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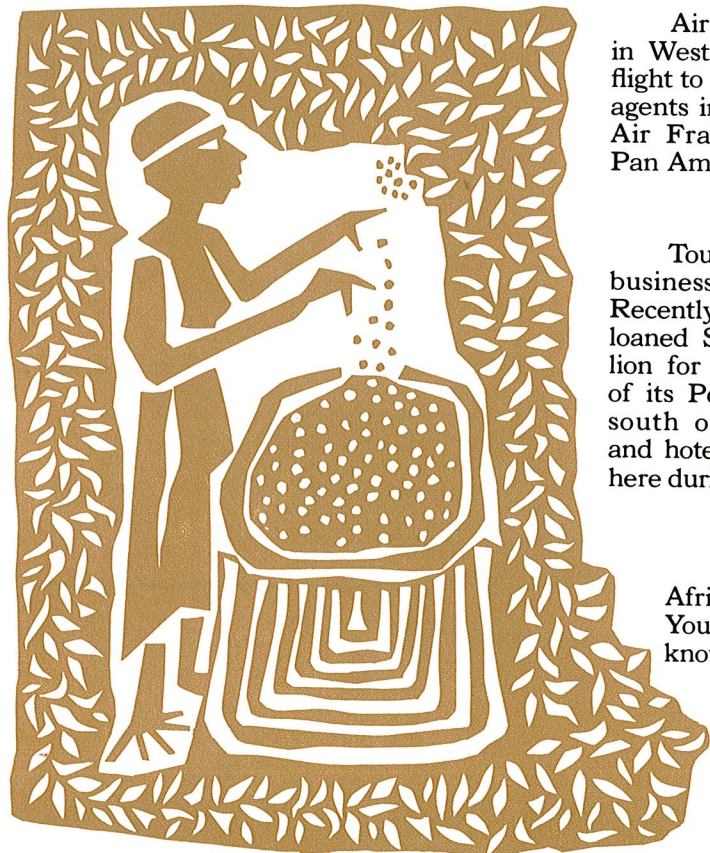
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AFRICA REPORT

AMERICA'S
LEADING MAGAZINE
ON AFRICA

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SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1982

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Exclusive Interview with Robert Mugabe

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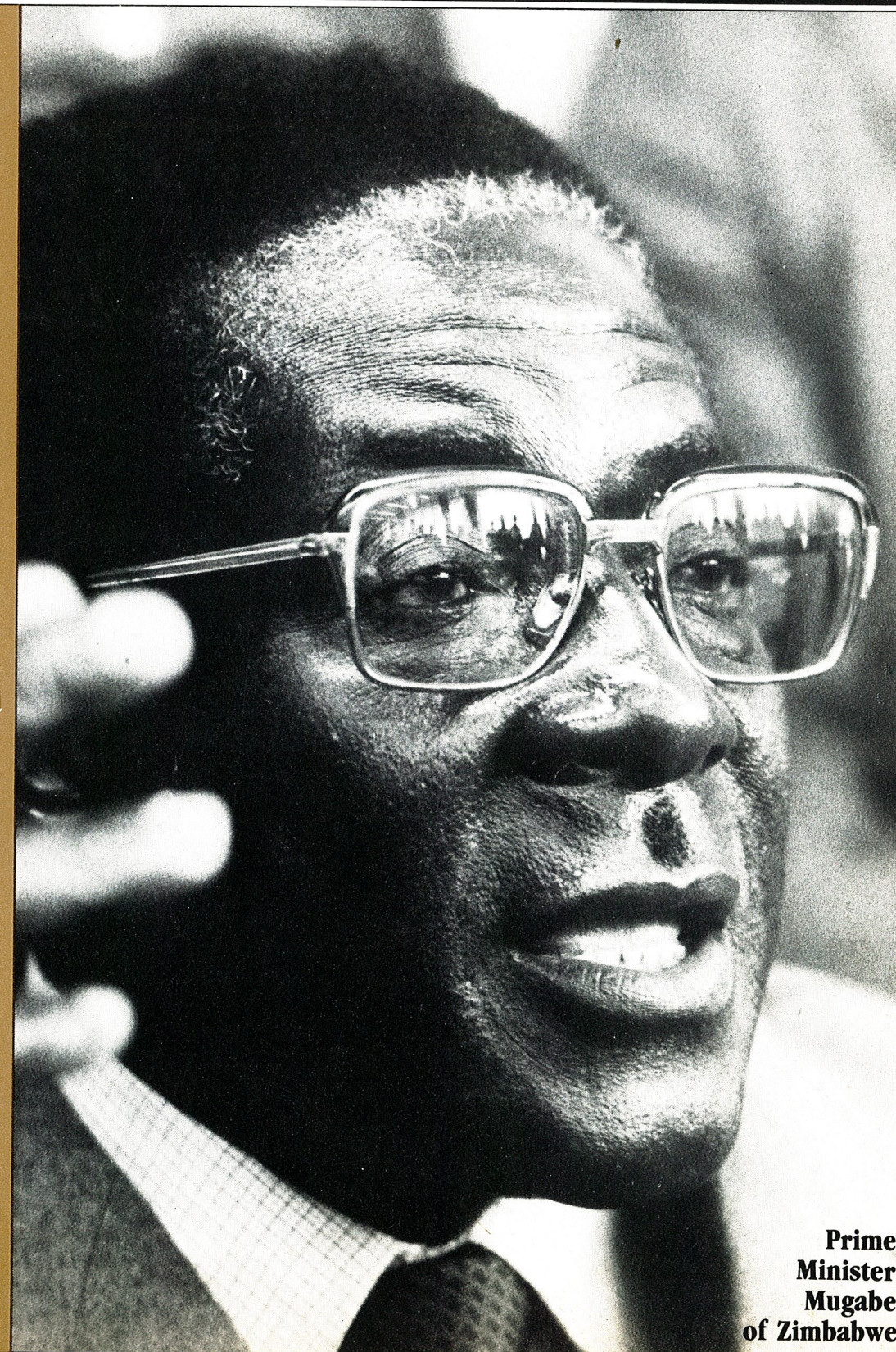
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Prime
Minister
Mugabe
of Zimbabwe



