to detainees' efforts to keep in touch with the outside world since the Rhodesian authorities made efforts to ensure a news blackout for detainees. For example, even though detainees were entitled to have access to current newspapers, most of the copies delivered to detainees were heavily censored. Although it was not clear who was responsible for censoring these papers, the state of the newspapers delivered to detainees demonstrated obvious signs that Rhodesian authorities worked hard to suppress certain current information for detainees. One Gonakudzingwa detainee remembered that, of the newspaper copies they received in detention, "There were large sections of the newspapers we received that had many blank spots which had been removed or blacked out by the censors. All other news items appeared in the newspapers but the political stuff was censored out. Moreover, we never received a current newspaper—they all had stale news. Others were even two months old."[86]

After 1965, detention conditions became stricter, and radios were forbidden. In an interview, Mathew Masitakurima, who had possessed a radio receiver since 1964 in Gonakudzingwa, recalled the time when guards were sent to confiscate radios:

> For almost a year before my radio was confiscated, I had the task of listening to the radio and then compile news reports to pass on to other detainees. I would listen to the most important news about the political situation in the country and then spread the information to everyone in the barracks. I would tune in to such radio stations as the BBC, and as a result, we were well-informed of what was happening outside detention. However, in 1965 many guards were sent to Gonakudzingwa to enforce new and more restrictive rules. One of those rules forbade detainees to own radios, and the guards demanded that everyone with a radio must surrender it. I concealed mine for some time, but somehow the guards got to know that there were people with radios in our detention camps, and one day they just surrounded our barracks and did a thorough search of all our belongings. I had tied my radio underneath my bed but the guards found it because they turned everything upside down.[87]

However, even after the raids and radio confiscations, a few detainees managed to conceal receivers. In Gonakudzingwa, for example, Joshua Nkomo made sure to keep a few radios when others were confiscated. According to Nkomo, "One of my [radios] was built into the top of a little bedside medicine chest that I had made myself during the relatively relaxed initial period of detention—a little Sanyo, using the same batteries as my pocket torch, so that I could buy [battery] replacements without difficult. The other [radio] was hung on a pole fitted under the seat of our earth latrine, and the guards never found it there."[88] In order to have access to current news, Gonakudzingwa detainees developed a network of people who would surreptitiously canvass for news on the few available contraband radio receivers, and these people would then spread it to other detainees in secret meetings. Victor Kuretu explained this form of obtaining contraband news this way:

> We knew the few people who had radios in our detention camp. Since our camp was divided into five barracks, we selected special people who would go to listen to the available radios and then come back and tell others if there was any important news we needed to know. We used to call the person who went to canvass for news a *kashiri* (literally means "little bird"). At a certain time of the day, word would spread that a *kashiri* had some news for detainees, and people would make their way

> to listen to their respective *kashiris*. This was very interesting because sometimes, other *kashiris* added a little bit of their own stuff into the news. To make it interesting, a *kashiri* had to be someone with some propaganda skills. People would congregate in the barracks, and there would be deafening silence as people gave the platform to the *kashiri*. Our radio news sources were The Voice of America, BBC, and other important news stations. So we would hear different viewpoints from all stations and this used to give us so much hope. . . . We heard a lot of news surrounding the [international] sanctions imposed on the rebel UDI Smith regime, and how ships of oil destined for Rhodesia were caught at sea, and other important news. We knew about impending political talks in Rhodesia, and other important news concerning political developments on the African continent.[89]

In addition to listening to international news concerning Rhodesia, detainees also listened to Rhodesian news stations and mastered ways of sifting through the regime's propaganda concerning the Africans' struggle for independence. This was particularly important after the outbreak of the African-led guerrilla war, when authorities strictly censored the media. As one detainee explained,

> We learned how to interpret the censored news of the Rhodesian and South Africa broadcasting services: [for example] whenever they told of a [battle] victory against the 'terrorists' we knew that the armed struggle was intensifying. . . . Indeed this biased information was often more revealing than the supposedly objective news of the BBC and the West German station, Deutsche Welle.[90]

In Gonakudzingwa detention camp, in order to maximize the circulation of information about the outside world gleaned from contraband radios, ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo put into use a little Roneo copier that he owned in order to produce a weekly detention publication called the *Gonakudzingwa News*. According to Nkomo, that publication "was extremely popular until it was finally banned. People would push and shove to get copies of these little papers."[91]

I suggest that by obtaining contraband news, or interpreting biased and censored Rhodesian news, detainees refused to submit to the isolative detention that authorities imposed on them. Surreptitiously listening to radio news was also an insurgent step toward challenging the "inside–outside" divide that detention created because radio news allowed them to maintain a connection to the outside world. News collection and analysis was resistance with an emancipatory and liberation vision, which flew in the face of the intended purpose of detention.

To a considerable extent, detainees' attempts to undermine the effects of isolative detention and maintain contact with the outside world depended on their relations with detention warders and guards. Whereas before 1965 detainees could find ways of staying in touch with news concerning Rhodesia, after 1965, a mixture of black and white warders and guards posed a challenge to detainees' ways of communicating with the outside world. After 1965, the terrain of detention centers changed radically as detainees were now fenced and guarded by numerous Rhodesian police and warders. At Sikombela, Mordikai Hamutyinei recalled that "A few days after [Ian] Smith declared his UDI on 11 November 1965, we were shocked to see the Rhodesian police arriving at Sikombela in huge trucks. We were immediately fenced and guarded by these police officers. . . . From that point onwards, our detention conditions changed. We were now always under the guard of 'Support Unit' police officers. No one was allowed to visit us."[92]

Detainees' initial relations with these guards, black or white, were frosty and sometimes violent. A few days after being fenced, Leonard Nyemba, a detainee at Wha Wha, got into trouble after mocking the Rhodesian police guarding detainees. In an attempt to tease the guards, Nyemba went to a part of the fence surrounding Wha Wha, let stuck his leg outside the fence, and shouted, "Hey, you police officers, since you are so fond of arresting people, come and arrest my leg that is out of the fence and take it to jail!" A white detention guard immediately confronted Nyemba and beat him severely.[93] At Gonakudzingwa, detainees provoked the Rhodesian police when they named some dogs, which they had obtained from local people, after Rhodesian officials. According to a Gonakudzingwa inmate at the time, among the dogs "There was Ian Smith, [named] after the illegal UDI prime minister, a female dog called Janet, after his wife, and an ugly beast called van der Byl (named after a top Rhodesian military official). A big fat dog we called Dupont, after the pompous man who became president of their illegal state—and there were others named after other ministers. When the police came round to inspect us we would call 'Smith, Smith,' and the dog would come running up to be patted. The police thought this lacking respect, so they shot all the dogs with names. They called out the names we had given, the dogs came running, and were shot."[94] Many more informants told stories of numerous confrontational incidents with detention guards and warders.

But detainees gradually worked at developing cordial relations with guards in order to mitigate some of the devastating consequences of

isolative detention. Because most of the prison guards were Africans, detainees were sometimes able to appeal to their political conscience and consequently, a number of the guards became conduits of contraband documents and other material going in and out of prison. At Gonakudzingwa, Joshua Nkomo noted that, "We soon found out that the African jailers were mostly members of ZAPU. They would come in [our camps] and we would talk together about the future. They brought messages in and passed our letters out without going through the official censor. . . . The policemen carried messages in and out, opening up lines of communication."[95] The ZANU nationalists at Sikombela also felt impelled to develop relations with African guards in order to establish ways of communicating with fellow political activists outside detention. According to Edgar Tekere, at Sikombela, "We began to develop a method of communication secretly with the outside world. We established a network of prison wardens who would help us smuggle out communications. Material to be posted was taken farthest from the prison, or posted at the main post offices."[96] Many other detainees exploited these relations with guards to obtain forbidden material such as extra food, clothing, radios and other items from visiting relatives and supporters of the struggle for liberation.

Overall, therefore, it is clear that detention in Rhodesia largely failed to act as spaces of isolation in which political activists were supposed to languish, cut off from the political world of Rhodesia. As argued in this chapter, political detainees were capable of violating regimens of isolation through reconfiguring their detention environment and ways of governing that space, transgressing their boundaries, obtaining contraband news, and smuggling. Staying in touch with the outside world was crucial for detained political activists since this undermined the intended purpose of isolative detention. As a result, political offenders inside detention centers in Rhodesia remained relevant to the political struggle for liberation. Outside detention, Africans saw political detainees (and prisoners) as part of the vanguard of the struggle for liberation and metaphors for the African people under Rhodesian bondage. Outside detention, Africans in urban areas conducted numerous demonstrations demanding the release of detained political activists. In fact, political detentions in Rhodesia inadvertently created another platform of resistance for outside political activists, who added the release of political activists from detention and prisons to their general demands of self-rule. The next chapter focuses on another major of form of confinement, that is, imprisonment, and documents African political offenders' experiences in the state corridors of silence.

CHAPTER 5

Life Behind Bars: Oral Histories of Life inside Rhodesian Prisons, 1965–1980

That prison was hell . . . but we survived.

Interview with Lucas Jonasi, Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe, July 28, 2007

Political imprisonment in Rhodesia constituted a second form of confinement for African political offenders. However, unlike life in detention centers, where for a while Rhodesian authorities left political detainees to their own devices in remote regions of the country, prison life for African political offenders was more restrictive and regimented. Despite their differences in governance and forms of regimentation, all Rhodesian prisons were fortified enclosures, architecturally equipped with communal and solitary confinement cells. These institutions were not ad hoc spaces of confinement like the detention centers that were set up in the 1960s. Rhodesian prisons were already established institutions, some constructed as long back as the 1890s, which were meant to discipline criminals of all sorts. In the politically charged environment of the 1960s and 1970s, those Africans who, in pursuit of political and social rights, stepped outside the Rhodesian authorities' conception of the rule of law, found themselves locked up in these prisons. Rhodesian authorities did not confer these political offenders with the statuses of political prisoners, or prisoners of war, in the case of captured guerrilla combatants; to Rhodesian authorities, convicted African political offenders were "terrorists," "thugs," "saboteurs," and "dangerous criminals," and were all lumped together as "communists."[1] In Rhodesian jails, African political prisoners confronted various forms of deprivation, regimentation, violence, and isolation. In those spaces of confinement, too, prisoners struggled to cope with depraved prison

conditions, and in many ways resisted the debilitating effects of massive violations of their human rights.

Based on ex-political prisoners' testimonies and their writings, this chapter argues that although Rhodesian prisons were spaces of racialized abuse, curtailed freedoms, and heightened repression, they were also spaces of struggle, subversion, and negotiation. Indeed, as this chapter's epigraph indicates, prisoners' testimonies and their written accounts reveal the depravity and brutality of prison life. They capture vividly some of the horrid and gruesome experiences in the state corridors of silence. But, as this chapter demonstrates, these testimonies also reveal the ways in which prisoners were not simply victims of state-sponsored penal terror: prisoners tell stories of how they struggled, coped, and creatively adapted to the harsh prison regimes by refusing to follow orders, making demands on jailers, engaging in protests such as hunger strikes, smuggling documents and letters in and out of prison, planning and executing prison breaks, fighting back violent prison warders, befriending black prison guards in order to mitigate harsh prison conditions, and educating themselves through prison classes organized by other political prisoners, among other things. In a confinement environment that was unlike the detention centers, where detainees could maintain their social identities, prison conditions blurred the diversity of political prisoners' social backgrounds, save for their gender. The blurring of those social identities was not a source of powerlessness, but instead provided a new platform for forging prison solidarity aimed at coping with brutal prison conditions.

I also suggest in this chapter that by transforming the prison into an arena of struggle for political and social rights, African political offenders undermined the disciplinary, rehabilitative, and punitive intent of imprisonment. The existing literature on prisons in Africa suggests that penal incarceration in colonial Africa triumphed as an instrument of state power and discipline for rebel colonial subjects, an argument that draws from Michel Foucault's theoretical study of the genesis of the prison in which he postulated the prison as a symbol of state hegemony.[2] This chapter questions whether this formulation applies to the experiences of African political prisoners in Rhodesia. Specifically, by describing the Rhodesian prison as a terrain of struggle, I argue that in their challenging, subversion, and negotiation of political imprisonment, political prisoners undermined the prison as a technology of control, and hence challenged state hegemony. Instead of passively accepting Rhodesian penal punishment and brutal reprisals, this chapter suggests that political prisoners viewed that

punishment through the eyes of "fighting for national freedom." Thus, instead of penal punishment achieving Rhodesian authorities' intended goal of subduing and subjugating these rebel colonial subjects, imprisonment actually strengthened political prisoners' resolve to challenge the colonial order.

Lastly, and at a broader level, this chapter also suggests that political prisoners are important historical subjects in the telling of the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe—prisoners' life stories and writings demonstrate the ways in which political prisoners confronted and undermined the colonial regime. Prisoners were important as symbols of the struggle for liberation, as producers of powerful critiques of the colonial regime, and as ideological contributors to the struggle for freedom through smuggled political documents.

I have organized this chapter into three broad sections. The first section describes the nature of the Rhodesian prisons and the politics of confining political offenders in these jails. The second section documents some of the major components of political prisoners' daily life in Rhodesian prisons and some of the ways in which African political offenders, as men and women, coped with the depravations and brutalities of the Rhodesian prisons. The third section illustrates the ways in which African political prisoners struggled, negotiated, and challenged the repressive penal policies of Rhodesian authorities, and their contributions to the struggle for freedom in Zimbabwe.

The Rhodesian Prison and the Political Prisoner

As in the case of political detainees, in the 1960s and 1970s it was impossible to know exactly how many political prisoners were incarcerated or the exact nature of the Rhodesian prison conditions. For instance, Rhodesian authorities *never* divulged the statistics of political prisoners at any given time. Besides the fact that prisoners were often shuttled from one prison to another, and that political offenders' carceral status frequently changed from being prisoners to detainees and vice-versa, Rhodesian authorities suppressed all information concerning political offenders. A contemporary human rights group noted in the 1970s that, "it is never possible to establish how many political prisoners there are at any given time in Rhodesia. All that is known is that they stand for majority rule."[3] Gathering or divulging any information about the nature of Rhodesian prisons was itself against Rhodesian law. For example, Section 188 of the Prison Regulations specifically forbade

the divulging of "any information concerning the administration of prisons and the condition and treatment and affairs of prisoners" by a prison officer or official visitor. Breaching this law carried a penalty of imprisonment for a year or a £100 fine. Under the Emergency Regulations that Rhodesian authorities invoked in 1964, a similar penalty was laid down for publishing any document written by a person in detention that was not passed by the police censors (Section 39 (3)). Rhodesian law also forbade the print media from publishing information "concerning any Restricted Person, detained person, Restricted place or place of detention" (Emergency Regulations Section 34 (c)). Much of the evidence for this chapter (and the book as a whole), therefore, relies primarily on ex-prisoners' oral and written testimonies.

Rhodesian prisons came into existence as early as the 1890s when white settlers imposed colonial rule in Zimbabwe. By the 1960s, prisons had been established in all major Rhodesian towns, including smaller institutions in the colony's rural districts. These prisons were divided into three broad categories for security reasons: maximum, medium, and open. During the period when African political offenders populated these prisons, Salisbury Maximum Prison, Chikurubi, and Khami Maximum Prison at Bulawayo were the largest, but political prisoners were also held at Gwelo, Que Que, Goromonzi, Gwanda, Fort Victoria, Selukwe, and Umtali prisons. Although Rhodesian prisons were modeled along the British penal system both architecturally and administratively, they did not include the modern reforms that took place in Britain throughout the twentieth century. Rhodesian prisons, like most spaces of confinement in Africa, were racially structured, meaning that the racialist structure of the Rhodesian society extended behind the bars. Rhodesian authorities separated inmates by race, and prison privileges (and obligations) were also allocated according to race.

As already racialized spaces, when African political prisoners arrived in Rhodesian jails starting in the 1960s, the rules of interaction between black and white came under extraordinary pressure. Unlike political detainees who were not so closely surveilled, African political prisoners and prison warders intimately shared the prison spaces in ways that transformed the once tranquil jails into spaces of explosive violence, repression, and constant confrontation. The tense relations between political offenders and prison warders extended over years since those Africans charged, tried, and sentenced for political offences carried long and life prison terms or spent many years on the death row. From the Rhodesian authorities' perspective, during the

years of the liberation struggle the prison was a space to discipline and punish rebel African political opponents.

In terms of the general organization of prisons, African political offenders occupied the lowest racial categories that obtained in the prisons. With respect to the racial structure of the prisons, Rhodesian authorities classed prisoners into three broad categories, namely "Class I" for Europeans/whites, "Class II" for Asians and Coloreds (mixed race), and "Class III" for Africans/blacks.[4] Occupying a particular class inside the prisons affected every aspect of inmates' daily lives such as their diet, the cells they occupied, the clothes they wore, and even the beds they slept on. In a report, the director of prisons explained the racialist structure in these prisons by saying that

> All admissions to prison are placed in the respective prison scale, i.e., Scale 1 = Europeans, Scale 2 = Coloureds and Asians, Scale 3 = Africans. *These categories are based on the traditional mode of living of these groups outside prison.* These scales also provide for the appropriate issue of clothing, equipment, diets, etc. Provision also exists, however, for advancement in dietary scale by prisoners in the lower scales, should they wish to apply. This advancement is granted to all applicants subject to them supplying the necessary proof of a comparable standard of living enjoyed by them prior to their committal to prison. Any prisoner is free to apply for this advancement at any time.[5] (My emphasis)

The reasoning behind this "classification" of inmates in Rhodesian prisons depended on what the director of prisons identified as "the traditional mode of living" of different racial groups outside the prisons. Essentially, this thinking was based on the assumption that since Europeans/whites were accustomed to better living standards in Rhodesia, those standards had to be replicated inside prisons for white inmates. Africans or blacks, on the other hand, were accustomed to lower standards of living, and these standards could be justifiably transferred to Africans' prison life. In order to give a "reality" spin to this reasoning, the director of prisons gave this example in explaining prison racial discrimination: "For example, all African prisoners are supplied with sleeping mats and only European prisoners are allocated beds . . . because Europeans habitually use beds."[6] A Rhodesian commission of inquiry into prison conditions actually endorsed this kind of justifications for racial discrimination in Rhodesian prisons by concluding in a report that, "Our conclusion is that there are differences in the treatment of the various races [in prison], [and that]

the differences are *appropriate* to [inmates'] different social and cultural backgrounds."[7]

In real everyday prison life, this sort of prison structure meant that the regimen, living conditions, and diet imposed on a prisoner depended on his race—nothing else. For example, the discriminatory system dictated that all African political prisoners graded as "Class III" were subjected to a bulk diet of ineffable monotony. In most prisons, the staple for African prisoners was hard maize meal (or *sadza*) at breakfast with black unsugared coffee, and another serving of hard maize meal at dinner. Variety came in the forms of relish, usually some vegetable, and, irregularly, meat. Meat was of the off-cut type or shin that prisoners referred to as *marunde*, and contained much bone and gristle.[8] Things like eggs, butter, milk, jam, biscuits, or indeed any "luxury"—which were part of Class I and Class II diets—were never provided.

This racial structuring in Rhodesian prisons also meant that discrimination extended to the hard labor sentences imposed on political prisoners. For example, whereas prison labor for European or so-called Colored convicts was remarkable only for its tedium, such as sedentary work like book-binding, for Africans it included manual and menial work like stone-crushing, farm labor, grass-slashing, felling trees, digging graves, pulling carts like horses, and digging gravel. African prisoners carried out this labor in parties under armed guard. Racialized prison conditions also meant that African political prisoners' clothing consisted of "crows feet" uniforms (i.e. uniforms made out of very course material), and that African prisoners slept on thin felt mats on the floor.[9]

In the litany of complaints by African political prisoners during this period concerning the set up of Rhodesian prison, the racialized structure of the prisons and its consequences were dominant, particularly because the cumulative effects of racialized incarceration on African political prisoners were enormous. For instance, evidence suggests that the assumed "traditional mode of living" that guided prison authorities' treatment of African political prisoners was in itself the single greatest cause of ill health and deaths of most inmates serving sentences of a political nature. A group of political prisoners at Gwelo Prison, reacting to the death of one of their colleagues, blamed his death and their own ill health squarely on the dietary effects of being Class III prisoners:

> The notorious Scale III prescribes the dietary scale on which we are fed. The diurnal diet of sugarless coffee and porridge from the coarsest mealie meal available, *sadza*[10] and weevil infested beans or peanuts,

> and for supper *sadza* and rotten vegetables is in its entirety alien to even the most indigent African. As a matter of fact, it is a mild poison devised for the ultimate ruin of our health.[11]

Another inmate, Arnold M. B. Chironda, who was incarcerated at Gwelo Prison made these submissions: "I contracted Asthma and chronic bronchitis both of which are said to be as a result of my long exposure to cold weather, inadequate clothings [*sic*], continued sleeping on hard-concrete cold floor. I have seen the Doctor who . . . recommended that I be provided with warm bed-clothing and clothing, but owing to my grade 3 or class III, prescriptions and all recommendations are declared devoid and the Prison Authorities are adamant. Given to my persistent call for humanitarian treatment I lastly got myself charged and will be appearing in court on charges of false allegations."[12]

As for the prisons themselves, available evidence indicates that most institutions were in a poor state in terms of their infrastructure and suitability as spaces of confinement. Expenditure on prisons in Rhodesia constantly lagged behind their estimated needs. A study in the 1960s showed that whereas a projected annual budget for running the prisons smoothly would be an average total of £230,000, in the years 1954–1964 the total annual expenditure actually averaged only £70,000.[13] Questions about the suitability of prisons for human habitation were constantly raised in the Rhodesian parliament. In 1964, the minister of justice was forced to respond to nagging allegations that prisons resembled "concentration camps." He told the parliament that there was nothing basically wrong with the prisons, but said "I admit that in the smaller prisons . . . in the remote rural areas, they do leave quite a lot to be desired."[14]

Overcrowding was endemic in Rhodesian prisons, but the problem became acutely so between the 1960s and 1970s due to the massive arrests of political offenders. Furthermore, political prisoners, who were almost all first-time offenders, were mixed with hardened and habitual criminals in the prison cells. This changed in the late 1960s, but only for political considerations after Edgar Whitehead, a one time Rhodesian premier, argued that

> There are certain risks in confining in the same prison an expert professional burglar . . . and a political fanatic. If, during the course of the sentences, the professional burglar also becomes a political fanatic he will be far more dangerous than most of those who are in for political fanaticism. . . . In the opposite direction, a political fanatic is likely to

> be much more dangerous if he is instructed in professional burglary during his period in prison.[15]

At maximum prisons such as Chikurubi, Khami, and Salisbury, Rhodesian prison officials began separating political offenders from ordinary criminals and often holed up political prisoners in single inmate cells or solitary confinement.

During the years that African political offenders populated Rhodesian prisons, the dilemma for differently situated prison officials, warders, and guards was whether to treat these prisoners like any other or to treat them differently. I elaborate on this aspect later, but according to oral evidence, white Rhodesian penal officials generally seemed to regard political prisoners as enemies of "civilization" and the Rhodesian way of life and hence felt personally and politically offended by these prisoners. When political offenders arrived at Rhodesian prisons, they were already marked as terrorists, brutes, thugs, and all sorts of racially derogatory savage-atavistic names. Relations between white and black in Rhodesian spaces of confinement were thus predictably confrontational. Oral evidence suggests that African political offenders suffered particularly prejudiced treatment from white penal officials who considered them as terrorists and anti-Rhodesians. For black prison guards and warders, relations with African political prisoners were quite complex, ambiguous, and often contradictory. Black warders were not the simplified "black faces of colonialism" or colonial state collaborators. Whilst on the one hand African warders and guards had to fulfill their employment obligations, oral evidence suggests that these black warders and guards overwhelmingly expressed solidarity with African political inmates in various ways, thereby exposing the Achilles heel of Rhodesian penal repression. Thus, whereas white penal officials sustained the confrontational approach in dealing with incarcerated political offenders, which bred defiant disobedience, violence, and brutal punishment, black guards provided the nexus for political offenders to negotiate, subvert, and challenge their incarceration. In essence, when it came to the treatment of political prisoners in Rhodesian jails, politics trumped prison regulations.

In order to personalize the experiences of confinement in the Rhodesian prison, I turn to the oral and written testimonies of ex-political prisoners themselves. The later sections document the personalized experiences of political imprisonment, and suggest that even though these prisons were spaces of disciplining and punishing political offenders, they were also spaces of struggle, resistance, and negotiation.

Discipline and Punish: Life in Prison

Rhodesian prisons were not for the faint-hearted. As soon as they arrived inside Rhodesian jails, convicted political offenders had no illusions about the horrid conditions that were awaiting them. Cecil Dube, who arrived at Connemara Prison in Gwelo in the March of 1972 after a Rhodesian court convicted him on terrorism charges, knew that his life in prison would be difficult the moment he set his eyes on other political prisoners in that prison. According to Dube,

> The first day at Connemara was spent enquiring about conditions in the prison. The [political] prisoners we found were a horrible sight. They were thin, dirty, and one could just read misery and suffering in their faces. They had been starved, given backbreaking labor, brutal treatment and were mentally frustrated. I did not sleep that night, thinking of the horrible stories I had been told about the notorious [prison warders] of the "Land Gang."[16]

The Land Gang that Dube dreaded was the largest group of African prison laborers at Connemara and performed hard labor on the prison farms. On his first full day in prison, Monday March 22, Dube joined the Land Gang. The prison's wake-up bell had rung at 5:00 a.m., and at 5:30 a.m. prison warders opened up prison cells to allow inmates a chance to have a cold shower. From the showers, Dube and his fellow inmates went to an open shed outside the prison blocks that served as a dining room. Breakfast was a small lump of *sadza* and sugarless black coffee. Next, a call-up bell was rung, and Dube and other new inmates followed veteran prisoners to where everybody sat to be counted by prison warders. At the end of the roll-call, Dube's group of Land Gang prisoners were marched under armed guard to the prison's fields.

In charge of the Land Gang, which consisted of thirty prisoners, were five warders, two dog-handlers, two armed warders, and a tough senior warder called Corporal Moyo who was in charge of the whole gang. At the fields, prison warders divided the Land Gang into two groups; one group of ten prisoners was to pick cotton, and Dube's group was to cultivate the cotton crops with hoes. Work started at 7:00 a.m., and each prisoner took charge of a line of crops in the fields. Dube recalled that,

> From the start we were told that nobody was to lag behind. We were being urged like oxen pulling a plough. The dog-handlers set their vicious dogs on those lagging behind. It was slave-labor, back-

> breaking, and insults being hurled at us. After an hour, I had large blisters in my hands. I had stopped sweating and my back was breaking. Around 11 o'clock Corporal Moyo ordered a staff prisoner to bring sticks because he said we were not working but playing. The sticks were promptly brought, and we were warned that we would have to increase our cultivating speed, and that anyone who lagged behind would be whipped.[17]

According to Dube's testimony, by midday the sun was now hot. The Land Gang prisoners had been cultivating non-stop for four hours, and most of the prisoners, particularly the newer ones, were not used to this type of labor. Dube thought to himself that, "Although we did cultivate in our own fields at home, it was not as hard as at Connemara." As he was deep in thought and looking at the prison warders urging other inmates with sticks and dogs being set on others, prisoners fainting and buckets of water poured over them in order to revive them, Dube felt the stick along his spine. "I don't remember anything after that except standing up from where I had fallen. I felt dizzy, I wanted to vomit but nothing came out. I was forced to continue cultivating and the beating continued," said Dube. According to Dube, on that day most of the new prisoners collapsed. Dube himself collapsed twice, and after the third time he decided to protest to the warder:

> After collapsing for the third time I could not stand it. I told the Corporal that I could not continue working. He took a gun and threatened to shoot me. By that time, I didn't care a damn about death. What had I done to deserve such treatment? I was holding a hoe and was prepared to use it if anyone came close. I asked the Corporal to shoot but he didn't. I started walking towards the gaol. The dog-handlers let their dogs loose on me. . . . I walked back to the gang and started working again. This time the warders did not assault me but insulted me and used all sorts of vulgar language. The other prisoners were whipped and kicked until 12:45 p.m. [During lunch hour] most of us could not eat. I just lay down feeling pain all over my body. I thought of my prison sentence, the period I had to cover, and that morning's experience. I did not expect to come out [of that prison] alive. . . . After lunch we went back to work. It was the same as in the morning, but the whipping had been reduced. Towards 4 o'clock the Corporal went from prisoner to prisoner, inspecting the damage that had been done on the prisoners. At 4 o'clock we knocked off and were marched back to prison.[18]

Cecil Dube stayed at Connemara for the duration of his prison term and survived the rigors of prison life. At the time that he gave his

testimony on his prison experiences, Dube had fled Rhodesia to Zambia, fearing further incarceration. Though his testimony about his prison experiences gave a unique insight into the lives of political prisoners in Rhodesia, it was not that different from other forms of prison brutalities that African political offenders faced in Rhodesian prisons.

