the homelands of the Oromos or Gallas as they are sometimes called. The Oromos are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia numbering about 20 million. However, they feel they have been oppressed by the historic rulers of Ethiopia who come from the Amharas.

The three rebel groups used guerrilla tactics. They attacked small groups of government troops; temporarily occupied key points in the country; and avoided large battles with the better armed government forces.

By the end of 1990, the rebels controlled the important port of Mossawa (Mitsiwa) on the Red Sea. Asmara (Asmera), the capital and main city of Eritrea, was completely surrounded. Rebel forces began a steady advance toward Addis Ababa, Ethiopia’s capital. At the end of May, Mengistu resigned as president and fled to Zimbabwe.

In July 1990, a charter was drawn up for the new Ethiopian government. Power was to be shared by the rebel leaders and elections were to be held sometime in the future. In this charter, the Eritreans, as well as any of Ethiopia’s dozens of other nationalities, have the right to self determination (autonomy) and also the right of secession. An agreement was reached that Eritreans and other nationalities would vote by referendum in two years on whether or not to break away from Ethiopia.

Soviet-Cuban Influence in Africa

Africa has always been a continent where foreign powers competed with each other to gain influence. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Soviet Union made great efforts to expand its influence throughout Africa. In this effort the Soviet Union was assisted by Cuba. To a lesser degree other Communist countries, mainly in Eastern Europe, sent special units to Africa to serve Soviet foreign policy interests. These countries were East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Bulgaria. In 1978, there were over 40,000 Cuban troops in Africa—20,000 in Angola, 17,000 in Ethiopia and about 4,000 scattered in places like Mozambique, the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, and Tanzania.

There were several reasons for the Soviet Union’s new interest in Africa. Africa was an excellent location for Soviet air and naval bases. These bases could help the Soviet Union extend its control to the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. The Soviet Union and China were engaged in a worldwide competition to win developing countries to their own form of communism. The Soviet Union hoped the African nations would follow the direction of Moscow rather than Peking. Africa, with its wealth of natural resources, is very important to Western Europe, which lacks many of these resources. This made Africa valuable to the Soviet Union as well. Since the Soviet Union did not have a history of colonialism in Africa as Western nations did, it was in a position to support African liberation movements such as the one in Angola. The United States, because of its close ties to the former colonial rulers and because of its association with South Africa, was looked on with favor by African revolutionaries. While the Soviet Union supplied economic and military aid to a number of African countries and revolutionary movements, there were several areas where the Soviet Union made an all-out effort.

Angola and Mozambique

Angola, which was a Portuguese colony for nearly 500 years, received its independence in November 1975. Before Angola became independent, fighting broke out among three Angolan liberation groups, each of which hoped to lead Angola when the Portuguese left. Following independence, the fighting increased and soon the country was involved in a
civil war. The three Angolan liberation groups were: the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) supported by Marxists; the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) supported by black nationalists; and the UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) supported by the majority of Angola’s white population.

Because of Angola’s vast oil and mineral wealth, a number of foreign countries became involved in the conflict. The Soviet Union and Cuba supported the MPLA. The FNLA was supported by the United States, France, and Zaire. The UNITA was supported by Portugal, China, and South Africa.

By 1976, the MPLA achieved victory in the civil war. The FNLA withdrew from the fighting, but UNITA forces continued to fight.

Mozambique gained independence from Portugal in 1975. Problems in Mozambique resulted when it helped black nationalists try to overthrow the white governments of Rhodesia and South Africa. In the 1970s, the Rhodesian government responded by aiding guerrilla groups trying to overthrow the government of Mozambique.

In the 1980s, instability and problems with South Africa dominated the politics of Angola and Mozambique. Both nations allowed anti-apartheid guerrilla groups to set up bases on their territory. Moreover, Angola allowed the Southwest Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO) to carry out raids against South Africa from Angolan territory. In response, South Africa gave military aid to guerrilla groups that opposed the existing governments in Angola and Mozambique. These guerrilla groups were allowed to operate from bases in South Africa.

In 1984, agreements were reached between the three nations. South Africa agreed to withdraw troops from southern Angola and to stop aiding the guerrilla groups. The Angolans promised to stop SWAPO’s guerrilla raids from Angolan territory and to get the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. A cease-fire went into effect. South Africa and Mozambique agreed that each nation would prevent the use of its territories for attacks against the other.

In spite of these agreements, the situation did not improve. Guerrilla attacks against Mozambique increased. Mozambique accused South Africa of failing to live up to the agreement. Moreover, in late 1986, the President of Mozambique was killed in a plane crash. The Mozambique government blamed South Africa for the crash.

