Intelligence Ethics: The African Authoritarian State Security Apparatus

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In the international arena, according to political scientist J. David Singer, “each actor has the legal, traditional, and physical capacity to severely damage or destroy many of the others with a considerable degree of impunity.” An authoritarian regime exercises that impunity in its pursuit of internal enemies who challenge the legitimacy of the regime. Intraparty rivals and emerging opposition parties pose the greatest threats to an authoritarian regime. Noted political scientist Samuel Huntington in his book, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, argued that “for the government interested in the maintenance of political stability, the appropriate response to middle class radicalism is repression, not reform.” In an authoritarian regime, “the security network operates as a ‘state within-a-state.’” The security network uses strategic intelligence less to identify and warn against threats from external enemies than to discover and respond to internal threats to political stability. Informed by its intelligence services, the authoritarian regime authorizes its state security apparatus to conduct purges among its own political partisans as well as to adopt counterrevolutionary strategies against internal opposition movements to mitigate and alleviate them as threats.

This calculus and the resultant response are not uniquely African or authoritarian; making use of a state’s strategic intelligence assets to thwart real and imagined domestic threats is a temptation for any regime that wishes to remain in power, be it democratic, socialist, or authoritarian. Therefore, for the African authoritarian regime, intelligence ethics is not a moral issue; the survival of the regime
and the stability of the state supersede any moral consciousness or considerations in conducting intelligence activities. In essence, ethical behavior in conducting intelligence activities is measured not in moral absolutes but pragmatically in terms of the hard realities of state security and regime survival—what is good for security and survival is ethical and what is not is unethical. For this reason, the African authoritarian regime: (1) maintains a de facto state of emergency; (2) uses the state security apparatus to identify and mitigate internal and external threats; and (3) restructures the state security apparatus to respond to these threats. The experience of Rhodesia and its eventual transition to Zimbabwe is a case in point.

The Rhodesian apartheid political regime led by Ian Smith declared a state of emergency in 1965 in response to the African nationalist movements' demand for majority rule and their declarations of armed struggle to achieve it. Given the commitment of the Rhodesian regime to retaining its apartheid character, its use of its intelligence and security assets reflected the regime's race-based, survival-at-all-costs, ethical paradigm. The state of emergency legitimized the decision of the authoritarian regime to broaden the role of the intelligence services within the state security apparatus and to marginalize the legislative and judicial arms of the government.

In 1980, at the end of protracted armed struggle, the African nationalist political regime led by Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe was faced with the challenge that every regime must undertake—to define the role and structure of the state security apparatus and to determine how that apparatus will reflect the character of the state. The Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) inherited an authoritarian repressive state supported by a powerful state security apparatus. The Mugabe regime was faced with the options to reform or restructure or transform the state security apparatus, including its ethical paradigm. Mugabe, based on the perceived threat to the survival of his regime, retained the existing Rhodesian state of emergency as well as restructured and broadened the state security apparatus. The result was continued marginalization of the legislative and judicial branches of government, not unlike the apartheid regime he had so recently supplanted. From the standpoint of intelligence ethics, the transition from Smith's apartheid regime to Mugabe's postcolonial regime did not lead to a change in the behavior of the intelligence services within the state security apparatus only to the identification of new targets of state repression. Clearly,
regime change does not guarantee reform or transformation of the state security apparatus or intelligence ethics.

Robert Weitzer, a sociologist, noted in his article “In Search of Regime Security: Zimbabwe since Independence” that the decision of the postcolonial regime to maintain the repressive state structures, in particular, the state security apparatuses, must be understood within the context of “two important variables: (1) the changing balance of forces, and (2) the internal dynamics and interests of the postcolonial state.” The declaration of a state of emergency by both the Smith and Mugabe regimes provided the context for an “ethos” based on regime survival and state stability, not on human rights or humanitarian law. The political regime’s intelligence ethics were defined by practical rather than moral considerations, and the intelligence methods used were situational—determined by the usefulness, appropriateness, and advisability of a particular action or behavior in a particular circumstance. Expediency, politically determined in relation to the perceived threat to the regime and the state, was the primary foundation of ethical behavior.

