

file Zimbabwe
GovtConfidential

Foreign Report

Published by The Economist Newspaper Limited
25 St. James's Street, London SW1A 1HG
1647 September 17th 1980

Contents

The real threat to Mugabe

Can Callaghan beat the left?

The campaign for sanctions on South Africa

Drugs: (1) the golden triangle

Drugs: (2) the golden crescent

Ethiopia: reculer pour mieux sauter?

The real threat to Mugabe

It has been widely assumed that the biggest threat to the new government in Zimbabwe would be a split between **Joseph Nkomo's** PF party and **Robert Mugabe's** Zanu (PF). Relations between the two have deteriorated sharply since Mugabe's triumph in the election – and there have been a number of shootings between their supporters. But it now seems that a more immediate threat is posed by a split inside Mugabe's own party, which dominates the coalition.

Within Zanu (PF), Mugabe is increasingly seen as a moderate who is pandering both to the west and to the white community inside Zimbabwe. And he is being accused of backtracking on his Marxist principles. The man who has emerged as the leader of the left faction in the party is **Edgar Tekere**, the secretary-general of Zanu (PF) and a member of the cabinet. Tekere's strength is based on the loyalty he commands among the Zanu guerrillas at the assembly points. His radicalism has become increasingly attractive to the guerrillas, who have been growing bored and disillusioned with the Mugabe government. Mugabe himself has been trying to keep in with the army: he has paid numerous visits to the bases of the former Rhodesian security forces, but it was only this weekend that he set foot in a Zanu assembly point – at Mtoko – for the first time.

Tekere also happens to be the only member of the Manica tribe (who inhabit the eastern border region around Umtali) to have made it to the top ranks of Zanu (PF). The rest were purged in Zambia in March, 1975, along with **Herbert Chitepo** after internecine fighting. The party has therefore been worried about losing Manica support. In an effort to placate the tribe, Mugabe has recently chosen two Manicas as ambassadors.

fication of the fighting between South Africa and Angola across the Namibian border. They are also worried by the increasing co-operation between the guerrillas of Swapo and those of the African National Congress, South Africa's main black nationalist party. The presence at the Paris meeting of **Oliver Tambo**, ANC's leader, and the fact he was given equal prominence with Nujoma, reinforces these suspicions.

It was no coincidence that the conference took place in Paris. France's foreign minister, **Jean François-Poncet**, said during his visit to Tanzania in July that the Namibian problem was "foremost among the matters preoccupying France in Africa". Last week Nujoma went to see him and said afterwards that François-Poncet had "a new approach to the Namibian question, no doubt because of his worry about the increasingly serious incidents between South Africa and Angola". This week Nujoma is seeing the West German foreign minister, **Hans-Dietrich Genscher**.

The United States too has become more openly hostile to South Africa's prevarication. Last week the American ambassador to the United Nations said that since the front-line states had persuaded Swapo to accept the settlement plan, it was now up to the west to get South Africa's agreement. He also criticised South Africa for accusing Waldheim of partiality towards Swapo. Even countries not directly involved in the Namibian diplomacy are becoming outspoken: a few days ago a senior Australian official told a parliamentary committee in Canberra that South Africa was maintaining the pretence of going along with the UN plan while working for a government in Namibia like the one **Ian Smith** ran in Rhodesia. The Dutch parliament will vote again next month on a unilateral embargo on oil exports to South Africa – earlier in the summer a clear majority of Dutch MPs voted in favour of an embargo.

Drugs: (1) the golden triangle

Burma's foreign minister, **U Lay Maung**, flew to Bangkok a fortnight ago for talks with Thai ministers. The visit was meant to be a goodwill mission. But one important reason for the trip was to discuss ways of halting the flow of narcotics from south-east Asia. The planting season is now underway in 75,000 square miles of heavily-forested, mountainous terrain in northern Thailand, Burma and Laos: an area which is known as the golden triangle. It is rich country for narcotics traffickers: opium poppies flourish in the high altitude and rich soil. The poppies yield a milky white sap, opium, which is converted through a relatively simple, chemical process to a deadly end product – heroin.

U Lay Maung did not come directly from Rangoon, but from Vientiane, the capital of Laos, where he talked with Laotian leaders. But if he was hoping for co-operation from Laos in fighting drug trafficking, he seems to have left empty handed. Although the communist Pathet Lao loudly proclaimed its horror at illicit narcotics prior to their 1975 takeover in Laos, drug enforcement officials in Bangkok reckon that the Lao communist government is now encouraging the drug trade. It is one way of gaining valuable export earnings for a desperately poor socialist state.

Controlling narcotics from the golden triangle has been largely left to Burma and Thailand. The central task for the Burmese government has been to halt the production of heroin, since the majority of the region's poppy fields are on its territory. Narcotics experts believe that about two-thirds of the golden triangle's opium production – estimated at 300 tons in 1979-80 – came from Burma.

He could also secure a bonus: a change in the balance of the party's national executive. At present it has a 16-12 left-wing majority, with one floater. This year, the floater, **Lady Jeger**, who is currently chairman of the party, will not stand again. A fierce tussle is going on for her place, but the right believe it could win. The right also has hopes of removing a couple of other left-wingers from the five-member women's section, but most insiders think that it will not succeed – at least this year. So the likely outcome of the conference is an honourable, if bloody, draw between the left and the right. That is likely to persuade Callaghan that, at the age of 68, he has finished his stint as the party's healer and can retire with a clear conscience to his Sussex farm. If the present system of choosing the leader survives, it is a near certainty that he will be succeeded by the 63-year-old former chancellor of the exchequer, **Denis Healey**. If, unexpectedly, the left succeeds in changing the system, the next leader would probably not be Benn, but a figure less closely identified with either left or right. The former environment secretary, **Peter Shore**, is in the running.

