

The history of the use of bacteriological and chemical agents during Zimbabwe's liberation war of 1965–80 by Rhodesian forces

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ABSTRACT *In 1979 the largest recorded outbreak of anthrax occurred in Rhodesia, present day Zimbabwe. The incident, widely known in Africa and in intelligence circles is not widely known in the USA or Europe. At the time Rhodesia was fighting a guerilla war against black nationalist insurgents. Rhodesia first accused the nationalist side of using anthrax as a weapon. In allegations that surfaced in 1998—and which persist to this day—external researchers and the current government of Zimbabwe insist that the outbreak in 1978–80 was anything but benign. They argue that the original outbreak was the result of a calculated move by the Rhodesian government with the duplicitous acknowledgment of apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, the government alleges that a current outbreak is the work of disgruntled white farmers in the country. The allegations over the 1979–80 outbreak are given credence by the acknowledgement by Ken Flower, Chief of Rhodesia's Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), and by CIO Officer Henrik Ellert that the white minority regime of Ian Smith used biological and chemical weapons against the guerillas, against rural blacks to prevent their support of the guerillas and against cattle to reduce rural food stocks. The current government and researchers have drawn inferences from his statements to show that the unusual outbreak in 1978–80 was a deliberate use of weaponized anthrax. These inferences rely on important facts which will be highlighted in this paper, namely that: 1) by 1978 the 'writing was on the wall' for the white regime and recourse to a weapon of last resort was not unfathomable; 2) because of its international status, Rhodesia had become an expert in sanctions busting; 3) the alliance between South Africa and Rhodesia makes the allegations more credible; and 4) the current government of Zimbabwe has purposefully failed to launch a formal investigation because it is convenient to its continued survival to vilify the former regime and current white farmers in order to deflect attention away from the 21-year-old dictatorship of Robert Mugabe and the economic woes that have followed from the regime's mismanagement.*

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In December 1962 the Rhodesian Front (RF), led by Ian Smith, won Rhodesia's general elections.¹ Rhodesia, which along with Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia had made up the Central African Federation, wanted either independence—as the other countries were given—or dominion status within the Commonwealth. In April 1964 amid rising internal pressure to find a solution, the Prime Minister resigned and Ian Smith became Rhodesia's first native-born Prime Minister.² Britain's Labour Government was unwilling to turn back the 'winds of change' and grant independence to another white minority regime. Negotiations dragged on and on 11 November 1965 Ian Smith went on the radio and unilaterally declared independence (UDI).³ 'Britain recoiled in anger at this first rebellion by a British territory since the American Revolution.'⁴ Wilson applied sanctions and backed them by deploying two carrier task forces to cut off Rhodesia's supply of oil. Later, to secure international co-operation,⁵ Wilson engineered mandatory sanctions from the United Nations under Chapter VII of the Charter. Selective sanctions were imposed against the regime in 1966 and these were made total in 1968. Sanctions busting became a national priority and was refined to an art.⁶ Sanctions were also weakened by the co-operation of Rhodesia's neighbours, Portuguese-ruled Mozambique and South Africa.⁷

The Second Chimurenga

Rhodesian Intelligence broke down the Rhodesian conflict into three phases.⁸ Phase one lasted from UDI until 1968. Phase two saw a complete cessation of insurgent movements. Phase three, from 1972 until 1980, saw the collapse of Portuguese rule in neighbouring Mozambique, and the intensification of insurgent movements within Rhodesia. This phase allegedly saw the use of bacteriological and chemical weapons.⁹ Because insurgency essentially challenges the law, the police took the lead with the military in support. Thus, the counter-insurgency campaign began on a low key, led by the British South African Police (BSAP).¹⁰

Phase one

Phase one was characterised by small-scale incursions into Rhodesia, mainly from newly independent Zambia. These incursions were a 'complete failure'.¹¹ On 28 April 1966, the first 'battle' occurred when seven rebel soldiers infiltrated Rhodesia in an attempt to occupy the town of Sinoia.¹² In quick order the BSAP dispatched the infiltrators. Nonetheless, the 28 April battle is the date on which blacks commemorate the second uprising against the white colonisers, which they call the beginning of the Second Chimurenga.¹³ From April 1966 onwards, groups of guerrillas infiltrated Rhodesia from neighbouring Zambia in steadily increasing numbers, but the war remained a relatively minor police action.¹⁴

Phase three and the use of biological weapons

After their collapse in 1966, the guerilla movements took different approaches to overthrowing the Smith regime. ZIPRA, led by Nkomo and influenced by the

USSR, concentrated on invading Rhodesia as a conventional army.¹⁵ ZANLA, led by Robert Mugabe and influenced by China, adopted a Maoist strategy of winning the hearts and minds of the rural population and waging a guerilla war in the eastern border areas of Rhodesia.¹⁶

Phase three was the most intense and it began on 21 December 1972, when ZANLA attacked a farm in the Centenary District, with further attacks on other farms in the following days.¹⁷ As the guerrilla activity increased in 1973, 'Operation Hurricane' started and the military prepared itself for all-out war. During 1974 a major effort by the security forces resulted in many guerrillas being killed and the number inside the country was reduced to less than 100.

In 1974 a coup in Lisbon ushered in the end of the Portuguese empire in Africa. The first colonial power in Africa would be the last to haul down the colours.¹⁸ Almost immediately after the coup, Portuguese colonial troops stopped their patrols and remained in their bases.¹⁹ Even though Portugal was still nominally in control, the effect was to create a second open front along Rhodesia's long border with Mozambique, which was exploited by ZANLA. In 1975 the Portuguese left Mozambique and a Marxist government—sympathetic to the Zimbabwean nationalist cause—came to power in the former colony.²⁰

As the guerilla war heated up, the BSAP was soon overwhelmed and the government turned to the security forces. As early as 1956 the security forces, including the police, had recognised that the major problem confronting them would be African unrest.²¹ The security forces therefore trained and prepared for counter-insurgency not only at home, but also by reinforcing the successful British efforts in Malaya and studying the counter-insurgency effort against the Mau Mau in Kenya. The Rhodesians had inherited a number of military units from the Federation break-up. Most important were:

- the Rhodesian Air Force (RHAF);
- the Army, consisting of the Special Air Service (SAS),²² the Rhodesian African Rifles—formerly a unit of the King's African Rifles and an anachronism of the Victorian era in which white officers commanded blacks²³—the Rhodesian Light Infantry (RLI)²⁴ and an Armoured Car Regiment,²⁵ collectively, the 'Security Forces'.

The Rhodesians made a strategic decision and made special operations (mainly the SAS, RLI and RHAF) their primary function and traditional military units (ie the Armored Car Regiment) their secondary option.²⁶ They took the lessons learned by their SAS in Malaya,²⁷ from the British in Kenya against the Mau Mau and from the US experience in Vietnam and adapted them to their war. Although they mastered the art of counter-insurgency operations—using the SAS—and the mobile use of helicopter-borne troops, the Rhodesians—because of their racist policies—were never able to win the campaign for the 'hearts and minds' of black Africans, a prerequisite in any guerilla campaign. With a population ratio of 1:10 in favor of blacks, that campaign was critical.