This paper defines intelligence ethics as a set of behavioral guidelines reflecting the ruling regime’s ideological and moral beliefs regarding the role of intelligence in society and interactions between the citizen and the state security apparatus based on the internal and external threats to regime survival and state security. The premise of this paper is that authoritarian and de facto one-party state African regimes: (1) maintain a de facto state of emergency; (2) use the state security apparatus to identify and mitigate the threats; (3) restructure the state security apparatus to respond to the threats; and (4) define intelligence ethics within the context of maintaining regime survival and state stability. This paper examines the structure of the state security apparatus for the authoritarian and de facto the one party state regime of Prime Minister Winston Field of Southern Rhodesian, President Ian Smith of Rhodesia, and President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe.

**Winston Field’s Regime: The Southern Rhodesian State Security Apparatus**

**Internal Threats:** Following World War II, the era of colonialism on the continent was coming to an end, and the emergence of independent African nations was changing the continent politically and
economically. At this point, the Rhodesian government of Prime Minister Winston Field had rejected any proposals that promoted majority rule. The primary threat to the regime and the stability of the colonial apartheid settler state was civil disobedience from the nonviolent African nationalist movements. With the growth of the African urban working class and middle class, we witnessed the rise of political activism and the formation of African nationalist movements that challenged the political, economic, and social inequities of the Rhodesian state. These new African classes challenged the repressive racial statutes and legislation of the colonial and apartheid state and the limited incorporation of emerging African classes into the political and economic colonial system.

James Chikerema, George Nyandoro, Edson Sithole, and Dundizye Chisiza formed one of the first African nationalist movements, the City Youth League (CYL), in 1955. The CYL used tactics of nonviolent civil disobedience. Its 1956 boycott of the bus services was an open challenge to the Southern Rhodesian government’s authority. At this time there were no demands for political independence; the CYL was primarily concerned with addressing the needs of urban African workers, such as the reform of the colonial system and their gradual racial integration into the political and economic system.  

In 1957, the CYL and the South African branch of the African National Congress (ANC) in Rhodesia merged under the leadership of President Joshua Nkomo, who would later head the Zimbabwe African Patriotic Front. The ANC’s primary objectives were the reform of the colonial political system, the abolition of racial segregation, and land reform. In order to increase their base of support, the issue of land reform was included because it attracted support from the African rural peasants. As the threat of African unrest and discontent became more vocal and discontent became more visible, the Rhodesian colonial government response in 1959 was to ban the ANC. ANC was reborn within months under the name the National Democratic Party (NDP) and was banned in 1961. Nkomo recreated the organization under the name of the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU). The survival tactic of the nationalists’ movement during this decade was that following each banning they reorganized under a new umbrella organization.

In response to the demands by the African nationalist movements, the Organization of African Unity, and the United Nations, the British government approved the 1961 constitution that guaranteed
gradual change from white minority rule to African majority rule in Southern Rhodesia. The white-rule Southern Rhodesian government’s rejection of the British Commonwealth’s proposal to promote majority rule was a signal to the African nationalist movements that constitutional reform was not forthcoming. In 1962, the Rhodesian Front merged with the Dominion Party and other white opponents to contest the 1961 constitution.

On September 19, 1962, the Rhodesian government banned ZAPU. ZAPU’s intelligence service knew of the ban well in advance and planned accordingly. Following this latest banning, the Rhodesian government placed the members of the central committee under restriction. ZAPU’s central committee was divided over how to respond to the government’s latest act of repression. At the time of the banning, the leader of ZAPU, Joshua Nkomo, was in Tanzania appealing to the Organization of National Unity to support his plan for a government-in-exile. Those members of the central committee who remained in Rhodesia made the decision that once the party was banned, they would operate underground rather than regroup under a new name. This decision was made to adopt a strategy of violence.

On December 17, 1962, the Rhodesian Front elected Winston Field as the tenth and final prime minister of the self-governing British colony known as Southern Rhodesia. In the face of both the threat of constitutional reform and African majority rule, Prime Minister Field invoked the 1960 Emergency Powers Act and declared a de facto state of emergency, but he was unwilling to declare a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from the British Commonwealth. However, the majority of the Rhodesian Front Party members and Field’s cabinet supported UDI and questioned his loyalty “because he had failed in July 1963 and again in January 1964 to advance the cause of independence during his visits to Britain.”7 Faced with this political challenge, Prime Minister Field resigned on April 13, 1964, leaving Southern Rhodesia at a political crossroads.