The campaign for sanctions on South Africa

The pressure to impose United Nations sanctions on South Africa, because of its policy on Namibia, is increasing. This emerged from the conference on Namibia last week held in the Unesco headquarters in Paris, under the presidency of Senegal's foreign minister, **Mustafa Niasse**. No-one from the governments of the western "contact group" (Britain, France, Canada, West Germany and the United States) turned up, but the Nordic countries did along with many African and third-world countries. The conference reviewed recent developments affecting Namibia, as well as expert reports on the possible repercussions of sanctions against South Africa.

At the end of the conference, **Mohammed Sahnun**, Algeria's ambassador to France and one of the chief organisers of the meeting, said that the efforts of the western contact group "are taking us nowhere and should now be stopped". He said that a delegation from the conference would go to the secretary-general of the UN, **Kurt Waldheim** to present a declaration demanding a meeting of the UN security council not later than October 15th, 1980, to impose comprehensive mandatory sanctions, including an oil embargo, against South Africa. The objective would be to enforce its compliance with the security council's resolutions 385 and 435 on Namibia. A parallel demand for sanctions will also be sought at the security council meeting on September 25th, called to discuss South Africa's apartheid policies.

The Paris conference also decided to ask Opec states to tighten their ban on shipments to South Africa by controlling the movement of tankers. The question is to be discussed by the Arab Opec members in Kuwait on December 10th, and by a joint Afro-Arab meeting in Mali the same month. The conference declaration also stresses "that Walvis Bay and all the islands off Namibia are integral and uncontested parts of the territory". By contrast, the western proposals do not contest South Africa's annexation of Walvis Bay. Nor so far, have UN proposals.

Sam Nujoma, the president of the nationalist guerrilla movement, Swapo, still says he is ready to implement the present UN plan and to talk to the South Africans – though not with the "internal" parties in the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance – about its implementation. But he supports sanctions against South Africa as a complementary measure, whether or not negotiations continue. To some extent, the black African impatience is shared by some western governments who fear an intensi-

Tekere had been planning to launch a new left-wing breakaway party on August 12th, "heroes' holiday". The party was to have been called "Super-Zanu". These plans were postponed after Tekere was implicated in the Adams murder on August 14th. Tekere and his eight bodyguards are shortly due to go on trial, accused of killing the white farm owner. The deputy prime minister has already promised that justice will be allowed to pursue its normal course despite Tekere's position.

If Tekere is found guilty, it will be a major blow to the left faction in the party (although it is not inconceivable that the guerrillas will refuse to accept that the trial was fair). But the faction also has the support of other leading cabinet ministers including **Herbert Ushowekundze**, the health minister, **Enos Nkala**, the finance minister, and **Ernest Kadungure**, the transport minister. So it is probably strong enough to survive even if Tekere is jailed.

In early August, a document was circulated in Salisbury suburbs addressed "to all special members of Zanu (PF)". If genuine, it seems to have been circulated to whip up support before the launching of "Super-Zanu". It is also said to have been put out by Nkomo supporters to discredit Zanu (PF). In any event, the local police were instructed to seize all copies that they could find and a small paragraph in the Salisbury Herald reported that a fraudulent document had been distributed by mischief makers. FOREIGN REPORT has obtained a copy of this document. The following extracts – complete with grammatical errors – indicate its flavour:

We, the Zanu PF underground committee wish to make it known that we have been following the activities of the preasant government which, had it not been for the firm stand taken by comrade Tekere we would have sold the liberation struggle down the river. On the latest feedback meeting by Tekere to our committee he said "Puppet Mugabe" had become the most dangerous man in this part of Africa, and is not prepared to spell out the policies of Zanu PF, as dictated to him by the central committee . . . Comrade Tekere wanted to get rid of the white civil servants. Puppet Mugabe publicly rebuked Tekere for his statement to the press about a questioner sent to the white civil servants, calling them to disclose their political loyalties . . . Comrade Tekere challenged puppet Mugabe while white soldiers who are our great enemies are languishing in assembly points. Puppet Mugabe lamley answered and said guerrillas are not qualified . . . shame puppet Mugabe . . . The man of the hour is Tekere and his supporters within the central committee.

Mugabe had publicly attacked inflammatory left-wing statements by Tekere and Nkala before the Adams murder. He urged Zimbabwe citizens not to pay any attention to such "hot air". Tekere replied by claiming that his views were more in line with party policy than Mugabe's and that if his views were "hot air" that meant Mugabe considered party policy was "hot air".

Within the cabinet, Mugabe can count on the staunch support of **Eddison Zvogbo**, the housing minister, **Maurice Nyagumbo**, the mines minister, **Tarisan Ziyambi**, the deputy home affairs minister and **Nathan Shamuyariva**, the information minister. And in any split, Mugabe could probably count on the backing of the civil service and white units in the army. But it is unclear how Nkomo's PF party would react.

Can Callaghan beat the left?

The long-running battle between the left and the right in Britain's Labour party comes to a climax in a fortnight's time. The party's conference, which opens in Blackpool on September 29th, will be a major test of the ability of the former prime minister, **James**