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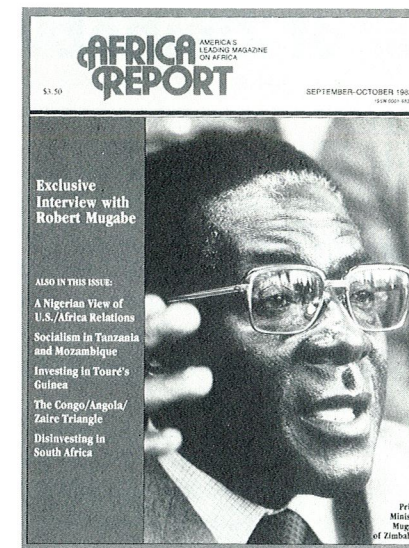
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IN THIS ISSUE

Our cover story is an exclusive interview with Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe by *Africa Report* assistant editor Margaret A. Novicki. The prime minister talks frankly about the difficulties still confronting his country in building national unity, especially in the face of activities of renegade military elements. He also discusses relations with the United States and explains the role he foresees for private and public enterprise in Zimbabwe's development.

The theme of economic cooperation with the United States is again taken up in the statement by Guinean President Ahmed Sékou Touré. The Tanzanian and Mozambican development models are compared and contrasted in an article by John Dimsdale, while Guy Arnold examines the significance of the massive Kenana project in Sudan.

Two articles focus on South Africa. In a study of the debate over disinvestment, David Willers concludes that given the current U.S. political climate, American companies will continue to do business in South Africa according to commercial criteria. Nigeria's UN Ambassador Maitama-Sule, presenting the case against U.S. involvement with South Africa, argues that Washington's policy of accommodation with Pretoria not only runs contrary to American principles but is also harmful to U.S. long-term interests.

Two articles deal with other nations in the southern African region. Mozambican Information Minister Jose Cabaco describes his country's relations with the Soviet Union, the United States, Portugal, and South Africa. Alexandre Mboukou describes the global, regional, and domestic factors that determine relations between Congo, Zaire, and Angola.

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The cover photo of Prime Minister Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe was taken by Alain Nogues/Sygma.

Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of Zimbabwe

INTERVIEWED BY MARGARET A. NOVICKI



Prime Minister Mugabe: "We have been preaching from the mountain a sermon on national reconciliation"

AFRICA REPORT: Mr. Prime Minister, it has been two years since Zimbabwe achieved independence. What have been the most challenging problems and the most rewarding aspects of your leadership?