State Security Apparatus: As the level of the African nationalist threat escalated and the intraparty rivalry within the Rhodesian Front intensified, Prime Minister Field recognized the state security apparatus he had inherited was inadequate. Prior to the dissolution of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in December 1963, the Federal Intelligence and Security Bureau served as the coordinating agency analyzing intelligence gathered by the British South Africa Police (BSAP) and the police forces of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.
The colonial state security apparatus at the operational and tactical levels was staffed and supported by African volunteers who comprised approximately 80 percent of the police force and roughly two-thirds of the Rhodesian army. Still, the colonial state security apparatus was designed primarily to address policing actions and to wage war.

Under the authority of the 1960 Emergency Powers Act and the 1960 Law and Order Maintenance Act (LOMA), Prime Minister Field continued the de facto state of emergency in response to the call for African majority rule. By 1962, there were clear indicators and warnings that the threat against the Rhodesian Front regime and the state of Southern Rhodesia was shifting from nonviolent civil disobedience to armed struggle. To address this change in threat level, in October 1963, Prime Minister Field created the Central Intelligence Organization, using a ministerial mandate under the Department of the Prime Minister to avoid the need for parliamentary approval and supervision. Based on the new threat posed by the African nationalist movement’s call for armed struggle, Field had clearly anticipated the need for finished intelligence. The chief architects of the CIO were Prime Minister Field and Ken Flower, the first CIO director.

The structure of the CIO was to be a hybrid of the British and American systems. The Central Intelligence Organization was the primary collection and analytical agency targeting the African nationalist guerrillas in Rhodesia’s government. The CIO consisted of eleven branches of which six were the critical branches: Branch I (Internal), Branch II (External), Branch III (Military Intelligence), Branch IV (Government Telecommunications Agency), Branch V (Close Security), and Branch VI (Government Protective Security). The senior leadership of the BSA Police, the Southern Rhodesia Army (SR Army), the Royal Rhodesian Air Force (RRAF), and the head of the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) established the Operations Coordinating Committee. The OCC’s primary mission was to coordinate the strategic engagement efforts against the African nationalist movements. This expansion of the state security apparatus increased the Rhodesian Front’s intelligence capability and capacity to identify new threats and to monitor and mitigate existing threats. The intelligence collected and analyzed by the CIO was used by the BSAP to detain the central committee of the African nationalist movement in prisons for ten years. Prime Minister Field’s tenure was brief, but he was the architect who laid the foundation for the expansion of Rhodesia’s state security apparatus following the dissolution of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The regime’s political intelligence ethics
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were defined by the practical decision to maintain white minority rule rather than to agree to African majority rule.

**Ian Smith's Regime: The Rhodesian State Security Apparatus**

**Internal Threats:** Following the intraparty fighting within the Rhodesian Front and the resignation of Prime Minister Winston Field, Ian Smith, on April 13, 1964, became the eighth prime minister of Southern Rhodesia. He inherited a nation on the brink of war and an authoritarian state security apparatus. In November 1965 Smith declared a Unilateral Declaration of Independence from the United Kingdom. The primary objective of the Smith regime was to preserve the Rhodesian apartheid state and retain white power. The Smith regime regarded the African nationalist movements' demand for black majority rule and their declaration of armed struggle as a threat to white minority rule.

In the face of this perceived threat, the 1960 Emergency Powers Act and LOMA and the 1969 Republican constitution provided Prime Minister Smith with unlimited power, capability, and capacity to address threats against the regime and to restructure the state security apparatus. The Emergency Powers Act gave the president unlimited power to protect public safety, to maintain public order, and to preserve the peace. Smith used this authority to maintain a de facto state of emergency in response to the threat of armed struggle from the two most militant African nationalist movements—Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU).

The broad and vague language of the 1960 Law and Order Maintenance Act (LOMA) allowed the Smith regime to randomly identify what was considered subversive and to target individuals and groups:

LOMA banned publications; criminalized "subversive statements" and "intimidation," which it defined broadly; restricted persons without trial to designated areas; empowered police to search and arrest without a warrant; and summarily prohibited meetings. It outlawed the publishing of "false news," boycotting, creating "disaffection" in the police force, and using or encouraging violence, sabotage, and terrorism.