Richard Mapolisa, a prominent political prisoner who was incarcerated at Khami Maximum Security Prison since the end of 1963 and served at least 14 years intermittently in solitary confinement on terrorism charges, gave a chilling account of his life in Rhodesian prisons.[19] After spending a year on death row in Salisbury Prison while a worldwide campaign by human rights groups got under way to save his life, in April 1965, following appeals to the privy council and to the Rhodesian prime minister for clemency, his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. Mapolisa, whose health had deteriorated badly due to the privations of Rhodesian prison life, was transferred toward the end of that year to Khami Maximum Security Prison outside Rhodesia's second capital of Bulawayo. Prison authorities put him into solitary confinement because they labeled him a "dangerous prisoner" and, despite a prescription from the prison doctor for an improved diet, prison officials refused him any additional food to that normally given to African or "Class III" prisoners. In protest, Mapolisa immediately went on a hunger strike, and was confined to a darkened punishment cell where attempts were made to force-feed him. After more than a month, the prison authorities backed down and agreed to provide him with supplementary food rations. Mapolisa remained, however, in solitary confinement, with prison officials allowing him out for only an hour or two a day to undertake hard labor but prevented him, like subsequent political prisoners who joined him at Khami, from talking to other prisoners. Furthermore, because of his prior hunger strike protest, he was singled out by the prison authorities and suffered particular harassment. Mapolisa was kept in solitary confinement at Khami in a special section of single cells used for those considered more dangerous by prisoner officials until 1968, when he was transferred into a cell with other prisoners. This comparative relaxation in his conditions did not last long, however. Following an argument with a prison warder in which he was beaten up and his head gashed open with a truncheon, he was moved back into a single cell. He remained in the single cell section of the prison until at least 1972.

For other political prisoners who were fully cognizant of the brutal conditions awaiting them in Rhodesian prisons, mental resistance

provided a means of coping with prison life from day one. The type of mental resistance that some political prisoners developed grew out of a shared sense of political destiny, and from the conviction that their ordeals constituted "suffering for Zimbabwe." This was certainly the case for those political offenders who were arrested and sentenced to prison terms in groups. Group political and emotional solidarity fueled prisoners' mental convictions that their suffering was part of a liberation war effort. Francis Chikukwa, who was sentenced to death along with his friends for terrorism crimes, explained how, in the face of certain death in Salisbury Prison's death cells, his group of friends psyched themselves to accept that their fate was to "die for Zimbabwe." According to Chikukwa,

> [At Salisbury Prison] we always expected to be hanged. But we remained jovial. We would sing uplifting songs everyday. We would also sing death/mourning songs telling our colleagues that we are going now, and that we will meet in the afterlife world. We were that prepared to die. We had no choice but to be emotionally strong, to die for what we believed in.[20]

However, Chikukwa and some of his friends escaped the gallows in 1964 after the British government pressured the Rhodesian regime to suspend the death sentence for political offenders. His group of prisoners was transferred to Khami Maximum Prison to serve life sentences. Unlike Richard Mapolisa, who arrived at Khami by himself, Chikukwa and his friends got to Khami emotionally and mentally prepared to confront that prison's horrid conditions. White jail wardens at Khami had developed a reputation of coming down hard on political offenders, but when Chikukwa and his fellow prisoners arrived at Khami their first response to the warders was to defy and undermine their authority. According to Chikukwa,

> When our group of political prisoners arrived at Khami Maximum Prison . . . [we were] determined to serve whatever sentence for our political convictions and we were not afraid to say it in front of our captors. Prison warders called our group 'very dangerous.' In fact, we learned that even before we got to Khami, the jail guards had been forewarned that we were a dangerous gang, and that we were even capable of escaping Khami's high security walls. . . . The following day after our arrival at Khami, we met the prison's white superintendent and our handlers told him that we were "the most dangerous people" he had been warned about. The superintendent addressed us and said, "So its you *magandanga* (terrorists)?" We looked at him and said

> unanimously, "Yes, it's us so-called terrorists! We are not terrorists, we are freedom fighters." The superintendent angrily retorted, asking us: "What is a freedom fighter? What is the definition of a freedom fighter?" We also retorted back and told him that just as he was sent here to keep us in jail, we were also sent by our people to be freedom fighters, to fight for the liberation of our country! In a fit of rage, the superintendent directed that we must be locked up in our cells for two days without seeing the light of day. We never cared—in fact, in the evening the whole jail broke into song and fanfare. We sang liberation struggle songs. We coordinated our efforts across the three floors of the prison to the extent that the whole prison was filled with the melody of these songs. Deep into the night, the jail guards came and pleaded with us to go to sleep. We never thought of ourselves solely as being in jail—we told ourselves that we were in Zimbabwe!

Notwithstanding the variations in political prisoners' initial responses to prison life, conditions in Rhodesian jails for political offenders were challenging. Of all the prisons populated by political prisoners, Khami was well known to Africans as the harshest of Rhodesia's Maximum Security Prisons.[21] Conditions there deteriorated after an influx of prisoners sentenced under the Law and Order Maintenance Act in the mid-sixties. In 1964, when warders opened fire on prisoners who were protesting about prison conditions, killing and wounding an unknown number, security was tightened and political prisoners were segregated from other convicted prisoners. Toward Rhodesia's November 1965 rebellious Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) that sought to forestall African majority rule, political prisoners were locked up at Khami, as at other Rhodesian prisons, almost continuously while new perimeter walls were built as part of a further security drive.

The cells at Khami were bare, and apart from a sleeping mat, prisoners had three blankets and a toilet bucket. Prison warders let out prisoners for only five minutes in the morning, during which time they were supposed to empty the toilet buckets, have a cold shower and use the flush toilets. No towels were provided, so prisoners had to dress and return to their cells after a shower while still wet. Breakfast of sugarless porridge was served in the area outside the cells but was taken back to the cells to be eaten. Usually, the same plates were reused, unwashed, several times by different prisoners. Physical exercise was limited to hard labor. For prisoners in the single cells, such exercise and time outside the cells was reduced to two or three hours a day. At Khami, labor consisted of stone crushing on the floor of a pit quarry, with armed guards on duty standing above the pits.

Prisoners were locked up again after lunch of *sadza* and beans and in the evening, they were strip-searched and counted at a roll call. While those in communal cells could at least talk quietly to each other, those in single cells were forbidden to speak to other prisoners even during the few hours of the day they were allowed out. They were allowed to receive and send one letter a month, and could have one visitor per month. No physical contact was possible during visits, which lasted for a maximum of 15 minutes, and a wire mesh and a distance of several feet separated prisoners and visitors. Prisoners occasionally saw newspapers, but only after prison authorities had rigorously censored them. Radios were forbidden. On top of these privations, inmates of Khami frequently complained of beatings, harassment, and assault, the indiscriminate withdrawal of privileges, and the arbitrary imposition of punishments such as reduced diets or additional hard labor.[22] Nana Nkomo, who gave testimony to the grim conditions in Khami prison, said,

> The living conditions [at Khami Maximum Prison] were the worst I ever saw or experienced. We were confined in cells of 30 people each. They were virtually crowded and most of the people lost their lives. Worst means of torture were used here. Electric fire was used under our feet and private parts. We were kicked all over the body. Most of the prisoners were brutally injured, some broke their legs while others lost their eyes. At times we were taken into a dark cell for a period of two weeks. Those who did not resist torture died and it took them days to bury the corpses. Our cells were characterized by smells of the dead comrades.[23]

At other prisons in Rhodesia, political prisoners confronted variations of such grim prison conditions. For example, at Gwelo Prison in 1975, a group of inmates gave evidence in a letter of the seemingly tailor-made gruesome conditions that they faced: ,"The Prison at Gwelo has become an orifice into an earthly hell," they wrote. "The trail of wickedness seems to blaze infinitely."[24]

Gwelo Prison was one of the smaller, backdated institutions of confinement where a proportion of political offenders were incarcerated. Rhodesian prisons in general were underfunded, and the effects of that manifested themselves in daily conditions like those Gwelo inmates described:

> The filth and squalor of our cramped quarters, and the unspeakable diet on which we are fed, chaff for our mealie meal, and putrid fish for our meat, or just offal, none on it fit for human consumption by

> public standards, leaves no surprise at the contraction of illness by half of the detainee population of the 55 men here. Thus to a greater or lesser extent virtually all the detainees at this centre have been reduced to varying degrees of emaciation and physical dilapidation.[25]

Other prisoners' daily lives were defined by the prison regimen that penal authorities imposed on political prisoners such as hard labor or solitary confinement. Political prisoners sentenced to imprisonment with hard labor, like Cecil Dube's experiences at Connemara prison, spent their prison sentences performing onerous labor tasks in prison crop fields, digging quarry, felling and stumping trees, and such other heavy manual jobs. In an interview, Lucas Jonasi remembered the hard labor daily conditions in Marondera Prison, where he spent eight years, in these words:

> That prison was hell. When we arrived, it was the harvest season, and prisoners were harvesting the prison's maize/corn fields. I will never forget the every day, grueling work sessions that I experienced at that prison. I never worked that much in the other prisons that I later went to. The work regime at this prison was onerous. We worked in the prison's cornfields in gangs, which were further divided into parties of two prisoners holding big empty sacks that prisoners were supposed to fill with dried corn. We were supposed to go into the cornfields and walk along single rows of the field filling those sacks with dried corn and then carry the sacks to a machine that ground the corn into corn meal. We repeated this process many times in one workday. It was a grueling job. No one was supposed to stop working, and a prison guard was always there to drive us to work. If you made the mistake of dropping the sack of corn to the ground, you were beaten until you picked up that sack. In the first two weeks of our stay at that prison, we were all broken, exhausted, and horribly tired from the working. After some time, we thought we were lucky to be transferred to Salisbury Central Prison.[26]

However, for Lucas Jonasi, being transferred to Salisbury Prison turned out not be luck at all because his assessment of daily life at that prison was even grimmer:

> We lived in subhuman conditions and far below what is expected of a human life. Every day we bathed communally with bare feet and in dirty bathrooms that were never cleaned. The ablution bathrooms also had feces all over, and again, we used these bathrooms with bare feet. Furthermore, at that prison there were blanket-lice (or bed bugs) that bit me to the extent that I have never experienced in my whole life.

> All the time you could actually feel the lice moving on your body, and if you managed to catch one of the insects, they were so big from feasting on our blood. As if that was not enough, the blankets were never washed, and thus they were a perfect breeding ground for the lice. That is the 'hell' that I saw at Salisbury Central Prison.[27]

Solitary confinement also defined daily life for many political prisoners in Rhodesian prisons. Although other penal punishments like hard labor were severe enough to make life difficult for political prisoners in Rhodesian prisons, solitary confinement was even more taxing on prisoners' physical, emotional, and mental health. In studies of imprisonment, solitary confinement stands out as one of the severest of penal punishments. For example, studies have shown that prisoners who are incarcerated in solitary cells and who may have been previously healthy prisoners "develop clinical symptoms usually associated with psychosis or severe affective disorders" including "all types of psychiatric morbidity."[28] In these studies, too, prisoners who are isolated for prolonged periods of time have been known to experience "depression, despair, anxiety, rage, claustrophobia, hallucinations, problems with impulse control, and/or an impaired ability to think, concentrate, or remember."[29] In different Rhodesian prisons, political prisoners were particularly targeted for solitary confinement, sometimes on the pretext that this would prevent them from politically influencing other common prisoners, and sometimes as the fitting punishment for offenders who were regarded as "dangerous" and "terrorists." A political prisoner who was kept in solitary confinement for five months at Gwanda Prison near Bulawayo remembered that,

> Out of the terrible [solitary confinement] experience a lot of imaginations got into my head. There was nothing I was allowed to read [in the solitary cells]—no newspapers, no books, nothing. I could not talk to anybody. I even forgot my own voice. After about five months continuously inside a room by myself I found I was getting very pale, and I asked to be allowed a bit of sunshine.[30]

This particular prisoner was later transferred to Khami Prison where, as he remembered, "I found people there saying they had been locked in [solitary] cells for six months. They would come out for perhaps 30 minutes per day, and sometimes they weren't allowed out of their cells at all and remained indoors continuously. That was very unhealthy."[31] Almost every political prisoner who passed through Khami Prison confirmed the fact that solitary confinement was a significant part of

daily life at that prison for political offenders. One prisoner testified that,

> [At Khami Prison] we were locked up in solitary confinement for nearly nine months and during this period we were not allowed to talk to each other. We were opened up each day for thirty minutes [*sic*] but that depended on the officer at the time. In the majority of cases, we were opened up for less than 30 minutes. When we were exercised, we had to keep a distance of about ten feet from one another. Had we not been allocated a few books (novels) to read I am sure quite a number would have been mentally affected. Already there were people who talked to themselves loudly towards the end of nine months.[32]

In an interview, another former Khami inmate said that, "There was a time when we were locked up in our cells for six months without seeing the light of day. Believe it or not, our skin turned pale. We never saw the light of day during that time, nor did we know what was out there. It was total confinement with no radio or anything."[33]

In Rhodesia's prisons, ill health was part of political prisoners' daily struggle to survive prison life. In the most notorious prisons, death was a frequent occurrence. With regard to prisoners' daily struggle with their health, oral evidence suggests that most inmates at one point or another fell ill, but were always ignored by prison officials and routinely accused of feigning illness. Common illnesses included a variety of ulcers, various stomach complaints, skin diseases, piles, eye problems, and mental cases. Political prisoners cited as the cause of their frequent ill health the injuries and bodily harm they sustained from torture during moments of arrest and in prison, poor prison diet, arduous prison labor, the debilitating prison punishments such as solitary confinement, and others. Cecil Dube noted that at Connemara, prisoners frequently fell ill due to daily rations of bad food: "We were starving at Connemara. The food was the dirtiest and most unhealthy I have ever come across."[34] Arnold Chironda, referred to earlier, suffered chronic diseases at Gwelo Prison due to the bad conditions at that prison. Chironda's illness in prison was complicated by the fact that he had also been a victim of police torture and had suffered severe internal injuries. As he testified in a separate smuggled letter dated December 12, 1975 to the same human rights group, Chironda further explained that,

> Owing to my deteriorating state of health, which I am greatly concerned with, I wish to appraise [*sic*] you with my state. I have been under my present circumstances as from August 1966 and on 22nd

August 1968 was sent to gaol for nine years long term imprisonment—after being in detention. Then on completion of this term I was re-detained and am at present at Gwelo [Prison] since August 1974.

Circumstances and treatment [during my arrest] were so punitive and atrocious and as a result I suffered internal damages as a result of some brutal beatings and barbarous torture. The aftermath of all this is that I am a moving grave—I have the highest rate of diseases ever recorded on a [prisoner] namely: ulceration of the rectal ancose (?), pains around the kidneys, abdominal ulcers, asthma, chronic bronchitis, and I have no doubt . . . other undetected aliments.

With all these ailments, I have tried to appeal for better food and treatment as well as for better clothing but to no avail from the authorities here. In order to survive I buy myself a pint of milk everyday which I drink three times in place of the worst cooked sadza and 2 ounces of groundnuts that we feed on. I am greatly concerned with my destitute position as far as my health is concerned.

As I am writing, tomorrow I will be going for an operation to try and detect where internal bleeding that I have been complaining of comes from ever since 1969. This is my second operation under such circumstances.[35]

In Gwelo Prison, political prisoners' concerns with their health was exacerbated by prison medical personnel who collaborated with unforgiving prison officials in ignoring and brushing aside inmates' health issues. A group of Gwelo inmates who came together and composed a smuggled letter of protest singled out a prison doctor named Dr. Taylor for having a bad reputation of ignoring prisoners' health concerns. Apparently, Dr. Taylor was a medical superintendent of the local referral hospital in Gwelo and was also the medical consultant of Gwelo Prison. For inmates, instead of treating illnesses, Dr. Taylor himself became a disease afflicting the prisoners, a metaphorical ailment the prisoners named "Tayloritis." In a lengthy letter dated November 1975, the prisoners elaborated on the effects of this "disease":

With the spate of diseases that has afflicted our society in this institution, the racist ogre which pervades the minds of the White prison administrators interposed to create problems galore in availing medication to our ailing persons. On this vile exercise yet a new disease, Tayloritis, has sprung up to pit itself against our vulnerable states of health. This new health hazard is the medical practitioner, Dr. Taylor, who from his antecedents avidly embraces the racist doctrines enshrined in the political philosophy of the Rebel R.F. (Rhodesia Front) regime.

> The renegade medical practitioner who most unfortunately is Superintendent of Gwelo Central Hospital and visiting doctor of Gwelo Detention Centre, without any scruples chose to disregard the sanctity of medical ethics, and zealously worked in league with the prison administration in furtherance of their machinations against our persons healthwise.
>
> During the second quarter of this year, we were spared the noxious effects of Tayloritis, since Dr. Taylor was then on leave. Dr. McCadery and Dr. Shoeniniburger alternated as visiting doctors, and a wide range of ailments, which Dr. Taylor had swept under the carpet, were uncovered, since a proper diagnosis with the aid of X-ray machines and sundry paraphernalia of medical equipment was utilized by these doctors in the quest of fulfilling their role as medical practitioners. To the chagrin and bitter hostility of the arch racist at Gwelo, the Officer-in-charge, T. E. P. Kitt, dietary prescriptions were made.
>
> The officer-in-charge could not contain his fiendish feelings even, since in no time he made an outburst in so many words. Referring to the lady, Dr. Shoeniniburger, he said "This doctor prescribes special diets as if she is handing out oranges from the Mazoe Citrus Estates."[36]
>
> Since the beginning of the third quarter of this year, Tayloritis has again been with us. Dr. Taylor wasted no time in placating the feelings of the racist fellows like Kitt and company. Literally, in a flash the prescriptions made by the two doctors during his leave of absence were cancelled. Attendance at Gwelo Hospital for comprehensive medical examination became virtually extinct.
>
> In the wake of our rapidly tottering health, we were constrained to lodge complaints to the Medical Council of Rhodesia [to no avail].[37]

Concerns with ill health also preoccupied inmates at Khami Prison, which recorded the highest statistics of prison deaths. Francis Chikukwa remembered that at Khami, "Some of our friends actually died at Khami, and we survived out of pure luck." He elaborated in an interview that the chief cause of prison deaths at Khami was that,

> Ill inmates were only taken to hospital only when they became seriously ill. In fact, it became common knowledge that if you were taken to the hospital, you were going to die because only those closer to dying were taken to hospitals. If you complained of any ailment but looked healthy, no one took you seriously. You were just given the same brand of pills that we used to call 'Quinines.' It did not matter what your illness was, you just got 'Quinines.'[38]

Khami inmates recalled the political attitude of the prison medical personnel, who neglected prisoners' health concerns because of

political differences. Dr. Lewis, a Khami medical officer, called "a political doctor" by inmates, had a reputation of prescribing insults to political prisoners rather than attending to their ailments. A former inmate remembered,

> A doctor called Max Lewis visited Khami once a week. During these visits, Dr. Lewis considered that his politics was more important than his medical duty. In the presence of prison officers, he would launch into a diatribe about what he thought of us and the prison officers obviously enjoyed these sessions. It was in one of these sessions that one inmate, damning the consequences, told the political doctor that in fact he should understand our cause better considering that his people had been the victims of Nazism in Hitler's Germany. Dr. Lewis was a Jew. I need not tell you that this courageous young man was carried out more dead than alive.[39]

In a way, during the years that political prisoners were incarcerated in Rhodesian jails, in addition to housing ailing inmates, the prison became a dark rictus of death. In January 1974, political prisoners at Gwelo Prison mourned the passing of a fellow political activist, Kenneth Chisango. Apparently, he had developed unexplainable liver cirrhosis in prison, which was ignored by prison officials until he fell seriously ill, and was released to die at his rural home in Rusape after prison officials noted that he had become "terminally ill." His fellow inmates, who knew exactly how Chisango had struggled until death with his illness, explained in a smuggled letter entitled, "The Elimination they seek achieved":

> We are deeply grieved to inform you that our beloved comrade Kenneth Chisango is no more, he died on or about 15th of January 1974. The continual deterioration of conditions in detention has maintained an inexorable tempo. The vile and brutal conditions under which we live have wholly contributed to the demise of our beloved Kenneth Chisango.
>
> Mr. Chisango had been persistently denied medical treatment, [and] having found he was verging on death they (i.e., prison officials) took him to Gwelo Hospital at the end of November only to have him returned after two days. The Authorities ignored the dietary prescriptions made by the Doctors. His liver cirrhosis got worse and he was again taken to hospital, again the Authorities at Gwelo Prison pressurized his return to prison. Again his condition constrained the vile and sadistic Authorities to grant him permission for his hospitalization. Convinced he had no more chance of living the ogres of the R.F. allowed him to be taken to his home in Rusape.

> He was actually taken home by ambulance whilst in a state of coma from which he was never to revive. The noble heart of this patriot (a victim of vile oppression) cracked only two days later on the 15th of January.[40]

Shadreck Rambanepasi, also a Gwelo Prison inmate, wrote an individual letter to a contemporary human rights group, corroborating the account of the death of Kenneth Chisango. In a January 20, 1974 letter, Shadreck wrote that,

> One of our fellow detainees, Mr. Kenneth Chisango, passed away this week. We had been together [in detention and prison] since 1963 and he was a dear friend as well as a loved comrade. His illness, like that of numerous others, was caused by the unhealthy and inhuman conditions under which we are compelled to live. The visiting doctor, who also happens to be the Superintendent of Gwelo Hospital, [Dr Taylor], kept on giving him, as he does to us all, useless prescriptions and telling him that there was nothing wrong with him. It was only when his stomach began to swell that he was allowed to go to the hospital, where the doctors discovered that he was seriously ill. The doctors could not understand how he could have liver cirrhosis when he has been in prison for over 8 years. Even so, when the doctors recommended a better diet for him it was refused him. The only change they could make was to give him [corn] meal porridge without sugar or milk. The doctors recommended his release, having seen [that] he hadn't many days to live and his mind had been so affected that even a fool could see the man was no threat to anyone. But they dragged on his release until the last minute. They at last sent him by an ambulance to his home where he died early this week.[41]

In an anonymous letter, another Gwelo Prison inmate alerted human rights groups of the death of a political prisoner. In the letter, dated November 13, 1975 and entitled "Murder in a Rhodesian Detention Jail," the author narrated the death of a Patrick Gurupira whose death mirrored that of many Gwelo inmates who succumbed to illness in that prison:

> Mr. Patrick Gurupira, a political detainee, was murdered . . . at 2 p.m. on November 5th, 1975. Mr. Patrick Gurupira was . . . in detention for 9 years. Of late, he has been suffering from diabetes, to which the visiting doctor, Taylor, merely prescribed penicillin pills. The same doctor twice returned the late from Gwelo Hospital [claiming that he was] fit. The fact that a qualified doctor prescribes penicillin to a diabetes case shows the extent of the racial war in Rhodesia.[42]

Death in Rhodesian prisons also claimed the life of a prominent ZANU nationalist, Leopold Takawira. Imprisoned at Salisbury Prison, Takawira's death in 1970 panicked prison officials who concealed the fact that he had died in prison, claiming it had happened in Salisbury Hospital. Eddison Zvobgo, who shared a cell next to Takawira, declared in a 1980 interview that, "The late Leopold Takawira, *Shumba yeChirimhanzi* (totemic reference "Lion of Chirimhanzi") died in a prison hospital and not in Harare Hospital as the previous government claimed." Recounting Takawira's last few days, Zvobgo said,

> It was a sudden illness. His wife came to Salisbury Prison on a Saturday to visit him. She was allowed to visit him once a week. He was feeling fine. So she went home. He fell really ill the following Monday. By Wednesday, he had lost so much weight. He kept on asking for water to drink. I remember filling six bottles of water for him before he was locked up and the following morning all the bottles would be empty. On Thursday [we] realized that Takawira could not stand or wake up. He has sunk into a coma. [We] asked the superintendent if one of [us] could be allowed to share his cell. This was refused. That same night, he fell off the bed completely unconscious. The following morning Maurice Nyagumbo, Robert Mugabe, Malianga and myself picked him up and put him back on the bed. We were extremely desperate. We realized that he was dying. We had to attract the attention of the superintendent but there was no way of doing this. I remember many comrades taking their chamber pots and using them to pound at the door until the superintendent came. We demanded that he be taken to hospital, but the superintendent said he would need ministerial authority to do this. So there he was just dying on our hands when the officials were totally unwilling to recognize that this was a very serious emergency. The whole day he was there until 4:30 p.m. when they came to put him on a stretcher and pretended they were taking him to hospital immediately. In fact, that was not so. They took him to the prison hospital. All the other prisoners who were working there told us he died in there. But the following morning Lardner-Burke (Rhodesia's minister of law and order) and others claimed he had died in [Salisbury] hospital.[43]

After so many deaths in Rhodesian prisons, prisoners sought the intervention of the Rhodesian government, particularly after noting with concern the cover-up tactic of Rhodesian prison officials of removing fatally ill prisoners from prisons to their homes in order to conceal the reality that conditions in Rhodesian prisons were responsible for prison deaths. Shadreck Rambanepasi noted in the letter

referred to earlier that, "The precedent is now established that only those certified by the doctors to be finished (i.e., nearly dying) are released. First, it was Bernard Mandinzera then Cephas Musakasa, Obedia Mbirimi, and now Kenneth Chisango. All these dead comrades were released because doctors certified them as having incurable diseases and not likely to live for long."[44]

By all accounts, deaths in prisons figured prominently in detainees' accounts of everyday occurrences. After receiving complaints from political prisoners, some African members of the Rhodesian Parliament confronted the state ministers responsible for prisons on the issue of prison deaths. During parliamentary debates, a Mr. Maposa, sought explanation from the minister of law and order in June 1976 by giving evidence that,

> The inmates of [Gwelo Prison] have brought to my attention that medical facilities are very inadequate. As a result many of them are getting sick, some of them have had their conditions deteriorating almost every day. . . . About three weeks ago, a detainee who was detained from 1964 and was still a detainee up to last week or two weeks ago died in Gwelo Hospital. The conditions surrounding his death to me were very mysterious.[45]

The responsible minister's response, like all official responses to questions concerning political prisoners' conditions of confinement, was dismissive of Mr. Maposa's enquiry:

> It is true that a man who was a detainee died on the 9th June this year in the Gwelo General Hospital, but the allegation that there was anything mysterious about the death is quite false. The deceased died of a heart attack after suffering from hypertension for a number of years and for which he was receiving treatment, and to which treatment he was apparently responding. His death is no more mysterious than the death of anyone else in those circumstances. It is perhaps a matter of some relief that the hon. member did not go so far as to demand a commission of inquiry.[46]

Life in Rhodesian prisons, therefore, was a combination of some of the worst conditions of confinement. Daily life in these prisons, as the evidence suggests, combined spatial confinement with curtailed freedoms, racialized abuse, racial segregation, and heightened repression. The extremely bad conditions of prison life for Rhodesian political prisoners cannot be trivialized. However, the other side of prisoners' testimonies also reconfigures the evidently repressive prison space

into a space of struggle, resistance, confrontation, and negotiation. I turn to this crucial aspect of political prisoners' lives in Rhodesian prisons in a section later in this chapter.