In the early 1970s the Rhodesians turned to a concept called 'pseudo operations' ('pseudo ops'), creating the Selous Scouts in 1973 and placing the unit under the auspices of the Central Intelligence Organisation's (CIO) Special

Branch, rather than the Army.²⁸ Security personnel would dress as insurgents and infiltrate rural communities seeking out real insurgents.²⁹ When they found the real insurgents, they could opt for an engagement or call in their position and allow other army units, notably the RLI to come in. At first highly trained white officers of the SAS were used for the operations. But language barriers and the distinct physical facial features of the whites necessitated the use of black Zimbabweans. To do this, injured or captured insurgents were 'turned' and made to serve the Selous Scouts.³⁰ Thus compromised, they could never return to their villages and were beholden to the regime for their lives.³¹ The new recruits were able to provide intelligence and the latest call signs used by the real insurgents. The British had used a similar pseudo ops concept in Malaya and Kenya.³² The Selous Scouts were housed in a secret facility near Mount Darwin within the Hurricane Theatre of the war. 'The Selous Scouts proved extremely effective in providing the security forces with useful and timely intelligence' and 'were responsible for a staggering 68 percent of all insurgent kills and capture in their areas of operation'.³³

The CIO consisted of two branches: Special Branch, responsible for internal security—thus the placement of the Scouts under its wings—and Branch II, responsible for external operations, propaganda, disinformation, covert ops, and psychological operations.³⁴ The Selous Scouts' unrivalled tracking abilities, survival and counter-insurgency skills made them one of the most feared and hated of the army units.³⁵ The unit was known for 'murder, rape, smuggling, and poaching',³⁶ and its members were 'psychopathic killers' and 'vainglorious extroverts'.³⁷ 'To avoid confusion and prevent other government forces from mistaking the Scouts for actual insurgents, any area they were operating in was "frozen"—that is no other security forces were allowed in the vicinity.'³⁸

In 1976 Operations 'Thrasher' and 'Repulse' started in order to contain the ever-increasing influx of guerrillas.³⁹ At the same time, rivalry between the two main guerrilla factions increased and resulted in open fighting in the training camps in Tanzania, with over 600 deaths.⁴⁰ The Soviets increased their influence and began to take a more active role in the training and control of the ZIPRA guerrillas. New tactics were developed on both sides. The Rhodesians decided to take the war to the enemy. Cross-border operations—which had started in 1976 with a raid on a major base in Mozambique in which the Rhodesians had killed over 1200 guerrillas and captured huge amounts of weapons—were stepped up by the SAS and later the Selous Scouts. Attacks on large guerrilla camps such as Chimoio and Tembue resulted in thousands of guerrilla deaths and the capture of supplies sorely needed by the Rhodesians.⁴¹ The concept of 'Fireforce' was also introduced at this time. This concept involved helicopters inserting a 'stick' of men from the RLI into an area identified by Selous Scouts as containing insurgents.⁴² Externally and internally the war was 'heating-up' for the Rhodesians. By 1976 'no one would say so in public—except for the very public act of emigrating—but in private many were prepared to admit that even if defeat was unlikely, victory was impossible'.⁴³ From 1976 to 1978 the war was at its most intense—during this period it is alleged that biological and chemical weapons were used.

The end of the war

By March 1978 Smith—ready to end the war—hammered out an internal settlement.⁴⁴ A black prime minister was elected through universal suffrage, but the military and intelligence apparatus remained in firm white control.⁴⁵ The international community refused to recognise Zimbabwe–Rhodesia as it was known.⁴⁶ In June 1978 the war spiralled out of control, as insurgents shot a civilian airliner out of the sky.⁴⁷ Some passengers managed to survive, only to be butchered on the ground by the insurgents. In retaliation, in October 1978 Rhodesian forces invaded Zambia and Mozambique, killing thousands of guerrillas in training camps.⁴⁸ Britain and the USA condemned the raids, saying that they could lead to a superpower confrontation in southern Africa.

Towards the end of 1979 talks had begun at Lancaster House in England, with both sides seriously interested in stopping the war, but Rhodesian cross-border raids continued in the meantime, hitting supply lines, strategic bridges and railways in an effort to convince Zambia and Mozambique to put pressure on the guerrilla leaders to end the war.⁴⁹ Rhodesian losses in men and aircraft were increasing, whereas the supply of equipment and recruits to the guerrillas seemed endless. By the end of 1979 therefore it was becoming obvious that the Rhodesians would be unable to end the war, despite the fact that their troops were winning every battle and skirmish they engaged in. With the war unwinnable and white emigration on the rise, Ian Smith signed the Lancaster House Agreement in December 1979. The Agreement ushered in majority rule 14 years after Smith's UDI.⁵⁰ In effect, the clock was turned back to 1965, and a British Governor arrived on 12 December 1979. All parties signed a ceasefire agreement on 21 December. The Union Jack was raised upon the governor's arrival, only to be lowered on 9 April 1980 as the nation of Zimbabwe emerged to join the family of nations.⁵¹

The dirty tricks: biological and chemical weapons

Early in 1976 the security forces, farmers and officials urged the government to impose firmer and swifter methods of justice on the 'terrorist'. From 1976 onwards the 'gloves were off' against the insurgents.⁵² The Army's Psychological Operations Unit (PSYOPS) presented a plan to eliminate terrorists. The aim of PSYOPS was: 'to kill and capture terrorists and to win over the local population'.⁵³ The RLI began to kill prisoners it captured in the field.⁵⁴ Government assassination of opposition members was authorised and ZANU's national chairman was assassinated in Zambia by CIO operatives.⁵⁵ Zambian officials sympathetic to ZANU rounded up other leaders because of disinformation implicating them in the assassination. The loss of the leadership set ZANU back politically at least two years, according to the CIO.⁵⁶

The effectiveness of the assassination and the desperation of the war effort lead to the use of bacteriological and chemical weapons as 'dirty tricks'. In the late 1970s, under siege, orders were given to use chemical and biological agents against the enemy.⁵⁷ The techniques used were: a) poisoning wells; b) spreading cholera; c) infecting clothing used by 'terrorists'; and d) using anthrax to kill

cattle and thus deny food supplies to the guerillas.⁵⁸

Doctors and chemists from the University of Rhodesia were recruited by the CIO in 1975 and asked to identify chemical and biological agents that could be used against the guerillas.⁵⁹ Professor Robert Symington is credited as being the father of Rhodesia's biological warfare programme.⁶⁰ Symington developed Rhodesia's stockpile of toxins and other agents to help 'supplement' the war effort by the Rhodesian forces.⁶¹ The Rhodesians used three toxins: 1) ricin,⁶² an extremely potent toxin that 'comes from the castor bean and enters the body intravenously'⁶³; b) thallium, a lethal heavy metal similar to rat poison; and c) Parathion.⁶⁴ By 1975 clinical trials were being performed on humans—a clear and recognised crime against humanity—provided by the CIO from the Selous Scouts' secret detention centre in Mount Darwin.⁶⁵ The doctors would administer various agents to the prisoners, experimenting with agents and dosages.⁶⁶ The CIO then disposed of the bodies of the victims down mine shafts.⁶⁷

By 1976 deployments of the agents were ready and carried out by the CIO, Selous Scouts and South Africans.⁶⁸ The chemical and biological agents used by the CIO in the field included thallium, organophosphate poisons, warfarin, anthrax bacterium, and other as yet unidentified bacteriological agents.⁶⁹ The CIO and the Scouts used thallium at first. Thallium was injected into canned meat and, through the use of pseudo ops techniques, the poisoned meat was given to insurgents who believed they were being resupplied by other friendly insurgents.⁷⁰ In one instance, because of a shortage of food in the Tribal Trust Lands—another deliberate tactic of the CIO and PSYOPS—the guerillas gave their thallium-laced food to innocent villagers, thus killing them.⁷¹

Unfortunately for the CIO, the use of thallium became known. Neither the manufacturer of the canned meat, nor the Ministry of Health knew of this programme.⁷² They began an investigation that ultimately led to the uncovering of the facts in the case.⁷³ In another incident, holes were drilled into bottles of water and this was laced with cyanide or poisons.⁷⁴ In their unwavering use of pseudo ops, Selous Scouts—perhaps in an attempt to show that the guerillas were responsible—used an unknown poison to contaminate a well near heavy guerilla activity close to the Mozambique border.⁷⁵ At least 200 civilians died because the well was the sole source of drinking water for the area.⁷⁶ Selous Scouts were instructed to poison watering holes, stagnant water, slow moving streams and other bodies of water⁷⁷ near guerilla camps inside the Mozambique border, as such sources were essential for supply lines.⁷⁸

Cholera was also alleged to have been used by the CIO.⁷⁹ Selous Scouts were told to spread the disease near the border. SAS operatives—responsible for external raids—probably spread cholera inside Mozambique. Nevertheless, the CIO was worried that the use of cholera could backfire and spread into Zimbabwe uncontrolled and affect the Selous Scouts who operated in the field.⁸⁰ Selous Scouts were also told to dump cholera in water supplies, most notably the Ruya River. This incident corresponds to a cholera epidemic along the Mozambican side of the river, in which an unknown number of fatalities occurred.⁸¹ The practice was discontinued because the agent was thought to dissipate too quickly to provide any lasting tactical advantage.