The Smith regime used this statute to target and criminalize the activities of the leadership and followers of the ZANU and ZAPU. They used all three acts to maintain internal security: the Emergency Powers Act, the Law and Order Maintenance Act, and the
Detention Act to ban ZANU and ZAPU. While the three acts expanded the authority of the Smith regime, their effectiveness as a deterrent to majority rule proved limited. Even though the Rhodesian government banned ZAPU on September 19, 1962, ZAPU’s central committee continued to operate underground rather than regroup under a new name. When Joshua Nkomo and his followers returned on April 16, 1964, the Rhodesian Front arrested them. This action to detain the core leaders of the African nationalist movement was sanctioned under the Detention Act.

In 1964 the Rhodesian government banned the executive central committee of the Zimbabwe African National Union. ZANU was formed following internal divisions within ZAPU. Immediately following the banning of ZANU, leader members were rounded up and sent to prison. In prison ZANU’s central committee was divided over whether to adopt an armed struggle strategy or to negotiate a peace settlement. A series of political developments lead to Robert Mugabe gaining control of ZANU: (1) Dr. Masipula Sithole, founding leader of ZANU, accepted the Lusaka Agreement for negotiated settlement; (2) the murder of the military leader Herbert Chitepo; and (3) the Nhari rebellion, an internal political coup attempt for power, failed. Mugabe, who would later become the first African prime minister of Zimbabwe, spent fourteen years in prison. Rather than form a government-in-exile, the ZANU leaders decided to organize and operate within Rhodesia illegally. The impact of these events changed the strategic direction of the nationalist movement from nonviolence to the adoption of armed struggle against the Rhodesian state.

When UDI went into effect in 1965, the Smith regime attempted to reduce the threat posed by the African nationalists by not allowing the African nationalist prisoners to have visitors; taking away access to news of the outside world; and prohibiting free association with prisoners in the neighboring camps. The Rhodesian government used the state security apparatus to create protected villages and to establish martial law tribunals to hang African dissidents. The government detained without trial over fifteen thousand people. During more than a decade of detention, ZAPU and ZANU leaders and their followers were subjected to inhumane and repressive conditions in Rhodesian prisons. The political prisoners were moved from jail to prison camps throughout their detention because the government feared that their contact with ordinary African prisoners would lead to subversion of the nonpolitical prisoners. The Smith regime intended to isolate their leaders from the African populace-at-large.
and their access to the international community. The objective was to reduce international pressure and condemnation to accept African majority rule from the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, and international nongovernmental organizations. However, detention of ZAPU and ZANU leaders did not undermine their commitment to independence. The Rhodesian government eventually released the African nationalists and their followers after more than a decade of detention because of international pressures.

Prime Minister Ian Smith labeled members of the African nationalist movements as insurgents and identified them as a threat to the survival of the regime and the stability of the Rhodesian state. He saw the growth of both ZAPU and ZANU’s popularity and strength among the urban and rural African populace as a threat to the stability of the white political regime. ZANU’s politicization and mobilization of the African rural masses led to the establishment of political support and bases of operation in the rural areas as well as among the Frontline States surrounding Zimbabwe.

Regime stability remained paramount for Prime Minister Smith as the nature of the threat changed with the Cold War reality of the Sino-Soviet rivalry playing out in terms of support for ZANU and ZAPU. The threat to regime stability escalated as ZAPU received support from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). On the international stage, the Russians as a member of the UN Security Council called for the use of comprehensive sanctions against Rhodesia. The Soviets condemned the Rhodesian Front and used the Zimbabwean struggle to bring to the surface the issue of colonialism and the right of self-determination for an oppressed people. With African governments in power, the Soviets anticipated a more receptive climate for developing a sphere of influence in the region through increasing their political, economic, and military presence. The Kremlin acted as a third party who provided assistance through the Frontline States and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The Kremlin demonstrated its commitment by supplying arms, training camps, and military advisors to ZAPU. The Soviets assumed a low profile in the armed struggle except for their assistance to ZAPU. Despite pressure from the Frontline States, the Soviets did not provide ZANU with any military assistance. The People’s Republic of China (PRC) also formulated a foreign policy to assist national liberation movements in colonies and apartheid states. In the mid-1970s, China committed to providing primarily arms and political/military advisors to ZANU. The major difference in the strategy of the two powers was that China emphasized ideological
commitment, politicization, and mobilization of the masses, whereas the Soviets emphasized the development of the military.