MUGABE: When we took over, we had elements that, if allowed to remain as they were, would not have made for peace. We had to work as urgently as possible to harmonize those political and military elements, to create circumstances that were promotive of peace. I am talking here of the three or more disparate forces that we inherited. We

decided to get rid of those we believed were really superfluous and too personal to be entertained. We disbanded those, such as Bishop Muzorewa's militia and the Selous Scouts, and we got rid of mercenaries and the like. We remained with only three regular forces: the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA)—the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) military arm; the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA)—the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) military arm; and the former Rhodesian forces. We had to unite these—that was the most

challenging of all the situations we faced at the time of independence. To enable us to do this with greater facility and to ensure greater confidence on the part of the population and among the elements that were to be integrated, especially the former Rhodesian forces, we asked the British to undertake the exercise of helping us to integrate the armies. They sent us 200 instructors who did a marvelous piece of work, standing neutral between themselves and any of the three forces. We have now emerged with a single army. The physical integration did not necessarily mean integration, however. We had to undertake a process of transformation. There is continuing instruction to ensure that the army is apolitical and not associated with political parties. It is necessary that every soldier should have loyalty to the state and to the government that has been elected. One cannot pretend that the process has been accomplished, but quite a great number of cadres have accepted the new outlook. On the surface, you hear about the actions of a few dissidents, even among ZIPRA, but the 16,000 former ZIPRA individuals have by and large complied. There were a few elements who wanted to disturb the harmony that we have created, but the fact that we did not end up with violent conflict speaks for the success of the exercise. This was the most challenging of all.

Of course, we had other challenges in the socioeconomic sectors. We had to resettle the people who had been displaced by the war, some of whom had been refugees abroad. We have succeeded in that task. In fact, during the first year, we managed to get the peasants to produce bumper harvests in maize and cotton. Unfortunately, this past year, when they worked even harder than they did in 1980, the good God did not reward us with good rains and so there is going to be a lower harvest. But still we will have enough food for ourselves. There are areas that have been hit very hard by the drought, but we will move food from the areas that have surpluses. In fact, all marketed food is purchased by the state through the existing parastatal bodies, such as the Grain Marketing Board and the Cotton Marketing Board, under the agricultural marketing authority. We inherited these—we didn't create them ourselves. Then we distribute food to the areas that have been affected by the drought. This has already started occurring.

There has also been the political thrust to try and unite Zimbabweans in spirit, one might say, and make them accept one another. That also was a great challenge. Whatever we did by way of integrating the army also had to be done among the people, integrating them in spirit and getting them to accept that they are now one society, whatever political affiliations they owe, whatever ethnic groups they belong to, whatever religion they believe in, and whatever region they come from. This has been one of our major tasks. So we have been preaching from the mountain a sermon on national reconciliation. I think it has worked, but we had to demonstrate in practice that we meant it, and we went about it by establishing a government of national unity, by inviting ZAPU to join in government and also appointing two or so whites in government so as to make the population see that we no longer were living in the past. We no longer were at war with each other. What we needed now

was to forge one society, forge a program of development, and any development would depend on the degree of our unity, the degree of our acceptance of one another, and the degree of our acceptance of the new political order. So roughly, this is how we have gone about it. These are real challenges. We are happy that by and large we have succeeded. We don't think that we have succeeded 100 percent, but I think we deserve a distinction.

AFRICA REPORT: What would you like to see as the essential elements of U.S. policy toward Zimbabwe? Are you seeking more development assistance, U.S. investment, aid to the Southern African Development Coordination (SADCC)? Are you pleased with the pace of disbursement of aid and its direction, i.e., the Commodity Import Program?

MUGABE: If aid comes to us in a basket of grants, that would be the most desirable form in which we would want to see it. We are happy and grateful that the United States has been one of our largest donors. After Britain, they come second in the size of grant aid or soft loans extended to Zimbabwe. Certainly we would want to see this kind of aid extended to us on a much larger scale to enable us to get through this very difficult period. We are facing the economic world recession abroad and the prices of our minerals are depressed. We are doing very badly in terms of our earning capacity abroad because of the world recession, not because our productivity is low, but because we are not rewarded for that productivity sufficiently. It is these circumstances in which we believe that developed countries can come to our aid.