But first, in addition to the earlier outlines of the conditions of incarceration for political prisoners, I give special attention to the gendered nature of the Rhodesian prisons. Although the later section reveals again some of the grim conditions of incarceration for political prisoners, the gendered lens yields interesting perspectives, particularly concerning the uniqueness of women's incarceration and the gendered relationships that prisoners developed in order to cope with prison life.

Gendered Confinement: Women and Gender in Prisons

Although Rhodesian prisons were predominantly masculine, a number of female political prisoners populated some of Rhodesia's prisons. Again, like other prisoners, despite the fact that female political prisoners were from diverse social backgrounds, oral testimonies suggest that in the Rhodesian prisons female political offenders reified their collective identity as political prisoners and took advantage of that singular identity to develop solidarity relationships meant to confront the grim conditions of Rhodesian jails. Based on their testimonies, I suggest that female political offenders experienced incarceration differently from men. As women, mothers, and girls, female political offenders faced unique sets of challenges in Rhodesian prisons that also shaped the ways in which they responded to and coped with diverse prison conditions.

Unlike male prisoners, when most female political prisoners arrived at Rhodesian jails, many arrived with their obligations as mothers with infant children or pregnant. Although the existence of women's only jails or exclusively female prison sections in the dominant Rhodesian jails would have provided a safe sanctuary for women from predatory male sexual assaults, the conditions of incarceration for women with motherly obligations left a lot to be desired. Mai Kadengu, who was arrested in rural Rusape on allegations of cooking for African guerrillas, was incarcerated at Salisbury's Chikurubi Maximum Prison along with her infant. According to Kadengu, "For nursing mothers like me and other women who had infant children, we had no choice but to take our babies with us to prison. Some of us were arrested with our children strapped on our backs anyway."[47] Hostile prison officials made it clear to such women that caring for their infants in prison

would be a tall order. Kadengu recalled that when she arrived at Chikurubi Prison along with other female political prisoners, prison warders disparaged them as "guerrilla prostitutes" and called them derogatory names. Their infants were regarded as "terrorist children." Kadengu elaborated on this in an interview:

> As soon as we arrived at Chikurubi Prison, we saw this female warden named Laiza who made it clear that she despised political prisoners. Other guards and prison officials even called us *magandanga* (terrorists) because we were arrested for cooking for and harboring terrorists. They also called our infant children whom we went to prison with "terrorists" because their parents were terrorists. That hurt emotionally. On our first night, the Warden instructed her other colleagues to beat us up, yet we had children on our backs. The prison officials denied us food that day, even though the kitchen staff had reserved food for us since they were under instructions to put aside food for prisoners who were coming that day. Prison officials were even supposed to give infant food to mothers with babies. But on that day, even our babies slept on empty stomachs because they were labeled *vana vematerrorists* (children of terrorists). The only thing they gave us that day was beatings. Our children were made to sit in a corner away from us as the warders took turns to lash us. As mothers with children, we were put in a cell of our own. We were forbidden from speaking to each other or even to gesticulate to each other.[48]

Conditions in the women's section of Chukurubi Maximum Prison were appalling, particularly for the infants who had to be separated from their mothers when they had to perform hard labor or other prison obligations. Former female political prisoners remembered that many children died at Chikurubi Prison due to malnutrition and the unhygienic living conditions. One testimony concerning the feeding arrangements for infants at that prison revealed some of the reasons why children in that prison could possibly die due to malnutrition and unhygienic conditions:

> Whilst we (i.e., mothers) were away performing hard labor, our children were mass-fed. The prison warders would take trash can lids and use them as huge plates in which they poured our children's porridge. Children would haplessly and desperately try to feed themselves from those dirty trash-can lids. No one was prepared to feed our children properly, and yet we were away doing hard labor somewhere as far as the Ruwa area. Young and inexperienced children either stayed hungry or were seriously injured as they tried to eat the hot porridge. Others got serious burns as a result, because no one was there to control them or anything.[49]

Oral evidence suggests that infant mortality in prisons such as these was high. A former inmate recalled that,

> Many children died at Chikurubi Prison. I especially remember a child named Sikhumbuzo who died in prison. His death traumatized all the mothers in that prison and, as for me, that particular experience stayed with me for many years. That child fell very ill due to malnutrition and succumbed to his illness. . . . Many other children also died of malnutrition. But I especially remember that other child because I was his mother's friend. His mother was from Bulawayo and she was serving a 25-year prison sentence for political issues. Our children suffered a great deal and, as mothers, that experience was difficult to go through. *Jeri rehondo range rakaoma!* (The liberation war jail was difficult!)[50]

Although many female informants were prepared to talk about general prison conditions, it was difficult for them to discuss issues pertaining to sexual exploitation in the prisons. Because Shona/Ndebele cultural norms prescribed that, as a young male, I was a "child" or "son" to these women, it was inappropriate to discuss intimate issues such as feminine hygiene or sexual issues in prison. Nevertheless, one female informant suggested in the female section of Chikurubi Prison, cases of sexual assault were very few mainly because female guards and wardens manned the female prison section. According to this informant, "Most women were raped and sexually exploited by Rhodesian security forces before they were brought to prisons. In prisons it was difficult for male guards to abuse us because most of the prison officers who looked after female inmates were also female."[51] At Gwelo's Connemara Prison, however, Emmie Sifelani Ncube recalled incidences of sexual assault. As her testimony reveals, female political prisoners had to come together to protect themselves from sexual assaults and to confront those prison guards who preyed on female inmates. According to Ncube's testimony,

> As women, we were vulnerable victims. This is because there were times when prison guards wanted to rape and sexually abuse us. However, we banded together as women and fought to protect each other from such abuses. We threatened to beat up the prison guards if they ever tried to touch us. There is a certain day when we were in prison that I still remember when a male prison guard entered the female section of the prison and attempted to rape a woman named Violet Ndlovu. The guard took the woman to some hidden room in the prison complex. After we heard the woman screaming, we went and broke the

> door of that room with our own bare hands. We entered the room and seriously beat up the prison guard. We got into that room before that guard had raped our colleague. That guard was later transferred to another prison away from Gwelo. During my time in Rhodesian prisons, no woman political detainee was raped because we were so united and therefore watched each other's backs. We never trusted to have one male guard summon a single female detainee for any kind of prison work. We made sure that whenever there was a male guard who wanted female labor, five or so female detainees would be around to deter any sexual advances. Thus, male guards never had a chance to be alone with a female detainee.[52]

Some testimonies hinted at the fact that common female prisoners could sometimes prey on young and inexperienced female political prisoners. Susan Museti, who was arrested in rural Rhodesia as a young girl along with her friends for cooking food for African guerrillas and incarcerated in Chikurubi Prison, hinted in an interview that young girls like her were often forced into awkward relationships with older female prisoners. In that prison, political prisoners were mixed with common prisoners and, as Museti hinted, older female prisoners exploited younger and naïve political prisoners. According to her testimony, "In this prison, we were . . . mixed with old female criminals, some of whom were murderers. These senior women were nasty because they made some of us to be their slaves. For instance, some of these women prisoners would demand that we make their beds, tuck them into their beds and cover them with blankets. These women used to promise us things like oranges as payment."[53]

Male political prisoners, on the other hand, openly talked about issues of prison sexuality. Male prisoners also developed unique gendered relations in prisons where homosexuality was rampant. For many political prisoners, such encounters were an affront to their political sensibilities, as they believed that homosexuality was but another manifestation of the colonial domination they were fighting. Their gendered testimonies of prison life involved encounters with prison homosexuality, which was rampant in Rhodesian prisons, but according to oral evidence, most political prisoners disavowed this practice, as they believed it was contrary to their political convictions, which they framed around narrow notions of African heterosexuality. For political prisoners, homosexuality was a moral scourge they could not condone. In their culturally grounded assertions and perhaps myopic constructions of human sexuality, homosexuality was

one of those manifestations of white colonial culture that had to be excised from the Zimbabwean social psyche.

Lucas Jonasi remembered in an interview that in the general population sections of Salisbury Prison, where some political prisoners were mixed with common criminals, older common criminals would make homosexual advances to younger political prisoners. But according to his testimony, political prisoners, who were all averse to homosexuality, warded off such advances:

> When we got there (Salisbury Prison), our group consisted of some very young boys. I was one of the youngest, but at least I was starting to have a beard, and so I did not appear to be that young. The younger ones were prone to some of those horrible things that happen in jail (referring to homosexuality). This was because in the general population there were some hard-core criminals who had been in prison for a very long time. In many cases, these criminals made vigorous advances to us, but we started standing our ground and told them that we are not criminals but political prisoners. Luckily, also, there were senior political leaders who were later imprisoned in this jail, and these men made sure that none of those homosexual acts happened. They made it clear that as long they were there, political prisoners would not tolerate that behavior.[54]

As suggested, political prisoners' disinclination toward homosexuality had a lot to do with the patriarchal ideals of African nationalism, which were conflated with heterosexual male virility.[55] In Rhodesian prisons, this manifested itself in an incipient revolutionary and nationalistic homophobia whereby these inmates regarded homosexuality as colonial and foreign and hence a threat to their anti-colonial revolution. Invariably, political prisoners reacted violently to any incidences of homosexuality in Rhodesian prisons. They attacked common prisoners whom they suspected of having homosexual relations, as they did, according to Panganai Gilbert Mangwengwende, upon discovering a hint of homosexuality in Salisbury Prison:

> We knew that common criminals had nicer food because they had homosexual relationships with some prison guards. This never happened with political prisoners because we used to beat up anyone who made homosexual advances or participated in this behavior. It was easy to identify homosexuals in prison. In most cases, those criminals who were in homosexual relationships with guards had nice, white, and clean prison uniforms. When we observed anyone dressed in these crisp uniforms we would beat him up because we knew he was a homosexual.[56]

Mathew Masiyakurima, an ex-Gwelo Prison political inmate, also gave evidence that,

> In some cases when we as political prisoners were mixed with convicted criminals in prisons such as Gwelo, we insisted on morality among those prisoners. We stamped out *hungochani* (homosexuality) among prisoners and meted out instant justice to transgressors. We made it clear that we would not tolerate such un-African behavior when some of us were suffering to liberate this country.[57]

These gendered experiences of political imprisonment are usually absent in scholarly work on prison experiences. As this section suggested, women experienced imprisonment differently from men, and men confronted their own sexuality in ways that conformed to narrow and myopic constructions of male sexuality. In the following section of this chapter, I now turn to the different ways in which political prisoners reconstituted Rhodesian jails into terrains of struggle as they sought to cope and creatively adapt to prison conditions.

Challenging Confinement: Redemptive Violence, Writing, and Negotiation

In the predominantly Manichean world of Rhodesian incarceration, African political offenders frequently found themselves having to defend and protect their human dignity through various forms of confrontation, violence, and protest against repressive prison officials. As racialized spaces, the rules of interaction between black and white came under extraordinary pressure in the prisons. In the volatile political environment of 1960s and 1970s Rhodesia, racial polarity reached its maximum crescendo and, in the closed and intimate spaces of confinement, that tension often produced explosive confrontation and protest pitting white penal official versus black political offenders. Available evidence suggests that prisoners occasionally refused to follow orders, made demands on their jailers, confronted and protested repressive prison policies, and when violently attacked, some prisoners embraced the Fanonic belief in the redemptive and liberating effects of counter-violence.[58]

During the early years of political incarceration, Rhodesian prison officials were not sure how to treat African political offenders who, unlike the common criminal, felt unjustly confined and were politically committed to confront symbols of Rhodesian settler rule such as white jailers. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, mostly the leaders

of African political formations were incarcerated in Rhodesian jails. Considering the insurgent and radical nature of African nationalist political thought in the 1960s, these political prisoners were unprepared to cooperate with Rhodesian jailers. Monthly reports by "officers-in-charge" of Rhodesian prisons frequently raised jailers' complaints that political prisoners were the most recalcitrant and obstinate inmates. These officials also occasionally expressed concern with the fact that instead of abandoning their political beliefs, imprisonment actually worked toward emboldening political prisoners' political commitments. In a monthly report dated April 4, 1960, an officer-in-charge at Selukwe Prison noted with concern the resilience of political prisoners when it came to their political commitments. He wrote that

> The following detainees are held here at present: Chikerema, Mtandwa, Mhizha, Nyandoro, and Maluleke…At present time there are five detainees held here. They seem to be the hard core of the [African National] Congress. *As far as I can ascertain there is no change in the political ideals, and they are still fanatical to the "Cause." Putting it bluntly, detention has not deterred them one bit. In fact, if anything, it has assisted them greatly, in that they have been free to study excessively, at next to no cost to themselves, whilst the authorities take care of their board and lodging.*[59] (My emphasis)

By November of that year, the same officer-in-charge of Selukwe Prison became very concerned with the confrontational attitude of political prisoners and admitted to failing to keep the prison environment "normal." In his lengthy report, he noted:

> The situation at this prison has reached a hectic period during October 1960. On several occasions, the [political] detainees have become very agitated and strong words had to be used. This prison has no facilities for people on punishment, and I find it difficult to keep the situation normal. They (detainees) seem to have the idea that this place has not enough space for exercise and consequently I find them very noisy as late as 10 p.m. and on one occasion at 1 a.m.; *they seem to treat everything as a joke to annoy people hoping for some results to their advantage.* Detainee [George] Nyandoro threatened me on two occasions by saying 'We will refuse to go into the cells at night' on being refused some of their requests, one occasion being the polishing of their cell which they refuse to do and want labour supplied, to which I did not agree and have instructed them to get on with the polishing. To date they have not carried out their threat after being informed of the consequences to anything of such nature.[60]

At Marandellas Prison, a particular political prisoner developed a reputation for beating up white prison warders and officials. Maurice Nyagumbo, who later wrote a post-prison memoir[61] that is peppered with his violent confrontations with Rhodesian prison officers, was one of the fieriest political prisoners who did not take lightly to what he perceived as infringements to his dignity.[62] As early 1959, the officer-in-charge for Marandellas Prison wrote concerning Nyagumbo that,

> No. 16. Moris NYAGUMBO—I consider to date the most difficult and possible dangerous detainee. . . . On several occasions, he has stated that he will not respect authority unless he is treated according to his idea as a gentleman. On his arrival he stated to the officer in charge that the detainees could be very difficult unless treated in a manner suitable to them. Needless to say we have clashed and at present he is in Salisbury undergoing a sentence for insolence towards members of the staff, it has also been brought to my attention that he stated that they, the detainees, are not afraid to use force.[63]

Nyagumbo's own autobiography documents his violent confrontations with Rhodesian white prison officers whom he accused of failing to treat him with dignity and respect and with manners due to him as a man and a nationalist. As one appraisal of his autobiography notes, on several occasions, Nyagumbo assaulted white policemen and prison superintendents, actions that sometimes cost him dearly in prison terms and punishments.[64] As historian Jocelyn Alexander notes in her review of his autobiography, Nyagumbo's violent assaults on these penal officials were at times on-the-spot responses, but sometimes they were planned in advance along with other political prisoners. Nyagumbo's description of his unbridled violent responses to prison officials spoke less of outbursts of rage than of deliberate, politically minded rejections of the coercive power and legitimacy of white prison officials.[65] In one of his numerous assaults on prison officials, he attempted to hammer a white official with a chair for what he thought was an affront to his masculinity. Apparently, whilst Nyagumbo was incarcerated at Marandellas Prison, the native commissioner of Marandellas oversaw the transfer of prisoners to detention or restriction centers. But this native commissioner, a certain E. S. Morris, had the habit of summoning prisoners' wives and children to prison whenever a prisoner was due to be transferred to a restriction area. When Nyagumbo learnt that Morris had summoned his wife to prison, he flew into a rage and attacked him for usurping his paternal and patriarchal privileges:

> I walked into the office where Morris was and asked: "Why is my wife here Morris?" His reply was: "I am *Mr.* Morris, if you want to call me

> by my name, just as I will call you Mr. Nyagumbo. Anyway, I thought you probably wanted to see your wife." I asked him: "Why did you think for me? What right have you to think for me?" I had lost my temper but it appeared as if Mr. Patch, the Marandellas Prison superintendent, had already smelt a rat as he and a group of warders came running. I…picked up a chair with which to hammer Morris's head but this grabbed by the African warders before it landed on Morris. I felt so disappointed because I had spent a lot of time quarrelling with him instead of bashing his head as I wanted. However, I told Mr. Patch who was struggling to get me out of the office that unless my wife was sent home that morning there was going to be very serious trouble between me and Morris.[66]

In this instance, Nyagumbo felt violated as a "man" because according to him, Native Commissioner Morris had no right to summon his wife to prison, particularly without his knowledge. Since he felt emasculated and that, in a way, Morris had attacked his manhood, Nyagumbo's response was to attack back through violence in order to redeem his masculinity. This was not Nyagumbo's last violent confrontation with prison officials. Again in his autobiography, Nyagumbo relates an encounter with a prison doctor in the 1970s in Salisbury Prison who had come to that prison to examine him. To Nyagumbo, this prison doctor's attitude was rude and condescending. In fact, instead of medically examining Nyagumbo, the doctor mocked his political convictions and dismissed his illness as fake. In recounting this incident, Nyagumbo says the doctor asked him, "What are you suffering from? You have been writing letters to your communist friends telling them that you are ill—what is it that you are suffering from?" Nyagumbo asked the doctor for his name, but he refused to give his identity. Accordingly, Nyagumbo proceeded to violently attack him, in retaliation for mocking his nationalism and responding rudely to his polite request for the doctor's name. He wrote,

> As you are aware of my character, I just could not stand that and decided to lynch the man. I was immediately taken to the member-in-charge to face disciplinary measures. This became an opportunity for me to be able to face this man who had always kept himself away from us. As soon as I entered his office, I did not hesitate to lynch him.[67]

Other prisoners followed the same Fanonic use of redemptive violence whenever they felt that prison officials' actions were an affront to their political sensibilities or masculinity. Prisoners also

responded violently to violent prison warders. Enos Nkala, a close friend of Nyagumbo's, did not hesitate to use violence when he felt attacked by white prison officials. In an interview, he recalled that,

> At one time, I beat up a white prison officer (MBM[68]: What had happened?). I think he had made an unpleasant remark, and then I attacked him. I punched him, and he tumbled onto the ground. He did not retaliate but went to file a report. I was separated from others, tried in a prison court, and given 14 days of solitary confinement. . . . I also remember Mugabe was given 25 days of solitary confinement after some incident. . . . I remember also that [Maurice] Nyagumbo was sentenced to caning because he beat up the prison superintendent so badly. So it was not me alone—there were others who beat up prison officers.[69]

In a smuggled letter that Nkala authored in Salisbury prison, he tells of retaliating against a prison officer who had also violently attacked him. In his words, "On the 4th of December, 1973, I was beaten up by a Prison Officer named Denis Gordon Smith (who apparently claims to be brother to the Prime Minister, Ian Smith) with a Baton Stick until the Baton Stick was broken. I sustained injuries on the arm and I have a broken finger on the right hand." In retaliation, Nkala wrote that "I . . . also attacked back in self-defence with my bare hands."[70] Oliver Muvirimi Dizha also recalled retaliating to a prison officer's violent attacks after he had led a prison sit-in to protest bad prison conditions. As Dizha recalled in an interview,

> During that prison sit-in, I was sitting in the front row of the protesting detainees, and the response of the prison officers was nothing but to lash us with rubber-baton sticks. One of them hit me on the back, and I became very angry and just rose up and hit that prison officer on the chin with my head. He fell to the ground, and I started kicking him until he reached for his gun at his waist and shot in the air. The other officers stopped beating detainees, but some detainees had actually started attacking these officers and others, and destroyed one of the fences surrounding the prison.[71]

Many other informants recalled incidences in which political prisoners fought back violent prison officers. I suggest that this use of violence by political offenders in Rhodesian jail undermined the rehabilitative and hegemonic functions of imprisonment. Prisoners' violence was a

total rejection of the Rhodesian state's authority through attacking the symbols of the colonial state, the prison officers.

In other cases of prisoners directly confronting Rhodesian prison authorities, African political prisoners frequently confronted prison officials when they felt that their rights as prisoners had been infringed upon. The sit-in that Dizha referred to earlier was in protest to poor prison food and other awful prison conditions at Marandellas Prison. That particular sit-in was effective because, according to Dizha,

> That chief prison officer that I had fought with later called me to his office and asked me to consult with other detainees on the things that we were demanding. Apparently, this officer now feared for his job after having instigated this near prison chaos that had led to the destruction of prison property. So in order to mollify us, he acceded to our demands. My friend, we started eating rice, steak, and other nice foods for the coming nine months that I was there.[72]

When Enos Nkala was denied an audience with high-ranking prison officials at Salisbury Prison to whom he wanted to protest against an infringement on his rights as a prisoner, he resorted to writing letters directly to these prison authorities. In one of those letters, Nkala wrote to the superintendent of Salisbury Prison, B. A. Ruff, protesting against a host of issues, chief among them prison officials' arbitrary withdrawal of his privilege to receiving one letter per week. In the letter to the superintendent, Nkala wrote,

> Dear Ruff,
>
> Re: Processing of Letters
>
> I have today been handed a "Surplus Letter Notification" informing me that my letter from M. Pida has been withheld as "Surplus." The declaration of this letter as surplus (during the week beginning 21st January, 1974) presupposes that I have already received another letter as my week's entitlement. But, unfortunately, I have not received any letter at all during the week beginning 21st January, 1974. Apart from the fact that I have not received any letter during this week, you owe me [a] letter entitlement for previous weeks during which I did not receive my letter entitlement because, as would appear on the surface, no letters came during those weeks. May I know, on what grounds has this letter been withheld as "Surplus to my entitlement for this week?" Have you been given new powers or has a new Law been enacted that says that you can now declare my letters "surplus" even though I have not received any letters at all? Anyway, if, as may be true, no new law has been enacted, then you have decided to use your well known methods of dishonest, cheating and trickery because

> the Federal Government Notice No. 64 of 1959; Prison (Detained Persons) (No. 2) Regulations, 1959, Section 11 (1) (a) which you have often professed to use, entitles me to one letter a week and it gives you no room for your often idiotic exercise of discretion.[73]

After prison officials unlawfully placed Nkala in solitary confinement for a minor prison infringement, Nkala again confronted Superintendent Ruff and wrote that,

> It is quite obvious to me that you are not satisfied with the fact that you kept me locked up in isolation without allowing me to exercise except for 3 days out of 17 days of isolation. You did this in violation of Section 102 (3) of Part XIV of the Prison Regulations, 1956. Of course, I am aware the law has no meaning to a blood-thirsty savage like you, who wishes that we should be dealt with as Adolf Hitler dealt with the Jews. Law as known and interpreted by you has no objective application; to you law depends on your whims and caprices and it can be twisted at will as opportunities present themselves.[74]

To this letter, Nkala signed off by demanding that a "copy of this letter to be sent to the Minister of Justice under registered cover at my expense."

In other cases, political prisoners confronted prison officials for seemingly trivial things, although the confrontations were important because of what Joshua Nkomo called "the little victories that keep you going" in prison.[75] For instance, Nkomo, who was imprisoned for a month in Gwelo Prison and was confined to a white prisoners' section so as to prevent him from talking to and mobilizing African inmates, protested against the "European" diet that prison officials gave him because it lacked *sadza*, an African staple. The protest was strange because the so-called European or Class I diet was the cleanest, most nutritious, and highly valued food ration in Rhodesian prisons. But according to Nkomo, "In protest (against this European diet), I insisted that I was a black man and must get a black man's rations, even if I was in a white man's cell. I said I wanted *sadza*, the maize porridge that is our staple diet. I said my whole body is made of *sadza*, I could not live without it. So they gave it to me. That is the sort of little victory that keeps you going in [prison]."[76]

As a way of undermining some prison punishments such as solitary confinement, prisoners devised ways of provoking and annoying prison warders, whilst at the same time attempting to lift up their own spirits in this type of incarceration. According to Chikukwa,

whose group of political prisoners was intermittently confined in solitary cells,

> Even as we were in solitary confinement at Salisbury Prison waiting to be hanged, we remained jovial. We sang uplifting songs everyday. We talked to each other through the walls. In what they called the "D-Class" cells for the condemned, we would shout to each other through the walls stuff like, "Good morning, friend. How was your night?" and engage in conversation through those walls. When our death sentences were commuted to life imprisonment, and we were transferred to Khami prison, prison warders there got incensed with our jovial mood. At night, we used to sing liberation struggle songs. We coordinated our efforts across the three floors of the prison to the extent that that whole prison would be filled with the melody of these songs. Deep into the night, the jail guards would come and plead with us to go to sleep.[77]

Prison officials were particularly concerned with political inmates' defiance and flagrant disregard of prison rules. In their reports, officials often complained about the jovial mood of African political detainees—one, who manned the Khami prison, wrote in 1966 that, "Most of the inmates detained here for political offences seem unfazed by their detention. They sing, they joke, and they play games, as if prison is a playground."[78]

"I damn you with this Letter!": Insurgent Prison Letter Writing in the Rhodesian Prison

Political prisoners' writings in Rhodesian prisons were an active form of resisting the disempowering effects of imprisonment. Unlike the famous prison intellectuals and authors in other parts of Africa,[79] Rhodesian prison writers were mostly ordinary and uneducated political prisoners. All of the authors of autobiographies of the liberation struggle documented their experiences and published them outside the prisons, and thus I do not regard such works as "prison writings." However, there are piles of archived and scattered personal letters that ordinary political prisoners wrote, most of which were addressed to organizations that gave legal or financial aid to political prisoners and their families such as the International Defence Aid Fund, Amnesty International, and Christian Care. These letters, written with personal anguish, fears, and a litany of emotions, capture vividly some of the horrid and gruesome experiences in the state corridors of silence. But the letters also contain the prisoners' challenges to Rhodesian

prison conditions and penal regulations as well as broader critiques of colonialism.