The ability of the Smith regime to survive and maintain the stability of the Rhodesian state was threatened by a third front—the Organization of African Unity and the Frontline States. The Frontline States played the role of negotiator and shuttle diplomat. They provided a diplomatic base for the Zimbabwean nationalists. The Frontline States' strategy of negotiated armed struggle called for (1) diplomatic isolation of the white regime; (2) international diplomatic and economic boycott of the region through sanctions; and (3) support for the armed struggle of the national liberation movements. This strategy was instrumental in shaping and directing the level of international involvement in the region and in determining the nature of that involvement. The OAU provided military funding to both ZAPU and ZANU but threatened to cut off its funding if they did not form a united front.

In the face of the overwhelming threat reality, Prime Minister Smith concluded that the demand for African majority rule was superseded by the need for the survival of the Rhodesian political regime and the stability of the Rhodesian state.

State Security Apparatus: In 1964, when Prime Minister Ian Smith came to power he inherited a state security apparatus that had been recently expanded by former Prime Minister Field to include the new Central Intelligence Organization and the Operations Coordinating Committee (OCC). Even with these additions, the state security apparatus remained largely a policing force with limited military capability and capacity to wage counterinsurgency against two African nationalist movements. In 1964, prior to the announcement of UDI, the first director of the CIO—Ken Flower—told Prime Minister Smith that

the case for UDI (Unilateral Declaration of Independence) was unsustainable—and the same prognosis—that it would fail. On the basis of reports we collated from military, economic and other sources, which were still overwhelming against UDI, we advised that the best course of action was to do nothing because Rhodesia already enjoyed self-government and that would be damaged irretrievably if change was forced through UDI.\(^{16}\)

Despite the intelligence provided by the CIO, the Smith regime moved forward in November 1965 with the announcement of Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence from Great Britain.
Smith retained the institutional integrity of the state security apparatus from 1965 through 1972 believing that by detaining the members of the central committees of both ZAPU and ZANU he could contain the threat. The prisons were only a short-term deterrent to the threat of insurgency as both ZANU and ZAPU continued to organize insurgent activities internally and externally while their leaders were in prison. The government's strategy was that the detention of the leaders would result in the disbandment of the movements and the unrest would quietly dissipate. As long as the tactics of the insurgent groups in the urban areas were primarily sabotage then the policing action of the state security apparatus was adequate to mitigate the threat.

In 1965, the Smith regime defined the African nationalist threat as an insurgency and personally supervised his government's counter-insurgency. This decision led Smith to reevaluate the capability and capacity of the state security apparatus to wage an effective counterinsurgency campaign. While the Operations Coordinating Committee (OCC), CIO, and the BSAP took the lead in coordinating the strategic approach, the prime minister was the final decision maker for strategic, operational, and tactical initiatives. This had serious consequences for waging the counterinsurgency.

From 1965 to 1972, the prime minister and the OCC, which included the senior leadership, were the strategic decision-making body: Internal Affairs, the CIO, the army, the police, Army Special Forces, and the air force. Prime Minister Smith exercised a very hands-on leadership style. It was the Smith regime that put the state security apparatus to the test as it attempted to mitigate the African nationalists' threat to the regime and state. Under the authority of the 1960 Emergency Powers Act and the 1960 Law and Order Maintenance Act, the Rhodesian police were responsible for all internal defense operations because Special Branch had so thoroughly infiltrated ZANU and ZAPU that the police were able to stop most incoming insurgents at the border.17