That is one area, but there is also the subject of trade. We would like to see the United States, for example, buy our sugar with less restriction and accord us a sugar quota. But to throw us in the basket of mini-producers of sugar when we actually are a large producer militates against our ability to sell our sugar. There are other areas in which we believe



"We would like to see the U.S. buy our sugar with less restriction"

trade can be enhanced. We are aware that the U.S. is one of our largest buyers of ferrochrome. With Union Carbide, an American multinational, being the main producer of chrome here, it is only natural that the United States should be one of our biggest buyers of this product. This is an area where we believe we can continue to expand our association.

There are other areas where we expect investment from U.S. companies. If investment were to come into these areas, it would enhance our development programs, increase employment, and improve production, leading to a greater gross domestic product. The U.S. has pressed us to sign an Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) agreement. As there have never been any OPIC agreements in this country before, if we sign an OPIC agreement covering new companies, we would be favoring new companies over established ones, unless we are going to extend the same protection cover to the existing ones. We believe that those that are already operating in the country have actually done much more than the potential of a new company, however bright, in terms of enhancing the economy and of leading to greater employment. But the multinational companies in existence—Union Carbide, Anglo American Corp., Rio Tinto, and Lonrho, which operates our pipeline—are companies with large assets in the country. We haven't expropriated those assets and we don't intend to expropriate them. If under any circumstances the state would want to acquire the properties, we would go about it in a very calculated way by consultation. In any case, we believe it is better to participate in these multinationals than to



A resettlement cooperative: "You resettle people so they can develop the land"

Photo: Margaret A. Novicki

nationalize them outright. Nationalization is therefore not on our cards. If we have these multinationals that have contributed to the development of the country, surely new multinationals that seek to invest in the country must accept the same circumstances in which their counterparts are operating—the guiding rules that operate. The law that protects them is one of the most rigid laws in the world—the constitution of Zimbabwe—which can only be amended by a 100 percent vote in Parliament. One hundred percent means everyone must vote even when some members may be dead. If they can't vote, one must wait until they are replaced in

Parliament. Everybody has to vote and vote "yes." If that is not a sufficient guarantee, then I don't understand what our friends would want as a guarantee.

Also, we ourselves would not want to be dragged into a government-to-government relationship with countries to which the nationals who seek to invest belong. Why should that relationship be created at all? We would want to create new relationships on a bilateral basis with countries where we have state-to-state programs. But where we have individuals seeking to invest in our country, whether these individuals come as individuals or as partnerships or corporations, this relationship is one between individuals and the state. Agreed, the state of which they are citizens would want to see them protected. But we would ask that state to look at our law and see whether the protection we offer is not adequate. We want to offer protection to all of them, the existing ones and the new ones. It is in these circumstances that we would want new investment to come. We want investment here and we hope that investment will be forthcoming from the U.S. private sector.

We are happy that a number of countries have presented us with commodity aid programs and we are happy that others have not tied us down to importing the commodities from their countries on given terms. Some are more flexible than others. One does tend to get a degree of inflexibility in commodity aid programs and we have been requesting various countries to modify such aid. A country may tie us down to importing its commodities and the items categorized under the program may include machinery. We need tractors in the country, but we must look at the kinds of tractors we already have because importing tractors means creating a need to import spare parts. You must have the technology to repair them. If our existing facilities here, the workshops we have, do not cater for this type of tractor, it means that we are being tied down to a type of commodity that would be a handicap to us or a disadvantage in the long term. Initially, when the tractor is new, it may have its advantage, but sooner or later we will have to cope with breakdowns and the need to repair it, and so we would need flexibility. If the United States says we can import tractors under the agreement, we would want it to agree that we can import the kind of tractor that we already have in the country. It may be a type of tractor made in the U.S.; it could very well be one made in Canada or Italy. We would want to see some degree of flexibility in that case.

AFRICA REPORT: Your government has been actively seeking foreign private investment as well as encouraging local private sector cooperation. Yet at the same time, you have said that eventually you expect to socialize the entire socioeconomic system. What are the short- and long-term policies with regard to the foreign and domestic private sectors?

