



# LEARNING WARFARE BY MAKING WARFARE

**MAO TSE-TUNG AND CHIMURENGA** by Paresh Pandya (Johannesburg, Skotaville Publishers, 1988) Available from Skotaville Publishers, P.O. Box 32483, Braamfontein. Telephone: (011) 339-1871, 272 pp, softcover, R25,35

THIS work was originally presented to the University of South Africa (Unisa) in 1986 in fulfilment of a Master of Arts Degree in Strategic Studies.

## The Objective

Pandya summarizes his objective in the following words:

"The reason for this book was to investigate whether the change in *status quo* that brought ZANU into power can be solely attributed to Mao Tse-Tung's theory of insurgency," (pg. 228)

with the rider that:

". . . (L)essons or conclusions applicable to a similar situation in South Africa might be found to emerge as a by-product of research." (pg.9)

The following disclaimer is made:

"This book is not aimed at determining how successful or well the war was fought, it does not seek to examine the problems encountered by the participants, for example, the problems of opposition by ZAPU, of support from the USSR favouring ZAPU, of the impact of the war's being carried into Mozambique, of the difficulties caused by fluctuations in the international relations of Mozambique or of ZANU itself." (pgs. 230-1)

## This Review

I aim to evaluate Pandya's study in the light of Mao's analysis and basic line and theory on the question of warfare and the actual application thereof (if any) by ZANLA.

I shall first present Pandya's version of Mao's theory and his version of ZANLA'S application thereof. *This does not mean that I agree that Pandya's arguments are correct, either in whole or in part. Not at all!*

As a departure point to this subject, Mao remarks in his analysis "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War" penned during December 1936:

*"The laws of war are a problem which anyone directing a war must study and solve.*

*"The laws of revolutionary war are a problem which anyone directing a revolutionary war must study and solve."*

*"The laws of China's revolutionary war are a problem which anyone directing China's revolutionary war must study and solve."*

It is fundamentally incorrect to transplant Mao's analysis holus-bolus to the situation in Zimbabwe or to any other situation for this would amount to "cutting the feet to fit the shoes." War and its laws are developmental.

The concrete application of Mao's military science to strategy, campaigns and tactics requires:

- (a) studying lessons, paid for in blood, which are a heritage of past wars, and
- (b) testing these lessons against our

own experience, assimilating what is useful, rejecting what is useless and adding what is specifically our own.

(December 1936)

## Mao's "Three-Phased Model"

Pandya's central thesis is that Mao's strategy of guerilla warfare is a three-phased one comprising:

**Phase I: Strategic defensive** in which "organisation, consolidation and preservation of base areas situated in isolated and difficult terrain" occurs. During this phase, "guerrillas are recruited, organised and trained to carry out agitation and to do propaganda work." (pg. 19)

Mao's emphasis was on people's war. Said he: ". . . (W)eapons are an important factor in war, but not the decisive factor: it is people, not things that are decisive . . ." (pg. 22) The guerrilla army has to make do with meagre resources and store its caches in inaccessible, far off and uninhabited regions.

Mao emphasized that self-defence units should be formed amongst the masses to provide logistical and other support to the guerrillas. These self-defence units must be given military training.

Pandya says that Mao favoured the development of separate political and military hierarchies (pg. 223) He argues further that Mao recommended that politicization and mobilization occur via the implementation of a code of behaviour, by way of articles, pamphlets and other literature includ-

ing inspiring poetry and by way of political meetings. The use of traditional cultural methods was emphasized and the cause of "any local discontent" was exploited "to its fullest potential to create political awareness." (pg. 153)

**Phase II: Strategic offensive** in which "terrorist acts of sabotage and assassination of collaborators takes place. Attacks are also made on isolated and vulnerable military and police outposts." (pg. 23) Pandya adds: "According to Mao, the level of success in carrying out any attack is largely determined by the following factors: pre-attack preparation, the level of secrecy maintained prior to and after the attack, and the actions taken by the combat unit after the attack." In other words, the key to success lies in the element of surprise.

**Phase III: Mobile warfare** which Pandya describes as the phase of "decision or destruction," when "the 'enemy's' destruction takes place by conventional military operations or settlement through decision and negotiation." (pg. 24) Pandya adds: "Mao lays down two main conditions for the transformation of combat units engaged in guerrilla war into the regular army fighting a conventional war. They are: firstly, increasing the number of combatants and secondly, improving the quality of their fighting."