Like in detention centers, most political prisoners learned writing skills in prison, and most deployed their literate abilities to authoring anti-Rhodesian critiques. Most of their letters, which are now archived in Zimbabwe's National Archives, are written on all kinds of paper, sometimes in less legible pencil and ink, or in crooked writing that is difficult to decipher. Others are transcribed versions of the original letters. Beyond the letters' dominant concerns with prison conditions and pleas for help with destitute families from human rights groups, I suggest that these letters also offer a unique insight into the ways in which political prisoners challenged their own incarceration and undermined the legitimacy of the Rhodesian state. For instance, in these letters, prisoners exploited every opportunity to embarrass the colonial regime by smuggling out letters that detailed the inhuman conditions of its jails. For instance, in Khami Prison, former inmate Francis Chikukwa remembers that after enduring starvation as punishment, prisoners decided to write a letter to overseas news organizations for publication:

> There reached a point where we actually wrote a complaint letter to Geneva (perhaps to the UN?), which we smuggled out of the prison through prison guards. We detailed all the abuses that we experienced in Khami prison in this letter, such as being tortured or being starved by prison officials. We later learnt that some print-media outlets had actually gotten hold of this letter and printed it. We knew that this severely damaged the reputation of the Rhodesian authorities. In fact, we heard that a fact-finding mission was to be sent to investigate our allegations. All of a sudden, some of our conditions of incarceration began to be relaxed, such as being allowed to go out of solitary cells to perform labor tasks. When the fact-finding mission envoys finally arrived at Khami, we demanded to talk to them in the absence of prison officials. Prison officials agreed to this, and we told these envoys every detail about our horrendous conditions in Khami prison.[80]

In Gwelo Prison, a group of political prisoners came together and composed a damning letter exposing their prison conditions and thereby undermining the Rhodesian state's claims of upholding international standards on the treatment of prisoners. In this letter, which was smuggled out of prison, posted to the British-based human rights group International Defense Aid Fund (IDAF), and titled "Out to Murder!," this group of prisoners exploited their mastery of writing skills and the English language to portray the Rhodesian prison as a murderous

aberration that had no place in the decent and civilized world. This particular letter, composed after the death of a colleague in prison, was circulated among pro-liberation struggle human rights groups in the United Kingdom and locally in Rhodesia. In it, the prisoners wrote:

Out to Murder!

We are deeply grieved to inform you that our beloved comrade Kenneth Chisango is no more, he died on or about January 15, 1974. The continual deterioration of conditions in detention has maintained an inexorable tempo. The vile and brutal conditions under which we live have wholly contributed to the demise of our beloved Kenneth Chisango:

> 'Certain elements must be eliminated'. This is an excerpt from a speech by Ian Smith, head of the fascist rebel Rhodesian regime. From the underlings, a prison officer recently said to a group of detainees at Gwelo Prison, 'As far as I am concerned you are better off dead.' These sentiments are shared by the generality of the prison officers, the R.F. regime and its cohorts. . . . We live under cramped and crowded condition to wit: four men to a cell of 10′ × 8′, gaping as it were a foot or so from where a man is sleeping is a toilet bucket. The unhygienic and archaic bucket system lavatories are still extant at this place.[81]

Writing to foreign, particularly British, human rights organizations seemed to be part of prisoners' way of appealing to the universal liberal ideals of human rights and also to expose the inhumanity of Rhodesian prisons. Furthermore, I suggest that by directing their grievances through writing to an outside and overseas audience, political prisoners also participated in constructing powerful critiques of the Rhodesian regime, which pretended to the whole world that it was upholding international standards on the treatment of prisoners. Their letters exposed officials' posturing. Writing, therefore, became a powerful tool that political prisoners exploited to critique the colonial state. Their compositions were so powerful and embarrassing to the state that tight censoring was introduced to every prison that held political prisoners.

But still, powerful letters damning the Rhodesian prison system and colonial domination continued to find their way out of prison. One such letter by Enos Nkala in 1974 demonstrated that prisoners deliberately intended to have their letters read and published for a wider international audience. In a letter that details both personal and general infringements of basic human rights in prison, Nkala tells his UK recipients that, "I want you to give certain parts of this letter to the British Press so that certain facts and conditions of our

detention can be known to the world and the British Government." He then goes on to state that, "The facts of the matter that I want you and others to give to the Press is as follows [*sic*]" and lists a litany of personal and general grievances with the Rhodesian prison system and the colonial regime. Again, at the end of the letter, Nkala reiterated to his recipients that the letter should be published and reach a wider audience, including one that he had written to the Salisbury superintendent protesting the withholding of letters from his son:

> You should also publish this letter written by me to the Superintendent and the slip notifying me of the withholdment of a letter written to me about my son. Publicity may help to serve ([*sic*]—"save") our lives from being deliberately ruined by these savages. As you can see I had to use language that is not normally used to an official; I had to do this in desperation and I was charged for this letter (i.e., letter to the superintendent). A copy as you can see was sent to the Minister of Justice in an attempt to get him to act but he did nothing to help. So *the only solution left is to publicise our conditions as they now stand.*... All this has been smuggled out of prison. *Tell the press not to accept any denial by the Rhodesian Government, it must insist on an Inquiry being held into our conditions of detention.* We are in fire. If nothing is done we may go mad or die of ill-treatments. Please serve ([*sic*]—"save") us from the Ian Smith savages. Don't worry about the Ian Smith's Fascist Tribunal—I won't be released. The whole thing is a farce; they want us to say that the whiteman must continue to rule and I am not prepared to do that on principles. Just try to help my children that is all. I am prepared to be killed by these savages.
>
> If there are any mistakes in this document please correct it for it has been written in a hurry as I have to smuggle it out of this place. Just follow what I am trying to convey.[82] (My emphasis)

In one of the letters that Nkala sent for outside publication, he declared to the Rhodesian authorities, "With this letter, I damn you!" Evidently, by surreptitiously exploiting the postal system and presenting themselves to a foreign and specifically British audience, detainees actively sought leverage over the official Rhodesian propaganda that claimed that the Rhodesian regime upheld international standards in treating prisoners. Rhodesian authorities were clearly embarrassed by these letters, and more so the fact that the letters slipped past the prisons' rigorous censoring officials. Evidence of smuggling pointed to a worrying Achilles heel in the Rhodesian prison system, but most importantly, demonstrated that prisoners effectively worked the prison system through negotiation with prison personnel to subvert prison rules and regulations on letters.

From within the prisons, too, political prisoners employed their writing skills to construct searing anti-colonial critiques directed at prison officials and the Rhodesian regime itself. Most letters directed at prison or Rhodesian authorities contained prisoners' protests against infringements of prisoners' rights or the bad conditions obtaining in the prisons. In these anti-Rhodesian and anti-colonial letters, political prisoners sought to register their defiance and undermine the legitimacy of the Rhodesian regime. After the Rhodesian regime started intercepting political prisoners' incoming letters in the 1970s, particularly those from human rights groups, prisoners in Salisbury Prison immediately wrote a protest letter to the Rhodesian minister of justice and law and order, Desmond Lardner-Burke, who was responsible for prisons. In the letter, signed by all political prisoners in that jail, prisoners not only demanded access to their letters but also defiantly made it clear that their incarceration was illegal and illegitimate. In a clearly insurgent tone, the prisoners wrote:

> We the undersigned, being person indefinitely detained under your orders, feel constrained to address you in this our joint letter, protesting in the strongest of terms against your recent high-handed, arbitrary, inhuman, and cruel decision denying us the right to contact our wives, relatives, benevolent friends and charitable organizations for such material help we require for our personal maintenance. We similarly protest against the fact that this your evil and unwarranted action denies us the right to contact friendly organizations and individuals to raise funds for our families and dependants, who have been rendered destitute by the action of your regime in keeping us in perpetual detention. . . . May we remind you and your regime that we are not incarcerated here by our own volition. Spurning legality and resorting to the law of the jungle, your regime has adopted as its sacred policy the practice of rule by a perpetual state of emergency under which to date you have thrown thousands of persons into detention.[83]

In their individual capacities, political prisoners did not hesitate to confront the Rhodesian authorities through letters to protest against the infringement on their rights. For example, Nkala, who was a prolific letter-writing prisoner as indicated earlier, challenged Ian Smith, the Rhodesian prime minister himself, in a letter protesting officials withholding mail from his son. Nkala demands to know whether

> it has now become government policy to interfere with the education of the children of the political prisoners as is the case with my son's education. If so, what has prompted this dirty Nazi and Fascist policy,

> and doesn't this amount to declaring my son an enemy of your illegal and unconstitutional regime merely because he happens to be the son of your regime's opponent? . . . The little boy doesn't know politics, nor does he understand why I am here, he doesn't even understand that there are [political] differences between you and me. Neither does he know that there is such a thing as UDI for which you are persecuting his father. . . . I wish to earnestly ask you and your fellow Nazi to leave the affairs of my children to me and to stop interfering with personal affairs of the political prisoners.[84]

For African political prisoners, letter writing was a means to protest and undermine the legitimacy of the Rhodesian regime, and to expose the inhuman conditions obtaining in Rhodesian prisons. Through letter writing, prisoners actively sought to counter state propaganda and misrepresentations concerning the treatment of prisoners in Rhodesian jails. In a way, letter writing, perhaps like most other prison writings, helped prisoners to maintain a powerful sense of individual and collective agency. Letter writing, I suggest, was a powerful act that restored some elemental political ground to the prisoner. And it was an insurgent way for prisoners to confront and contest their own incarceration.

Negotiating the Prison System: Relations with Prison Guards

Through negotiating with African prison personnel, African political prisoners exploited the racial divide between black and white guards to subvert prison regulations. In the racially explosive world of the 1960s and 1970s Rhodesia, the African liberation struggle forced black and white prison officials to clearly define their race loyalties. Whilst it was easy for white prison officials to clearly identify with the Rhodesian regime against political offenders whose political convictions were antithetical to the Rhodesian way of life, black guards were thrown into a quandary of sorts. Wanting to keep their jobs but at the same time supporting the struggle for freedom, black guards became the weakest link in the Rhodesian repression machine inside the prisons. Political prisoners exploited this weakness, and cultivated the black prison officials' subversive tendency to sympathize with nationalism against which white officials had constantly to battle.

In their testimonies, political prisoners had no kind words for their white jailers. Oral histories suggest that, whilst relations between black inmates and black prison warders or guards could border on

cordiality and even solidarity, relations with white Rhodesian prison officials were always tension ridden and violent. For example, at the notorious Khami Prison, white prison officials subjected inmates to cruel punishments and routinely hurled racial insults at inmates. According to Reuben Bascoe, for instance, "White prison officers were always harassing political prisoners, calling us all sorts of names such as 'terrorists' or 'Kaffirs.'"[85] Another Khami inmate gave this testimony, "They were all racists. Most of them were violent and murderous. They could beat inmates to death." African political prisoners also mistrusted white prison officials, and considered them treacherous. At Khami prison, political prisoners were also convinced that white prison officials were murdering some of their colleagues who just "disappeared." According to Francis Chikukwa,

> We know that some of our colleagues during this time were taken to be executed. If you were stubborn, you were executed. *Mabhunu* (white authorities) used to come in the dead of the night, around 1 a.m. or 3 a.m. with black-painted faces, snatching people in silence. We know this because some friendly African prison guards warned us that if ever these killers were to wake us up, we must make noise and wake others up. These black guards promised to open the doors so that we could all witness these killers' murderous ploy.[86]

There was thus no love lost between African political prisoners and white prison personnel. In an interview, Lucas Jonasi declared that, "Our relationship with white prison guards was sour. . . . We took them as our enemies."[87] Roderick Muhammad also expressed his contempt for white Rhodesian prison personnel; he recalled a ruthless white prison warder at Chikurubi Prison who enjoyed torturing political offenders; "His name was Buizegnot and his favorite punishment was to pour water onto our blankets and order us to sleep in those blankets. He would order his prison guards to pour water on our blankets and then laugh, saying, "These bloody Kaffirs! You monkeys!"[88] In Gwelo prison, a group of prisoners accused white prison officials of racist violence: "The luckless prisoners at this camp have to contend with the inhuman ruthlessness meted out to them by the racist oriented prison officers whose attitude which has lately assumed brutal proportions completes the makings of a hostile environment."

Prisoners' relations with black guards, however, were prone to negotiation. To be sure, not all black guards immediately gravitated toward solidarity with African political prisoners. As Rueben Basoe recalled, "During the early years in prison, black guards used to treat

political prisoners badly, but as more and more political prisoners came to the prison, these black guards changed their attitude. Some of the guards really sympathized with us and we established good relationships with many of them. I am talking of African guards, of course."[89] Francis Chikukwa, who was a political prisoner at Khami said, "At Khami prison, most of the prison staff were black guards, and we befriended most of them. Of course, there were others who did not want to consort with us, who adopted the same demeanor as *mabhunu*. But most agreed with us."[90] In an interview, Enos Nkala also explained how political prisoners negotiated friendships with black prison guards at Salisbury Prison and exploited those cordial relations to subvert prison regulations, particularly with regard to outgoing and incoming mail:

> Well, we understood that most of them (black guards) were just working in the prisons because they had to have a job. Otherwise, they understood and supported us. The ironic thing is that most of the black guards at this prison were always hungry. We used to send them food from our cells. Since we were located in the upper cells of the prison, we would tie the food on strings and lower it down to the guards. That was the same with our letters—we would tie the letters and send them down to the guards, which they would smuggle out of the prison. When we received letters, they would tie them to these strings, and we would pull them up. We were always in communication with Chitepo (ZANU chairperson who was in Lusaka, Zambia) and others outside the prisons.[91]

Political prisoners not only exploited their relations with black guards to smuggle mail. They also colluded with them to smuggle forbidden items such as small radios, newspapers, extra food, and books into prison. Chikukwa recalled that in Khami Prison,

> Through befriending some black guards, sometimes African guards would supply us with few copies of up-to-date newspapers. . . . These newspapers were not the censored and stale copies that prison regulations allowed us to read. The ones we got from black guards would not have passed through the censorship department of the prison. These newspapers would have been bought outside the prison by our friendly guards.[92]

In a few extreme cases, political prisoners' subverted the system by colluding with black guards who used their knowledge to help them escape from prison.. In an interview, Emmie Sifelani Ncube

told a dramatic story of her escape from Connemara Prison along with other political prisoners. Their plan succeeded with the help of friendly black guards:

> We escaped from Connemara at night. The guards that we were working with told us that they would switch off security lights and go and guard in the opposite direction of our escape route. They had told us to scale the fences at a certain corner of the security fence surrounding the prison. We were four female prisoners, including myself, and seven other boys. We did not know where we were going or have any sense of direction after scaling the fences because beyond that prison was a huge jungle. It's not that we completely trusted the connivance of the guards in executing this scheme because just before we escaped, we debated on whether the guards' compliance was not a ploy to try and shoot us and then later claim that we were trying to escape from prison. We did not really believe that these guards had connived with us to escape from prison. I told my other colleagues to just pray and hope that the plan would work out. But all our fears evaporated after we successfully scaled the fences and disappeared into the thickets. The guards kept their word to help us escape.[93]

This chapter sought to establish that although the Rhodesian prisons were centers of brutality, political detainees were not passive recipients of state penal terror as they actively negotiated, challenged, and subverted oppressive penal regulations. Rhodesian prisons were indeed spaces of brutality and conditions in most prisons were appalling. But instead of penal punishment achieving its intended goal of subduing and subjugating these rebel colonial subjects, it actually strengthened political prisoners' resolve to challenge the prison system itself and the colonial order in general. I also suggest that this challenge by political hostages of the Rhodesian regime played a crucial role in dislodging colonial rule, both as producers of powerful critiques of the government from inside the prison confines and as symbols of African resistance.

CHAPTER 6

Epilogue: Life Beyond Bars and Legacies of Incarceration in Colonial and Post-Colonial Zimbabwe, 1965–2000

When I returned to my rural home soon after coming from prison, my homestead was lying in ruins. I had also lost my other son, and so I thought of concentrating on rebuilding my family again. My husband had been laid off from work because he was constantly harassed by Rhodesian soldiers who accused him of knowing something about "terrorists" since I, as his wife, was in prison on charges of harboring terrorists. I abandoned our rural home and came here in Salisbury (Harare). I survived through vegetable vending, selling tomatoes and other vegetables in the streets. I managed to stay in the city through renting a room in the Mabvuku African Township. Up until now, I have worked for ZANU since independence in 1980, even though I do not have anything to my name and even though I am poor… (sobs uncontrollably) During the recent land reform program, I tried to get a piece of land, but I failed. Yet, during the liberation struggle, because of our incarceration, we lost all our livestock, property, and livelihood. I was disillusioned as to why I could not get a piece of farming land during the land reform.

Interview with Amai Kadengu, Central Harare, Zimbabwe, September 20, 2006

No one anticipated that we would be forgotten. Personally, I thought all my sacrifices had gone to waste because no one in government remembered us. As ex-detainees, we all thought we had been abandoned and no one ever saw us as a people worth remembering.

Interview with Victor Kuretu, Mufakose Township, Harare, Zimbabwe August 24, 2006

This chapter is about the impact of incarceration beyond Rhodesian jails and detention centers. It also reflects upon the legacy of liberation wartime political detention and imprisonment, specifically accounting for the silencing and marginalization of this history vis-à-vis the post-colonial meta-narrative of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle history. First, accounting for the impact of political incarceration is partly based on the historical fact that when African political activists were imprisoned or detained, their normal lives ended for the length of their prison sentences or, in the case of detention, for an open-ended and undefined period of years. Confinement in Rhodesian prisons and detention centers therefore translated to fractured social and economic lives for the prisoners' and detainees' own lives and those of their dependents. In their oral testimonies and prison/detention letters, ex-political prisoners and detainees told stories of impoverishment, dislocated social lives, and bleak futures, which their incarceration caused. Dependents of those who were confined, particularly women and children, also gave testimonies of economic disempowerment and vulnerability due to the incarceration of their family members. Secondly, in analyzing the legacy of political confinement, I recognize that in the post-colonial period, the triumphant ZANU PF[1] government glorified and reified a historical account of the liberation struggle that singularly emphasized the heroic role of liberation struggle ex-guerrillas and trumped the histories, memories, and contributions of political detainees and prisoners to the struggle for freedom. This narrow interpretation of the liberation struggle history was necessary in order for the newly powerful political elites to define political insiders and outsiders, and who had access to power and scarce resources.[2]

This chapter is divided into two broad sections. The first section explores the long-term effects of political detention and imprisonment on those who were incarcerated as well as their families. I particularly utilize political prisoners' oral testimonies and prison letters to demonstrate the social effects of incarceration on prisoners' lives, their livelihoods, and their families. Evidence suggests that beyond bars, women and children left behind by incarcerated husbands, fathers, and sons were the most affected. Given the highly gendered nature of political imprisonment, men outnumbered women in the prisons and detention centers. Most of these men were the sole income-earners for their families, which was consistent with the gendered nature of colonial Rhodesia's employment and career opportunities. What this meant, therefore, was that

once the sole income-earner was incarcerated, and given the long jail terms meted out to most political detainees and prisoners, the family and dependents left behind faced certain destitution and poverty. Indeed, many families robbed of their breadwinners devised survival strategies, and these strategies along with aid from charitable organizations saved many from starvation. However, most informants lamented the destruction of their social lives that incarceration brought: others lost their spouses due to divorce, some lost touch with important close relatives, and most had their careers and forms of livelihoods ruined for life. In addition, those political detainees or prisoners who were released intermittently during the UDI[3] regime faced destitution outside the prisons because the Rhodesian government never established any form of prisoner rehabilitation. Many released prisoners found themselves jobless and unemployable, and suffered the biting effects of the UDI economic meltdown, which was induced by international economic sanctions imposed on the Ian Smith-led white supremacist Rhodesian government. Furthermore, political prisoners released during the colonial period returned to the hostile world of Rhodesian political repression. Their fates, and that of their families, were intimately linked to the ongoing political repression in Rhodesia, and increased state authorial policies in the face of the intensive guerrilla war in the 1970s and the racist legacies and practices that persisted until the end of Rhodesian rule in 1980.

In post-colonial Zimbabwe, I argue that the histories and memories of Rhodesia's political prisoners were marginalized and silenced by political elites fixated upon monopolizing the liberation struggle history for their own political ends. In Zimbabwe, the history of the liberation struggle has been central in determining access to political power and scarce resources. Over the past three decades, the ruling elites have constructed a narrow liberation struggle and nationalist narrative, one that draws the line between so-called military veterans and the rest of the participants in the struggle against Rhodesian colonial rule.[4] According to this narrative, which others have called "patriotic history,"[5] in the epic struggle against colonialism, certain individuals and groups made more significant sacrifices and contributions than others. At the top of this hierarchical mantle of "heroism" are ex-guerrillas whose violent overthrow of the Rhodesian regime is valorized and validated by a narrow state-sponsored narrative that prioritizes the centrality of the guerrilla war over other forms of struggle against Rhodesian rule. Although many in powerful political positions in post-colonial Zimbabwe were at one time or the other

Rhodesia's political prisoners, most ignore their experiences of incarceration and trumpet their guerrilla experiences in order to fit within the pantheon of "heroes." In the process, the histories and memories of other historical subjects who contributed to the struggle for freedom—women, peasants, urban workers, and others—have been suppressed and can't be seen or heard.

By describing the histories of ex-political prisoners as having been rendered inaudible and invisible, I mean the suppression of these historical subjects' memories within the public and state authorized narratives of Zimbabwe's struggle for liberation. In making this proposition, I recognize that when it comes to historical knowledge in Zimbabwe, narratives produced in the public domain are more visible and prominent than those produced in academia. Zimbabweans know more about their history from state-sponsored projects memorializing important aspects of their past than from scholarly narratives. It is within this public domain of knowledge production that such histories as the liberation struggle past are susceptible to numerous interpretations and even invention.[6] In this domain of knowledge production, there is of course unequal control over the outcome of remembering certain pasts, and the politics of memorializing certain pasts mean that those in positions of power control the nature of the narratives about the past in the public domain. As Michel-Rolph Trouillot reminds us, "At best, history is a story about power, a story about those who won."[7]

In the Zimbabwean case, the triumphant ZANU political elites encouraged the production of certain histories about the liberation struggle,[8] ones that reified the significance of other historical subjects over others. The main reason for this, besides posterity, was to clearly define groups of people with access to power and scarce resources.[9] In the process, those whose histories are regarded as insignificant are silenced, and their voices rendered inaudible within these public domains of knowledge production. In this chapter, I demonstrate this argument through the oral testimonies of ex-political prisoners and the animated parliamentary debates[10] among the ZANU ruling elites over the distinction between so-called military veterans and political veterans who include ex-political prisoners of the Rhodesian regime. With regard to the Zimbabwean liberation struggle history, these debates sealed the fate of Rhodesia's ex-political prisoners as history's losers in a process where a powerful coalition of guerrilla veterans and political elites rewrote history to make their contributions to the struggle more central than those of other historical subjects.

Tales of Poverty and Social Dislocation: The Impact of Political Incarceration

One of the lasting effects of political incarceration was the impoverishment of political prisoners and their families. In their oral testimonies and archived letters, political prisoners and their families lamented the general poverty of their daily lives, and the dislocation to their social relationships that political incarceration caused. After her father was arrested for political offences in rural Mutoko in the 1960s and detained at Wha Wha prison, Grace Chimutsa struggled along with her mother to take care of her five young siblings. Bereft of the income that her father used to provide, Chimutsa's mother became a petty vendor and supported her family through selling vegetables and other produce from the small plot of land the family owned. But, as Chimutsa wrote in a letter to a charitable organization that provided aid to families of political prisoners, her mother, who had become their sole source of income, was also arrested in 1976. According to Chimutsa, "She was taken away from home on the 6th of April 1976 and they (Rhodesian police) said this was because she was a wife of a politician. At present, she is at Chikurubi Prison. I don't know when she is going to be freed." After her mother's arrest, Chimutsa became responsible for taking care of her siblings. However, as she was also still in school, it was difficult for her to find any source of income. Like her mother, she also turned to their plot of land for survival: "During the [school] holidays I worked very hard in the fields being helped by my sisters. We sold some of the grains, and we got [school fees]. Without this, we would have been at home now [and not at school]." In spite of her hard work, Chimutsa's family still fell short when it came to financial resources for everyday survival, and some her siblings had to drop out of school. Also, since there was a heavy presence of Rhodesian soldiers in their rural area, who constantly harassed the local communities, there was nothing else that Chimutsa's family could do to earn a living. Her two brothers were eventually forced to flee the area because of frequent harassment by Rhodesian soldiers who accused them of associating with "terrorists." In a long letter in which she described the poverty of her family that was a result of the incarceration of her parents, Chimutsa appealed for help from Christian Care, a human rights organization that assisted families of political prisoners with small cash and material donations.[11]

Chimutsa's story of family destitution due to the political incarceration of family members was just a variation of many other experiences

of families whose parents or family members were arrested for political offences. Chenai Mbidzo, whose widowed father was in detention, also wrote a letter seeking assistance for her own schooling and the welfare of her siblings. She wrote in January 1975,

> I am a girl of seventeen years of age. I am one of those children whose father is in detention. Mine is in Gwelo Detention. I am the first born in our family with three sisters and three brothers. My mother died a long time ago. After the departure of my father I was left in great obstacles. I passed my grade seven but I can't do anything to further my education. I am not able to educate my young sisters nor to give them sufficient food.[12]

Mathanei Mbidzo, a young girl whose father was also incarcerated for political offences, wrote in November 1975,

> I am one of those poor families who have their fathers detained. I am 15 years of age and I am doing my Form 2. In our family we are six. We were being helped by Christian Care in the previous years but as from next year onwards it will be helping those who are in Form 2 and lower. Next year I will be doing my Form 3. So I have no one to help me in my education. I have got poor relatives. We have no good arable lands for growing cash crops. We have no good clothes.[13]

In addition to pleas for assistance from children whose parents were incarcerated for political offences, wives and mothers also lamented the poverty of their families that political incarceration caused. The common thread in most of these experiences of poverty and destitution was the gendered nature of impoverishment induced by political imprisonment. This was especially the case in Rhodesia because of the gendered nature of the colonial economy that inhibited the economic empowerment of women. In a colonial state where few Africans had access to education and skills training, fewer women were even able to receive the opportunity for a full education, and the majority were denied access to the skills that would equip them to become breadwinners. Consequently, for most African families in Rhodesia's urban or rural areas, there was an unusually heavy dependence on the man—the husband and father—to provide for the family. Thus, when his imprisonment income stopped, children's schooling came to an end for want of cash to pay the fees and buy clothes and other school-related material, and financial resources for food and other basic commodities disappeared. In urban areas, families were evicted from homes for want of money to pay the rent, and some became squatters

or retreated to their rural homes. In the rural areas, because of the violent scorched earth policy of Rhodesian security forces, homes and property were burnt following the arrest and detention of anyone belonging to targeted homesteads, and the families left behind faced homelessness, hunger, and poverty.