MUGABE: This is why we say private investment must come into those areas or sectors where we believe we haven't got the technology for now and where we don't intend to operate for the foreseeable future, in terms of our socialist programs. There are areas where we believe we cannot apply socialism in the immediate future or in the medium term. So it is in those areas that we believe we can entertain

capitalism, as it were. In the majority of cases in those areas, we would want that private enterprise to join hands with the state, so that the state is represented in the particular enterprise and there is a joint venture between us. Hence, private enterprise in crucial areas is more acceptable when it is on a joint venture basis than on its own.

There are other areas such as the small enterprise in commerce—we don't bother about having little shops—but one does not expect that investment from the U.S. will come in the form of establishing little shops in competition with our own. It would kill our own shops. That type of shop should be on a limited scale because our own nationals would feel greatly threatened by large-scale commercial enterprises introducing themselves here. It is more in manufacturing, mining, and infrastructure that we need investment. Some of the investments can come by technology rendered to us. Suppose we want to establish a hydroelectric project. A company in the U.S. offers assistance in this direction and after bidding in competition with others, it becomes the preferred firm. That firm would come on a basis that would benefit the economy here. But there is also direct investment, where a firm creates itself here, perhaps as a mining or manufacturing group. Those two areas are very open. We haven't exhausted our mineral resources yet although quite a lot has been shipped abroad by the U.S.'s Union Carbide, Anglo American, and so forth. We still have lots of resources that need to be exploited and prospecting is going on all the time by various companies. It is an area where we are not ourselves equipped to undertake the processes. There are others. We have many projects but limited capacity to undertake tasks such as road building and railway construction. We will have to depend on outside firms to accomplish any sophisticated piece of work.

Then you have irrigation. That's very vital; we are going to emphasize this over the next three years or so. We are talking now of a three-year development plan and one of the features of this plan is the emphasis on the water infrastructure. I don't think we use 30 percent of our water in the rivers, hardly that. The rest just flows into the Indian Ocean and Mozambique doesn't use it either. They have the problem of floods from water that comes surging down the rivers from our side. If we can create lots of dams throughout the country, and also use subterranean water, getting it up to the surface, this would improve our agricultural performance and we would have two harvests instead of one. There would be more food for the people and there would be more food for Africa and other starving countries. So that is an area where we need real technology and the United States can provide it. Europe has participated in our railway electrification program. We are now at stage two of our Wankie thermal power plant, and firms in Britain, West Germany, and other European countries are participating in that venture. We can also have U.S. participation in these ventures. There are vast areas that call for investment by the United States.

AFRICA REPORT: It is apparent that you envision a one-party state for Zimbabwe. How do you foresee it coming about, as it does not seem likely to result from a willing merger of ZANU and ZAPU?

MUGABE: I suppose it will come from the people. We will go to a referendum on this one, preferably after our first term of office as a government, inviting the people to cast a vote on it. If they vote for it, then that's it. If they vote against it, we will accept their verdict. In fact, we are not in a hurry. With or without a one-party state, we have a clear majority. But we believe that the unity of our people is fundamental. You asked me in the first question about the greatest challenge. The need for the unity of our people, as I



Photo: Margaret A. Novicki

"We need to accelerate the pace of resettlement"

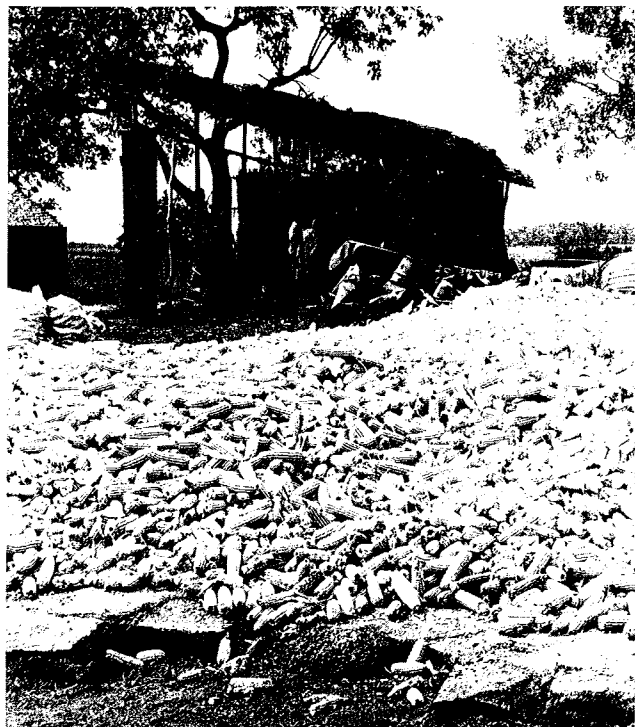
told you, was one of the biggest issues. We have demonstrated that we are for unity, we are for one society. We are one country, not two, and so we must have one society, whatever the divergent political, religious, or other viewpoints. The divergence should not be of such a degree as to prevent our people from regarding themselves as one.