**Foreign aid and assistance:** Pandya maintains that this element is crucial to Mao's entire strategy: "It is apparent that no liberation movement can successfully achieve its objective if it does not receive the required aid, assistance and support from the international community." (pgs. 26-27)

Pandya stresses that Mao's prescriptive model, while designed specifically for Chinese conditions, reveal "an almost complete blueprint for insurgency by a nationalist movement which:

- is suppressed by the incumbent government,
- is seeking to represent and gain the support of a large proportion of the rural population,



- is militarily and materially inferior to the incumbent government,
- is receiving no significant attention and support for its cause,
- is seeking to gain political power." (pg. 27)

## ZANLA and Mao

Pandya contends that ZANLA originally employed a Guevarist approach, but had to seriously reconsider this after the sporadic and ineffective nature of the operations following upon and including the Battle of Sinoia on 28 April 1966 became apparent. (pgs. 161 and 221)

By the end of 1972, says Pandya, ZANU was able to establish political cells in Zimbabwe. By mid-1978, the Tribal Trust lands became secure base areas for ZANLA. ZANLA largely depended on rear bases outside the borders of Zimbabwe viz bases in Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania.

Pandya is unable to define what a liberated zone referred to, quoting both ZANLA's definition and that of the Rhodesian Security Forces. What is clear, however, is that ZANLA did not claim to have total administrative and military control over any part of Zimbabwe *by day!*

Nevertheless, Pandya equates the ZANLA-defined liberated zones to Mao's "base areas" and traces the choice of terrain (areas covered with high mountains and large rivers) as also the fact that ZANLA chose the rainy season to launch its attacks di-

rectly to Mao's prescriptions.

Pandya admits that ZANU had little or no success in mobilizing the so-called "Indian" and "Coloured" sections of the Black population. He also strongly contends that ZANLA guerrillas were recruited from refugees to Mozambique and Zambia: "The reason for such a large percentage of rural peasants being recruited was mainly because they were ground between two millstones - the military and the police on the one side and the ZANLA forces on the other side." (pg. 85) (emphasis added).

The author's contention is that the preponderance of rural peasants in ZANU's ranks shows a direct application of Maoist military strategy. He describes the complementary role of the young apprentice militants, the *mujibas* and their female equivalents of all ages, the *chimbwidows* who:

- "...- Acted as liaison between the population and the combat units.
- Acted as liaison between combat units.
- Provided information and assistance to the guerrillas.
- Provided logistical and other assistance." (pg. 95)

and informed people of *pungwes* (political meetings). *Chimbwidows* also specifically provided food for and washed the clothes of the guerrillas and acted as singers and dancers at *pungwes*. (pgs. 100-101) Pandya concludes that the role of the *mujibas*



and the *chimbwidows* corresponded exactly to that of Mao's self-defence units, even though they were untrained militarily. (pg. 224)

Pandya argues that ZANLA instructors trained in the People's Republic of China were imbued with Mao Tse Tung Thought. The application of Maoist strategy within ZANLA, Pandya maintains, is apparent in:-

- (a) the ZANLA Code of Behaviour which was a verbatim adoption of Mao's three rules of discipline and nine points of attention,
- (b) the use of chiefs to supply food, shelter and intelligence to the guerrillas as well as the use of missionaries,
- (c) the employment of spirit mediums who supported ZANU as virtual military and political advisors and who were a powerful magnet for recruitment,
- (d) the issue of Mao's *Red Book* to ZANLA guerrillas for their personal use,
- (e) the distribution of publications such as *Zimbabwe News* and *Chimurenga News* by these guerrillas to the Zimbabwean people,
- (f) the fact that guerrillas carried medical supplies for the populace,
- (g) the employment of *chimurenga* and freedom songs to make people aware of their oppression and exploitation,
- (h) the use of *pungwes* to conscientize people and terrorize them especially via people's courts which punished "collaborators" by sentencing them to death or amputating them (see pg. 149),
- (i) the use of radio facilities provided by Mozambique,
- (j) the use of *chimurenga* names i.e. *noms de guerre* (such as Yeukai Chimurenga= You must never forget the revolutionary line) by the guerrillas,
- (k) the concentration by ZANU's external wing on mobilizing international support (including the isolation of the Smith regime) and on obtaining sanctuary, economic and material aid, cash grants and recognition,
- (l) the separation of the military and the political wings of ZANU with overall command in the hands of