From 1972 to 1977, the OCC remained the strategic planning body for the state security apparatus. Despite its representative nature and inclusive membership of the key security organizations, the consensus decision-making process of the OCC was a major impediment to executing military actions. This resulted in decision delays that prevented the timely execution of military action. Prime Minister Smith's authoritarian leadership style and his unwillingness to delegate strategic authority to a sole military commander proved costly in terms of military losses.18
With external support from China, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the Organization of African Unity, the military capability and capacity of both ZANU and ZAPU increased, and so did the threat to the Rhodesian regime. By 1977, the state security apparatus strategic command structure was becoming a liability because at the most senior level no single commander had overall authority or seniority over fellow committee members. Accordingly, all decisions had to be reached through an arduous system of consensus, with each member retaining the responsibility for ensuring that his service carried out agreed-upon command decisions. Issues that could not be decided in the JOCs [joint operations centers] and sub-JOCs were thus referred up the command structure to the OCC [operations coordinating committee], where top commanders debated their forces' appropriate role in each operation. Those issues not resolved by the OCC were referred further up the line to the Prime Minister.¹⁹

Prime Minister Smith was reluctant to change the command structure and give authority to a single military commander, but the escalating and changing nature of the threat against the Rhodesian regime required a more responsive command structure. He transferred authority to the National Joint Operations Center (NATJOC), which replaced the OCC and to which Combined Operations (COMOPS) reported. [AQ2] The NATJOC was ostensibly endowed with the authority to exercise command over all the security forces and relevant civil agencies.²⁰

Regime change did not result in reform or transformation of the Rhodesian state security apparatus or intelligence ethics. The Smith regime maintained a de facto state of emergency and used the state security apparatus to identify ZAPU and ZANU as internal threats to regime security and the survival of the state. The Smith regime expanded the capability and capacity of the state security apparatus in an effort to mitigate the threat by launching a counterinsurgency campaign against ZANU and ZAPU. However, restructuring and expansion of the state security apparatus was not sufficient to overcome the African nationalist insurgency threat.

**Robert Mugabe's Regime: The Zimbabwean State Security Apparatus**

**Internal Threats:** On April 18, 1980, Zimbabwe, a new African nation-state, gained its independence, and a new African nationalist regime came to power under the leadership of Prime Minister Robert Mugabe. Mugabe served as prime minister from 1980 through
In 1987, Mugabe became president with the abolition of the position of prime minister. He inherited an expansive authoritarian state security apparatus. The primary objective of the Mugabe regime was to establish a one-party state based on the tenets of African nationalist ideology and Maoist ideology, and to preserve the order of the state. Immediately following independence, the primary internal threats to regime survival and the disruption of state stability were the civil disobedience of labor unions, the press, war veterans, political parties, and humanitarian organizations. The Mugabe regime regarded their demands as a direct threat to the establishment of a one-party state.

In the face of perceived internal and external threats, the 1960 Emergency Powers Acts, the Law and Order Maintenance Act, and the Detention Act provided Prime Minister Mugabe with unlimited power, capability, and capacity to address threats against the regime and to restructure the state security apparatus. He targeted Joshua Nkomo and his ZAPU followers, accusing them of engaging in subversive activities in Matabeleland to trigger armed revolt because of Nkomo’s refusal to accept defeat in the 1980 presidential election. Mugabe used the broad authority of the state of emergency to target the external insurgent group—Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO)—created by the Rhodesian government in Mozambique. RENAMO was a Rhodesian-South African state-sponsored insurgent group that was created first to undermine the African nationalist armed struggle and then to destabilize Zimbabwe as a state.

Unlike the Smith regime that used the Emergency Powers Act to circumvent international sanctions, Mugabe used the same authorities to address economic threats to state control of mineral resources and land. The Mugabe regime used economic and financial powers under the Emergency Powers Act in 2008 to authorize the police and army to launch Operation Chikorozha Chapera (no more mining) against gold panners, and Operation Hakudzokwi (no return) against thirty thousand diamond panners.

The greatest threat to the survival of Mugabe’s regime and the stability of the Zimbabwean one-party state was the rise of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in general and presidential elections from 2006 to 2008 as a viable political opposition. This marked the first time that a political opposition group generated open Zimbabwean popular support capable of challenging Mugabe’s political survival. The government launched a sustained campaign against MDC using the state of emergency and the legislative authority to
detain, ban, and prosecute members and supporters of MDC. The Central Intelligence Organization, war veterans, and the youth militias conducted Operation Makavotera Papi—a sustained occupation of Masvingo, Mashonaland South, and Manicaland for their citizens’ political support of MDC in a midterm election. This use of the state security apparatus resulted in the withdrawal of MDC from the run-off election.25

President Mugabe retained and used the Emergency Powers Act, Law and Order Maintenance Act, and the Detention Act from 1980 to 2009 to: (1) maintain a de facto state of emergency; (2) control intraparty rivalry; (3) target ZAPU from 1980 to 1984 to consolidate the one-party state; (4) respond to external state-sponsored insurgents; (5) control the 2000, 2002, 2005, and 2008 general and presidential elections; (6) target and delegitimize MDC as a viable political opposition party; (7) suppress civil disobedience groups; (8) restructure and expand the state security apparatus to respond to threats; and (9) define intelligence ethics within the context of maintaining regime survival and state stability.