We believe that with one society organized and contained under this one political umbrella, we can be more effective than we have been hitherto. It's a political, a philosophical concept and idea that we cherish very strongly indeed. We value it not because there is any desire on my part or on anyone else's part to be a dictator, but because we genuinely believe this is the best way of going about it. It also stems from our tradition that we had only one society in any particular geographical area, coming under a single chief. Under the political leadership that was offered, although it might have been traditional or feudal in some cases, our people were given the opportunity in their various areas to assemble, to express their views on fundamental issues before decisions were implemented.

In our particular case, what we have in mind is that all parties would fall under one umbrella. There would be only one party, but various viewpoints can be entertained—the rightists, the leftists, the center people. They can express

their views, but at the end of the day, the view of the majority becomes the view of the party and the view of the state. I don't see why that should be said to spell doom for our democracy. In fact, it enhances democracy in my view. Opposition for the sake of opposition is really a time waster and a negation of democracy in my opinion. You have a party opposing for the sake of opposition in Parliament. A person must stand up to criticize because a member on the government side has spoken, and if the opposition makes a statement, a member of the government side must counter it. We are not saying, of course, that there should not be any opposition in government. People should be allowed to stand as independents if they want to and not just stand as candidates for the one party. Tanzania does that, and in some cases, you get candidates sponsored by the party being defeated. That's what it should be. But then Tanzania being one society with one party presents just that concept of oneness and that's all we really want.

AFRICA REPORT: On the subject of land resettlement, can you assess the progress of the program thus far and cite its major constraints? Some critics maintain that the program is not being carried out rapidly or drastically enough to suit the needs of the people and that perhaps the policy of "willing seller-willing buyer" of land should be abandoned.



"In 1981 the peasants produced bumper harvests in maize and cotton"

Photo: Margaret A. Novicki

MUGABE: Yes, there have been problems. The first problem is really a financial one. Fortunately for us, we still have funds that have been donated by Britain that haven't been exhausted, some \$60 million, but that's no money

when you look at the size of the problem and the population that you want to finally resettle, in the region of 350,000 families. We have planned to resettle 162,000 families over the next three years. That may not sound rapid enough, but actually it is a very rapid program. When it started, it wasn't vigorous enough for obvious reasons. We had to plan it and planning meant taking into account the various inputs that should go into it, the various ministerial sectors affected by any resettlement program. You don't resettle people purely to provide them with a home or a piece of land. You resettle them so they can develop in the new environment and develop the land. Hence, you have to carve out the areas first—a geographical exercise—but one which must also entail water resources, and the Ministry of Water Resources and Development must come into it. Then as you resettle them, you must ensure that there are areas that have been marked out for building schools, hospitals, and clinics, and the establishment of growth points, where they will have their little shops. And this exercise has to be done therefore on a multilateral basis. You must have the Ministry of Roads involved in it, and the Ministry of Agriculture for the agricultural inputs. So it is that combination of inputs that has tended to delay the exercise.

I think we need to accelerate it, although we have accelerated the pace and it is faster now than it used to be. We also suffered from a shortage of staff sufficiently tutored in the exercise of land redistribution. But we are now in a better position to accelerate it and I am told it is going on much faster. It should go twice as fast as it is going at the moment. We will see what we can do to accelerate the pace, especially now that the people have just harvested their crops and they are looking forward to planting a new crop. We must get them in position as quickly as possible. It is already late because if they are to remove the trees and prepare the soil, it will be some time before they are really ready. They don't have the necessary equipment with which to carry out the exercise because we are still short of things like graders and tractors. We are getting them in gradual stages, but we are still very short.