- the Revolutionary Council or Dare-Re-Chimurenga (later the Central Committee),
- (m) the popularization by the internal wing of ZANU of the leadership of Robert Gabriel Mugabe which was instrumental in bringing him to power,
- (n) the fact that targets for guerrilla attacks, usually unpopular farmers were decided on in consultation with the local peasants,
- (o) the effective use of the surprise element to create confusion and uncertainty among the government forces, thus affecting their morale,
- (p) the use of unsophisticated weaponry such as landmines, dynamite and grenades,
- (q) the equality between male and female ZANLA guerrillas with regard to programme of training and opportunity to rise in rank.

Pandya concludes that ZANLA applied Mao's strategies on a virtual point-by-point basis with regard to Phase I of *chimurenga* and substantially adhered to Mao's model with regard to Phase II. Pandya is at pains to explain that these two phases coincided and overlapped.

As regards Phase III, Pandya argues that while the Rhodesian security forces had smaller numbers than ZANLA and were unable to sustain a conventional campaign, "the ZANLA Forces were . . . neither prepared, nor could have withstood a mobile conventional attack from the Rhodesian Security Forces in 1979

when the hostilities ended, or at any other time before that date. However, it is clear that should either party have initiated a conventional attack, ZANLA Forces would certainly have fared second best." (pg. 187)

The eventual outcome of Phase I and II was the negotiated settlement or National Convention at Lancaster House fashioned by the West collaborating with the Frontline states.

### A Perversion of Mao's Theory

It is instructive to note that Paresh Pandya devotes roughly 5,1% of his study to Mao's Theory of Insurgency. Almost 41,5% of the study concentrates on Phase I of Mao's alleged strategy as applied by ZANLA, 6,9% on Phase II, 3,3% on Phase III and 10,4% on Foreign Aid.

Pandya makes Freudian slips which are indicative of both his class and national outlook. Not least of these is the total distortion and perversion of Mao's systematic and comprehensive military line. Readers will note the use of terms such as "terrorist acts" - Mao's principled opposition to terrorism is legendary - to describe Phase II.

Equally revealing are the following excerpts:

"(The rural peasants in protected villages) began to perceive the government as their enemy, which sometimes the authorities unfortu-

nately confirmed by some of their poor arrangements, lack of planning and slipshod approaches to the villages," (emphasis added) and

"The isolation of the rural population from the guerrillas failed as a solution to insurgency in Rhodesia. Instead it only provided ZANU and ZANLA with another method to mobilize 'the masses', but a true and lasting solution should have been timely political changes." (pg. 153)

Pandya's exposition of Maoist military doctrine is absolutely jejune, concentrating as it does on trivia. Pandya attempts to reduce Mao's military thought to a "shopping list" and then ticks off the items available in *chimurenga* which bear a crude resemblance to the Chinese experience of guerrilla warfare, with a passing reference to the specificity of conditions in Zimbabwe (hence the employment of the spirit mediums and the missionaries, for instance).

But a cursory examination of the Pandya "shopping list" reveals that the items listed are of the essence of any and every sort of guerrilla warfare – these items are not specifically Maoist at all!

It is impossible to understand Mao's military line without understanding and applying Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. As Mao said in his December 1936 piece on "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War":-

"The naked eye is not enough, we must have the aid of the telescope and the microscope. The Marxist method is our telescope and microscope in political and military matters."

Mao brilliantly applied materialist dialectics to the question of warfare and the development of revolutionary strategy for warfare in China. Listen:

"In war, offensive and defence, advance and retreat, victory and defeat are all mutually contradictory phenomena. One cannot exist without the other. The two aspects are at once in conflict and in interdependence, and this constitutes the totality

of a war, pushes its development forward and solves its problems." ("On Contradiction", August 1937)

For Mao, the chief method was "to learn warfare through warfare . . . A revolutionary war is a mass undertaking; it is often not a matter of first learning and then doing, but of doing and then learning, for doing is itself learning."