The agreement between Angola and South Africa also failed to achieve peace. Although South Africa’s armed forces finally withdrew from Angola in April 1985, their attacks against guerrilla bases on Angolan territory continued. In addition, UNITA, which was receiving support from South Africa, increased its guerrilla activity. Soviet support for the Angolan army and the Cuban combat troops stationed in Angola increased. Negotiations over Namibia’s (South-West Africa) independence reached a stalemate over the problem of the withdrawal of all Cuban troops from Angola. This situation continued for the next six years.

The push to end the 16 years of savage civil war took place in February 1991. The Marxist government of Angola agreed to a peace plan that included a ceasefire with the FNLA—the U.S.-backed rebels. UNITA, the main rebel group, quickly agreed to the plan. The agreement called for a new constitution and the establishment of a multiparty government. The United Nations was to make sure the agreement was put into effect fairly.

Zaire

In 1960 Zaire, formerly known as the Congo, gained its independence from Belgium. Almost immediately, there was bloodshed and rebellion. Moïse Tshombe led a rebellion

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against the central government of the Congo. The goal of this rebellion was the secession of Katanga Province from the Congo. Katanga province (now known as Shaba) in southeastern Zaire is very rich in copper and other materials. Katanga is the homeland of more than 1,500,000 people of the Lunda tribe. There are other members of the Lunda ethnic group in northwestern Zambia and in eastern Angola. Tshombe’s followers wanted to preserve their mineral wealth from their enemies—the government and the Bakongo tribes. The rebellion was crushed, but Tshombe’s followers fled to Angola. In Angola, the Katangese, as these refugees are known, have considerable autonomy in their region in the northeast. The Katangese helped Agostinho Neto and the MPLA come to power in Angola, and Neto allowed them to use Angolan territory to prepare for invasions of Zaire.

In May 1978, Katangan rebels based in Angola invaded the copper mining province of Shaba (Katanga) in southern Zaire. The rebels brutally massacred several thousand blacks and whites living there. A force of French and Belgian paratroopers, assisted by United States jets, prevented the invasion from succeeding. French and Belgian troops forced the Katangan invaders to retreat back to Angola. They also rescued more than 2,500 Europeans trapped in Shaba. The goal of the invaders was to disrupt Zaire’s economy and bring about the downfall of President Mobuto Sese Seko. The copper mines in Shaba province are the main source of Zaire’s wealth. One-half the world’s annual supply of cobalt comes from this region as well as large quantities of zinc.

Immediately following the invasion, Zaire charged that Cubans were involved in the fighting on the side of the rebels. The United States sharply criticized the Soviet Union and Cuba. However, Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba stated that his country had no part in the invasion of Zaire. The fact remains that over the years, Cubans and Angolans had armed and trained the Katangese. Cuba had troops in Angola, and there were Cuban troops stationed along the Angolan border, the area from which the Katangans launched their invasion.

Under pressure from the United States, Angola signed a treaty with Zaire in 1985. The agreement stated that both nations pledged not to allow or support rebels within their borders.

After 1985, Mobutu tried to reform Zaire’s economic situation. His attempts to use a free market economy to cure the ills of the weak economy were not successful. Inflation was the most serious problem. Another problem was Zaire’s growing international debt as well as the inability to pay even the interest on the debt.

In the political area, objections to Mobutu’s dictatorial rule grew. The U.S. Congress, concerned over corruption and human rights violations, voted to cut off all direct military and economic aid to Zaire (September 1990).

In January 1991, Mobutu called for a dialogue between the state and the people. The purpose of this dialogue was to give the people an opportunity to present their views on how the government was being run. These views led Mobuto to announce in April 1991 that he would allow multiparty democratic activity.

Mobutu’s most important opponent was Etienne Tshisekedi who, while in exile, stated that Mobuto had to step down before any progress toward democratic government in Zaire could be made.

Mobutu responded by allowing Tshisekedi to return to Zaire in February 1991. Tshisekedi’s party, the UDP (Union pour la Democratie et le Progress Social), has become the most important political party in Zaire.
Rhodesia—Zimbabwe: The Transition to Black Majority Rule

In the middle of the 19th century, the first white settlers arrived in the land that is now known as Zimbabwe. They were British and Afrikaner (descendants of the Dutch in South Africa) hunters, traders, miners, and missionaries who had moved up from the south. In 1889, the British South Africa Company was formed by Cecil Rhodes, Britain’s great empire builder. The company was to bring colonists to the region and promote trade. The land came to be known as Southern Rhodesia in honor of Cecil Rhodes.