The Rhodesians, with possible assistance from the South Africans, also

launched a programme of contaminating clothes. In a *mea culpa* account, Ken Flower, the Chief of the CIO stated:

For more years than I would like to tell, young men were recruited for the guerilla cause under the aegis of CIO and with the willing cooperation of [Reverend Arthur] Kanodareka and his helpers who supplied them with poisoned uniforms. The men would be sent on their way to the guerilla training camps, but before reaching their destination would die a slow death in the African bush. Many hundreds of recruits became victims of this operation. It became so diabolically successful that exposure seemed inevitable and so the principal perpetrators had to be eliminated [Kanodareka]—rather as a hunter will finish off a wounded animal to stop further suffering.⁸²

The South Africans had two dedicated biological weapons facilities, the Institute of Virology in Johannesburg and the other in a South African Defence Force (SADF) veterinary facility near Pretoria.⁸³ Under an umbrella project named 'Alcora' the South Africans and Rhodesians used poisoning agents.⁸⁴ According to a former CIO officer, they:

would give us briefings about certain places and we would be warned that the drinking water or, you know, the wells might have been poisoned—but our soldiers did not do it. There were places where we were told that the waters had been salted with cholera and we would have to be careful. Truth is, Rhodesia was being used as a laboratory. There were civilian operators, strange types, from South Africa. To be more precise it was South African Military Intelligence.⁸⁵

Sweatshirts, uniforms, and other apparel were soaked in chemicals;⁸⁶ through the Selous Scouts these were distributed to insurgent groups near the border with Mozambique. The Rhodesians used organophosphates to poison the clothing of guerillas.⁸⁷

Anthrax in Rhodesia

For centuries *bacillus anthracis*, anthrax, has caused disease in animals and, uncommonly, serious illness in humans throughout the world.⁸⁸ Anthrax is endemic to certain parts of Africa. Naturally occurring anthrax is a disease acquired following contact with an anthrax-infested animal or its byproducts. Herbivores are the most common carrier, they usually ingest anthrax spores residing in the soil. Animal vaccination programmes have reduced the rate of infection among animals.⁸⁹ In humans, the disease is not contagious, ie it cannot be spread readily from one human to another. Three types of human anthrax infection can occur: inhalational, in which spores enter the lungs and within a month or sometimes less release two types of toxins which result in blood poisoning; cutaneous or subcutaneous, in which the bacteria penetrate the skin; and gastro-intestinal, in which the spores are ingested.⁹⁰ Cutaneous anthrax is the most common natural form of the disease with an estimated 2000 cases reported annually.⁹¹ The human disease typically follows exposure to a diseased animal.⁹² Research into the use of anthrax as a weapon began more than 80 years ago, and it remains a popular choice as a weapon of terror, particularly in its most deadly inhalation form.⁹³

In Rhodesia before 1978 there were an average of 13 cases a year.⁹⁴ By 1979 the Department of Veterinary Services announced that a cattle-borne illness, anthrax, had broken out in three Tribal Trust Lands.⁹⁵ The disease had only claimed 21 people. But, there is an inconsistency. On 19 October 1979, three days after its announcement, the government announced that the anthrax outbreak had spread to six Tribal Trust Lands.⁹⁶ From 1978 to 1980, 10 783 Zimbabweans were infected and 182—all black Zimbabweans—died of cutaneous anthrax. A former Rhodesian officer recently reported in confidence:

It is true that anthrax spoor was used in an experimental role in the Gutu, Chilimanzi, Masvingo and Mberengwa areas, and the anthrax idea came from PSYOPS. The use of anthrax spoor to kill off the cattle of tribesmen ... was carried out in conjunction with the psychological suggestion to the tribespeople that their cattle were sick and dying because of disease introduced into Zimbabwe from Mozambique by the infiltrating guerillas.⁹⁷

According to another report from a former member of the Rhodesian forces, anthrax was used to kill the cattle of the Zimbabweans.⁹⁸ The operation was to reinforce the notion that foreign guerillas were bringing back diseases that would kill cattle. This was another variation of PSYOPS, in the ongoing campaign to alienate the local population from the insurgents.⁹⁹ In contrast to the devastation in the black Tribal Trust Lands, only 11 cases of human infection were reported—with no deaths—in the European farming areas.

The use of anthrax as a weapon of last resort is not far-fetched. The area of northeastern Zimbabwe has ideal conditions, with the right mixture of alkaline pH, nitrogen, calcium and organic matter. In attempting to crush their opponents and maintain their white minority regime, the Rhodesians, according to Cilliers, often used food as a weapon. On 28 January 1977 the Rhodesian government introduced an amendment to the Emergency Powers Act, whereby control of food supplies was instituted in various areas of Rhodesia.¹⁰⁰ PSYOPS pushed for food control to keep ZANLA insurgents from obtaining food from friendly rural blacks who worked on the white farms. PSYOPS instituted Operation Turkey in 1977. The aim of Operation Turkey was twofold: to cut the food supply to ZANLA and to increase animosity between the insurgents and the local population by controlling the supply of food. The operation was relatively successful—guerillas, believing that they were poisoned by villagers sought out and destroyed villages and killed villagers who had prepared food for them. Further restrictions were put upon the blacks by PSYOPS, such as introducing ration cards, placing limits on the amount of food available in stores, and limits on bulk purchases.¹⁰¹ Viewed from this perspective, anthrax may have been more part of a plan to reduce food stocks to the native population and not—like the chemical and cholera incidents—an effort at direct genocide.

The Nass Report

The first non-Zimbabwean to suspect the deliberate use of anthrax was an American doctor, Meryl Nass, a biological warfare epidemiologist.¹⁰² From 1989 to 1992 she researched the events of 1978–80.¹⁰³ She became interested in how

anthrax spores spread so quickly—even in the absence of bovine cases—and engulfed six of the eight Rhodesian provinces.¹⁰⁴ Even more remarkable was that the white farmers lost only four heads of cattle, with 11 cases of human exposure and no deaths.¹⁰⁵ Nonetheless, why does Nass believe that it was a deliberate spread? First, the large amounts of those infected. Rhodesia had had only 334 cases from 1950 to 1978. Doctors in Zimbabwe in 1977 had rarely seen an anthrax case. Yet, during the war, anthrax became one of the country's major causes of hospital admissions.¹⁰⁶ Next, the large-scale infestation is additional proof of a deliberate spread. Most anthrax outbreaks have a high degree of focality.¹⁰⁷ In Zimbabwe most of the Tribal Trust Lands, stretching across six of the eight Provinces, was infected.¹⁰⁸ Many of the cases occurred in areas where there had not been a previous case. The outbreak was centred only in Zimbabwe. None of its neighbours, according to Nass, had higher than normal reporting of infections.¹⁰⁹ Finally, Nass points out that the outbreak occurred when the war intensified to its greatest levels.¹¹⁰ However, Nass ends her investigation into the use of anthrax, by concluding that 'there exists no generally accepted methodology to serve as a guide for the design of an investigation in the possible use of biological weapons'.¹¹¹

Perhaps the first outside confirmation came in 1990 from a Defense Intelligence Agency Cable from Harare to Washington: 'According to [source deleted], a member of the Rhodesian Selous Scouts admitted in 1978 that "they" had tried both chemical and biological warfare techniques to kill terrorists.' The report went on to say that Rhodesian forces used cholera to poison the water supply.¹¹² It appears that Washington was and still is oblivious to the use of bacteriological weapons in Zimbabwe.¹¹³ Nonetheless, officials of the US Embassy in Harare seem aware of the situation, but dubious as to its credibility.¹¹⁴

In 1997 the Minister of Health, Tim Stamps—a white Zimbabwean—personally ordered an official investigation into the use of bacteriological agents in the Liberation War. Stamps is convinced that, through forged documents, the USA or UK shipped anthrax for legitimate research in a third country, but it eventually wound up in Rhodesia.¹¹⁵ Stamps is convinced that the spread of the disease was deliberate. He points out the severe restrictions on Africans' movements, the focality of the outbreak being so widespread and the targeting of cattle in particular.