In some instances, the burden of support for the families and dependents of political prisoners fell upon friends and relations. The Rhodesian regime gave no assistance to the vulnerable families of political prisoners and detainees, despite the regime's common public posturing claiming that they did. When an African member of the Rhodesian parliament questioned the deputy minister of internal affairs, Mr. Hayman, about the kind of assistance given to families of detained or restricted persons to enable them to support and educate their children, the responsible minister gave one of the regime's usual misleading statements. Hayman replied,

> Wives of detained or restricted persons are treated in the same manner as wives of persons in prison, hospital, unemployed, etc., in that if application is made for assistance they are attended to in accordance with their needs, be it rent, food, cash in lieu, etc., by the Department of Social Welfare, with district commissioners acting on an agency basis in some districts. In the case of children enrolled at Government schools, where application is made and a need is established, the fees may be remitted. If enrolled at schools other than Government schools there is no assistance as education is not compulsory.[14]

These statements were inconsistent with the evidence gathered by many non-governmental organizations that received numerous pleas of help from families of those left behind by incarcerated family members. One such organization, Christian Care, dismissed Rhodesian authorities' claims of assisting such families by noting that,

> No assistance is given by the illegal regime.... From time to time groups of concerned people in Rhodesia come together to form voluntary welfare organizations. For the most part these are made up of liberal whites and churchmen, most of whom sooner or later are deported. At present, there is one such organization at work in Rhodesia, Christian Care, sponsored by the Christian Council of Rhodesia. Outside Rhodesia, there are various individuals and organizations trying to offer assistance. Many of these spread their work across a large number of countries. Others, especially private individuals, are without the resources to organize and provide assistance on the scale needed. Christian Care itself operates on a limited budget and is fully stretched.[15]

Of the pleas for assistance that organizations such as Christian Care received from families of incarcerated political offenders, the majority came from women and children. This was not surprising since in most cases the burdens of social reproduction fell squarely on the shoulders of women and older children (particular the girl children) when husbands, fathers, and mothers were confined in Rhodesian jails and detention centers. A critical reading of these pleas for support also reveals the generic ways in which the letters were written. Since most of the charity groups upheld notions of Christianity and caring for the poor and vulnerable, petitioners' pleas played upon these Christian ideals of support for the poor and disadvantaged, and of familial responsibilities. In one such letter, Mrs. R. Nyathi chronicled the long history of her husband's imprisonment and detention, and how that affected her ability to take care of her family. She wrote to Christian Care in 1978:

> May I inform you of the predicament in which I find myself. I am married with six children and seven dependents to care for. My husband has suffered spells of detentions and restrictions ever since 1964. From October 1964 to October 1965 he was detained at Gonakudzingwa. Then from November 1965 to February 1966 he was detained at Khami Prison. From November 11 1966 to January 1972 he was detained in Gwelo Prison on his release in January 1972 to February 1975 he was restricted within a radius of 5 miles within our home. Then in July 1975, he was taken to Gwelo Prison after they had failed to trump any charges against him.
>
> As I write you my husband is detained in Gwelo Prison without any trial for they have nothing to try him for. As you can see the period my husband has been roughed up by the authorities has been long. At each stage, we poured in all the little we had on legal representation to no avail. *Now I am left completely destitute with no chances whatsoever of finding any means of livelihood.* The place where I am is in the war-zone, i.e., Kezi, near the Botswana border. There are curfews, we can't herd cattle nor can we plough safely. Furthermore, the place has suffered from drought for some past. Our cattle are either dying or straying. We have nowhere to go. Children have been kicked off school for non-payment of school fees, as I have no money to pay with. When we think of simple food it is as if we are thinking of luxury—starvation is daily crawling on us. It is on these reasons and many others which are too long to bore you with which have made me to appeal to you for aid to make our life easier.
>
> You can write my husband at Gwelo Prison, PO Box 1, Gwelo, Rhodesia. Write only friendly letters as they are not allowed to communicate with overseas organizations and friends seeking their aid. His name is Joel Nyathi.[16] (My emphasis)

Mrs. R. Nyathi's letter was among the hundreds of letters that Christian Care received from destitute families of arrested political offenders. Mrs. Laffie Mabhena, whose husband was incarcerated at Khami Prison, wrote in 1974 of the abject poverty that her family had been reduced to because of the absence of her husband whom she said was the family's "sole breadwinner." At the time that she wrote her letter pleading for assistance from Christian Care, her husband had been in prison for a decade. She wrote:

> My husband who has been the sole breadwinner for the family, was convicted in 1964, under Section 37A of the LO(M)A Chapter 39. After he was gone, I remained as the sole breadwinner. Having no profession [that] I know and since I could not eke out a living out of the poor soil, my husband instructed me to dispose of everything of value to obtain money for the upkeep of the family. I drew all the little savings we had managed to put aside for the children's education. I sold all the property of value. Now nothing is left. The house is bare yet we are hungrier and almost naked. . . . Ours is a pathetic case. The children (three of them) are dependents and are all of school-going age. I have no cent to dress them, not to talk of sending them to school. This has drawn much of my physical and spiritual resources, and my husband is also feeling the same, yet he cannot do anything under his present circumstances.[17]

Another mother, Mrs. Tapera Zvawhedza, who was left behind by her arrested husband to look after eight children in rural Chipinge, recounted a familiar story of destitution in her letter. In describing the poverty of her family, Zvahwedza not only pointed to the incarceration of her husband as the cause of her familial destitution, but also the conditions of war that obtained in her rural area. With no husband, and with homes and property destroyed by Rhodesian security forces during their "anti-terrorism" campaigns, Mrs. Zvawhedza's 1977 letter recounted an all too common story of destitution that many others told in their letters to non-governmental organizations seeking help:

> My husband Tapera Zvahwedza is in prison, convicted for giving food to what they call terrorists since 1975. His imprisonment means that I was left alone to look after our family of 8 children. . . . Since my husband's imprisonment, we have been depending on selling livestock and growing our own food. We live on the Eastern border operational area (meaning war zone) where the present war has intensified. Rhodesian soldiers have burnt down our huts with their contents in trying to drive us into the so-called "keeps" (protected villages), while on the

> other hand the so-called terrorists are driving us back to our homes. So at times, we have to live in jungles. People no longer invest in livestock. So you can see how life has become difficult for us.[18]

In Rhodesia's prisons and detention centers, husbands, fathers, and sons worried too about the welfare of their families. Many men in detention and jails desperately used the postal system to the fullest extent to solicit for assistance for their families from charitable and nongovernmental organizations. Thousands of archived letters that are now in possession of such organizations as the International Defence Aid Fund (IDAF), Christian Care, the Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice (CCJP), and others reveal the parental and familial obligations that Rhodesian political detainees and prisoners carried with them into jails and detention centers. Like the mothers and wives left behind, incarcerated fathers also worried about their children's welfare, schooling, food, clothing, housing, and other basic necessities that they could not provide because of their incarceration. Other men worried about the welfare of their other dependents, for in Shona and Ndebele culture, one's family extended far beyond one's immediate family. When these men wrote letters pleading for assistance, many worried about the numerous extrafamilial dependents whom they could not take care of. Sons, who were all too aware of the cultural demands that mandated them to look after their elderly parents, worried about their mothers and fathers, whom they could not look after. Furthermore and more broadly, many men worried about their collective people's commonwealth, particularly their rural communities that were in constant danger from the murderous Rhodesian security forces.

These men's letters, therefore, were not just plain pleas for assistance, for within them, they underlined the responsibilities that they recognized as theirs but could not fulfill because of their incarceration. In 1975, a collective group of political detainees in Gwelo Prison wrote to a charitable organization underlining the fact that, "Due to the long years of incarceration were are unable to support our families and ourselves. Long imprisonment has virtually left us without any means of living. As a result, some of our families are living in a state of destitution. We are therefore requesting you to give us assistance in any form at your disposal, e.g. clothing and money." These men were not just beggars. I suggest that in the subtext of their letters, these men lamented the fact that incarceration compromised their roles as breadwinners, fathers, responsible husbands, and sons.

Of the many letters that these men wrote, Herbert Murimira's 1975 letter to the International Defense Aid Fund, another of the

non-governmental organizations that assisted political prisoners and their families, captures all of the elements of the familial obligations that these men carried with them to Rhodesian detention centers and jails. Murimira, who was incarcerated in Gwelo Prison, worried about the welfare of his young children, dependents, and parents:

> I am a married man with three children and two dependents, a very old father and an invalid mother—both of whom can no longer fend for themselves. None of my children is old enough to work and two of them should be attending school if it were not for lack of (school) fees. I was arrested in 1965 and have had several detention orders after completing my sentences. Since that time, I have thus been always in prison. In my absence, my family has exhausted the little money I had managed to save. Next, they sold movable property in order to get money for the barest necessities. The children have no clothing, no food, no schooling. Their mother has tried everything humanly possible but there can be no end to their plight. This has caused me many sleepless nights, my hair has grown white as a result of detention.[19]

Francis Mudiwa Gunda, who was incarcerated in Wha Wha detention center and whose rural home was in a war zone, expressed concern over not only his immediate and extended family, but his rural community's commonwealth as well. In a letter to Christian Action in 1978, Gunda wrote:

> I have these dependents: my widowed mother and five children left by my father who passed away in 1973, and three children and their widowed mother left by my young brother who was brutally murdered on the 15th of March 1978 as the result of the war situation in the area. These people are already in the most difficult position; they are completely unable to find any means of helping themselves. Another thing adding to my problem is the war situation in the country which is causing all the schools in my area to be closed [and] making farming just impossible. All my cattle at my home were shot or gunned down and all houses were burnt. And all these people are now scattered in search of help from relatives.
>
> The above mentioned things makes my family members destitutes [*sic*] [for lack of] shelter, food, blankets, school fees and other necessities. Hence I am in all sincerity entreating you to come to my family's rescue or aid at any possible early time.[20]

Similarly, John Tarasana Musonzi, who was jailed in Gwelo Prison, appealed for assistance for his family and his rural community who had been herded into rural concentration camps (also known as "keeps"

or "protected villages") by Rhodesian security forces. Musonzi, who had been in jail since 1967, wrote in 1976:

> I have a very large family and they were all driven into the concentration camps or the so-called protected villages in 1972. In these concentration camps my family including other families are all living in extreme poverty not to mention appalling poor sanitation to name a few. Like all other families, they left all the few cattle, goats and sheep at our previous villages to be confiscated later by the authorities. Life has become very intolerable and just a nightmare for my family at Dzimwe Concentration Camp. So I am kindly requesting you to assist my family with anything you can help them with.[21]

Furthermore, apart from lamenting their destitution due to political imprisonment, political prisoners also worried about their social relationships. In an interview, Ronald Mlilo talked of numerous detainees who lost their wives due to detention or after being released from prison, including his own.[22] In most cases, wives strayed out of their marital obligations, or abandoned their marital homesteads in search of better livelihoods elsewhere. Shadreck Murapa, who was detained at Wha Wha, worried over the threat by his in-laws to take back their daughter because he could not finish paying *lobola* (or bridewealth) since he was incarcerated. Murapa worried about the consequences of losing his wife since he also had elderly parents who needed someone to look after them. In an unprecedented appeal, Murapa went against his Shona marital beliefs and begged for *lobola* from strangers. In a letter to Christian Care, Murapa asked for money to pay off his *lobola* in order to save his marriage:

> My problem is I've recently married and had paid $30 for my lobola, but unfortunately I was arrested. Right now I am in detention, such that my family has got no one to look after. The balance I am left with for *lobola* is $200.The main problem I have now is that my father and mother are very old to look after themselves. The parents for my wife have told my parents they are coming to collect their daughter if I can't pay the rest (of the *lobola*). Therefore, I am afraid if they take her who will look after these old and helpless parents of mine and my family when I am in detention? So I wish you could help me pay the *lobola* so that she can stay and look after my old parents.[23]

In an interview, Henry Masunda, who spent close to a decade in prison, spoke of his disappointment when he came out of prison to find his wife married to another husband. What disappointed Masunda

most was the fact that while he was locked up, he used to request IDAF and Christian Care to give financial assistance to his wife and young child, and yet his wife could not wait for him to be released so they could be reunited as a family. After hearing rumors that his wife was now married to another man, Masunda hunted for her when he was released. When he found her, he asked her why she had abandoned their matrimonial home, and his wife simply answered, "Think about the time you spent in jail. What was I supposed to do? I found another man, and you should find yourself another wife."[24]

Besides losing wives, other informants also talked of finding their extended families dispersed and out of contact after they came out Rhodesian prisons and detention centers. Others had to deal with the pain of being ostracized by their families who considered ex-detainees or prisoners a political risk and an added economic burden. I expand on these issues in the next section, which focuses on the world that political prisoners and detainees inhabited after leaving Rhodesian jails and detention centers. Many came home to confront the poverty of their families, others faced broken homes, and others stared at bleak and impoverished futures. But what ex-political detainees and prisoners did not expect was to have their histories and contributions to the struggle for freedom silenced and trivialized in the new post-colonial dispensation starting at 1980. Many informants spoke of the disappointments and disillusionments of black majority rule, for their sacrifices and struggles for a new Zimbabwe were not recognized by the new political elites who defined the "real heroes" of the liberation struggle and marginalized others. Later, I turn to this legacy of Rhodesian colonial political imprisonment.

Life beyond Confinement: Legacies of Imprisonment in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe

Life after incarceration for ex-political prisoners, both during Rhodesian colonial rule and in the post-colonial period, was doubly disorienting and disillusioning. Regaining freedom and returning to the uncertain world of Rhodesian repressive rule, or entering the uncharted post-colonial world, meant that life beyond bars was uncertain. Upon finishing their prison sentences or upon the expiration of detention orders, some political hostages of the Rhodesian regime regained their freedom before the end of colonial rule. Others only regained their freedom in the immediate years before the end of Rhodesian colonial rule as beneficiaries of "amnesties." At certain

moments, prisoners and detainees were beneficiaries of intermittent political talks within and outside Rhodesia that forced the Rhodesian regime to show political goodwill to their African opponents by releasing political prisoners. April 13, 1978 was one such day when the Rhodesian authorities announced the release of hundreds of political prisoners across Rhodesia's detention centers and jails. At Wha Wha on this day, a local Rhodesian newspaper reported that, "One hundred male political detainees sang, chanted, laughed, cheered, and cried their way out of the gates of Wha Wha detention prison at 11:30 yesterday morning." The newspaper further noted that these released detainees

> were the first of the mass releases of detainees from prisons and detention centers all over Rhodesia—given their freedom on the orders of the four-man Executive Council of the Transitional Government. Another 361 are either free or in the process of being freed as a second phase of the operation. The first phase, the relaxation of restricting conditions on 254 former detainees, is complete. The Government has also said more detainees will be released.[25]

For the first time since Rhodesia began holding African political activists hostage, Wha Wha opened its gates to more than 50 local and international journalists—flown to Gwelo at the Government's expense—to see this brief and emotionally charged ceremony. Before this day, Rhodesian authorities had barred the media and other interested parties from visiting political detention centers as part of a wider strategy to create a wall of silence on issues pertaining to political incarcerations on the grounds of protecting "national security" concerns. However, on this day, under the watchful eyes of the media, family members, and other interested persons, the detainees at Wha Wha had assembled in separate groups in the prison grounds, and in the center was the biggest group, the African National Congress supporters, with one man holding a placard reading: "ANC. Heroic liberation, honor, and dignity." Journalists mingled with the detainees for about 45 minutes. Then the first group of about 15 men picked up their baggage of boxes, waterproofed mostly with Red Cross plastic bags, and walked through the gates to a prison lorry that took them to the Gwelo station for the next train to Bulawayo. As they passed through the gates, the square resounded with chants "Zi-Zi," the ANC cry, while other inmates, still in prison khaki and grey on the other side of the wire, responded. The same happened when the remaining 85 began moving through the towering gates toward 2 buses bound for Salisbury. One

journalist asked Andrew Mariga, a young ANC supporter from the Hartley area, how long he had been in detention. His reply summed up his glee at being free: "Four years . . . and 10 days."[26]

During these phased releases of political detainees, the Rhodesian minister of justice, Mr. Hilary Squires, warned of the conditional nature of these releases. He told a Rhodesian regime media mouthpiece, *The Rhodesia Herald*, that, "The release of detainees depends on the security situation. If they do not constitute a threat to public safety any longer, then they will be released. The guiding factor so far has been that they support the internal settlement. People who are obviously inimical to that will just stay where they are."[27] However, not even the Rhodesian government's warning of the political conditions attached to their release dampened the newly released political detainees' spirits. Political prisoners were just happy to regain their freedom. At the end of the guerrilla war in 1979, many more political detainees and prisoners were released by the caretaker government of Lord Soames, despite criticisms from many quarters that political hostages of the Rhodesian regime were not being released fast enough.[28] In 1980, the year when Zimbabwe regained its political independence from Rhodesian colonial rule, an unconditional amnesty was granted to all remaining political prisoners and detainees of the Rhodesian regime.

In the late 1970s, some of the released detainees and prisoners walked out of Rhodesian prisons and detention centers to pick up the pieces of their lives in colonial Rhodesia. After the jubilation and euphoria of regaining their freedom dissipated, the grim realities of shattered livelihoods set in for most ex-political detainees and prisoners. Just as the Rhodesian government did not provide any assistance to families of political detainees and prisoners, there was also no rehabilitation program for these ex-prisoners and detainees. By the late 1970s, international economic sanctions were biting in Rhodesia and this, coupled with the worldwide increases in oil prices, made life difficult for the economically vulnerable. Ex-detainees and prisoners, most of whom were unemployed and unemployable, could not have come out of confinement at a worse moment. They were on their own.

In an interview, four men who spent an average of 18 years in detention, talked about their difficulties reintegrating into society and adjusting to the economic situation in hyper-inflationary Rhodesia. The four ex-Wha Wha detainees, Robert Mungadze, Peter Katsande, S. Kakora and Peter Kambewa, came out of detention and went to live in Salisbury, afraid of returning to their rural homes, which were still under war conditions. All four were staying with friends and relatives

in Salisbury and were receiving small financial aid from the Christian Care organization. Prior to his detention, Robert Mungadze, a father of eight children, had been a successful peasant in Mtoko, a rural area; by the time he was arrested, he had amassed 21 head of cattle and owned 2 cars. During his arrest, however, Rhodesian forces destroyed all his property, and he was left with nothing. Now unemployed and out of detention, life on the "outside" for these ex-detainees was tough. Mr. Kakora, expressed shock at the prices of basic commodities in 1978: "When I came out of detention I just couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the prices of clothing and food."[29]

Many more of the hundreds of Rhodesian political detainees released since the 1978 internal settlement agreement also found life hard as free men. Like the four men above, many detainees were not able to return to their homes, which were war zones. Others had lost their families and homes in the war. Many were unable to find gainful employment, in spite of qualifications acquired by study in prison. A few former detainees were able to get jobs as office assistants or organizers within their old parties. But most struggled to survive. A ZAPU member, Mr. Kismore Kaenda, who was detained for fourteen years, and had several commercial diplomas gained in detention, said in an interview that employers turned him down because he had "no on-the-job experience."[30] Henry Masunda, who had spent close to two decades in prison was now too old to be employable. Nevertheless, he attempted to find work; "I tried to look for a job" he said, "but then I was already old for most jobs. Prison life had taken the best of my life. My economic status was dire when I came out of prison. My rural home was destroyed during the guerrilla war and all my cattle were gone. My children were uneducated and I had no life savings whatsoever."[31] Ex-political prisoners also had to contend with the fact that before Zimbabwe gained political independence in 1980, very few white Rhodesian employers wanted to employ an ex-detainee or prisoner, whom they regarded as enemies of the white minority government. Victor Kuretu attempted to hunt for jobs but came to realization that, "There was no way I could get a job in white-owned businesses because they did not want to see anyone with a political detention history or background."[32] Mordikai Hamutyinei, who was a secondary school teacher at the time of his detention, hoped to return to his old job after spending a decade in detention. He wrote in his Shona autobiography:

> Because at the time of my arrest I was fully employed as a teacher, I thought that upon my release I would go back to my old job. My

> children had dropped out of school. My family was scrounging for food like rats. All my wealth in cattle was destroyed. . . . I decided to approach the education officers so as to get my job back. I wrote a letter to the colonial education officers and their reply read: "You will never find a job again in this country until the government of Mr. Smith steps down." From this day, I realized that looking for jobs in Rhodesia was like chasing the wind.[33]

Hamutyinei went to Salisbury to look for some other jobs, but, like other detainees' experiences, he got nothing. At one firm called Rothmans, white employers turned Hamutyinei away because "They told me that they did not want people who had no prior job experience." After being jobless for seven months in Salisbury, Hamutyinei finally got a job in Gwelo with a Catholic-run publishing house called Mambo Press. Hamutyinei knew he was one of the lucky few, and in his new job as a writer of Shona articles for the Mambo Press publications, Hamutyinei excelled and ended up publishing his own autobiography with that publishing house.[34]

Many other ex-political detainees joined the ranks of the destitute in Rhodesia. The colonial state, having disrupted the lives of many of these detainees, provided next-to-nothing or no assistance at all toward the rehabilitation of released prisoners. Representatives for African political parties actually took the Rhodesian government to task over the impoverishment of the regime's former hostages. They argued, for example, that ironically, most detainees were worse off outside detention, because at least in detention, they were assured of shelter and food. A ZAPU spokesman, Willie Musarurwa, argued in 1978 that the Rhodesian government should have taken over the welfare of former detainees. He said, "The government should provide for them because it is the government that rendered them destitute."[35] Musarurwa himself had spent more than 10 years in detention, and despite the efforts of his political party to take care of its released activists, he said ZAPU was unable to give proper help to its freed members since it was still a banned organization and was forbidden by law to raise and receive any funding. Another spokesman for the African National Congress also slammed the Rhodesian government's negligence with respect to the welfare of ex-political detainees: "The situation is pathetic. The government should have set up a rehabilitation fund."[36]

Just as they had desperately sought for assistance from non-governmental organizations inside Rhodesian confinement spaces, many ex-detainees and prisoners again turned to these welfare groups

for survival. In the late 1970s, each of these organizations received hundreds of letters from ex-detainees seeking assistance. These letters again reflected the desperate need for formerly detained men to regain leverage over the welfare of their families. Men lamented the loss of their positions as breadwinners and the indignities of hunger and poverty. Here are excerpts of some of these letters:

- Kujinga Mpofu's (from Umtali) Letter to IDAF, April 19, 1978 (NAZ MS 587/3)

"Dear Friends, My name is Kujinga Mpofu. I was under detention in Marandellas camp and detention number was 1827 and my prison number in Marandellas was 970. I was released on the 13/04/78. When I got to the family in Umtali I found that they were in a state of miserable, therefore I decided to appeal for the help. The family and I are completely out of food, clothings, blankets, and school fees. I was a breadwinner of the family but since I was arrested and detained the position of the family fell down. I have six children of which three of them are in school, have my mother and sister who all are widows. All these are in my care, a person who is not working. Hoping to get help from you. Yours in much need, Mr. Kujinga Mpofu."

- Mandaza Muringazuva's (from Centenary) Letter to IDAF, April 26, 1978 (NAZ MS 587/3)

"Dear Sir/Madam, I was arrested in 1973 because of political activities for an indefinite period. My detention No. is 293 Whawha (Prison). Just recently when I was set free I found out all my property, cattle, fields taken by the former government leaving my wife without anything. I am requesting you to find me any friend willing to help me on the following: clothes, food, and school fees for my children. Yours faithfully, Mandaza Muringazuva."

- Canan Chimufombo's Letter to IDAF, April 26, 1978 (NAZ MS 587/3)

"I am writing to introduce myself in view of seeking for assistance both for myself and my family. My name is Canan Chimufombo. I am married to two wives and I have seven children. I have been in detention since 12th March 1976. Now I came out and I found my home destroyed, my family without clothes, and not enough food. But I am trying to fight hard to restore and bring back my home and family

to normal. But I think it will be after some years for me to do it. I am therefore making my appeal to you if you can help by whatever means, financial or material. I will be very glad if my request would meet—" (some parts of letter are illegible and incomplete).

- Constantine H. Takaendesa, New Mkoba Township, Gwelo, April 26, 1978 (NAZ MS 591/4)

"I am writing this letter to you in this minute of my arriving here at home from prison. Since the government has released me, to tell you the truth, I have nothing to rebuild my life. Surely sir my children are in a very bad position. They have nothing and I also have nothing to give them. . . . Without your help surely I do not know what to do. At the moment I have nothing to put on. I have been in prison for nearly 8 years but I spent the 9th in detention and I have no one to help my family since I was in prison."

- Elisha T. Shiripinda, "Ex-Detainee, New Highfield, Salisbury," July 12, 1978 (NAZ MS 591/4)

"I am glad to let you know that I with hundreds other detainees are freed from the agony of Wha Wha Detention. After such a number of years of dehumanization and separation from my family I feel happy for this re-union with my children. . . . However, I wish to let you know that I found nothing, nothing, and nothing on my release in terms of property which I had gathered before I got arrested. I have absolutely nothing to start life with materially and financially. I apply for jobs but I am not accepted. This is a horrible condition which befalls most detainees. I wish to stress on this point to you that I have no house in which to live. . . . At present I live in a kind man's car garage with the children. It upsets humanity to watch the hungry children as they gather around me."

- Leonard Mukondomi's (from Dangamvura Township, Umtali) Letter to IDAF, October 17, 1979 (NAZ MS587/5)

"I am a man now without a home from the Chikurubi Prison, where I was serving a sentence of eight years imprisonment under Law and Order Maintenance Act. And because of the war situation my home was destroyed by fire by the [Rhodesian] soldiers. My family of 7 members, two mothers, three boys and two girls had to suffer without somebody to look after them. Food, clothes and my properties

were burnt in the fire. I am a man of 60 years of age and was released in the 20th September. My sentence was going to finish up in 1981 from 1975.

I am now a beggar and without anything to build up my home again under such circumstances. For further information I refer you to the Superintendent, Chikurubi Prison. Your Servant, Leornard Mukondomi."

A small group of non-governmental organizations struggled to meet the needs of these ex-detainees through small family allowances.[37] In the absence of a government-funded rehabilitation program, ex-detainees and prisoners of the Rhodesian regime settled uncomfortably into lives of destitution and poverty.

At the end of Rhodesian colonial rule in 1980, most of these former hostages of the Rhodesian regime presumed that the new independent and black majority ZANU (PF) government would give them assistance in recognition of their sacrifices toward the struggle for freedom. Even those other non-governmental organizations that had struggled to assist the detainees and prisoners during the colonial period anticipated that the new government would take over from their work. But Kumbirai Kangai, the first independent Zimbabwean minister of labor and social services, implored these organizations to continue assisting ex-political prisoners and detainees. In a letter to one of the organizations, IDAF, Kangai wrote,

> The assistance given by your Fund to political prisoners and detainees, during the past 15 years, has been an important contribution of practical and moral support to a large section of Zimbabwean people, many of whom have been in prison or detention for more than a decade for their involvement in the liberation struggle. Now that they have their freedom, their next most urgent need is for continued support in the difficult period of re-establishing themselves in the community. It will therefore be appreciated if you can give such assistance through Christian Care, in the form of cash grants for immediate necessities after release, further education and vocational guidance, and the financing of projects to help those released to support themselves and their families."[38]

The new post-colonial government failed to come up with rehabilitation programs to assist ex-political detainees and prisoners. In an interview, one of the new government's ministers, Enos Nkala, who spent many years in detention, too, uncomfortably reflected on the negligence of the new government and said, "I think there was a sense of negligence on our side. We should have, umm . . . uh, well,

there were too many of them, and we also had to take care of the guerrillas who were coming from the bush to assembly points in the country. . . . Some of them (ex-detainees and prisoners) were reckless, I must say. . . . And just as in any situation, you cannot cover everything 100 percent for reasons of negligence or through forgetting."[39]

"Negligence and forgetting" on the part of the new ZANU (PF) government betrayed a deeper political context in which the new political elites were involved in a project to consolidate power through defining insiders and outsiders. Interpretations of the liberation struggle history became important in this process. Since the 1980s, ZANU (PF)'s official histories silenced the contributions of other groups of people to the struggle for freedom and instead narrowed, flattened, and reduced the whole anticolonial struggle to the "heroic" actions of those who led and won the guerrilla war. Furthermore, in ZANU publications and public commemorations of this history, ZANU political elites encouraged hierarchy discourses, ones that separated those with so-called liberation war credentials and those without. When it came to remembering the history of the liberation struggle, therefore, a broad hierarchical discourse of heroism emerged, one that political elites used to define who was a liberation "hero" and who was not. In the process, other histories and memories of the struggle for freedom were displaced.