Pandya uses the terms "liberation movement" and "Party" interchangeably but this is incorrect. Herbert Ushewokunze (presently Zimbabwe's Minister of Political Affairs) who recently announced that "Even dreaming of socialism is a non-starter . . . We won't see true socialism here. Nor will our children" (see "Investment code brings ideological dilemma" *The Natal Mercury* 10 July 1989) grasped this distinction:

"(M)ass parties cannot articulate a coherent ideology because they have to accommodate so many interests. A party joined by former tribalists, racists and regionalists must compromise its socialist position if it has to retain these new members . . ." (*An Agenda for Zimbabwe* 1984 pg. 5)

## Gloss

Pandya glosses over important details. Mao argued that the Party, provided it had the correct ideological and strategic orientation, must command the gun and not the other way round. The entire development and independence of ZIPA (formed in 1975 to unite ZANLA and ZIPRA guerrillas) and their correct opposition to the capitulationist line which began to assume sway in ZANU rates not even a footnote in what purports to be a serious academic study.

ZANU went through a period of turmoil and sharp ideological struggle. The development of the armed struggle produced a revolutionary headquarters in ZANU. This headquarters rejected the Lusaka Agreement of 7 December 1974. The murder of Herbert Chitepo during March 1975 followed the Nhari Revolt in ZANU and provided Zambia with an excuse to clamp down on ZANU's revolutionary headquarters.

The ZANLA-ZIPRA alliance broke down in 1976 when Nkomo negotiated with Smith. While the alliance lasted, however, there were serious differences over military strategy. The Soviet-trained ZIPA forces favoured operating as a regular army with sophisticated weaponry. As a ZANLA/ZIPRA commander pointed out: "We needed rifles, they wanted tanks." (*Africa Confidential* Volume 17 Number 17, 1976) They paid scant attention to mobilization and consolidation of the masses, relying on spectacular – and symbolic – military operations.

ZIPA rejected the Anglo-American Kissinger Plan (September 1976) as an imperialist plot "intended to sabotage our revolution." (quoted by Andre Ascrow *Zimbabwe: A Revolution that lost its way?* Zed Books 1983 at 105) At about the time the Patriotic Front (PF) was formed i.e. 9 October 1976, Dzinare Machingura, ZIPA's Deputy Political Commissar, gave this explanation as to why ZIPA resisted control by the politicians:

"ZIPA is an army in the traditional sense of the word. But ZIPA is a unique and revolutionary army in the sense that it has a strategic role of transforming itself into a political movement. The ZIPA structure accommodates the shouldering of both the military and the political tasks of the revolution."

– quoted by Ascrow at 100

The existence of ZIPA as a separate factor was vital in preventing capitulation at the Geneva Conference. In order to absorb ZIPA into ZANU, Mugabe formed a politico-military pact with Tongogara. When ZIPA accused the ZANU leadership of lack of contact with cadres in the field, of Mugabe's lack of military knowledge and of being responsible for the Chimoio camp massacre by Rhodesian troops in November 1977, Mugabe and Tongogara sought the help of the Frontline states in removing and liquidating ZIPA's leadership.

There was a significant difference between ZIPA and ZANU: ZIPA believed that victory could only be



achieved via the armed struggle while the Mugabe leadership regarded armed struggle as necessary to create the climate for negotiations and as a bargaining chip to break down the intransigence of the white settlers.

In early 1977, ZIPA guerrillas and leaders were systematically detained in Mozambique or murdered there. This cleared the path for Tongogara to become ZANLA's Chief of Defence. At the Chimoio Congress, ZANU established that the military should accept the decisions of the political Central Committee.

Similar waves of arrests followed in January 1978 during the Gumbo Revolt when ZANLA guerrillas opposed ZANU's lack of political unity with ZAPU. David Martin and Phyllis Johnson in their book *The Struggle for Zimbabwe* Ravan Press 1981 at 275 submit that Gumbo and his followers aimed at seizing power in ZANU in order to absorb ZANU into ZAPU.

## Capitulation

The widespread discontent in ZANLA and amongst the Zimbabwean masses over the sellout at Lancaster House also does not merit even a footnote in Pandya's study. As *Newsweek* 7 January 1980 reported at page 16:

"In one grisly and perhaps prophetic incident last week, a squad of guerrillas murdered a school-teacher in front of his pupils, and left behind a note reading 'Down with the cease-fire. Forward with the war.'"