The "willing seller-willing buyer" basis is the system we have adopted under the constitution. We don't seize land, we acquire it. If we reach a point where we have no funds from Britain and Britain is unwilling to extend further amounts for this exercise, then we will say, "No, the principle is no longer operative." But as long as we have funds for the exercise, I don't see any reason why we shouldn't continue along that pattern. I can see, however, our coffers running dry and our having to adopt some other method, perhaps creating bonds and getting government to acquire land on credit with a promise to pay in the future.

AFRICA REPORT: In the southern African regional context, you recently signed an agreement to join the preferential trade area for eastern and southern Africa, and Zimbabwe is also a member of SADCC. You are still required to rely heavily on trade routes through South Africa, which is supporting destabilization activities against Zimbabwe and Mozambique through the Mozambique National Resistance. What is the basis of your regional policy and how will you lessen dependence on South Africa?

MUGABE: The fact that we are now a member of these two organizations—the regional one, SADCC; and the east, central, and southern African one, the Preferential Trade Area agreement—speaks of our desire to cooperate with our neighbors and with the rest of Africa in creating a situation of economic interdependence. We believe that there are resources at our disposal which, if developed jointly, can lead to a greater volume of products being yielded and therefore offering us greater prospects of earning foreign currency, let alone greater prospects of creating employment in our region. We believe that if we can therefore examine those areas where we can be interdependent and facilitate cooperation among ourselves, it will reduce our dependence not just on South Africa, but on other countries as well. This is what we are working vigorously to achieve.

In terms of our relations with South Africa, yes, we have inherited a situation of, I don't want to call it dependence, although we have said so, but South Africa also depends on us because we are its largest market in Africa. And so they cannot easily get rid of us. Yes, we know they have a larger market outside Africa than we have, but within Africa, we are their largest market and so are they our largest market in Africa. This is a situation we have inherited. We have accepted it, but continue to look for other markets. Until we have created other markets, and we can do this through SADCC and through the new PTA agreement, the reality that confronts us demands that we continue to trade with South Africa and we have admitted this phenomenon quite openly. We have done our best to reduce our dependence on South Africa with respect to transportation. Whereas in April 1980 not a single train moved to Mozambique and 100 percent of our exports and imports went through South Africa, now some 25 percent of our goods either way travel through the ports of Mozambique and we are increasing this volume. It's nothing unusual, it's not anything new. We want to get back to the situation in which this country was before the 1976 sanctions by Mozambique. The Rhodesian government was exporting and importing 85 percent of its goods through Mozambique and we want to get back to that position. We are still a long way off, but we are getting there in gradual stages. Mozambique is also enlarging its harbors. The port of Beira is being dredged, so we hope that bigger ships will call there and a growing volume of our exports will come through Mozambique.

AFRICA REPORT: The Lancaster House agreement set some very rigid constraints on the policies that you can carry out. What provisions of the accord have you found most difficult?

MUGABE: I think it is the rigidity regarding constitutional amendments. We think the British were just unfair on this one, very unfair to insist that certain clauses can be amended only by 100 percent vote. That is really saying that the whites, with their entrenched parliamentary seats, can hold the rest of the population at ransom and that we must submit to the will of the whites. It is a racist provision in the constitution and we cannot have that lasting for all time. True, we will struggle through during the first five years, but during the second term of office, it just has to go and the will of the people must be reflected in the constitution. This

is a fundamental principle that we feel has been vitiated in this constitution—that the majority of the people can be held ransom by a small population.

AFRICA REPORT: Zimbabwe has been the victim of somewhat of a bad press in the United States. Is there anything you would like to say to clarify the image?



A dried-up river bed in drought-stricken Matabeleland: Food will be moved to the affected areas

Photo: Margaret A. Novicki

MUGABE: I want to appeal to fairness. There is no civil war taking place here. Yes, we have had our share of dissidents, but who hasn't got dissidents, who hasn't situations of violent conflict as a state that emerged from a circumstance of violence when we fought a very bitter struggle? It should be understood that the process of attaining peace is a long one and that as you proceed to achieve peace and calm and create unity among the people, there will be discordant notes to that harmony. We would want journalists to report us correctly, to be as objective as possible, to know their facts before they publish them. People just publish what they think the situation is. In most cases, it is what they want the situation to be—an unstable one. Those are not our well-wishers, but we know we have well-wishers in the United States who do not believe in this kind of propaganda. □