I suggest that at the most basic level, the political elite's appropriation of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle history was meant to define groups of people who had unfettered access to political power and economic resources. During the 1990s, when the Zimbabwean economy began to shrink, certain groups of people exploited ZANU's hierarchical discourses of heroism and touted competing narratives of the liberation struggle in order to stake claims to power and scarce resources. These narratives energized debates in Zimbabwe's House of Assembly, a parliamentary body that was dominated by ZANU PF parliamentarians between 1980 and 1999. Most of these parliamentarians had been either liberation struggle guerrillas or political prisoners/detainees. The debates most relevant here were those between ex-guerrilla parliamentarians and those parliamentarians who were ex-political prisoners or detainees.[40] In 1991, two ex-guerrillas introduced the debate about which groups of people contributed significantly to the liberation struggle and thus deserved a central place as "heroes" in the history of the struggle. Framed as a formal parliamentary motion, the debate was specifically about the criteria that the government used to identify national heroes.[41] Through an act of parliament, that is, the National Heroes' Act of 1986, the ZANU

government had vested within the Zimbabwean president the power to posthumously select national heroes based on individuals' significant and outstanding contributions to the country's liberation struggle. The two ex-combatants argued that the real heroes of the liberation struggle were ex-guerrillas. They averred in their motion that, "we are proud to say we were the [ones] who actually did the job to completely eradicate colonialism. . . . We should never, never allow our youngsters to learn distorted history particularly on the question of heroism. It is high time that true history is written."

An ex-political detainee shot back, accusing ex-combatants of driving a wedge among the people of Zimbabwe, separating "the people of Zimbabwe into ex-combatants and detainees and just ordinary people." Ruth Chinamano, who spent time in Gonakudzingwa detention with her husband Josiah Chinamano, underlined the centrality of ex-political prisoners to the struggle by arguing:

> Many heroes . . . have no blood in their hands but they have suffered and fought for this country. Without politicians (who were arrested) there would not have been any people going to Maputo and Zambia (to wage the guerrilla war). Some of the people who ran to Maputo and Zambia, did not run because they were heroes, they ran because they were afraid of being arrested. Those who did not face the assegai with their backs and faced the assegai with their fronts languished in prison and some of them died in prison and those are heroes.[42]

Chinamano further argued that some of the parliamentarians and political elites were even falsely touting their guerrilla credentials for some of them only "rushed" to guerrilla outposts in Maputo and Lusaka after it had become clear that the liberation struggle was ending. She derided these people as the *mafikizolo* (Ndebele term for latecomers) in the struggle for liberation.

In August 1995, Aeneas Chigwedere, who was neither an ex-guerrilla nor ex-political prisoner, introduced a motion to give equal recognition to both deceased ex-guerrillas and political detainees. However, a seconder of this motion, an ex-guerrilla, only called for ex-guerrillas and not political prisoners/detainees to enjoy the automatic posthumous "hero" status and preferential access to land, a scarce resource.[43] These debates became more acute when ex-guerrillas began to vociferously make politically charged demands for monetary compensation for their participation in the 1970s liberation struggle. In the mid- to late-1990s, the Zimbabwean economy was deteriorating, which made the liberation struggle veterans' demands for monetary compensation even more pressing. Ex-guerrilla parliamentarians introduced the War

Veterans Administration Bill, which was supposed to be the legislative tool for monetary compensation for the guerrilla war veterans' sacrifices during the liberation war. Ex-detainees supported their own bill, the Political Detainees Bill, which was modeled along the lines of the War Veterans Bill.

The choice for the ZANU (PF) government was clear: it either had to compensate all veterans of the struggle, i.e. military and political veterans, or to seek out the most powerful coalition of veterans from the two groups demanding compensation. The military veterans seemed to be the more vociferous of the two groups; their leaders formally formed a powerful group that organized a series of protest demonstrations against the ZANU (PF) government for not compensating them. Riding on the crest of having been the ones who held the guns against the Rhodesian regime, ex-guerrillas argued that they alone were the true heroes of the liberation struggle and only they deserved to be compensated for their service. Their argument was carefully selfish, for ex-guerrillas appreciated the fact that, considering the late 1990s economic meltdown in the country, the ZANU (PF) government was cash-strapped and thus could not afford to give monetary compensation to every group claiming compensation. An ex-guerrilla in parliament argued that it was only the guerrillas who deserved compensation because they were the ones who "saved the most severe stage of the armed struggle which was the gun and dying, planning and commanding. The ex-detainees, ex-restrictees planned, yes but the death was faced by the gun holders."[44] Another ex-combatant dismissed the need to compensate ex-detainees by falsely claiming that ex-detainees' families did not suffer that much during the struggle since the Rhodesian government and charity organizations took care of them. He argued that, "Their children were able to attend school and many of them were able to study and did degrees in jail while their fellow fighters were in the bush."[45]

For the ZANU (PF) government in the late 1990s, the calls for compensation by these two distinct groups played into its political patronage system. The fact that the country's economy was deteriorating was of secondary importance to ZANU's political considerations, particularly after ZANU felt threatened by increasing opposition to its mismanagement of the economy from workers' unions and ultimately from the workers-based Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) opposition political party. The ZANU (PF) regime desperately needed powerful constituents within its ranks in order to stave off the threat posed by trade unions and the new political opposition. Since the liberation war veterans' coalition was the strongest of the

two groups demanding compensation, in August 1997 ZANU (PF) dipped into the country's treasury and awarded guerrilla veterans hefty pensions of Z$50,000 for each veteran and life pensions. Almost immediately, the guerrilla veterans' formal grouping suspended their protests against the government and became the ZANU government's most loyal constituent, working hard to violently suppress any opposition to ZANU rule. The ex-detainees coalition, through their own Zimbabwe Ex-Political Prisoners, Detainees, and Restrictees Association (ZEPPDRA) attempted to protest against being sidelined but were silenced and accused of fomenting anti-ZANU sentiment. The most respected ex-guerrilla in Zimbabwe, Retired General Solomon Mujuru, came out quashing any voices of protest from the ex-detainees by arguing that their contributions to the struggle were minimal. He argued that ex-guerrillas suffered during the liberation struggle in the bush with the rains and heat, "but these ones (ex-detainees) want to be paid for what? They were guarded and they were protected... Can we just *forget* about some of these issues?" (Own emphasis)

And so the histories, memories, and experiences of Rhodesia's political prisoners and detainees were forgotten. In the drama of competing stories, ex-political prisoners became the losers of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle meta-narrative. In its insidious version of history, the ZANU political elite claimed that only guerrilla veterans deserved a central role in the epic 1970s fight against colonial rule. Such a narrow rendition of the liberation struggle not only defined who had access to power in the Zimbabwean body politic, but also who had access to scarce resources such as land.

In my collection of oral testimonies, several ex-political prisoners certainly felt strongly silenced and marginalized in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Seventy-year-old Bafazi Moyo, once a fearless female freedom fighter but now frail and incapacitated, who spent the last years of the colonial era in prison, remembered that even in the 1980s, "ex-combatants were receiving Zimdollars 185 (18.50 US dollars) [monthly] demobilization allowances for two years and compensation for injuries, [but] we (political prisoners) remained in the backyard. Appeals for recognition became a cry in the wilderness." Norman Mabhena, who spent 15 years in detention, said that, "We feel that we have been betrayed by our colleagues. Our political and social expectations were dashed because our role has not been acknowledged." 68-year-old Vail Mangaba, who now has chronic high blood pressure that she says resulted from torture during her two years in detention, said, "What pains me most is that people who did not fight this

war, some of whom fought against us, are enjoying the fruits of our suffering while we languish in poverty and disease." Victor Kuretu, the current chairperson for the ex-detainees grouping ZEPPDRA, expressed the disillusionment of ex-detainees for having been forgotten and silenced by saying, "No one anticipated that we would be forgotten. Personally, I thought all my sacrifices had gone to waste because no one in government remembered us. As ex-detainees, we all thought we had been abandoned, and no one ever saw us as a people worth remembering." As a witness to the hefty compensations that the ZANU government gave to ex-guerrillas, Kuretu said as ex-political prisoners, "We felt hurt (*talks in a low, sad voice*), especially considering the rapidity with which ex-guerrillas were recognized by the government and empowered by an Act of Parliament to claim their hefty lump-sums and all the benefits accorded to veterans of the war of liberation. We just thought that as ex-detainees, we had been abandoned."[46]

In October 2004, the ZANU government passed a separate law to provide life pensions and benefits to the now elderly and surviving group of liberation struggle ex-political prisoners and detainees. The face-saving token gesture was too little, too late and even insulting for many of them. For Emmie Silefali Ncube, "All we ever wanted from this government were the words 'thank you,' even without monetary compensation."[47] In the hyper-inflationary economic conditions obtaining in Zimbabwe today, the compensation that the ZANU government is now giving to former detainees does nothing to change their poverty and precarious lives. As Susan Museti said about their pensions, "The compensation is next to nothing. The money is paltry and it does not make any difference in my life. The people who really benefited are the ex-guerrillas who received what was called 'de-mobilization funding' soon after 1980, and the 1997 compensation packages that ex-guerrillas received. When the government later thought about compensating ex-political prisoners, the money they offered us was useless."[48]

Conclusion: Political Imprisonment and Memorializing Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle

We can [either] afford to stand aside, laugh and perhaps forget temporarily the painful experiences of prison. We can even theorize about them, having been liberated. [Or] we can pay homage to the special heroes.

Jack Mapanje, "Liberated Ruminations," in Siobhan Dowd (ed.), This Prison Where I Live, *International PEN, New York, 1996, p. 171*

I lost eleven precious years of my life in the jail of a white man whose freedom and well- being I have assured from the first day of Zimbabwe's independence (in 1980).

Extracted from Robert Mugabe's speech at the 62nd Session of UN General Assembly, *New York, September 26, 2007*

Given the prominence of other histories of political imprisonment such as those in South Africa during the anti-apartheid movement and other places, it is surprising that, before this book, such a history was absent for Zimbabwe. Among Zimbabweans, memories of the anti-Rhodesian liberation struggle revolve around the guerrilla war only, perhaps reflecting the dominant state narrative that reifies the war and actively silences other narratives of the anticolonial struggle. Whereas Nelson Mandela's nearly three-decade incarceration at Robben Island in South Africa has acquired a central place in the popular memories of the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, the penal experiences of leaders such as Zimbabwe's current president, Robert Mugabe, are substituted by the guerrilla experience, which underscores the dominant state narrative of the liberation struggle. The liberation war has so far been the centerpiece of nearly all the narratives, scholarly and popular, about Zimbabwe's nationalist struggle.

For many informants, recalling Rhodesian incarceration, particularly experiences of torture and violence, is a very painful and

difficult process. Many of the men and women that I talked to told uncomfortable stories of torture and bodily harm that Rhodesian security agents inflicted on them either on their way to prisons and detention centers or inside the prison confines. These stories have fueled a disturbing and conscious historical amnesia about African political activists' penal experiences in Rhodesian jails. Whereas those who participated in the guerrilla war tell stories of heroism and liberating Zimbabwe "through the barrel of the gun," Rhodesian political prisoners are widely assumed to have been "cut off" from the liberation struggle by virtue of their incarceration. Furthermore, rumors and gossip of sexualized torture on the overwhelmingly male contingent of political prisoners casts a heavy cloud of shame and silence about political imprisonment during Zimbabwe's liberation struggle.

In this book, however, I endeavored to tell a different story: I told a story of the prison experience in which political prisoners were more than just victims of Rhodesian penal violence. I told a story of the Rhodesian prison as a contested space—a terrain of struggle—in which the prison was doubly a space of repression and subversion, and how political prisoners were capable of challenging and negotiating their incarceration. It is an alternative narrative of the liberation struggle history, one that introduces a new set of historical subjects to the history of the anti-Rhodesian struggle in Zimbabwe.

In 2006, when I was contemplating researching and writing about an undocumented aspect of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle, I read a newspaper article with curiosity, particularly the invocation of anticolonial history by Zimbabwe's ruling party politicians. In December 2006, two leading ZANU (PF) politicians had visited a Zimbabwean electoral constituency called Chiredzi South, in the extreme southeastern part of the country. Their business there was to whip up the rural electorate in the run up to a by-election for that constituency's parliamentary seat, so that the rural voters could vote for a ZANU (PF) candidate. In the blistering heat that is characteristic of southeastern Zimbabwe, hordes of weary peasants, women, men, and children, sat on the dusty grounds of a primary school after ZANU (PF) party youths had frog-marched them to this political rally.[1]

At the rally, one politician, a decorated liberation war veteran, retired General Vitalis Zvinavashe, told the peasants of this rural constituency that those who would vote for the opposition party (the Movement for Democratic Change/MDC) in the forthcoming by-election were not serious and merely joking with the legacy of

the liberation struggle. The retired general was quoted in one of the state-owned newspapers, *The Herald*, as having told the villagers, "It is important for all of you to understand that ZANU-PF is indispensable because it is the party that brought independence to Zimbabwe following many years of colonialism and all these other parties that are coming up are managing to do so in an environment that was ushered following the freedom that was brought by the ruling party." Invoking the liberation war past, he went on to declare that, "To me I must stress that voting the MDC is tantamount to cursing those who lie in caves and mass graves after they perished in the struggle for a new and free Zimbabwe. Voting MDC, to me, is something that is done by over-excited people who will be merely joking and do not know how painful it is to wage an armed struggle."[2]

What particularly caught my attention in this newspaper story were the utterances of another ZANU politician. Speaking at the same rally, Dzikamai Mavhaire, exhorted the people not to betray Chiredzi's legacy of being home to the notorious Gonakudzingwa Detention Center where veteran nationalists were restricted and detained. According to the report in this state-sponsored paper, "Mavhaire said the people of Chiredzi South were supposed to be the last to turn against the ruling party as their nearness to Gonakudzingwa should always serve as a constant reminder of the heinous legacy of colonialism." The paper quotes Mavhaire:

> Zimbabwe's history will be *incomplete* without mentioning Gonakudzingwa, which is located here. That is where eminent nationalist leaders like the late Vice President Nkomo once stayed and that should serve as lasting reminder to the people of Chiredzi South on the bitter road that was passed to attain self-rule in 1980. That history alone means that this area should be the last to turn its back on Zanu-PF.[3] (My emphasis)

In reading this invocation of the fight for majority rule, I was struck by the mention of political imprisonment as being part of the struggle for freedom. This was strange because for anyone familiar with ZANU (PF) political rhetoric, the guerrilla war is the single most important aspect of the history of the liberation struggle. Since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, ZANU (PF) politicians never tire of reminding Zimbabweans of how, as guerrillas, they liberated the country "through the barrel of the gun." So Mavhaire's invocation of *political imprisonment* as part of the liberation struggle (and even Robert Mugabe's reference to his own incarceration in the epigraph

earlier) was a bit off the course. Perhaps Mavhaire's allusion made political sense because he was speaking to people who really lived in the area where the Gonakudzingwa detention camp was located during the colonial period. But it did not make sense to say the Chiredzi people should remember Gonakudzingwa because "That is where eminent nationalist leaders" were detained, as if only those in the leadership positions of African nationalist parties in the 1960s were detained by the Rhodesian regime. These rural villagers would obviously have remembered members of their own communities who were arrested and detained or imprisoned by the Rhodesian regime for their support of the guerrilla war or other political crimes associated with the struggle for freedom.

As I was pondering over this piece of history that had been invoked by ZANU (PF) politicians, I decided to specifically follow up on the history of political confinement during the liberation struggle, first out of pure curiosity, and later for other reasons as well. Apart from intellectual curiosity, I saw in this history an opportunity to challenge the ZANU (PF) narrative of the anticolonial struggle, particularly that which narrowly focuses on elite political figures and their roles in the guerrilla war. In a political environment in which the ZANU (PF) government has marginalized and silenced alternative voices of dissent for nearly three decades, and used the liberation struggle to stake a monopoly on power and "patriotism," I felt committed to the task of writing a history that would challenge the myopic nature of ZANU (PF)'s narrative of the struggle for freedom. In conceptualizing this project, I imagined that, by highlighting the contribution of Rhodesian political prisoners and detainees in challenging the colonial order and their enormous sacrifices toward the ideals of black majority rule, my work would challenge the ways in which the postindependence political leadership has thrived on manipulating liberation war history (and other colonial histories), positioning itself as the sole "liberators" of Zimbabwe, and excluding other historical actors perceived as threats to its continued grip on political power.

The formulation of political prisoners' contribution to the liberation struggle pervades this book and has several analytical advantages. First, I conceived of political prisoners as important historical subjects who contributed to the anticolonial struggle history by locating them within the activist communities of the Africans' nationalist movements. Most of the men and women who ended up in Rhodesian prisons were people from various social backgrounds whose anticolonial politics were shaped by both their individualized assessments of Rhodesian colonial rule and the insurgent politics of newly formed

African political organizations in the 1960s. As youths, workers, and peasants in both urban and rural Rhodesia, these men and women joined communities of political activists, and they were at the center of the growth of mass-based nationalism and liberation movements in Zimbabwe. It was their politics and their understanding of the struggle for liberation that gave Zimbabwean nationalism its form and substance. It was their overwhelming support of the various nationalist parties that forced the Rhodesian regime to resort to confinement policies as a style of governance. And it was their political activism that landed many in Rhodesian prisons and detention centers between 1960 and 1979.

Contributing to the struggle for freedom also meant thinking about the prison space itself as a terrain of struggle, in which political prisoners were protagonists who rejected the subordinate status to which Rhodesian authorities relegated them, and were thus capable of playing a role in the struggle for liberation. To be sure, both the detention and prison institutions of Rhodesia were spaces of brutality, curtailed freedoms, racialized abuse, racial segregation, and heightened repression. But as the evidence for this book demonstrates, instead of passively accepting penal punishment and brutal reprisals, most political prisoners viewed these as "fighting for national freedom." This was in addition to prisoners developing ways of challenging, coping, and adapting to prison conditions, for instance, by refusing to follow orders, making demands on jailers, protesting through hunger strikes, smuggling documents and letters in and out of prison, planning and executing prison breaks, fighting back violent warders, befriending black guards in order to mitigate harsh conditions, and educating themselves through classes organized by other political prisoners, among other things.

Political prisoners' direct contributions to the struggle for freedom also took the form of challenging the "inside–outside" divide that detention and imprisonment created. One particular and effective way of collapsing the barriers of isolative detention and imprisonment was through prison writings. Ordinary prisoners, and some influential African political leaders in confinement, left paper trails of searing political critiques that were smuggled out of prisons and detention centers. Most of the prison writings were powerful indictments of Rhodesian colonial rule and the injustices and brutalities of the state's policies of confinement. Many of these letters were read abroad, in Britain and across Europe, published in the international press, and read by various audiences in Rhodesia itself. One particular document that was smuggled out of confinement by political

leaders in Sikombela Detention Camp even acquired the status of a declaration of war with Rhodesia. ZANU leaders insist that a communiqué that they called the "Sikombela Declaration," which they drafted in Sikombela Detention Center in 1965, was the document responsible for instructing political activists outside of confinement to take up arms and fight the Rhodesian regime.[4] Other letters and writings were also directed to Rhodesian authorities themselves, and using very strong and defiant language, their authors challenged the colonial authorities' abuse of state power and denounced Rhodesian colonial rule itself.

Furthermore, political prisoners contributed to the liberation struggle in other, subtler ways. For example, during the volatile years of the 1960s and 1970s, they became symbols of the struggle for liberation. Activists outside of Rhodesian prisons and detention centers added the release of political prisoners to their list of demands for rights. The arrest and detention of certain political figures triggered a series of violent protests in Rhodesian urban areas, with unrelenting African protesters confronting Rhodesian authorities over the detention of African activists.

Apart from documenting Rhodesian political prisoners' activism and their agency in spaces of confinement, this book left no illusions about the brutalities and violence of their incarceration. These detainees and prisoners in Rhodesia were held in some of the most inhumane spaces of confinement, as some were dumped in wild animal-infested jungles, and others lived in squalid conditions and dark rictuses of death and disease. As for those who survived incarceration and were released at the end of their jail terms or after state amnesties, most confronted the uncertain world of repressive Rhodesian rule, which only ended in 1980 when Zimbabwe gained independence from Rhodesian colonial rule. In the post-colonial world, former political hostages confronted bleak futures in which their own material poverty – the result of long years of incarceration – was combined with political marginalization. In a political environment where the triumphant ZANU government reified the guerrilla war as the most important form of struggle for freedom in Zimbabwe, former political prisoners' own memories of that struggle, and their contributions to it, were silenced, forgotten, and marginalized.

This study, informed by these memories, attempted to write the histories of the former political prisoners of the Rhodesian regime into the narrative of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. Through documenting the histories of these incarcerated people, their experiences

in Rhodesian jails, and the ways in which they struggled and coped in some of the most brutal detention centers of the Rhodesian regime, this book argued that detainees were important historical actors whose encounters and experiences with one of Rhodesia's repressive apparatuses—the prisons—deserve to be documented.

Notes

1 Introduction: Suffering for the Nation: The Prison as a Site of Struggle during Zimbabwe's Liberation War

1. "Rhodesia" was Zimbabwe's colonial name from 1890 to 1979, in recognition of Cecil Rhodes who engineered British settlers' occupation of the country. After the end of settler colonial rule in 1980, the country's name became Zimbabwe, in recognition of one of the country's pre-colonial empires, Dzimbahwe.
2. See Peter Zinoman, *The Colonial Bastille: A History of Imprisonment in Vietman, 1862–1940*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, CA, 2001, pp. 2–3.
3. For an important discussion on this, see Terence Ranger, "Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation: The struggle over the past in Zimbabwe," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2004, pp. 215–234. In this paper, Ranger reflects upon a certain nationalist rendering of Zimbabwe's past that has seen a "narrow historical narrative gain[ing] a monopoly and [has been] endlessly repeated." See p. 3. Here Ranger refers to a particular post-independence nationalist history that has mutated into what he calls "patriotic history" that is driven by the urge to laud a narrowly defined group of "liberation war heroes" whilst at the same time excluding people who are perceived to have not contributed anything to the struggle for independence.
4. Here I am referring to the obsession by most liberation war scholars to either concentrate on the histories of guerrillas or guerrilla movements, without providing space for other historical actors such as Rhodesia's hostages—most of whom were neither guerrillas nor involved in guerrilla movements. See David Lan, *Guns and Rain: Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*, James Currey, London, 1985; Ngwabi Bhebhe and Terence Ranger (eds.), *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War*, James Currey, London, 1995; and most recently, Norma Kriger, *Guerrilla Veterans in Post-War Zimbabwe*, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, 2003.
5. For works on pre-1960s African anti-colonial struggle see: Terence Ranger, *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896–7: A Study in African Resistance*, HEB, London, 1967; Terence Ranger, *The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia, 1898–1930*, Northwestern University Press,

Evanston, 1970; Tsuneo Yoshikuni, "Strike Action and Self-Help Associations: Zimbabwean Worker Protest and Culture after World War 1," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 1989; Brian Raftopolous and Ian Phimister, "'Kana sora ratsva ngaritsve': African Nationalists and Black Workers—The 1948 General Strike in Colonial Zimbabwe," *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol. 13, No. 3, 2000; and M. Green, "The Salisbury Bus Boycott, 1956," *Journal of the Historical Association of Zambia*, Vol. 11, No. 13, 1968, pp. 1–17.

6. The participation of ordinary men and women in nationalist struggles is what is referred to as "mass nationalism."
7. Zimbabweans still revere these places today as the birthplaces of Zimbabwean nationalism.
8. See David Lan, *Guns and Rain: Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*, James Currey, London, 1985.
9. Rhodesian authorities branded the guerrillas "terrorists." Anyone, therefore, who aided and abetted the military operations of the guerrillas, was guilty of working in tandem with "terrorists." The LOMA was specifically amended to impose jail terms on people accused of coming into contact with and helping "terrorists" in any way.
10. See Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya*, Henry Holt & Co., New York, 2005.
11. See R. Maran, *Torture: The Role of Ideology in the French-Algerian War*, Praeger, New York, 1989.
12. See Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Madonald Purnell, South Africa, 1994.
13. Jurgen Habermas, quoted in Ines Izaguirre, "Recapturing the Memory of Politics," *NACLA Report on the Americas*, Vol. 31, No. 6, May/June 1998.
14. David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, Faber & Faber, London, 1981.
15. Donald Moore, quoted in Ngwabi Bhebhe and Terence Ranger, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War*, James Currey, London, 1991, p. 6. Teresa Barnes also added to the criticism of the book by characterizing it as a "quasi-official history which depends solely on official accounts and the recollections of national leaders." (Barnes, quoted in Bhebhe and Ranger, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War*, p. 6.) Brian Raftopoulos scathingly dismissed the same book as a "little more than a hagiography for the ruling party (ZANU), an unashamed apologetic justifying the coming to power of a section of the liberation movement." See Brian Raftopoulos, "Problematizing Nationalism in Zimbabwe: A Historiographical Review," *Zambezia*, Vol. XXVI, No. II, 1999, p. 121.
16. See Terence Ranger's *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1988; and David Lan's *Guns and Rain: Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1988.

17. Norma Kriger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992.
18. One Zimbabwean historian dismissed Kriger's work as a "gross distortion of the Zimbabwean [liberation struggle] reality" for her refusal to submit to a liberation war narrative that stresses collective peasant grievances and consciousness. See Alois Mlambo, "Out on a Limb: Review of Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War by Norma Kriger," *The Zimbabwe Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1, January/March 1997, pp. 8–9. Another reviewer, Angela Cheater, characterized Kriger's book as a "badly flawed contribution to the literature on Zimbabwe's liberation struggle." See Angela Cheater, "Review: Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War," *Man*, New Series, Vol. 27, No. 4, December 1992, pp. 888–889. For other useful reviews of Kriger's book, see Terence Ranger, "Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War by Norma Kriger," *African Affairs*, Vol. 93, No. 370, January 1994, pp. 142–144; S. Robins, "Heroes, Heretics and Historians of the Zimbabwe Revolution: A Review Article of Norma Kriger's 'Peasant Voices,'" *Zambezia*, Vol. VVIII, No. i, 1996, pp. 73–91.
19. See Josephine Nhongo-Simbanegavi, "Zimbabwe Women in the Liberation Struggle: ZANLA and Its Legacy, 1972–1985," PhD Thesis, University of Oxford, Oxford, 1997; and her subsequent book, Josephine Nhongo-Simbanegavi, *For Better or Worse: Women and ZANLA in Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000.
20. Tanya Lyons, *Guns and Guerilla Girls: Women in the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle*, Africa World Press, Trenton, 2004.
21. Joyce Chadya, "The Unrecognized and the Invisible: Gender and Internal Displacement during Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle, Harare, 1965–1980," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, 2004.
22. Timothy Scarnecchia, *The Urban Roots of Democracy and Political Violence in Zimbabwe: Harare and Highfield, 1940–1964*, University of Rochester Press, Rochester, NY, 2008.
23. Florence Bernault (ed.), Translated by Janet Roitman, *A History of Prison and Confinement in Africa*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH, 2003.
24. See David Killingray's chapter, "Punishment to Fit the Crime? Penal Policy and Practice in Colonial Africa," in Florence Bernault (ed.) *A History of Prison and Confinement in Africa*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH, 2003 p. 97.
25. See Fran Lisa Buntman, *Robben Island and Prisoner Resistance to Apartheid*, University of Cambridge Press, Cambridge, 2003.
26. ZANU-PF is an acronym for the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front party, which has ruled Zimbabwe for the past 33 years, that is, since 1980.
27. In 1997, before the plummeting of the Zimbabwean economy, Z$50,000 was a lot of money. The average yearly income for a Zimbabwean worker was by then Z$8,000.