Analysis of anthrax and other bacteriological agents

Drawing inferences from the circumstantial evidence, particularly when coupled with the personal accounts—of which Flower's and Ellert's personal *mea culpas* are the most convincing—leads one to the conclusion that bio-weapons were used in Rhodesia by the security forces, notwithstanding Ian Smith's flippant response when confronted by a reporter over the alleged use of these weapons: 'first time I've ever heard about it'.¹¹⁶ While there is one explanation for a possible natural occurrence, it is not convincing under the circumstances: by mid 1978 veterinary services outside the white farming area had collapsed and such services were no longer provided.¹¹⁷ Because of the level of violence in the countryside, inoculation of cattle against diseases had become sporadic since at

least 1974 and, even then, vets were sent in with armed soldiers.¹¹⁸ Malaria, bilharzias and other endemic diseases soared during the period of anthrax spread.¹¹⁹ Yet the collapse of the veterinary and medical system alone does not provide a satisfactory explanation of a naturally occurring outbreak of anthrax. The reason is that anthrax vaccination was not practised in Zimbabwe even before the outbreak because of the low prevalence of the disease.¹²⁰ As a consequence, the collapse of veterinary services would not have had a major impact on cattle in the Tribal Trust Lands. The collapse did affect other diseases, such as preventable tick-borne diseases. Between 1975 and 1979 an estimated 260 000 head of cattle died because 'dipping' services in the rural areas had been shut down.¹²¹ Sleeping sickness also rose dramatically during this period.

Additional inferences of a deliberate spread can be gleaned from other practices of the Rhodesian CIO, along with PSYOPS. CIO's and PSYOPS' use of anthrax would have been consistent with three other practices. It would continue the PSYOPS operation of continuing psychological warfare on rural blacks by highlighting the fact that foreign diseases were the fault of the guerillas. Second, CIO was already seeking to deny food supplies to the guerillas in line with 'Operation Turkey'. Third, CIO would have been attracted to a weapon of last resort to break the morale of the rural blacks. To understand CIO's thinking, one must look at Zimbabwe at the time. As in other parts of southern Africa, wealth is primarily measured by the number of cattle one has.¹²² Therefore, without cattle to measure their wealth, rural blacks' morale would sink and support for the uprising would end. For example:

There is always hardship, but if cattle die, the family loses its source of wealth; without motive power for ploughing, crops can not be planted, leading to no food, no money to purchase food, pay school fees, bus fares, taxes, or buy the essentials of life. The family is reduced to grinding poverty and malnutrition becomes rife.¹²³

The use of the Selous Scouts furthered this goal. Former officers have retold how, by imitating the guerillas, massacres were perpetrated. Thus the rural population would feel threatened by the guerillas. The land allocated to the Zimbabweans was mostly arid, whereas the white areas were relatively fertile. The alkalinity in the soil and the arid conditions would be ideal for the spread of anthrax. Nass suggests that aerial spraying is one possibility.¹²⁴ As in other third world insurgencies, the Rhodesians built special protected villages into which the native population was concentrated, mostly involuntarily. Congregation of the rural the population into one area could have contributed to the ease of intentional infestation by the Security Forces.¹²⁵ This goal would meet the first prong of their desired use.

The second reason CIO and PSYOPS would use anthrax was that, by destroying food stocks in rural areas, the original goals of 'Operation Turkey' would be enhanced. Food was used as a weapon in Rhodesia. Therefore, it is conceivable that the anthrax programme was meant to destroy Shona wealth and food processing. By denying the guerillas food their morale would sink, as their supply lines would be unable to support them: this was especially true as the SAS was simultaneously hitting targets outside Rhodesia. The CIO hoped the guerillas would merely starve in the field.

Finally, the CIO and PSYOPS knew that by 1978 the war was unwinnable. The Security Forces could not be beaten, as they had won each battle, but neither could they win. In addition, the constant call-up of the male population was increasing emigration.¹²⁶ Most knew that concentrated efforts to end the war had failed and that they had their 'backs to the wall'. The enemy was seen to be the villager as well. As shown earlier, post-1975, the CIO and Selous Scouts used untraditional means of warfare. Their operations were always along the line of reducing rural support for black nationalists and lowering morale. To that end, cholera was spread, thallium was used to poison people, and water supplies were poisoned. More generally, the Rhodesians had 'taken off the gloves'. An interesting analysis is that of the main operational area during the war—the Hurricane Theatre. Here, there were numerous no-go or frozen areas because of Selous Scout activity in the border area at the time.¹²⁷ It is plausible that, together with legitimate military operations, the Scouts were engaged in spreading anthrax. For example, as noted previously, the Selous Scouts were instructed to pour cholera agents into the Ruya River. Starting in August 1973 'Exercise Long Walk' was begun along the Ruya River near Mozambique. Selous Scouts were active in the area and other Security Forces were told to pull out when the Scouts neared their positions. Henceforth, Security Forces were instructed not to approach the frozen zone and to stay at least 4000 metres from the Ruya River.¹²⁸ In 1978 in Mozambique large numbers of ZANLA soldiers arrived from training bases near the border with a bleeding disorder.¹²⁹ At first a haemorrhagic fever was suspected but lab results showed warfarin poisoning.¹³⁰

The first case of anthrax in humans was reported in November 1978, according to Nass.¹³¹ This is one month after the Rhodesian invasions and bombings of Mozambique and Zambia—the height of the war. The outbreak therefore coincided directly with a peak in hostilities. The use of anthrax could have strengthened the hand of the whites at the negotiating table, illustrating that the black population was enduring the worst consequences of the war and thus had the most to gain through a negotiated settlement. It was the classic bargaining-from-strength position.

The evidence shows that Rhodesia had a small indigenous bacteriological and chemical programme by 1975 led by Dr Symington under the supervision of the CIO. Anthrax is obtained by lab specimens or through collection of spores in the soil.¹³² As noted, the Rhodesians became experts at sanctions busting, with false-end certificates, dummy companies and fake airlines. The RHAf set up dummy corporations such as Air Gabon in Gabon, CargoMan in Oman and Air Trans Africa.¹³³ It is not too hard to imagine that Rhodesians could have obtained a batch of British anthrax spores from sympathetic admirers in Britain or through US labs.¹³⁴ Britain experimented with anthrax during the Second World War.¹³⁵ Anthrax does occur naturally in Zimbabwe, but not in sufficient quantities to justify the expense of field cultivation of spores. And if we discount the evidence and dismiss the ingenuity of the Rhodesians at sanctions busting, the main culprit in the proliferation of bacteriological weapons to Rhodesia was most probably South Africa.

The South African connection

The main culprit over the Rhodesians getting hold of biological weapons has been South Africa. South Africa was an original signatory to the Biological Weapons Convention in 1972, ratifying it on 5 November 1975. South Africa has always maintained that its biological weapons programme was solely for defensive use.¹³⁶ South Africa produced chemical weapons during World War II in Gauteng—responsible for mustard gas production—for the allies.¹³⁷ South Africa claimed that undelivered stocks were destroyed after the war. However, former allied production sites continued to be used by the South Africans for military purposes. To manufacture anthrax under ‘ideal’ conditions, high-containment suites are used. However, such facilities were not available to the allies during World War Two, according to Nass.