This discontent saw a wave of strikes in Zimbabwe after *uhuru* and manifested itself again on 18 July 1989 with clashes between the army and students at the University of Zimbabwe (*Daily News* 19 July 1989). For those who imagine that Mao opposed strikes, we need only remind them that Mao himself proposed that the right to strike be included in the new Constitution of the People's Republic of China in January 1975.

Mao waged relentless struggle against the reactionary "theory of the produc-

tive forces", struggling for the correct line viz. "grasp revolution, promote production." The following words by Zimbabwe's first Labour Minister, Kumbirai Kangai represent precisely the line that Mao strived to combat:

"The relationship between the workers and management should be like one big family. You have to respect them as workers and they have to respect you as the management."

- *The Herald* 26 May 1980

A ZANU supporter observed that: "It is impossible to construct socialism on the superstructure of capitalism." (quoted by Ascrow at 173)

For those who support and propagate capitulation, Mao gave sage advice on October 12, 1942 in "The Turning Point in World War II":

"All those who take a pessimistic view of the world situation should change their point of view."

(Are you listening, capitulationists in occupied Azania?) He expanded on this in "The Present Situation and our Tasks" on December 25, 1947:

"Our Party waged a resolute struggle against such impotent and degenerate ideas (as capitulation), which run counter to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, resolutely carried out its political line of 'developing the progressive forces, winning over the middle forces and isolating the die-hard forces' and resolutely expanded the Liberated Areas and the People's Liberation Army."

Imperialist strategy was always dictated by the need to maintain capitalist social relations in Zimbabwe. By the mid-1970s this required a process of "decolonization" which would preserve the rule of capital.

ZANU completely failed to identify imperialism as its number one enemy and propagated the myth that Britain was the legitimate (sic!) colonial



power. Its strategy was thus aimed at reform and despite the Maoist rhetoric (which guaranteed it the support of both the Zimbabwean proletariat and peasantry) its capitulation at Lancaster House was the logical outcome of its history and petit-bourgeois degeneration.

Both before and after "independence", ZANU insisted that the Lancaster House deal was in the interests of the Zimbabwean masses. Tongogara "regarded Lancaster House as a kind of 'second front' brought about by the people of Zimbabwe and their liberation forces . . ." (Martin & Johnson *op cit* at 319)! ZANU not only welcomed Western imperialism as a progressive (sic!) force, it ensconced Zimbabwe firmly in the Western camp.

The national liberation struggle in Zimbabwe was not carried out on an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist basis. The aim of the petit bourgeois leadership was not to overthrow capitalist relations but to remove the discriminatory structures of settler society which hindered its advancement as a social group. As Rockefeller puts it:

"The more I have seen of countries which are allegedly Marxist in Africa, the more I have the feeling it is more labels and trappings than reality."

- quoted by Ascrow at 190

Pandya neglects to inform us that a critical reason for ZANU agreeing to

join the Patriotic Front was its hope that it would receive arms and ammunition from the Soviet social-imperialists. (*The Herald* 16 November 1980)

## War is the highest stage of struggle

For Mao, war is the highest stage of struggle and the purpose of the proletariat in waging war is to defeat imperialism and reaction and advance society to a stage wherein war would be eliminated with the elimination of classes and the state. Indeed, ZANU even failed to identify the proletariat as the leading force in Zimbabwe, ignoring Mao's warning that "In this era, any revolutionary war will definitely end in defeat if it lacks, or runs counter to, the leadership of the proletariat and the Communist Party." (December 1936)

Note that Mao specifically included class-conscious workers both in the Communist Party and the Red Army. He warned against the hegemony of the petit bourgeoisie (in particular, the peasantry) rather than the leadership of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement.

It is absurd to call any strategy Maoist if it makes guerrilla warfare primary and regular warfare supplementary. As Mao emphasized:

"Unless we understand this, unless we recognize that regular warfare will decide the final outcome of the war, and unless we pay attention to building a regular army and to studying and directing regular warfare, we shall be unable to defeat Japan." ("Problems of War and Strategy" November 6, 1938)

It is necessary for guerrilla units to undergo steeling and gradually transform themselves into regular forces: in this way guerrilla warfare develops into mobile warfare.

## No magic short cuts

The fact that the Zimbabwean war was aborted before it even reached the scale of genuine people's war makes it anything but a protracted war. To quote Mao: "There is no

magic short-cut" ("On Protracted War" May 1938).