28. Due to my work on this history, I actually ended up writing testimonial evidence in support of asylum applications made by some former Rhodesian political prisoners seeking asylum in the United Kingdom.
29. Interview with Lucas Jonasi, Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe, July 28, 2007.
30. Ian Smith was the ultra-reactionary Prime Minister of Rhodesia, who, in 1965, declared Rhodesia to be an independent white settler colony and severed all ties with the Britain, the metropolitan colonial ruler of Rhodesia.
31. Interview with Enos Nkala, Central Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, November 30, 2006.
32. Michele Rolph-Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Beacon Press, Boston, MA, 1995, p. 15.
33. See also Joyce Chadya on victims of guerrilla and state violence, "The Unrecognized and the Invisible: Gender and Internal Displacement during Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle, Harare, 1965–1980," PhD Thesis, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2004.
34. Interview with Refina Ratidzai Siniwa, Central Harare, September 21, 2006.
35. Interview with Mai Kadengu, Central Harare, September 20, 2006 (MK for "Mai Kadengu" and MBM for Munya Bryn Munochiveyi).
36. According to the standard psychologists' definition, a "repressed memory" is the memory of a traumatic event unconsciously retained in the mind, where it is said to adversely affect conscious thought, desire, and action. For references to the debates on "repressed memories" see, http://skepdic.com/repressedmemory.html.
37. See these autobiographies: Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakange Zvakaoma muZimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gwelo, 1984; Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, Methuen, London, 1984; Edgar Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, SAPES, Harare, 2007; Maurice Nyagumbo, *With the People: An Autobiography from the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle*, Allison & Busby, London, 1980; and Didymus Mutasa, *Rhodesian Black Behind Bars*, Mowbrays, London, 1974.
38. David Arnold, "The Self and the Cell: Indian Prison Narratives as Life Histories," in David Arnold and Stuart Blackburn (eds.), *Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography, and Life History*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2004, p. 43.
39. Most of these photographs are now deposited in the National Archives of Zimbabwe, the largest repository of historical documents in Zimbabwe. (Author's note: Publisher refused to include these photographs in this book because of strict "permissions" legislation in the United States).
40. See Christraud M. Geary, "Photographs as Materials for African History: Some Methodological Considerations," *History in Africa*, Vol. 13, 1986, pp. 89–116.

2 The Growth of African Opposition and Intensified State Political Repression in Rhodesia, 1960–1970s

1. See Claire Palley, *The Constitutional History and Law of Southern Rhodesia, 1888–1965*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966.
2. Interview with Enos Nkala, Central Bulawayo, November 30, 2006. Nkala was a leading nationalist who helped in the formation of ZANU in 1963. In the "Youth League," young, educated Africans debated the efficacy of forming political parties which culminated in the formation of the SRANC. The best synthesis of African political movements in the 1960s can also be found in a paper by Edwin Lichtenstein, "The African Nationalist Parties (in Rhodesia)," which is reproduced in G. C. Grant, *The Africans' Predicament in Rhodesia*, Minority Rights Group, Report No. 8, January 1972.
3. Ibid. This figure is based on the number of people who bought the party's membership cards as part of subscription to the organization.
4. See Victor E. M. Machingaidze, "Agrarian Change from Above: The Southern Rhodesia Native Land Husbandry Act and African Response," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1991, pp. 557–588. One colonial official noted with concern the infiltration of the SR-ANC into the rural areas: "This ANC... began to reach out tentacles to the rural areas during 1958, probing about for grievances and local talent on which to fasten.... In six [rural] districts we have witnessed a gradual intensification of soapbox oratory which was so characteristic of weekends in the urban areas, we have viewed with increasing concern the effect on unsophisticated peasants of violent and lurid speeches." Ibid., p. 581.
5. Ibid., p. 582.
6. To ban African political organizations, the Rhodesian regime enacted the 1959 Unlawful Organizations Act, which is discussed later.
7. Again, this figure is based on the number of members who bought party membership cards as part of subscription to the organization.
8. See G. C. Grant, *The Africans' Predicament in Rhodesia*.
9. See Ibbo Mandaza's "Introduction" to Edgar Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, SAPES Books, Harare, 2007, p. 12.
10. See Ibbo Mandaza, *Race, Color and Class in Southern Africa*, SAPES Books, Harare, 1997; and also Ali A. Mazrui and Michael Tidy, *Nationalism and New States in Africa: From About 1935 to the Present*, Heinemann, Nairobi, 1984; A. Adu Boahen, *African Perspectives on Colonialism*, John Hopkins Press, Baltimore, MD, 1987.
11. The subject of Zimbabwean nationalism is littered with official histories that highlight the central role played by "nationalist leaders." See especially David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, Faber & Faber, London, 1981; and David Smith and Colin Simpson, *Mugabe Illustrated*, Pioneer Head, Salisbury, 1981.

12. Whereas Zimbabwean official histories of the nationalist movement read more like elitist distortions which undermine the important roles of other historical subjects critical to the liberation struggle, works such as David Martin and Phyllis Johnson's *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, though passionate in their documentation of Zimbabwe's struggle for liberation, read more like histories of selected elite personalities who led Zimbabwe's guerrilla war. Other dominant commentaries of the nationalist period fall in the same trap of being "official-type histories, presumptuous and self-indulgent accounts, or vain attempts at recording the 'authentic' experiences of selected actors," as Ibbo Mandaza puts it. Even Brian Raftopoulos' innovative critique of the ruralization of Zimbabwean nationalism (because of the rural geography of the liberation guerrilla war) which documents the *urban* roots of nationalist political activism heavily relies on the histories of African educated elite trade unionists, or what he calls the "urban intelligentsia."
13. The oral and life history of Obed Mutezo was published as a biography by Ndabaningi Sithole, an academic and later nationalist leader of ZANU. Sithole came from the same rural home as Mutezo and once shared a prison cell with him. During intermittent periods of freedom from Rhodesian prisons and detention centers, Sithole decided to follow up on Mutezo's life history and later published that life history as a biography. cf. Ndabaningi Sithole, *Obed Mutezo of Zimbabwe*, Oxford University Press, Nairobi, 1977.
14. Rhodesia's Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934 legalized an industrial color bar that segmented black and white laborers into different reward structures and disallowed competition between them and mobility across this racial chasm. Introduced as a 1930s Depression coping mechanism and ostensibly meant to reduce unemployment among whites, white unemployment became almost nonexistent in Rhodesia; for blacks, joblessness, underemployment, and *underpayment* were facts of life. See Edmore Mufema, "The Southern Rhodesia Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934," MA Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, 1992.
15. Native Commissioners were the principal rural district administrators in Southern Rhodesia.
16. An urban based trade unionist, Benjamin Burombo was an influential reformist African politician in the 1940s. Not necessarily advocating for majority rule, Burombo's British National Voice Association provided a platform for reform-minded Africans to challenge the racial policies of the Rhodesian authorities. See Ngwabi Bhebhe, *Benjamin Burombo, African Politics in Zimbabwe 1947–1958*, College Press Publishers, Harare, 1989.
17. This oral history is based on Sithole, *Obed Mutezo of Zimbabwe*, pp. 21–23 and pp. 118–119.

18. David Lan, *Guns and Rain: Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*, James Currey, London, 1985.
19. Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakange Zvakaoma MuZimbabwe* (translates to "*It was Difficult in Zimbabwe*"), Mambo Press, Gweru, 1984.
20. According to Rhodesia's 1912 Beer Ordinance, Africans were not allowed to drink European brewed beer such as clear malt liquor, spirits, or wines. Africans were only allowed to partake of their home-brewed, sorghum opaque beer. Although the law was later amended to allow Africans who had attained a certain level of education to partake of "European beer," it remained common knowledge that Africans were not allowed by law to drink clear bottled beer. See also Justin Willis, "Drinking Power: Alcohol and History in Africa," *History Compass*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2005, pp. 1–18.
21. See Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakange Zvakaoma MuZimbabwe*, pp. 5–6.
22. Interview with Oliver Muvirimi Dizha, Murewa Rural Area, Zimbabwe, October 17, 2006.
23. Ibid.
24. Interview with Lucas Jonasi, Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe, July 28, 2007.
25. Interview with Henry Masunda, Bikita, Mandadzaka Village, Zimbabwe, July 1, 2007.
26. Interview with Francis Chikukwa, Mufakose Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, August 25, 2006.
27. On Rhodesia's urban influx-control laws, see Terry Barnes, "'Am I a Man?': Gender and the Pass Laws in Urban Colonial Zimbabwe, 1930–80," *African Studies Review*, Vol. 40, No. 1, April 1997, pp. 59–81.
28. Salisbury's "First Street" was the central boulevard of downtown Salisbury. It was known for its town glitter, elegance, and cosmopolitan outlook. Black people were not allowed to set foot along this street.
29. Interview with Roderick Muhammad, Mbare Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, August 10, 2007.
30. Mr. John Stonehouse was a British Labor Party M.P. who once visited Southern Rhodesia in 1959 in a non-official capacity. At the time that Matthew Masiyakurima attended this rally, Mr. Stonehouse had been invited to a meeting of the SR-ANC in Salisbury where, according to the Rhodesian-aligned newspaper, *The Herald*, he told Africans attending the rally that: "Lift your heads high and behave as though the country belongs to you." Rhodesian authorities promptly deported Stonehouse, with a Rhodesian Member of Parliament, Winston Field, accusing Stonehouse of "interfering" with Rhodesia's internal affairs. According to Field, "In telling a large and ignorant crowd to behave as if the country belonged to

them, Mr. Stonehouse was inciting people to civil disobedience." Stonehouse was also branded an "irresponsible agitator," just like his friends leading and supporting the SR-ANC. See Alan Gray, "Quarterly Chronicle," *African Affairs*, Vol. 58, No. 231, April 1959, pp. 103–104.

31. Interview with Matthew Masiyakurima, Budiriro 5 Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, August 26, 2006.
32. Interview with Rueben Bascoe, Mbare Township, Zimbabwe, July 12, 2007.
33. Given the centrality of urban violence in South Africa's anti-apartheid movement and the sophistication of the studies made of it, it is surprising that this aspect of the Zimbabwean liberation struggle has been omitted by scholars.
34. The word *Zhii* has no precise equivalent in English. Its nearest meaning in English is "devastating action"; it is precisely onomatopoeic as the word takes its origin from the sound caused by the fall of a huge rock. Any object crushed by such a rock is destroyed completely, hence *Zhii* denotes "destruction."
35. For details of the demonstrations, I rely on the observations of Francis Newhati, a participant in Bulawayo where the riots started. See Francis Nehwati, "The Social and Communal Background to 'Zhii': The African Riots in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia in 1960," *African Affairs*, Vol. 69, No. 276, 1970, pp. 250–266.
36. It is difficult to obtain evidence of the numbers of Africans attending political rallies, but oral evidence suggests that in the 1960s whole African urban communities in African townships would come out to attend political rallies. It seems also that no one particularly kept statistical tabs on the numbers of rioters in cases of violent demonstrations, but again oral evidence suggests that the crowds that rioted were enormous.
37. *The Rhodesia Herald*, "Stone-Throwing Rioters Threaten Center of Bulawayo," July 25, 1960.
38. Francis Nehwati, "The Social and Communal Background to 'Zhii.'"
39. Ibid., p. 252. Some parts of this quotation are paraphrased for clarity.
40. Interview with Panganai Gilbert Mangwengwende, Mbare Township, Harare, July 8, 2007.
41. Interview with Rueben Bascoe.
42. Annual Report of the Director of African Administration, Report for the Municipal Year July 1, 1962 to June 30, 1963, p. 41.
43. Ibid., p. 41.
44. Interview with Victor Kuretu, Mufakose Township, Harare, August 24, 2006.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.

47. The PCC was an underground political organization that emerged after Rhodesian authorities banned ZAPU. It was a well-organized network of political activists who coordinated their activities in their local communities.
48. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
49. Ibid.
50. Ruth Chinamano quoted in the *Daily News*, n.d.
51. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, *Our War of Liberation: Speeches, Articles, Interviews, 1976–1979*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1983, p. 76.
52. Ibid. According to a contemporary assessment by Mugabe, men had behaved in a "cowardly" way and had refrained from this demonstration, and when their women "courageously" chose to serve jail sentences instead of paying "admission of guilt" fines, it was these men, particularly husbands, who threatened their women with divorce if they did not agree to pay the fines. See p. 76.
53. Interview with Matthew Masiyakurima.
54. *The Rhodesia Herald*, January 29, 1964.
55. Ibid.
56. Interview with Mathew Masiyakurima.
57. "Police Stoned in Beerhall Affray," *The Rhodesia Herald*, February 17, 1964.
58. Interview with Njodzi Rusere, Mbare Township, Harare, July 9, 2007.
59. "White Police Hurt in Townships Flare-Up," *The Chronicle*, February 10, 1964.
60. Interview with Panganai Gilbert Mangwengwende.
61. See "Stealthy Boycott Drive in African Townships," *The Rhodesia Herald*, February 10, 1964.
62. NAZ, File MS 587/1, Defence and Aid Fund, Southern Rhodesia, "Where is a Human Life worth £17.10s.0d? The Hanging Bill and Richard Mapolisa," Job No. 785, May 25, 1964.
63. Interview with Rueben Bascoe.
64. Interview with Njodzi Rusere.
65. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
66. Interview with Oliver Muvirimi Dizha.
67. Salisbury's Mayor, Frank Clements quoted in *The Chronicle*, February 20, 1964, "Gangsters Take Over Townships: Clements."
68. Law and Order Minister, Memorandum: Security Legislation, 1964.
69. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
70. NAZ, RG 4, Rhodesia Miscellaneous Reports, 1964–1967: Prime Minister's Department—Note to the United Kingdom Government from the Rhodesian Government, August 28, 1967.
71. Zimbabwean guerrillas, inspired by the writings of the Chinese master of guerrilla war, Mao Tse Tung, occasionally made reference to Mao's theory on guerrilla survival whereby the rural peasants were to be treated as the water which is indispensable for the survival of fish.

The guerrillas were the metaphorical fish. For Zimbabwean guerrillas, therefore, peasants were indispensable for their survival.

72. "Pass-out parade" is a military term for the occasion of graduation of recruited soldiers at the end of their training.
73. P. K. Van der Byl, quoted in a document entitled Zimbabwe Working Group, "Possible Quotes for Poster."
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid.
76. P. K. Van der Byl, Rhodesian Minister of Defence, quoted in Zimbabwe Working Group, "Possible Quotes for Poster."
77. On guerrillas' violence on rural civilians see Joyce Chadya, "The Untold Story: War, Flight, and the Internal Displacement of Rural Women to Harare during the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle, 1974–1980," PhD Thesis, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, 2005, pp. 60–74; and Norma Krigger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices*, Baobab Books, Harare, 1992.
78. NAZ, GEN-P_CAT, *Rhodesia: The Man in the Middle*, The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Rhodesia, Rhodesia, April 1975.
79. Interview with Mai Kadengu, Central Harare, Zimbabwe, September 20, 2006.
80. For reasons behind peasant support of the war see Terence Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*, James Currey, London, 1985.
81. Interview with Refina Ratidzai Siniwa, Central Harare, Zimbabwe, September 21, 2006.
82. Ibid.

3 Getting Arrested: Oral Histories of Violence, Torture, and Arrest in Rhodesia, 1960–1979

1. I use the word "manufacturing" to emphasize both the political intent behind these confinement laws, that is, to remove African political activists and supporters of the struggle for liberation out of circulation in their communities, and the laws' capacity to enable *extra-legal* arrests that went beyond the rule of law. Most arrests discussed in this chapter were extra-legal, politically contrived, fabricated, and were not within the confines of the rule of law. However, the security legislation introduced by Rhodesian authorities enabled those arrests, hence "manufactured" political prisoners.
2. Hilary Squires, Rhodesian Minister of Justice, Law and Order, quoted in Zimbabwe Working Group, "Possible Quotes for Poster," NAZ, File MS 591/2/7.
3. NAZ, T1/35/21 Southern Rhodesia Government Notice, Unlawful Organization Act, 1959.

4. Larry Bowman, *Politics in Rhodesia: White Power in an African State*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1973, p. 145. See also Table 3.1.
5. NAZ, S3330/T1/35/21 Vol. 1, Preventive Detention (Temporary Provisions) Bill, 1959.
6. The "Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland" was an amalgamation of the three neighboring British colonies of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland. The "Federation" was cobbled up in 1953 at the instigation of Southern Rhodesian white politicians who stood to gain from the cheap labor and valuable resources of the two other colonies. The "Federation" broke up 10 years later, in 1963.
7. Law and Order Minister, Memorandum: Security Legislation, 1964.
8. Ibid.
9. The chief source of reference for some of the legal pieces discussed here is NAZ, File S3279/2/36, "Acts passed by the Southern Rhodesian Legislature, 1963." For a detailed analysis of Rhodesian security laws see a paper by the Amnesty International: "Amnesty International Briefing: Rhodesia/Zimbabwe," *ISSUE: A Quarterly Journal of Africanist Opinion*, Vol. VI, No. 4, Winter 1976, p. 34.
10. H. L. Magan, "Rhodesian Criminal Law: Its Development and Administration," PhD Thesis, University of London, London, 1972.
11. At times, such departures from accepted legal conventions led to the embarrassment of the Rhodesian regime as most of the accused persons were constantly acquitted in the courts of law for lack of evidence of guilt. But, because of this security law, many other victims of arbitrary arrest found themselves serving lengthy sentences of crimes that they did not commit or even understand.
12. See G. Feltoe, "War Law in Rhodesia," *The Rhodesian Law Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1974, p. 29.
13. After some years of heavy criticism, however, many death sentences were commuted to life sentences.
14. (My emphasis) Member of Parliament for Highfield, *no name*, quoted in Debate on Security Legislation: Law and Order (Maintenance) Amendment Bill, 1964.
15. I referred to this case earlier when I discussed issues of urban political militancy.
16. *The Rhodesia Herald*, September 21, 1963, "'Hanging' Clause: Mapolisa Gets Death Sentence."
17. Most of Zimbabwe's legal historians agree that before the 1960s, the Rhodesian courts historically maintained a modicum of judicial independence, and that the executive branch of government never interfered overtly with the running of the courts. The introduction of an array of security legislation in the 1960s changed this as the

governing RF government now expected Rhodesian judges to hand down political, and not legal, judgments on the accused.

18. Annual Report of the Director of African Administration, Report for the Municipal Year July 1, 1962 to June 30, 1963, p. 41.
19. See NAZ, File S3279/2/36, "Acts Passed by the Southern Rhodesian Legislature, 1963."
20. Desmond Lardner-Burke quoted in the *RDM* Newspaper, August 2, 1967.
21. NAZ, File MS591/2/7, International Defence & Aid Fund, Fact Paper on Southern Africa, "Ian Smith's Hostages: Political Prisoners in Rhodesia," IDAF, London, Special Issue, October 1976.
22. Mr Dewa, Contribution to Debate on "Detainees," *Hansard: House of Assembly*, Vol. 97, No. 2, September 20, 1977, p. 74.
23. See Larry Bowman, *Politics in Rhodesia*, p. 146.
24. Cephas G. Msipa, Letter to Leonard Newman, November 20, 1978, in NAZ, File MS 587/3, Untitled.
25. D. M. Mbidzo, "Wha Wha Prison, Detainees Section 5," June 4, 1975, Letter to IDAF, in NAZ, File MS 591/2/1, "Ian Smith's Hostages."
26. Misheck Mtetwa, "Gwelo Prison," June 1976, Letter to IDAF, in NAZ, File MS 591/2/1, "Ian Smith's Hostages."
27. Francis Mudiwa Gunda's Letter from Wha Wha Detention, Section C, to Christian Action, London, December 18, 1978, NAZ, File MS 587/4, Untitled.
28. See G. Coyle and C. J. Millar, "A Methodology for Understanding Military Complexity: The Case of the Rhodesian Counter-Insurgency Campaign," *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1996, pp. 360–378.
29. NAZ MS 591/2/7 International Defence & Aid Fund, *Fact Paper on Southern Africa: Political Prisoners in Rhodesia*, October 1976, p. 3.
30. Interview with Francis Mudiwa Gunda, Seke, Chitungwiza, August 16, 2006.
31. Interview with Chishawa Chikadza, Mabvuku Township, Zimbabwe, August 6, 2006.
32. ZIPRA was ZAPU's guerrilla wing that operated mostly in the Western parts of Rhodesia. The other dominant guerrilla group was ZANU's Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), which launched its military offenses from the eastern and north-eastern parts of Rhodesia.
33. NAZ GEN-P_CAT, *Rhodesia: The Man in the Middle*, The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Rhodesia, Rhodesia, April 1975.
34. For similar observations elsewhere in colonial Africa, see Neil Macmaster, "Torture: From Algiers to Abu Ghraib," *Race and Class*, Vol. 46, No. 1, 2004, p. 6. Macmaster successfully demonstrates how

French torture on African political opponents in Algeria evolved corteminously with a skewed definition of "terrorism." Macmaster, however, strictly racializes this violence in a rigid white violence/Arab victims framework.

35. Almost 99 percent of all my informants say that they were tortured (or witnessed torture) at the time of their arrest by either Rhodesian police or soldiers.
36. See *The Chronicle*, February 20, 1964, "Hush Hush at Wha Wha as the Thugs are Moved In"; and *Rhodesia Herald*, February 20, 1964, "First Restricted Men Arrive at Wha Wha."
37. (My emphasis) *The Chronicle*, February 20, 1964, "Hush Hush at Wha Wha as the Thugs are Moved In."
38. *The Rhodesia Herald*, February 20, 1964, "First Restricted Men Arrive at Wha Wha."
39. The Rhodesian government carried through its calculated suppression of information concerning political detentions and imprisonment of African political activists until 1979, when the Rhodesian regime collapsed. The Rhodesian regime considered this kind of information "sensitive," and divulging it to the public meant compromising Rhodesia's security interests. For the historian, therefore, it is particularly difficult to reconstruct the Rhodesian regime's official policy regarding political detentions in a balanced manner. As a researcher, I was particularly frustrated in my search for official Rhodesian information concerning political detentions in the Zimbabwean archives and other repositories of documentary evidence.
40. See *Hansard: Rhodesian Parliamentary Debates*, August 22, 1964; August 29, 1975; July 4, 1975.
41. The Minister of Law & Ordr (Sen. Lardner-Burke response to Mr. Maposa, *Hansard: Rhodesian Parliamentary Debates*, July 4, 1975.
42. *Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs and the Chief Native Commissioner for the Year 1958*, Government Printing Office, Salisbury, 1959, pp. 5–6.
43. Interview with Enos Nkala, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.
44. Maurice Nyagumbo, *With the People: An Autobiography from the Zimbabwe Struggle*, Allison & Busby Limited, London, 1980, pp. 120–121.
45. Edgar Tekere, *Edgar Tekere: A Lifetime of Struggle*, SAPES, Harare, 2007, p. 56.
46. Joshua Nkomo, *Joshua Nkomo: The Story of My Life*, Methuen, London, 1984, p 66.
47. Ibid.
48. David Smith and Colin Simpson, with Ian Davies, *Mugabe Illustrated*, Sphere Books Ltd., London, 1981, p. 45.
49. Ibid.
50. Interview with Emmie Sifelani Ncube.

51. Interview with Rueben Bascoe.
52. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
53. Interview with Mathew Mangoma, Highfield Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, August 28, 2006.
54. Interview with Thomas Chirise, Pumula Township, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, November 30, 2006.
55. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
56. Earl Peter, "Where Détente means Detention," *Africa Report*, Vol. 21, No. 2, March/April 1976, p. 18.
57. Ibid.
58. Interview with Robert Munetsi, Mabvuku African Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, September 3, 2006.
59. Earl Peter, "Where Détente Means Detention," p. 19.
60. Interview with Lucas Jonasi, Chitungwiza Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, July 28, 2007.
61. Interview with Rueben Bascoe.
62. Interview with Mathew Masiyakurima.
63. NAZ, MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box: "Material on Christian Care and IDAF relating to Detainees, 1973–76."
64. Plumtree was one of the border outlets that was used by guerrilla recruits to sneak out of Rhodesia into Botswana.
65. NAZ, MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box.
66. Norma Kriger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992.
67. See Joyce Chadya, "The Untold Story: He Untold Story: War, Flight and the Internal Displacement of Rural Women to Harare during the Zimbabwean liberation struggle, 1974–1980," PhD Thesis, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, 2005. See particularly chapters 2 and 3.
68. Interview with Refina Siniwa.
69. Interview with Mai Kadengu.
70. NAZ, MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box.
71. This information is derived from a petition that was drawn up by Levit and Benchard Katumba's lawyers in, NAZ, MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box. "Benchard Katumba, Katumba Kraal, Sipolilo District: Extracts from Petition to the President of Zimbabwe–Rhodesia" (undated, circa 1979).
72. Ibid.
73. These "Special Martial Courts" were established under the 1978 Martial Law to deal with numerous incidences of supporting "terrorism" in the rural areas. The courts were ad hoc and were held in makeshift buildings where white Rhodesian 'judges' heard cases related to the war's Martial Law.
74. NAZ, MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box; See "Bibo Chitedza and Duster Katanha: Petition addressed to The Commander Combined Operations, 7 August, 1979."

75. Ibid., "Peter Chitsote's Petition for the Presidential Prerogative of Mercy against the Death Sentence," February 9, 1979.
76. NAZ, MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid.
79. *Rhodesia Legislative Assembly Debates*, "Parliament of Rhodesia—Oral Questions," August 11, 1976.
80. Adopted from L. C. Becker and C. B. Becker (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ethics*, Routledge, New York, 2001, pp. 1719–1720.
81. This was certainly the mentality of a Rhodesian military official who explained the violent treatment of peasant communities perceived to be supporters of the liberation struggle in the 1970s. He said: "If [rural] villages harbour terrorists and terrorists are found running about in villages, naturally they (villages) will be bombed and destroyed in any manner which the commander on the spot considers to be desirable in the suitable prosecution of a successful campaign. . . . Where the civilian population involves itself with terrorism, then somebody is bound to get hurt and *one can have little sympathy for those who are mixed up with terrorists when finally they receive the wrath of the security forces.*"
82. NAZ, MS 311/1, CCJP Reports: "Documents Concerning the Prosecution of Members of the Executive, 1977/78."
83. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
84. Jonasi's reference to me as "my son" was in keeping with Shona ways of relations between an elder and a young man. Traditionally, as a young man, any elderly Shona man or woman is my "mother" or "father" in an honorific way.
85. Interview with Lucas Jonasi.
86. Interview with Refina Siniwa.
87. NAZ, MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box; see "Bibo Chitedza and Duster Katanha: Petition addressed to The Commander Combined Operations, 7 August, 1979."
88. *Focus: IDAF Magazine*, "A Personal Account by a Defendant in a Special Court Martial," Vol. 24, No. September–October, 1979.
89. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
90. MS 587/2 Political Prisoners Box; "Lazarus & Sarif's Letter to Bernard, Sheridan & Co. of London."
91. Rhodesia High Court (RHC), "Notes on Cases: Confessions to Policemen," *The Rhodesian Law Journal*, Vol. 6–8, 1966, p. 6.
92. Interview with Lucas Jonasi.
93. Ibid.
94. NAZ, MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box; "Benchard Katumba, Katumba Kraal, Sipolilo District: Extracts from Petition to the President of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia" (undated, circa 1979).
95. NAZ, MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box; see "Bibo Chitedza and Duster Katanha: Petition addressed to The Commander Combined Operations, 7 August, 1979."

96. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
97. NAZ 591/2/7, IDAF, Political Prisoners in Rhodesia, October 1976 Fact Paper.
98. Ibid.
99. Ibid.
100. "U.D.I." was the name for the Ian Smith-led Rhodesia Front government that passed a "Unilateral Declaration of Independence" from Britain on November 11, 1965, thereby assuming white minority *self-governance*. The United Nations declared the U.D.I. government illegal and imposed sanctions on the Rhodesian government.
101. See, for example, H. H. Marshall, "The Legal Effects of U.D.I. (Based on *Madzimbamuto v. Lardner-Burke*)," *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 4, October 1968, pp. 1022–1034; A. J. G. Lang, "Madzimbamuto and Baron's Case at First Instance," *The Rhodesian Law Journal*, Vols 6–8, 1966, pp. 21–38. For a simpler version, see Alex Magaisa, "Revisiting Madzimbamuto vs. Lardner-Burke Case," *The New Zimbabwe*, May 3, 2007 Issue.
102. See H. H. Marshall, "The Legal Effects of U.D.I.," p. 1028.
103. See also Florence Bernault's introductory chapter, "The Politics of Enclosure in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa," in Florence Bernault (ed.), Translated by Janet Roitman, *A History of Prison and Confinement in Africa*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH, 2003, p. 26.
104. Ibid. In fact, I agree, to an extent, with Bernault's conclusion that "The enduring violence of colonial incarceration suggests that not every colonial encounter can be fully explained by the 'negotiation' paradigm," p. 15. The picture looks different, however, when one considers the prison experience itself, in which the relationship between inmates and prison warders very much bordered on both negotiation and confrontation.

4 Life in Detention: Oral Histories of Confinement in Rhodesian Detention Centers

1. "Detention" was also somewhat similar to what Rhodesian authorities called "restriction." I use both terms interchangeably. The other form of confinement was *imprisonment*, which is a subject of the next chapter. Some of the major detention centers that I refer to in this chapter are Gonakudzingwa, Sikombela, and Wha Wha.
2. After 1965, some African detainees were confined in prisons after the closure of some detention centers. Detainees in prison were technically *not* prisoners since they had not been sentenced to prison terms in a court of law, but that distinction was to all intents and purposes just technical.
3. See chapter 3, pp. 7–17.

4. I use the term "prisoner of conscience" in concurrence with its definition by Amnesty International as referring to "someone imprisoned solely for the peaceful expression of their beliefs." Amnesty International's founder, civil rights lawyer Peter Benenson, coined the term. See http://www.amnestyusa.org/Individuals-at-Risk/Special-Focus-Cases/page.do?id=1106638&n1=3&n2=34&n3=53.
5. In many instances, convicted prisoners also became detainees at the end of their prison term, after Rhodesian authorities had imposed detention orders on them. See chapter 3, pp. 13–14.
6. The Law and Order Maintenance Act's Sections 50 and 51 empowered the Rhodesian Minister of Law and Order to define areas of detention or restriction where individuals who "presented a threat to the maintenance of law and order in the country" were to be held. The length of such detention or restriction was determined according to the Minister's own discretion.
7. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, Methuen, London, 1984, p. 130.
8. National Archives of Zimbabwe (hereafter NAZ), MS 591/2/1, "Ian Smith's Hostages: Political Prisoners in Rhodesia," IDAF, London, "Extracts from Interview with Michael Mawema."
9. For example, see these reports, among others: NAZ, MS 591/2/1, International Defence Aid Fund (London), "Ian Smith's Hostages: Political Prisoners in Rhodesia"; NAZ, MS 308/15/1–7, Amnesty International Documents, "Campaigns for Detainees etc, 1967–1980"; NAZ, MS 591/2/7, "Ian Smith's Hostages, Geneva Press Conference, October 1976"; NAZ, MS 587/1, Christian Care, "Legal Aid and Solidarity Work for Political Prisoners."
10. For similar analysis of human rights based reports on political prisoners, see John Hammond, "Organization and Education among Salvadorian Political Prisoners," *Crime, Law & Social Change*, Vol. 25, 1996, pp. 33–35.
11. See Fran Buntman and Tong-yi Huang, "The Role of Political Imprisonment in Developing and Enhancing Political Leadership: A Comparative Study of South Africa and Taiwan," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 1, 2000, pp. 43–66.
12. Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya*, Holt Paperbacks, New York, 2005, p. 156.
13. See Derek R. Peterson, "The Intellectual Lives of Mau Mau Detainees," *Journal of African History*, 49, 2008, pp. 73–91.
14. *Rhodesia Parliamentary Debates*, Hansard, February 3, 1966.
15. *Rhodesia Parliamentary Debates*, Hansard, March 13, 1965.
16. See brief geographical sketches of these detention areas, see Amnesty International, *Prison Conditions in Rhodesia: Conditions for Political Prisoners and Restrictees*, August 1966, pp. 18–23.
17. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
18. Interview with Oliver Muvirimi Dizha.

19. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, p. 121.
20. The Rhodesians named their police post near Mozambique "Villa Salazar" in honor of the Portuguese colonial head in Mozambique Antonio Salazar, and the Portuguese reciprocated by calling their adjacent police post "Malvernia" in honor of the one-time Rhodesian Premier Lord Malvern.
21. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, pp. 121–122.
22. Ibid., p. 122.
23. Unnamed detainee quoted in Amnesty International, *Prison Conditions in Rhodesia*, p. 20.
24. Interview with George Kumire, Mbare Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, November 12, 2006.
25. Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakange Zvakaoma muZimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gwelo, 1984, p. 29.
26. Ibid., pp. 31–32.
27. Edgar Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, SAPES, Harare, 2007, p. 60.
28. Amnesty International, *Prison Conditions in Rhodesia*, p. 22.
29. Interview with Mathew Mukarati, Glen View 1 Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, December 18, 2006.
30. Extracts from Interview with Mawema, "Ian Smith's Hostages," MS 591/2/1.
31. Amnesty International, *Prison Conditions in Rhodesia*, p. 22.
32. Ibid., p. 23.
33. Ibid. "Kaffir" is a racially derogatory term that was used by mostly southern African white settlers to racially insult and humiliate black people.
34. Interview with Charles Murambiwa, Magwegwe Township, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, August 10, 2006.
35. Amnesty International, *Prison Conditions in Rhodesia*, pp. 23–24.
36. Ibid., p. 24.
37. Interview with Enos Nkala.
38. NAZ, MS 591/2/7, "Ian Smith's Hostages."
39. Extracts from Interview with Mawema, "Ian Smith's Hostages," MS 591/2/1.
40. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
41. *Rhodesia Parliamentary Debates*, Hansard, September 28, 1977 (see also *The Rhodesia Herald*, September 29, 1977).
42. Amnesty International, *Prison Conditions in Rhodesia*, p. 4.
43. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My life*, p. 124.
44. Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakange Zvakaoma muZimbabwe*, p. 26.
45. MS 308/15/1–7, Amnesty International Documents.
46. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
47. Interview with Oliver Muvirimi Dizha.
48. Joseph Msika, Joshua Nkomo, and Josiah Chinamano were some of the leading ZAPU nationalists at Gonakudzingwa.
49. Interview with Oliver Muvirimi Dizha.

50. Interview with Mathew Masiyakurima.
51. Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakange Zvakaoma muZimbabwe*, p. 24.
52. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, p. 124.
53. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
54. Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, p. 61.
55. Interview with Enos Nkala.
56. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
57. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, p. 124.
58. Interview with Mathew Masiyakurima.
59. Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, p. 61.
60. Interview with Mabasa Chirwa, Old Mabvuku Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, September 16, 2006.
61. Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakange Zvakaoma MuZimbabwe*, p. 33.
62. Ibid., pp. 33–34.
63. Rhodesia adopted the British education system where "Form Two" was the most junior secondary level. Graduates at this level were awarded a "Junior Certificate" (or RJC—"Rhodesia Junior Certificate"). The "O" Level (or Ordinary Level) was the General Certificate of Education (GCE) diploma awarded to graduates of middle secondary level school. The most advanced high school level of education was called the "A" Level (or Advanced Level), and this was the last level of pre-college high school learning.
64. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
65. MS 308/15/1–7, Amnesty International Documents.
66. Interview with Oliver Muvirimi Dizha.
67. Interview with Mathew Masiyakurima.
68. Tekere also corroborates this point in his *A Lifetime of Struggle*, p. 61.
69. Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakange Zvakaoma muZimbabwe*, p. 33.
70. Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, p. 61.
71. Interview with Thomas Murape, Dzivarasekwa Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, November 12, 2006.
72. On Rhodesian education policies, see Carol Summers, *Colonial Lessons: Africans' Education in Southern Rhodesia, 1918–1940*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992.
73. Cephas Msipa, quoted in *Free Labour World*, "Cephas Msipa: The One That Got Away," November 1966.
74. Interview with Barney Chakaodza, New Mabvuku Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, January 22, 2007.
75. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
76. Interview with Enos Nkala. For corroborative evidence, see also Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, p. 62.
77. Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, p. 62.
78. Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakange Zvakaoma MuZimbabwe*, p. 33.
79. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
80. Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakanga Zvakaoma MuZimbabwe*.

81. Ibid., p. 35.
82. Interview with Oliver Muvirimi Dizha.
83. Interview with Tafirenyika Mushamba.
84. Interview with Enos Nkala.
85. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, p. 130, p. 138.
86. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
87. Interview with Mathew Masiyakurima.
88. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, p. 130.
89. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
90. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, p. 138.
91. Ibid., p. 125.
92. Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakanga Zvakaoma muZimbabwe*, p. 36.
93. Interview with Leonard Nyemba, Glen View Township, Harare, February 17, 2007.
94. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, p. 131, p. 142.
95. Ibid., p.144.
96. Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, pp. 62–63.

5 Life Behind Bars: Oral Histories of Life inside Rhodesian Prisons, 1965–1980

1. Although I refer to these imprisoned African political offenders as "political prisoners" since they were essentially prisoners of conscience, Rhodesian authorities routinely dismissed suggestions that their captives were "political prisoners," or "prisoners of war" in the case of captured combatants. Rhodesian authorities, in their deliberations in the Rhodesian parliament and in public statements, underlined the fact that African political activists were criminals and not genuine political activists and that their political activities were criminal.
2. This is the tentative conclusion of most historians of imprisonment and confinement in Africa. See Florence Bernault (ed.), *A History of Prison and Confinement in Africa*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH, 2003.
3. NAZ MS 591/2/7, "Ian Smith's Hostages, Geneva Press Conference, October 1976," Campaign for the Relief of Rhodesian Political Prisoners/CRPP, Report, c. 1970s.
4. See NAZ, Quenet Report into "The Treatment of Prisoners in Rhodesian Prisons," undated.
5. The Rhodesian Director of Prisons quoted in NAZ (ibid.).
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Interview with Jacob Mushunje, Seke Township, Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe, January 20, 2006.
9. NAZ MS 591/2/7, "Ian Smith's Hostages."
10. *Sadza* is a high calorie thickened corn-meal porridge, mostly eaten by Africans in Zimbabwe.

11. "Letter to Makoni Signed by Three Prisoners (Gwelo) Known to Didymus Mutasa," January 29, 1974, in NAZ, file MS 591/2/1, "Ian Smith's Hostages: Political Prisoners in Rhodesia," IDAF, London.
12. Arnold M. B. Chironda, "Gwelo Detention Centre," Letter to IDAF, June 23, 1975, in NAZ, File MS 591/2/1, "Ian Smith's Hostages."
13. See Amnesty International, *Prison Conditions in Rhodesia: Conditions for Political Prisoners and Restrictees*, Amnesty International, London, 1966, p. 7.
14. Rhodesia Parliamentary Debates, *Hansard*, March 25, 1964.
15. Ibid.
16. NAZ MS 591/2/7, Cecil Dube "Transcript of Tape," 1976.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. This is my reconstruction of Richard Mapolisa's imprisonment from various sources that provide information about his experiences in Rhodesia's prisons. Sources include: International Defence Aid, Southern Rhodesia "Thirteen Years in Khami Maximum," in NAZ, file MS 591/2/7, "Ian Smith's Hostages"; Defence and Aid Fund, Southern Rhodesia, "Where is a Human Life worth £17.10s.0d? The Hanging Bill and Richard Mapolisa," Job No. 785, May 25, 1964, in NAZ, file MS 587/1, "Political Prisoners Box: Legal Aid and Solidarity Work for Political Prisoners: The Case of Patrick Matimba and Richard Mapolisa."
20. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
21. As a "Maximum Security Prison," Khami held what the Rhodesian regime considered to be "dangerous criminals" who were almost exclusively captured guerrillas or people arrested for being in possession of "terrorist weapons" such as guns, bombs, explosives, and so on. Most of my informants who were held at Khami Prison tell harrowing stories about their experiences there.
22. See NAZ MS 591/2/7, International Defence Aid, Southern Rhodesia "Thirteen Years in Khami Maximum."
23. NAZ MS 589/7/4, Testimony by Nana Nkomo (Refugee in Zambia), Mulungushi Hall, Lusaka, Zambia, July 27, 1978.
24. NAZ MS 591/2/1, Anonymous Authors, "Detention in Gwelo Prison, November 1975," in file entitled "Ian Smith's Hostages."
25. Ibid.
26. Interview with Lucas Jonasi.
27. Ibid.
28. See Human Rights Watch, "Supermax Prisons: An Overview," http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/supermax/Sprmx002.htm.
29. Ibid.
30. NAZ MS 591/2/1, Anonymous Author, "Incident at Khami," in file entitled "Ian Smith's Hostages."
31. Ibid.

32. NAZ MS 591/2/1, "Thirteen Years in Rhodesian Prisons—An Account by a Former Political Prisoner, Written in 1979," in file entitled "Ian Smith's Hostages."
33. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
34. NAZ MS 591/2/7, Cecil Dube, "Transcript of Tape," in file entitled "Ian Smith's Hostages."
35. NAZ MS 591/2/1, Arnold M. B. Chironda, "Gwelo Detention," December 12, 1975, "Ian Smith's Hostages."
36. Mazoe Citrus Estates were the largest orange-producing estates in Rhodesia.
37. NAZ MS 591/2/1, Anonymous Authors, "Detention in Gwelo Prison, November 1975," in file entitled "Ian Smith's Hostages."
38. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
39. NAZ MS 591/2/1, "Thirteen Years in Rhodesian Prisons—An Account by a Former Political Prisoner, Written in 1979," in file entitled "Ian Smith's Hostages."
40. NAZ MS 591/2/1, Anonymous Authors, "Letter to Makoni."
41. NAZ MS 591/2/1, Shadreck Rambanepasi, "Gwelo Prison," January 20, 1974.
42. NAZ MS 591/4, Anonymous Author, "Murder in a Rhodesian Detention Jail," November 13, 1975, in file entitled "Political Prisoners: 1975–80," Transcripts of Interviews, and so on.
43. Interview with Eddison Zvobgo, Interviewed by the *Moto Magazine*, June 21, 1980.
44. NAZ MS 591/2/1, Shadreck Rambanepasi, "Gwelo Prison," January 20, 1974.
45. Rhodesia Parliamentary Debates, *Hansard*, June 24, 1976.
46. Rhodesia Parliamentary Debates, *Hansard*, July 6, 1976.
47. Interview with Mai Kadengu.
48. Ibid.
49. Interview with Stella Mushonga, Chitungwiza Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, February 21, 2006.
50. Interview with Mai Kadengu.
51. Ibid.
52. Interview with Emmie Sifelani Ncube.
53. Interview with Susan Museti.
54. Interview with Lucas Jonasi.
55. For a nuanced commentary on the genesis of homophobia in Zimbabwe and particularly during the liberation struggle, see Marc Epprecht, "Black Skin, 'Cowboy' Masculinity: A Genealogy of Homophobia in the African Nationalist Movement in Zimbabwe to 1983," *Culture, Health and Sexuality*, Vol. 7, No. 3, May 2005, pp. 253–266.
56. Interview with Panganai Gilbert Mangwengwende, Mbare Township, Harare, Zimbabwe, July 8, 2007.
57. Interview with Mathew Masiyakurima.

58. See Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Grove Press, New York, 1963. In the chapter entitled "Concerning Violence," Fanon makes his famous argument concerning the justifiable (counter-) violence of the racially humiliated and down-trodden colonial subject. In the incidences of prison violence discussed in this chapter, I argue that prisoners' violent response to abusive prison authorities mirrors the kind of violence described by Fanon.
59. NAZ S 3330, Officer-in-Charge, Monthly Report: Detainees: Selukwe Prison, April 4, 1960.
60. NAZ S 3330, Officer-in-Charge, Monthly Report: Detainees: Selukwe Prison, November 3, 1960.
61. Maurice Nyagumbo, *With the People: An Autobiography from the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle*, Allison & Busby, London, 1980.
62. See also Jocelyn Alexander, "'Political Prisoners' Memoirs in Zimbabwe: Passages in the Meta-Narrative of Nationalism," Unpublished Paper, 2007, pp. 6–7. Cited with permission.
63. NAZ S 3330 T/1/1/8A/1/4-T1/1/8A/1/6, Officer in Charge, H. M. Prison "H.M. Prison" seems to be an administrative title, not initials for a name. It appears like that in the archived document, Marandellas, September 23, 1959, Reports on Detainees.
64. Alexander, "'Political Prisoners' Memoirs in Zimbabwe," pp. 6–7.
65. Ibid.
66. Nyagumbo, *With the People*, p. 140.
67. Ibid., p. 211.
68. I interjected to inquire further on why Nkala beat up a prison officer. "MBM" for Munyaradzi Bryn Munochiveyi.
69. Interview with Enos M. Nkala.
70. NAZ MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box: "Material on Christian Care and IDAF relating to Detainees, 1973–76," Nkala's Letter to Jean Pine, Report of IDAF and AI in London, April 16, 1974.
71. Interview with Oliver Muvirimi Dizha.
72. Ibid.
73. NAZ MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box; Nkala, Letter to B. A. Ruff, Superintendent of Salisbury Remand Prison, January 21, 1974.
74. Ibid.
75. Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, Methuen, London, 1984, p. 123.
76. Ibid.
77. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
78. NAZ T/1/1/8A/1/4-T1/1/8A/1/6, Superintendent Monthly Report, Khami Prison, March 1966.
79. The works of these prison-authors are celebrated as the quintessential examples of "prison writing." See these works: Nelson Mandela (*Long Walk to Freedom*); Ruth First; Govan Mbeki (*Learning from Robben Island: The Prison Writings of Govan Mbeki*); Josiah Mwangi

Kariuki (*Mau Mau in Detention*); and Ken Saro Wiwa (*A Month and a Day: A Detention Diary*).

80. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
81. NAZ MS 591/2/1, "Letter to Makoni," in file entitled "Ian Smith's Hostages."
82. NAZ MS 587/2, Political Prisoners Box, Nkala's Letter to Pine.
83. NAZ MS 587/2, "Letter to Mr. D.W. Lardner-Burke, Minister of Justice and Law and Order," August 1, 1972.
84. MS 591/2/4, Nkala, Letter to Ian Douglas Smith, entitled 'About Education of My Son', August 7, 1974.
85. Interview with Rueben Bascoe.
86. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
87. Interview with Lucas Jonasi.
88. Interview with Roderick Muhammad.
89. Interview with Rueben Bascoe.
90. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
91. Interview with Enos M. Nkala.
92. Interview with Francis Chikukwa.
93. Interview with Emmie Sifelani Ncube.

6 Epilogue: Life Beyond Bars and Legacies of Incarceration in Colonial and Post-Colonial Zimbabwe, 1965–2000

1. The ZANU (PF) political party formed the first African-led majority government in April 1980, after it won the first post-Rhodesia democratic elections, with Robert Mugabe as its leader. ZANU has been in power ever since. ZANU (PF) is an acronym for Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front).
2. For similar analysis see Norma Kriger's recent piece on post-colonial debates about the legacy of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle history, particularly on aspects of "heroism" and arguments over who deserves to be called a "hero"; Norma Kriger, "From Patriotic Memories to 'Patriotic History' in Zimbabwe, 1990–2005," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 6, 2006, pp. 1151–1169. See also Terence Ranger, "Nationalist Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation: The Struggle over the Past in Zimbabwe," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2004, pp. 215–234.
3. UDI is an acronym for "Unilateral Declaration of Independence," which signified the political act of the Ian Smith-led Rhodesian government to sever ties with the British colonial office in November 1965 and the declaration of independent white minority rule in Rhodesia. The Smith-led government after 1965 is thus known as the "U.D.I" government/regime.
4. This trend is not new, but an overspill of the 1970s liberation war rhetoric that separated armed guerrillas from the so-called masses

(or "povo" in ZANU parlance). In the post-colonial era, ex-political prisoners risked being relegated to the ranks of the "povo."

5. See Terence Ranger, "Nationalist Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation: The Struggle Over the Past in Zimbabwe," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2004, pp. 215–234.
6. Since 1980, the ZANU government has oversaw and monopolized the production and dissemination of liberation struggle histories in the public domain through, among other things, monopolizing the development of curricula in schools, access to all forms of public media, and access to important historical sites of the liberation struggle. Recently, for example, as a counter-offensive against growing opposition to its repressive governance, which ZANU believes is partly caused by younger generations' "ignorance" of the liberation struggle history, the state introduced a National Youth Service program, and a National Strategic Studies program for out-of-school and tertiary education-level youths, respectively, programs that are meant to inculcate ZANU's historical perspective of the liberation struggle past. Also recently, public television programs concentrating on the liberation struggle past such as "Nhaka Yedu/Our Heritage" repeatedly stress the significant roles played by ZANU political elites in dislodging Rhodesian colonial rule. During national commemoration holidays such as April 18's "Independence Day", or August 11's "Heroes Day," ZANU leaders constantly mythologize and trumpet their roles in the liberation struggle through the public media and at public gatherings.
7. Michele Rolph-Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Beacon Press, Boston, MA, 1995, p. 5.
8. See, for example, state-authorized texts such as David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, Faber & Faber, London, 1981; and David Smith and Colin Simpson, *Mugabe Illustrated*, Pioneer Head, Salisbury, 1981. State-sponsored historians have also written biographies of ZANU personages, which are clearly intended to trumpet these figures' significance to Zimbabwe's liberation struggle history. See, for example, Ngwabi Bhebhe, *Simon Vengayi Muzenda and the Struggle for and Liberation of Zimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 2006.
9. According to ZANU (PF)'s post-colonial political discourse, only those with so-called liberation struggle credentials, meaning those who were ex-guerrillas, can occupy the highest of political offices in Zimbabwe. Anyone else without these "credentials" is an outsider and "ignorant" of the country's history, and therefore cannot be entrusted with political power. The same argument is invoked when it comes to access to scarce resources such as land and other forms of wealth. Ex-political prisoners who are bereft of these "credentials," have been marginalized by the ZANU political elites when it comes to access to power and resources.

10. These debates dominated Zimbabwe's parliamentary sessions through the 1990s as ZANU (PF) parliamentary backbenchers wrangled over the sort of recognition was due to liberation struggle "heroes." During these debates, the term "hero" came to mean those who had contributed to the liberation struggle more than others. For this part of the chapter, I draw from the *House of Assembly* (HAD) debates. I also defer to an exhaustive analysis of these debates by Kriger, *Third World Quarterly.*
11. NAZ MS 591/2/1, Grace Chimutsa, "Letter from Grace Chimutsa Who Parents are Detained at Wha Wha and Chikurubi," May 18, 1976, in file titled "Ian Smith's Hostages: Political Prisoners in Rhodesia," IDAF, London.
12. Ibid., "Chenai Mbidzo, Gwelo, 2 January, 1975."
13. Ibid., "Biggy Mathanei Mbidzo, Gwelo, 3 November, 1975."
14. Rhodesia Parliamentary Debates, *Hansard*, September 14, 1973.
15. NAZ MS 591/2/1, "Ian Smith's Hostages."
16. NAZ MS 308/15/5 (1978 Files), "Letter from Mrs. R. Joel Nyathi, 30 January 1978."
17. Ibid., "Letter from Mrs. Laffe Mabhena, Khami, 27th January, 1974."
18. NAZ MS 591/4, "Wife of Tapera Zvahwedza, Gatooma Prison, 8 November, 1977," in file titled "Political Prisoners: 1975–80" (Transcripts of Interviews, etc.).
19. NAZ MS 587/4, "Herbert Murimira, Gwelo, 19 January, 1975."
20. Ibid., "Letter from Francis Mudiwa Gunda, Wha Wha, 15 June 1978."
21. Ibid., "John Tarasana Musonzi, Gwelo Prison: Detention Section II, February 1976."
22. Phone interview with Ronald Mlilo, London, United Kingdom, June 2, 2008.
23. NAZ MS 591/2/1, "Shadreck Murapa, Wha Wha Prison, Detention No. 1294, 7 April 1976," in file titled "Ian Smith's Hostages: Political Prisoners in Rhodesia, IDAF, London.
24. Interview with Henry Masunda, Mandadzaka Village, Bikita, Zimbabwe, July 1, 2007.
25. *The Rhodesia Herald*, "Laughter, Song as Detainees go Free," April 14, 1978.
26. Ibid.
27. *The Rhodesia Herald*, April 21, 1978.
28. See documents in NAZ MS 587/6, "Rhodesia, February 1980." The file contains correspondence between IDAF/Christian Care/lawyers, and the Governor Lord Soames and other State Authorities.
29. *Zimbabwe Times*, Tuesday, May 9, 1978, "Life on the Outside—Higher Prices Shock Ex-Detainees."
30. *Rand Daily Mail*, June 7, 1978, "The Hardship of Freedom."
31. Interview with Henry Masunda.

32. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
33. Mordikai Hamutyinei, *Zvakanga Zvakaoma MuZimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1984, p. 51.
34. Ibid., pp. 51–52.
35. *Rand Daily Mail*, June 7, 1978, "The Hardship of Freedom."
36. Ibid.
37. See cases files and the work of two such organizations, IDAF and Christian Care, in NAZ MS 587/2 Political Prisoners Box: "Material on Christian Care and IDAF relating to Detainees, 1973–76"; and NAZ MS 587/3 Christian Care Report, December Quarter, 1977.
38. NAZ file MS587/5, "Kumbirai Kangai, Ministry of Labour and Social Services, Letter to IDAF," (Month?), 1980.
39. Interview with Enos Nkala.
40. Norma Kriger's recent writings about post-colonial appropriation and rewriting of liberation struggle history by certain groups in Zimbabwe also utilize these parliamentary debates. I draw heavily on her work and my own collection of oral histories to illustrate the marginalization of ex-political prisoners in the post-colonial dispensation. For the most relevant of Kriger's work, see Kriger, *Third World Quarterly*, pp. 1151–1169.
41. Kriger, *Third World Quarterly*, p. 1155.
42. Ruth Chinamano quoted in Kriger, *Third World Quarterly*, p. 1156.
43. Ibid., p. 1157.
44. Ibid., p. 1160.
45. Ibid.
46. Interview with Victor Kuretu.
47. Interview with Emmie Sifelani Ncube.
48. Interview with Susan Museti.

7 Conclusion: Political Imprisonment and Memorializing Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle

1. During electoral seasons, failure to attend ZANU (PF) rallies in Zimbabwe's rural constituencies is not an option for rural peasants, otherwise one risks being labeled an opposition party supporter and therefore an "enemy" or "sell-out" (*mutengesi*). Being labeled an "enemy" or "sellout" in rural Zimbabwe is tantamount to being marked for death. In the run up to, and during many elections in Zimbabwe, scores of rural inhabitants have lost life and limb for failure to tow the ZANU party line or for supporting the only strong opposition party in the country, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Many peasants in rural Zimbabwe now understand that they either have to vote for ZANU (PF) or risk death, violence, torture, and starvation. See objective catalogues of ZANU rural violence by the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights on http://www.zlhr.org.zw/media/torture.htm.

2. *The Herald*, December 30, 2006.
3. Ibid.
4. One architect of this document, Enos Nkala, insists to this day that, "The guerrilla war was planned in Sikombela, and the Sikombela Declaration authorized that war." Edgar Tekere, another ZANU leader who was also detained in Sikombela at the time when this document was drafted, echoes his sentiments. See Edgar Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, SAPES, Harare, 2007, p. 62.

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Index