South Africa provided Rhodesia with military support. In 1968 it sent a small contingent to Rhodesia to help against the insurgency.¹³⁸ Nonetheless, to see both as an inseparable alliance of white supremacists is somewhat misleading. In 1975 South Africa pulled out most of its military assistance to Rhodesia. If South Africa assisted in the use of bacteriological weapons in Rhodesia, it was most likely for its own personal gain in research, rather than for benevolent love. South Africa and Rhodesia were quite dissimilar, with their one unifying aspect being continuation of white minority rule. South Africa, according to Ian Smith, was willing to sell out Rhodesia in order to appease the international community and buy time for its own apartheid state.¹³⁹ However, one major factor exculpating the South Africans from involvement has been the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s findings on South Africa’s Project Coast. Project Coast may have commenced in the late 1970s to early 1980s, with an exact date unknown. What is known is that by 1981 the head of ‘Project Coast,’ one Dr Basson—aka Dr Death—visited the USA and met CBW scientists.¹⁴⁰ Project Coast experimented with cholera, botulism, anthrax, chemical poisoning and lethal micro-organisms. The military is alleged to have used cholera—as in Rhodesia—to poison wells, to have placed anthrax in cigarettes, and placed paraoxon in whiskey and then distributed it.¹⁴¹ There is no mention of South African and Rhodesian collusion; however, former CIO members have indicated that the South Africans bankrolled the Selous Scouts and had unfettered access to their Mount Darwin base.¹⁴² Nonetheless, the methods and choice of weapons used would lead to an inference that at least there was communication on shared technology and application at the operational level. In addition, South Africa launched ‘Operation Winter’ whereby large assets of the Rhodesian military left Rhodesia upon majority rule.¹⁴³ In some cases, whole units of the Selous Scouts and SAS joined the South African Defence Force, taking with them Rhodesia’s dirty little tricks.¹⁴⁴

Legal analysis

The main legal questions are: a) who should be held responsible? b) under what mechanisms? Should the state of Rhodesia be held liable or should the perpetrators?

International law

The first attempt to deal with chemical weapons were the Hague series of Conventions, which codified the law of war and entered into force in 1910. Rhodesia may have violated the 1907 Hague Convention. Through Article 1, the convention is applicable to members of the Rhodesian Security Forces. Article 23(a) prohibits the use of 'poison or poisoned weapons'. The use of cholera, thallium and other bacteriological agents is a clear violation of this article. The use of bacteriological weapons was outlawed by the 1925 Geneva Protocol, to which the UK is a party. In 1949 the Geneva Convention broadened the applicability of the treaty by adopting the phrase 'armed conflict' to replace the narrower phrase of 'laws or customs of war', as used in the 1907 Hague and 1925 Geneva Conventions. The 1949 Geneva Convention was built upon prior treaties which have been universally applied.

Under Common Article III of the Geneva Convention—which makes itself applicable to internal conflicts and civil wars—Rhodesia committed several 'grave breaches'. By killing cattle, the Rhodesian Security Forces targeted the wealth of the rural population a violation of Article III(1). Furthermore, the Selous Scouts killed captured insurgents or used them for biological experimentation if they did not 'turn'. These practices are a violation of Article III(1)(a). Great Britain was a signatory to the Geneva Convention, but Rhodesia was not. Nonetheless, international law and recent cases have elevated Common Article III of the Geneva Convention to customary law. A violation of the Article is a violation of customary law.

In addition to these two treaties, there is the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), which renounces biological weapons use against human beings. The BWC reflects the post-World War II renunciation of biological weapons by the defeated Axis powers and the unilateral renunciation of the use of such weapons by the USA in 1969. By enlarging the scope of the 1949 Geneva Convention, through Common Article III, the use of chemical weapons in internal armed conflicts is outlawed. Because of its declaration of UDI, it is arguable whether the use of these weapons would have been 'illegal' under the Geneva Protocol, since Rhodesia was never a party to the Convention. However, Rhodesia's independence was illegal and not recognised by the international community.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, the use of such weapons is now acknowledged to be a violation of customary international law. For a practice to become customary international law there must emerge a general consensus in the international community that furthering the practice violates international customary law. In 1988 Iraq used chemical weapons in an internal conflict. International condemnations of the use of chemical weapons against an internal civilian population were swift, and Iraq was accused of violating the 1925 Geneva Convention.¹⁴⁶ Therefore, under the Hague Convention and the 1925 Geneva Protocol, the use of chemical or biological weapons against internal populations has been raised to a violation of customary humanitarian law.

The successor to Rhodesia through decolonisation is Zimbabwe. Under the Vienna Convention a newly independent state begins its existence free of the obligations of its predecessor state—the 'clean slate doctrine'.¹⁴⁷ At independence

the UK attempted a legal fiction. It turned back Zimbabwe's clock to 1965 by appointing a Governor and reincorporating Zimbabwe into the Commonwealth of States, the successor to the British Empire. The illegality of the regime was overturned and Zimbabwe emerged as a new nation under the clean slate doctrine. Therefore, since violation of the treaties is a violation of international customary law Zimbabwe is liable for violations by Rhodesian security forces. This is a *non sequitur*, and thus illogical. Therefore, one must turn to the next logical question: if the state is not responsible, are the perpetrators and under what judicial model can they be brought to justice?

Holding individuals accountable

The law of nations does not confine its reach to state actions.¹⁴⁸ There are innumerable references to individuals committing an offence against the law of nations.¹⁴⁹ Therefore individuals who were part of the Rhodesian Security forces who violated international customary law during the internal armed conflict of 1965–80 should be prosecuted. For example, Symington's experiments on humans are a clear crime against humanity.¹⁵⁰

Under international law, the Rhodesian Security Forces committed two major international crimes: war crimes and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions.¹⁵¹ War crimes—violations of the customs of war, ie Hague 1907—include murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war, wanton destruction, use of biological agents, and devastation not justified by military necessity. Grave breaches include willful killing, biological experiments, compelling a prisoner of war to serve in the forces of a hostile power, making the civilian population targets of attack, racial discrimination, deportation of population of occupied territory, and willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body and health. If a Nuremberg-style court is established—doubtful because of the time lapse in the events—criminal prosecution can take place against those members of the Security Forces who perpetuated the crimes and their leaders who authorised the use of these tactics.¹⁵²

In 1999 a call was made by university professors to the government of Zimbabwe to investigate the 1975–80 incidents of bacteriological war, in part because of Health Minister Stamps' insistence.¹⁵³ Yet to date nothing has been officially undertaken by the government of Zimbabwe. The reasons for not acting against the report are twofold. First, the white population in Zimbabwe has fallen from around 190 000 in 1980 to 90 000 in 2000.¹⁵⁴ Whites were the economic backbone of the country.¹⁵⁵ To his credit, Mugabe tried to build a multiracial country. Reconciliation was the tone. The whites were allowed to stay as long as they knew their place in the new country.