Instead of following Mao's prescriptions, Mugabe chose to co-opt General Walls in his team and assign him the task of integrating ZANLA and ZIPRA with the Rhodesian army. The Rhodesian army which included notorious units such as the Selous and Grey Scouts and the Rhodesian Light Infantry was composed of the worst detritus from failed empires around the world as well as the most ruthless of local elements. At any rate, to integrate a settler army with an alleged people's army can only be aimed at demobilizing the people's army in the interests of imperialism.

A true Maoist would defeat, disintegrate and win over part of the imperialist army, smash and punish the private reactionary armies and shatter and destroy their police forces and punish them for their crimes. For at least nine years, the Mugabe government suppressed information about an industrial incinerator at Chikurubi (just east of Harare), made by the macro-Burn Company of Johannesburg, which was used to cremate the corpses of untold numbers of Zimbabweans executed during *chimurenga*. (*Weekly Mail* July 28-August 3, 1989).

In the base areas and throughout the country, it is vital for a revolutionary Party to share weal and woe with the masses. ZANLA largely relied on *mujibas* and *chimbwidows* and did not trust the masses: its *pungwes* gave only the most rudimentary political education and its use of the spirit mediums was not directed at raising peasant consciousness to genuine revolutionary consciousness.

Terence Ranger in *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe* Zimbabwe Publishing House 1985 quotes a ZANLA guerrilla on the level of political education at *pungwes*:

"We did not talk to the peasants about socialism. Ah, no, we couldn't do that. The peasantry are very conservative and even today they know nothing about socialism. We had to teach them first about the evil deeds

and oppression of the regime and how we had tried to talk to the whites but failed, so that we had to take up arms." (at 178)

Peasant religion formed an indispensable part of the composite ideology of *chimurenga* and focussed strongly on the Land Question. It is clear that sustained effort was required to create conscious beings who see themselves as their own liberators and need no ancestral spirits, gods or goddesses to "liberate" them.

ZANU's guerrilla ideology was expressed only via the Shona tradition and culture, helping to alienate the Ndebele people and to reinforce ethnicity. As Ranger puts it: "The ZANLA guerrillas were not sufficiently flexible to adapt the composite ideology which served them so well throughout two thirds of the country." (at 216)

To wage a true people's war, ZANLA and ZANU needed nothing less than the full mobilization of the Zimbabwean Nation. That they failed to achieve this is apparent even in their inability to make good their promise of disrupting the election charade which brought Bishop Abel Muzorewa to office during April 1979, taking intimidation by the Rhodesian forces fully into account. ZANLA's successes in surprise attacks and evasions shows the durability of Mao's prescriptions: ZANLA did not utilize these in any thoroughgoing manner, however.

To compare bases in neighbouring states to the base areas established by Mao within the borders of China itself is ridiculous. So is the comparison between ZANLA's self-proclaimed "liberated zones" and Mao's base areas. At a minimum, a base area is under the complete control of the revolutionary army. The potential existed to create true liberated zones when the infrastructure of the settler regime began collapsing completely – about the time of Lancaster House!

## War of Attrition and Annihilation

What Pandya glibly refers to as Phase



I and Phase II requires at the least an assessment of whether ZANLA employed the sixteen-character formula viz "The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue." (December 1936)

In a settler colonial situation such as Zimbabwe's was it is necessary to constantly lure the enemy in deep, surround it with the masses, cut off its forces into various parts and annihilate it. Guerrilla war combines a war of attrition with a war of annihilation. The formula is "strategy, one against ten; tactics, ten against one."

Mao emphasized that in both regular and guerrilla warfare it is necessary to stress the principles of fighting battles of quick decision, of concentrating a big force to strike as a small section of the enemy forces and to annihilate the enemy forces piece by piece, thus through a protracted process carrying out a war of attrition against the enemy until it is weakened to the point where the final *coup de grace* can be delivered to it.

From a long-term point of view, the Rhodesian Security Forces were severely overextended and suffered from a shortage of troops. In these circumstances, guidance is available from Mao's telegram, "The Concept of Operations for the Northwest War Theatre" issued during April 1947. As Mao stressed therein, it is imperative when circumstances are favourable to keep the enemy on the run, tire it out, wear it down, reduce it to extreme fatigue and conditions of starvation and then launch the offensive to destroy it.

As the Lancaster House conference got underway, the war in Zimbabwe raged more fiercely than at any other time since the fighting began.