State Security Apparatus: In 1980, Prime Minister Mugabe inherited a nation under a “state of emergency,” a de facto one-party state, and an expanded authoritarian state security apparatus; “the repressive state [was] structurally disposed to the formulation and application of illiberal policies.”26 Mugabe decided to retain the expansive authorities provided by the Emergency Powers Act, the Law and Order Maintenance Act, the Indemnity and Compensation Act, and the Protection of Wildlife (Indemnity) Act to address perceived threats. Another important legislative legacy was the 1975 Security Force Indemnity Regulations, which “indemnified members of the security forces and other government servants for any actions carried out in good faith in defense of national security . . . and gave the Minister for Law and Order authority to terminate actions for damages before the High Court.”27 This legislation gave the prime minister unlimited authority to authorize and commit atrocities.28

From 1980 to 1984, Mugabe retained the existing formal structure of the Rhodesian state security apparatus, but the escalation and changing nature of the threat against ZANU’s regime required a change in command structure. The regime incorporated the war veterans and the ZANU-PF Youth League as a shadow or an informal part of the state security apparatus. To reduce the insurgent threat posed by returning war veterans, the Zimbabwe military was an amalgamation of the three former military forces: Zimbabwe
Patriotic Army (ZIPRA) and the Zimbabwe African National Army (ZANLA), and the Rhodesian army. The integration of the three military components expanded the military capability of the regime and expanded the size of the state security apparatus. The result was a highly politicized and ideologically oriented military component.

President Mugabe increased the state security apparatus by politicizing the expansion process based on party affiliation, in particular ZANU party affiliation. The military promotion prospects of senior leadership within the state security apparatus were contingent on their ranking within ZANU. The party controlled the newly restructured state security apparatus, but ultimate decision making remained in the hands of the prime minister, who is both head-of-state and head-of-party. This allowed the political regime to exploit the powerful Central Intelligence Organization. As the internal opposition threat increased so did the politicization of the state security apparatus, in particular, the Central Intelligence Organization, Police Intelligence, Military Intelligence, the Zimbabwe National Army, the Zimbabwe Republic Police, and the Zimbabwe Prison Service. The regime relied heavily on these agencies to identify and mitigate threats to the regime.

From 2000 to 2008, MDC’s democratization platform was the most significant direct threat to the regime’s one-party state structure. The general and presidential elections of 2000, 2002, 2005, and 2008 challenged President Mugabe’s political base of support. Regime change from an authoritarian apartheid one-party state to an African nationalist authoritarian one-party state did not guarantee reform or transformation of the state security apparatus or intelligence ethics. The repressive and sweeping power derived from the state of emergency allowed President Mugabe to: (1) make emergency regulations; (2) interpret essential services; (3) define and mitigate the threat; (4) structure the security apparatus; (5) make regulations for preventive detention; (6) consolidate state economic and financial control and distribution of goods and services; and (7) continue regulation in certain circumstances.

Conclusion

Regime change did not result in reform or transformation of the Rhodesian and Zimbabwean state security apparatus or intelligence ethics as practiced by the regimes. Like Winston Field and Ian Smith, Robert Mugabe retained control over the state security apparatus
and was the ultimate political, military, and ideological decision maker. Each regime engaged in the politicization of intelligence and expanded the capability and capacity of the state security apparatus in an effort to mitigate both internal and external threats by launching counterinsurgency campaigns. The Field, Smith, and Mugabe authoritarian regimes maintained a de facto state of emergency and used the state security apparatus to identify internal and external threats to regime security and state survival.

Notes

4. Ibid., 531.
12. Ibid., 186.
18. Ibid., 18.
19. Ibid., 16.
20. Ibid.
25. Ibid., 6.

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