During the 1990s Mugabe faced several problems to his rule.¹⁵⁶ In 1990 there were fewer jobs for blacks than there were in 1975 and real incomes were down from what they were in 1975.¹⁵⁷ In an attempt to escape domestic problems, Mugabe turned to the legacy of land distribution in Zimbabwe. In 2000 farm invasions began as the government attempted illegally to seize white-owned farms. White emigration began again and, in 2001, the white population was less than 50 000, consisting mostly of retired persons. Mugabe—through his

ministers—keeps the spectre of whites being all-powerful and treacherous. Nonetheless, he cannot institute an inquiry because it just might show that anthrax was not used in the conflict or, worse yet, that Mugabe and his side might have carried out their own dirty tricks. Mugabe and his ministers have recently insinuated that the remaining whites may use anthrax again against the black population. On 25 October 2001 the Deputy Health Minister said that exiled Rhodesians and white Zimbabweans were preparing an anthrax attack.¹⁵⁸ The state-controlled media interviewed rural farmers about a recent anthrax outbreak the same week. The rural farmers claim that the remaining white commercial farmers have activated the anthrax used in the liberation war.¹⁵⁹ In January 2002 the government orchestrated an ‘anthrax scare’ and blamed it on the opposition political party and white farmers—one of the latter’s supporters.¹⁶⁰ However, these inquiries were quickly suppressed:

ZANLA and/or ZIPRA may also have had complicity in spreading the biotoxins around. The war between ZANLA and ZIPRA was by far the deadliest and most destructive aspect of the liberation struggle. ZANLA was fighting ZIPRA as much as it was the Rhodesian Army. ZANLA may have become aware of the Rhodesians’ bio ‘dirty tricks’ and used them, such as the poisoned food tins, against villages sympathetic to ZIPRA, possibly even with the Rhodesians’ help. Or, ZIPRA may have done the same to ZANLA, but I think the former is more likely. I think this is a more logical explanation for why a more comprehensive investigation has never been undertaken. In the current environment, this is the perfect story to villify the remaining whites in Zimbabwe and justify seizing their property. The GOZ [government of Zimbabwe] would only have to go after a handful to make the case that its campaign against the whites was part of the war on terrorism, and this, in turn, could give the West pause in villifying the GOZ (I don’t think it would lead to a mass white exodus, however). Instead, the ‘story’ that the whites were planning an anthrax attack, and the ‘story’ about anthrax-like substances turning up at the central post office disappeared quickly. I suspect someone on high squashed any further investigations because of where it might lead.¹⁶¹

In conclusion, domestic remedies against those remaining Security Forces personnel would be highly unlikely under the Mugabe regime and his co-opted justice system. If the trials were to show that there was no use of chemical or biological weapons, Mugabe would be unable to continue to use whites as scapegoats. If whites were found to be guilty of the use of these weapons, the stigma attached could well produce the final exodus of whites in the country, plunging it into complete economic chaos.

Therefore, the last option and the most feasible for those affected during the liberation war is to use the forum of a third country, like the USA, whose laws would allow an alien to seek compensation for damages. In the USA Zimbabweans may use the Alien Tort Claim Act, 28 USC ss 1350 (1988), enacted in 1789, which creates federal court jurisdiction for suits alleging torts committed anywhere in the world against aliens in violation of the law of nations.¹⁶² In addition, federal common law has incorporated international customary law.¹⁶³ Therefore, an alien within the USA can pursue a claim against the former Rhodesian Security Forces. In fact, on 9 September 2000 Zimbabweans living in the USA filed suit against Mugabe and two of his associates under the Alien Tort

Act for torturing their relative in Zimbabwe because he belonged to another party.¹⁶⁴

South African actors—exempt

If South Africa used bacteriological weapons, it was in violation of Article II of the Geneva Convention. If it possessed and developed bacteriological agents such as cholera and thallium along with Rhodesia, then it was in violation of Article I of the Convention. If it helped proliferate the spread by helping Rhodesia acquire the technology and the means to use biological weapons, it is also in violation of Article III of the Convention. Rather than stop or prevent the development of these weapons domestically, South Africa actively participated in their development in violation of Article IV of the Convention. Under this Article, only state parties to the Convention may lodge alleged violations. To date none has. Nonetheless, domestically, under the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, crimes committed under apartheid may be pardoned if the perpetrators testify about their crimes. Many in the biological programme did and were subsequently pardoned. However, South Africa's 'Project Coast' is still a state secret and its machinations are under 'lock and key'.¹⁶⁷ A trial conducted in Afrikaans, whose main witnesses were a throwback to the 1970s defence establishment, recently found even 'Dr Death'—who did not repent—not guilty.¹⁶⁸ In addition, South Africa was not a belligerent under Article I of the 1907 Hague Convention.

Conclusion

Through practice, a custom can emerge. Most countries have forsaken the use of bacteriological agents. Therefore it can be argued that the use of bacteriological weapons by Rhodesians in 1975–80 was a violation of the 1907 Hague Convention, regardless of Rhodesia's international status and Article III of the 1949 Geneva Convention, and regardless of its status as an 'illegal' state, since individual responsibility can be used. The Rhodesian Security Forces can be prosecuted for war crimes, although a proper venue will be difficult to find. If the current government is unwilling to put forward claims against the prior regime, ordinary citizens who were affected can bring forth claims. Since Zimbabwe has descended into a one-party dictatorship, Zimbabweans may have to look abroad for a judicial solution to the crimes committed against them.

Notes

- ¹ Ian Douglas Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, London: 1997, pp 60–61.
- ² Graham Boynton, *Last Days in Cloud Cuckooland: Dispatches from White Africa*, New York: 1997, p 65.
- ³ Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, pp 103–106.
- ⁴ JTR Wood, *Rhodesian Insurgency*, available at <http://www.rhodesia.myweb.nl/rhomil.htm>, last visited 10 November 2001. See also Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, p 109.
- ⁵ Wood, *Rhodesian Insurgency*; and Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, p 117.
- ⁶ Roy Nesbit & Dudley Cowderoy, *Britain's Rebel Air Force: The War From the Air in Rhodesia*,

1965–1980, London: 1998, pp 56–65. An entire wing of the Rhodesian Air Force was dedicated to sanctions busting. The planes flew with fake tail numbers. Bills of lading were routinely falsified with false country receivers. The sanctions busting also consisted of forming ‘dummy’ corporations in third countries. For example, the Rhodesian Air Force flew Alouette helicopters for missions against the insurgents. The French producer of the Alouette complied with the UN arms embargo. The Rhodesians merely set up a dummy civilian corporation in a neighbouring African country which had an Alouette. In the life of this ‘company,’ the single Alouette required numerous engine repairs, dozens of gear boxes and tail rotor replacements.

⁷ Alan Best & Harm de Blij, *African Survey*, New York: 1977, p 305.

⁸ Nexbit & Dudley, *Britain’s Rebel Air Force*, p 29.

⁹ *Ibid*.

¹⁰ Bruce Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies: The Rhodesian Experience*, RAND Institute, 1991, pp 18–19. See also Wood, *Rhodesian Insurgency*.

¹¹ Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies*, p 7.

¹² Nesbit & Cowderoy, *Britain’s Rebel Air Force*, pp 29–30.

¹³ See *ibid*, pp 29–33 for a description of the ‘battle’.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p 35.

¹⁵ Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies*, p 9.

¹⁶ *Ibid*. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 divided Rhodesia into distinct farming communities—excluding black Africans from ownership of the best farmland. Whites were given the most fertile land. Whites received around 51% of the land and blacks received around 22% of the land, while the rest was set aside for future purchasing. The effect was to force Africans to work on white farms and in mines and factories. It was this resentment which would contribute to recruitment drives by the guerrillas.

¹⁷ Boynton, *Last Days in Cloud Cuckooland*, p 75. See also Peter Abbott & Philip Botham, *Modern African Wars: Rhodesia 1965–80*, London: 1986, p 11; and Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies*, p 14.

¹⁸ See, for example, Ian-Illych Martinez, ‘The Cuban military in Angola: the limits of internationalism’, MA thesis, University of Miami, 1998.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, pp 31–33; and Adelino Serras Pires, *The Winds of Havoc: A Memoir of Adventure and Destruction in Deepest Africa*, New York: 2001, pp 89–107.

²⁰ See, for example, Best & De Blij, *African Survey*, pp 306–307. In 1976 Soviet-backed Cuban troops stationed in Mozambique clashed briefly with the Rhodesians.

²¹ *Ibid*.

²² Abbott & Botham, *Modern African Wars*, p 18. Originally a part of the British SAS, the Rhodesian contingent was founded in 1950. The unit trained as late as 1962 with the British SAS in Aden. This unit was the elite of the Rhodesian military. For a general history of the unit, see Barbara Cole, *The Elite: The Story of the Rhodesian SAS*, Transkei: Three Knights Publishing, 1984.