## Pandya's Agenda

Mao emphasized that the enemy's knowledge of the overall strategy and tactics of the People's Army could not save it because "... our strategy and tactics are based on a people's war; no army opposed to the people can use our strategy and tactics."



In 1953, at the conclusion of the war to resist US aggression in Korea, Mao declared: "Our experience is that reliance on the people together with a fairly correct leadership enables us to defeat a better-equipped enemy with our inferior equipment." ("Speech at the Lushan Conference")

As for Pandya's over-emphasis on foreign aid and assistance, it needs to be stated that Mao's lasting emphasis is that people, not foreign aid or sophisticated weaponry are decisive in any war. Pandya fails to analyze ZANU's struggle to achieve recognition in the face of the stranglehold exercised by ZAPU in league with the ANC of South Africa and the Soviet Union. Mao would have had no truck with the interference and petty hegemony exercised by such forces and the Frontline states on the pattern and pace of Zimbabwe's national liberation struggle.

Mao could well have been talking about Pandya when he commented: "Epistemologically speaking, the source of all erroneous views on war lies in idealist and mechanistic tendencies on the question." (May 1938)

Not that Pandya has no agenda: he most certainly has! On page 230 of his book, Pandya attempts to draw the lessons of the Zimbabwean experience for occupied Azania. He advises that:

1. There should be no procrastination towards achieving a political solution, else "the 'hearts and

minds' of the people" will be lost and there will be widespread insurgency;

2. The political solution must consist of reforms; and
3. In arriving at the political solution, "it is vital that the authorities work and consult with all the parties concerned."

## High Tide of Revolution

That advice such as Pandya's is being taken seriously and that a complete betrayal of the masses figures prominently on the Azanian agenda is obvious. But, to quote Mao, there will "soon be a high tide of revolution" both in Azania and in Zimbabwe. Listen to Mao's explanation:

"But when I say that there will soon be a high tide of revolution in China, I am emphatically not speaking of something which in the words of some people 'is possibly coming', something illusory, unattainable and devoid of significance for action. It is like a ship far out at sea whose mast-head can already be seen from the shore; it is like the morning sun in the east whose shimmering rays are visible from a high mountain top; it is like a child about to be born moving restlessly in its mother's womb."

- *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* edited by a Commission of the CPSU(B), New York, 1939 at page 275

I remember trudging through the streets of Zimbabwe during the fifth

anniversary celebrations of Zimbabwe's "independence" when an Azanian exile exclaimed: "What Zimbabwe desperately needs is Black Consciousness." I wonder if all those who are indulging in "waiting for Mugabe" fantasies – the latest of whom are Colin Stoneman and Lionel Cliffe in their *Zimbabwe: Politics, Economics and Society* Pinter Publishers, London 1989 – do not have a clammy sense of *déjà vu*. Remember "waiting for Nyerere?"

A rigorous and correct application of Mao's political and military line can be seen in the activities the Communist Party of Peru (PCP), referred to in the media as The Shining Path or *Sendero Luminoso*. The PCP proclaims:

"Comrade Mao teaches us that there is only one way to seize political power: revolutionary violence. The theory of seizing power by the peaceful road is wrong, impracticable and revisionist. Revolution is the overthrow of one class by another and the

old classes will never give up their political power voluntarily, not even in the worst crisis. The only way to deal with them is to sweep them away through revolutionary war, by means of revolutionary armed force. We should keep this *universally valid* principle in mind."

"We should also keep in mind one of Marx's great teachings: 'Once the banner of revolution is raised, it cannot be lowered again.'"

"This means that the armed struggle must be organized and persisted in. In order to launch the people's war in Peru the Communist Party of Peru made the great decision *never* to lay down its arms until communism is reached."

- from the "Worldwide Campaign Speech to Support the People's War in Peru", 1986, emphasis added

### Recommendation

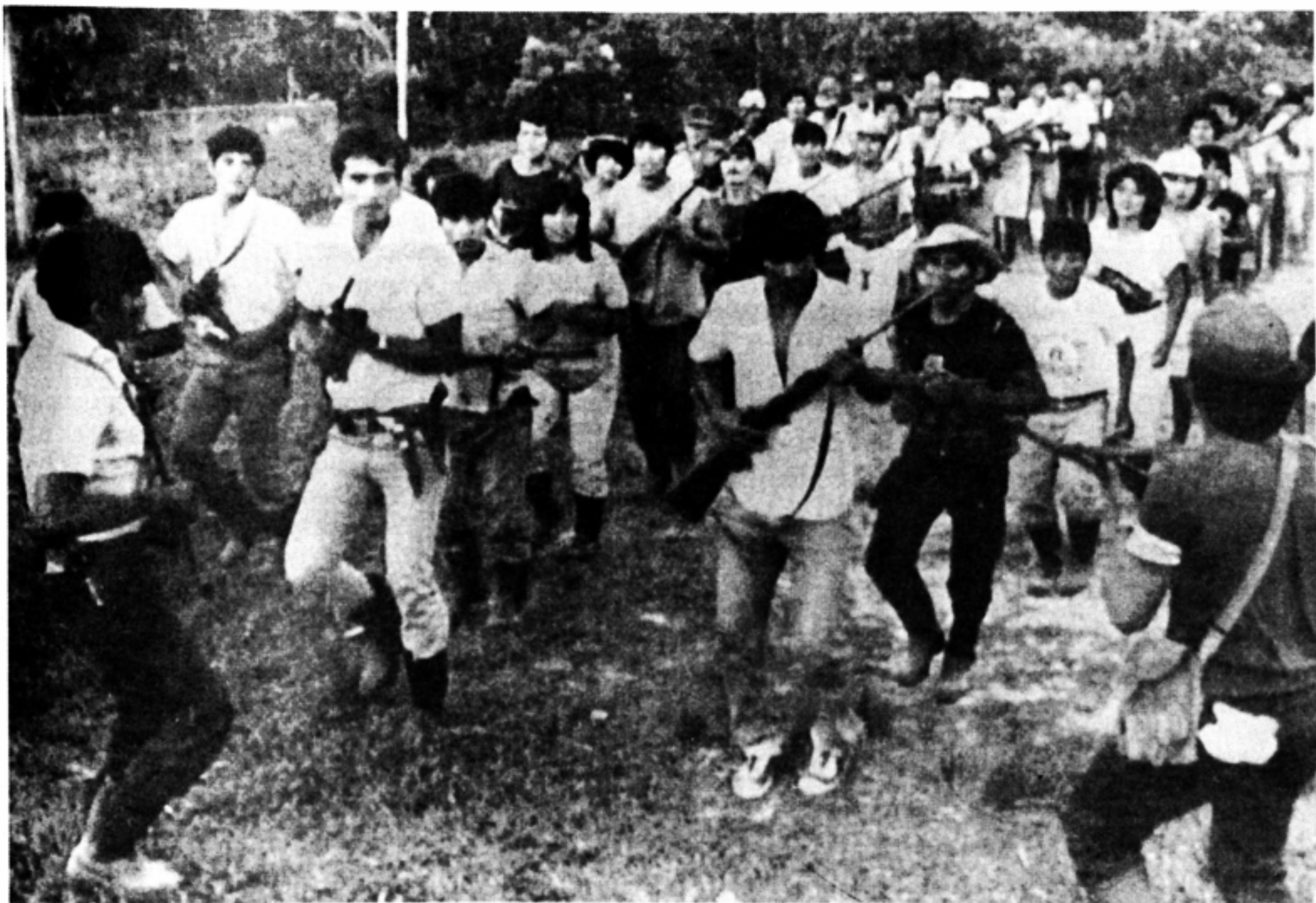
Pandya has certainly chosen an exciting aspect of *chimurenga* to analyze

but he fails to do justice to his task. His study is useful, however, for the data collected within its pages, not least of which is a handy set of diagrams, tables and photographs.

The printer's gremlin has not spared Pandya. The most glaring error is the ambiguity of the word "they" in the sentence "As a result one finds it very difficult to determine whether *they* were really liberated zones, that is, zones under ZANLA occupation and rule" (pg. 57). Other errors are the mis-spellings of "suite" for "suit" on page 61 line 4 and of "sprinter" for "splinter" on page 191 line 6.

The reader is advised to read Pandya's book against Mao Tse Tung's actual works and ZANU/ZANLA's actual performance. If the reader is unable to obtain Mao's works and read widely on the Zimbabwean revolution, this book is *not* recommended. ■

- Nhlanhla Nyide



Young PCP guerrillas in training.