²³ Abbott & Botham, *Modern African Wars*, pp 14–15. The RAR was the oldest unit in the Army, founded in 1940. Black officers were finally allowed in 1979. For a general history of the King’s African Rifles, which includes the RAR, see Malcom Page, *RAR: A History of the King’s African Rifles & East African Forces*, London: 1998.

²⁴ Abbott & Botham, *Modern African Wars*, pp 16–17. The RLI was formed in 1961 as the Federation’s European Army. Along with the SAS the RLI was never integrated. For a general history of the RLI, see Chris Cocks, *Fireforce*, Alberton, South Africa: Galago, 1987.

²⁵ Abbott & Botham, *Modern African Wars*, p 21. The Armored Car Regiment was formed in 1941. It was disbanded upon break-up of the federation, but was resurrected in 1972.

²⁶ Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies*, pp 23–24. The Rhodesians showed the world that small bands of guerrillas are best fought by small highly trained bands of special operation units in the field, a tactic that changed the US mode of conducting counter-insurgency conflicts.

²⁷ Abbott & Botham, *Modern African Wars*, p 18.

²⁸ See Ron R. Daly, *Selous Scouts: Top Secret War*, Cape Town: 1983 for a general history of this unit; and Selous Scouts Home Page, http://members.tripod.com/selousscouts/home_page.htm, last visited 14 August 2002. See also Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies*, p 31; and Nesbit & Cowderoy, *Britain’s Rebel Air Force*, p 39.

²⁹ Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies*, p 32.

³⁰ *Ibid*.

³¹ Jeremy Brickhill, ‘Zimbabwe’s poisoned legacy: secret war in southern Africa’, *Covert Action*, 43, 1992/93, p 6.

³² Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies*, p 31.

³³ *Ibid*, p 33.

- 34 JK Cilliers, *Counter-Insurgency in Rhodesia*, London: 1985, p 218. For a general overview of Rhodesian intelligence, see pp 218–237 of the same work.
- 35 See, for example, Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, p 6.
- 36 *Ibid*, p 7.
- 37 Ken Flower, *Serving Secretly*, London: 1987, p 124.
- 38 Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies*, p 33. See also Cilliers, *Counter-Insurgency in Rhodesia*, p 102, n 4, citing the *Rhodesian Army Manual Military Support to the Civil Order's* 1976 definition of a no go area as: 'one [from] which all civilians are excluded by an order of the Protecting Authority ... Only authorized members of the security forces, on duty, will move in no-go areas and no action [civil] may be instituted against them for any death or injury within the area.'
- 39 Cilliers, *Counter-Insurgency in Rhodesia*, p 239. In 1973–74 there were a few 'hundred' insurgents within Rhodesia. By 1977 CIO estimated that the combined ZANU/ZIPRA force numbered over '5000.' By 1978 the figure was over 9000. Meanwhile white emigration was accelerating. See, for example, Peter Godwin, *Rhodesians Never Die: The Impact of War and Political Change on White Rhodesia 1970–1980*, Harare: 1993.
- 40 Wood, *Rhodesian Insurgency*.
- 41 *Ibid*.
- 42 Nesbit & Cowderoy, *Britain's Rebel Air Force*, p 40.
- 43 Peter Godwin, *Rhodesians Never Die*, p 171; and Best & De Blij, *African Survey*, p 308.
- 44 Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, p 249
- 45 Abbott & Botham, *Modern African Wars*, p 7; and Best & De Blij, *African Survey*, pp 307–308. The South Africans took 'an active role, out of self interest in [the] behind-the-scenes diplomatic moves with Zambia, Tanzania, and Botswana to help create an atmosphere in which [a] [sic] constitutional settlement might be achieved'.
- 46 Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, pp 269–271.
- 47 Godwin, *Rhodesians Never Die*, pp 228–231. The aeroplane was hit by a SAM 7 missile. The pilot was able to land the plane safely, but at the last moment, hit a ditch and broke in two. Eighteen people survived the crash. Five of the least injured went to get help. Soon afterwards, insurgents showed up and killed 10 of the 13 still alive. ZIPRA's head, Nkomo claimed responsibility, and a rumour that he laughed about killing civilians sent Rhodesia over the edge.
- 48 The operation in Zambia led to the RHAf being in control of Zambian airspace for over 30 minutes. *Ibid*, p 233. The action boosted morale in Rhodesia as the tape was played on the television.
- 49 See Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies*, pp 82–90 for an exhaustive list of these cross-border raids into neighbouring countries.
- 50 Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, p 329.
- 51 Thomas Packenham, *The Scramble for Africa: the White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent From 1876–1912*, New York: 1991, p 671.
- 52 Godwin, *Rhodesians Never Die*, p 168. According to the book, 'one can forget about the hearts and minds', the Rhodesians just wanted to 'go out and slay houts'.
- 53 Cilliers, *Counter-Insurgency in Rhodesia*, p 156.
- 54 Cocks, *Fireforce*, p 236.
- 55 Godwin, *Rhodesians Never Die*, p 117; and Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counter-insurgencies*, p 35.
- 56 Hoffman *et al*, *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies*, p 35.
- 57 Tom Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars: A True Story of Biological Warfare*, available at <http://www.panmacmillan.com/plaguewars/chapters.htm>, p 216; and Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, p 7.
- 58 *Ibid*, p 222.
- 59 *Ibid*; and Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, pp 7–8 and n 14.
- 60 *Ibid*.
- 61 Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 226.
- 62 Fredrick R. Sidell *et al*, *Jane's Chem-Bio Handbook*, Alexandria, VA: 1999, pp 179–80. 'Ricin is a toxin made from the mash that is left over after processing castor beans.' Since processing is world-wide, the material is 'easily available'.
- 63 Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 226.
- 64 *Ibid*.
- 65 Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, p 8; and Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, pp 222–223.
- 66 *Ibid*.
- 67 Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 223.
- 68 *Ibid*, pp 221–223. 'South African military and security personnel who not only acted as advisers and monitors, but likely played some part in the development of the chemical and biological agents.'
- 69 *Ibid*.
- 70 *Ibid*, p 223.

- ⁷¹ Henrik Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War: Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla War in Rhodesia 1962–1980*, Harare: 1989, pp 146–147. Ellert was a former head in the CIO Special Branch section, which makes his allegations that much more credible. See also Al Venter, 'Biological warfare: the poor man's atomic bomb', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 11 (3), 1999, p 42.
- ⁷² Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 223, citing Ellert, pp 146–147.
- ⁷³ *Ibid*.
- ⁷⁴ Venter, 'Biological warfare'. Selous Scouts also used conventional weapons. They would place bombs in radios and distribute them to guerrillas. Once in the field, the Scouts would detonate the radios killing the listeners. Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, p 6.
- ⁷⁵ It was through this border that guerrilla activity had spiked post-1975.
- ⁷⁶ Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 223; and Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, p 8, citing Ellert, p 112.
- ⁷⁷ Sidell *et al*, *Jane's Chem-Bio Handbook*, pp 165–166. Cholera exposure is through contact with contaminated water. 'It can thrive in saline water or water polluted with organic matter for up to 6 weeks.'
- ⁷⁸ Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 222.
- ⁷⁹ 'Smith's chemical warfare secrets revealed', *Observer*, 10 November 1991, p 18; and 'Kenya: terrifying reality of plague wars', *The Nation* (Nairobi), 21 October 2001.
- ⁸⁰ Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 222.
- ⁸¹ Sidell *et al*, *Jane's Chem-Bio Handbook*; and Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, p 8.
- ⁸² Flower, *Serving Secretly*, pp 137–138; and Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*.
- ⁸³ Submission to the Research Dept of the TRC by the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa, *The Chemical Warfare Cases: Questions About the Development of the South African Apartheid Regime and Its Secret Services in External Operations Like Hit Squads, Chemical and Biological Warfare*, 1997, available at http://www.contrast.org/truth/html/chemical_biological_weapons.html, p 5.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p 6. The Portuguese were also involved in the project before their empire collapsed.
- ⁸⁵ Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 221.
- ⁸⁶ *Chemical Warfare Cases*, p 6.
- ⁸⁷ 'Smith's chemical warfare secrets'. After independence Professor Symington moved to South Africa, and is alleged to have participated in making biological and chemical weapons in that country. Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, p 8.
- ⁸⁸ 'Anthrax as a biological weapon', *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 281 (18).
- ⁸⁹ *Ibid*.
- ⁹⁰ Sidell *et al*, *Jane's Chem-Bio Handbook*, p 162.
- ⁹¹ 'Anthrax as a biological weapon'; and 'First response to terror', *Insight on the News*, 26 January 1998, p 10.
- ⁹² Sidell *et al*, *Jane's Chem-Bio Handbook*, pp 162–163.
- ⁹³ *First Response to Terror*, p 10.
- ⁹⁴ Mangold, *Plague Wars*, p 218.
- ⁹⁵ Zimbabwe–Rhodesia: In Brief; Anthrax Outbreak in Matabeleland TTLs, BBC, 16 October 1979.
- ⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 19 October 1979.
- ⁹⁷ Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 222.
- ⁹⁸ 'Rhodesia forces used anthrax, cholera in guerrilla warfare', Agence France Presse, 8 July 1993.
- ⁹⁹ Cocks, *Fireforce*, p 236.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p 158.
- ¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p 159; and Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, p 6.
- ¹⁰² Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 218.
- ¹⁰³ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁰⁵ Meryl Nass, 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe, 1978–80: due to deliberate spread?', *PSR Quarterly*, 2 (4), 1992, p 198. See also 'Rhodesia forces used anthrax'; and Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 218.
- ¹⁰⁶ Nass, 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe'.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p 199.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*.
- ¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p 206.
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid*.
- ¹¹² Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 218, citing Defense Intelligence Agency, ref DoD 5200-1-R, August 1990, declassified under Freedom of Information Act on 1 February 1994.
- ¹¹³ Phone Interview with State Department Desk Officer, 14 November 2001, Miami.
- ¹¹⁴ E-mail Interview with author's confidential source, 15 November 2001, Miami.
- ¹¹⁵ Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 218.

- 116 Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, p 9.
- 117 Nass, 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe', p 105; and Cilliers, *Counter-Insurgency in Rhodesia*, p 238.
- 118 Cilliers, *Counter-Insurgency in Rhodesia*, p 141.
- 119 *Ibid*, p 239.
- 120 Nass, 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe', p 199.
- 121 See Taper Knox Chitiyo, 'Land, Violence and Compensation: Reconceptualising Zimbabwe's Land And War Veteran's Debate', *Track Two*, 9 (1) 2000.
- 122 Nass, 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe', p 205.
- 123 *Ibid*, citing AO Pugh & JCA Davies, 'Human Anthrax in Zimbabwe', proceedings of the International Workshop on Anthrax, *Salisbury Medical Bulletin*, 68, 1990, pp 32–33.
- 124 Nass, 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe', p 204.
- 125 *Ibid*.
- 126 See, for example, Godwin, *Rhodesians Never Die*, for the effects of emigration on white morale and manpower.
- 127 Nass, 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe', p 207. Nass suggests that there might be a correlation between the no-go areas and the use of anthrax by the Selous Scouts.
- 128 Daly, *Selous Scouts*, p 41.
- 129 Nass, 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe', p 206.
- 130 *Ibid*, citing Paul Epstein, 'In southern Africa, brutality and death', *Boston Globe*, 26 December 1987, p 23. For example, the Ebola virus and its strains are haemorrhagic fevers. In fact, Dr Tim Stamps, Zimbabwe's Minister of Health, has his 'suspicions about Ebola too' and deliberate spread by the Rhodesians. Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 220.
- 131 Nass, 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe', p 204.
- 132 *Ibid*.
- 133 Nesbit & Cowderoy, *Britain's Rebel Air Force*, pp 56–65.
- 134 Nass, 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe', p 205; and Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, pp 218–219. Because of their sanction busting activities, 'forgery was dead simple in the catalogue of tricks used during the dirty wars in Southern Africa'.
- 135 Nass 'Epizootic in Zimbabwe', p 204; and Mangold *et al*, *Plague Wars*, p 219.
- 136 *Chemical Warfare Cases*, p 69.
- 137 *Ibid*.
- 138 Cilliers, *Counter-Insurgency in Rhodesia*, p 9.
- 139 Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, pp 281–282..
- 140 See Special Investigation into Project Coast, 'South Africa's chemical and biological warfare programme', available at <http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/commissions/1998/trc/2chap6c.htm>, last visited 19 April 2002; and 'Dr Death implicates West', BBC News, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/africa/143006.stm>, last visited 8 August 2002.
- 141 Special Investigation into Project Coast.
- 142 Brickhill, *Zimbabwe's Poisoned Legacy*, p 10.
- 143 *Ibid*, p 59.
- 144 *Ibid*.
- 145 Resolution Concerning Southern Rhodesia, 1265th Meeting SCRes. 217, 20 SCOR, Resolutions and Decisions, p 8.
- 146 US Department of State, *Press Guidance*, 9 September 1988. 'Questions have been raised as to whether the prohibition in the 1925 Geneva Protocol against chemical weapons use "in war" applies to use in internal conflicts. It is clear that such use against civilian populations would be contrary to the customary international law that is applicable to internal armed conflicts, as well as other international agreements.'
- 147 See Vienna Convention Arts 17, 24; and International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg) Judgment and Sentences 41 A.J.I.L., 220-221 (1946).
- 148 *Karadzic*, 70 F.3d, p 238.
- 149 See, for example, *US v Smith*, 18 US (5 Wheat) 153, 161-62, 5 L.ed. 57 (1820).
- 150 International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg).
- 151 Four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and First Protocol of the Geneva Conventions of 1978, 75/UNTS/31. Protocol One applies also because it applies to, 'armed conflicts in which people are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their right to self-determination, as enshrined in the Charter of the UN.'
- 152 Ken Flower, the head of CIO, died in 1987. Ian Smith is still alive at 83, and as of the time of writing, is living in Harare and Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.
- 153 'Zimbabwe: government urged to probe reports citing use of chemical agents', Africa News Service, 12 November 1999.
- 154 'A socialist confronts poverty with a wealth of pragmatism', *Washington Times*, 5 November 1990.

The white population was 125 000 in 1990; 90 000 in 1991. 'Alienated from Africa', *Africa Report*, February 1991.

¹⁵⁵ 'Zimbabwe's "bush peace" deadly to white farmers', *Washington Post*, 8 March 1988. In 1988 whites held all but 12 of the top 200 executive positions in Zimbabwe's 100 largest companies. See also 'Alienated from Africa'.

¹⁵⁶ See Supra.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ 'Zimbabwe prepared for anthrax attacks', *Panafrican News Agency*, 25 October 2001.

¹⁵⁹ 'Zimbabwe: anthrax cases reported in Zhombe district', ZTV1, BBC Worldwide Monitoring, 27 October 2001.

¹⁶⁰ 'Zimbabwe's anthrax "gimmick"', BBC News, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/africa/newsid_1752000/1752767.stm, last visited 10 January 2002.

¹⁶¹ E-mail Interview with author's confidential source, 16 April 2002, Miami.

¹⁶² *Filartiga v Pena-Irala*, 630 F.2d 876 (2d Cir. 1980).

¹⁶³ *The Paquete Habana*, 175 US 677, 700, 20 S. Ct. 290, 299, (1900).

¹⁶⁴ 'Mugabe sued in New York over rights abuses', *Washington Post*, 9 September 2000, p A3.

¹⁶⁵ 'Exiles seek Castro's indictment in Belgium', *Washington Post*, 4 October 2001, p A32.

¹⁶⁶ 'Belgium "embarrassed" by probe of Sharon', *Washington Post*, 6 July 2001, p A18.

¹⁶⁷ 'Dr Death implicates West'.

¹⁶⁸ 'Revenge of South Africa's Dr Death', BBC News, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/africa/1926117.stm>, last visited 8 August 2002.