During the 1890s, many European settlers arrived. They laid claim to large areas of land and to mining rights in the area. This resulted in uprisings by the Ndebele and Shona tribes, but by 1897 the region was pacified by British troops. The country was governed by the company until 1923, when it became a self-governing British colony.

In Southern Rhodesia, as in South Africa, the white minority ruled the black majority. Although 95 percent of the population was black and 5 percent white, the whites owned half the land. All urban, mining and industrial areas were designated as white, so no African could acquire a permanent home there. There was discrimination against blacks in job opportunities, in education, and in many other ways. The government, the army, and the police were entirely in the hands of the whites.

At first, the black nationalists tried to improve the lives of blacks by nonviolent means. They concentrated their efforts on trying to end discrimination in education and employment. They demanded equal voting rights for blacks. Their methods were strikes, demonstrations, and appeals to Britain. By the 1950s and 1960s, the nationalist movement became more militant and they demanded black majority rule.

In November 1965, the white government of Ian Smith declared Southern Rhodesia independent from Britain. The country was now called Rhodesia. In March 1970, Rhodesia declared itself a republic. The purpose of these actions was to prevent an orderly transfer of power from the British to the Africans. (This kind of orderly change to black majority rule had been achieved in the other former British colonies in Africa.) It was at this point that many black nationalists decided that armed struggle was the best way to achieve their goals.

Two leading groups in the struggle for black rights were the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU), led by Joshua Nkomo, and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), led by Ndabaningi Sithole and later by Robert Mugabe. (Zimbabwe is the ancient African name of Rhodesia.) These groups established bases in Zambia and Tanzania and later in Mozambique after it became independent in 1975. From these bases both organizations launched many guerilla attacks against Rhodesia. Another important group was the African National Council (ANC) under the leadership of Bishop Abel Muzorewa, a moderate. Although he demanded black majority rule, he believed that that goal could be achieved by negotiating with the government of Ian Smith.

In 1975, after more than a year of negotiations between Smith and Muzorewa, Smith rejected black majority rule. The guerilla attacks intensified and by the end of 1978, more than 12,000 people had been killed. There were attacks on the road and rail communications between Rhodesia and South Africa. This presented a great danger to Rhodesia. Since Rhodesia is a landlocked country, it depends on South Africa’s ports to receive its imports and ship its exports. If it were cut off from South Africa, the damage to the economy could be severe. The Rhodesian government retaliated against the guerrillas by
launching air strikes and ground operations against the guerrilla camps in Mozambique and other countries. There was danger of war between Rhodesia and its neighbors. Also Rhodesia was cut off from many nations around the world that refused to recognize Rhodesia's independence. When the United Nations called for economic sanctions against Rhodesia, many countries stopped trading with and investing money in Rhodesia. The sanctions hurt Rhodesia's economy in the 1960s and 1970s, but the country was able to survive with the help of South Africa. Another very serious problem was that many whites left Rhodesia during the 1970s. The white population declined from 277,000 to fewer than 100,000 by 1979.

Britain and other nations put great pressure on Ian Smith and his government to reach an agreement with the blacks. In 1976, Britain presented Smith with a peace plan. The major points included acceptance of the principle of majority rule and elections to be held in 18 months to two years. A few months later, U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger visited Africa and announced that the United States was committed to majority rule in Rhodesia. Smith and the black leaders refused to accept the British and United States proposals.

Black nationalist leaders had been divided among themselves. However, they realized that it was necessary to agree on a common political strategy. This led to the formation of the Patriotic Front (PF). The most important groups that joined to form the Patriotic Front were ZAPU and ZANU. The Front was led by Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo. However, Smith refused to deal with the PF.

The situation in Rhodesia deteriorated further in 1977 and 1978. There were more guerrilla attacks and more retaliatory raids by the Rhodesian armed forces against bases in Mozambique. More whites left the country. Agriculture and industrial output declined. The collapse of the Smith government was just a matter of time. Still, there were many people in Smith's party who were totally opposed to any negotiations that might lead to black majority rule.

At the end of 1977, Prime Minister Smith announced that he was prepared to accept majority rule. But he insisted that he would only meet with black leaders inside Rhodesia and not with the guerrilla organizations that were banned. This excluded Mugabe and Nkomo from any talks. Smith met with Bishop Muzorewa, Ndabaningi Sithole, and Jeremiah Chirau of the Zimbabwe United People's Organization. In March 1978, an agreement was signed. This agreement, known as the "internal settlement," stated that the country would be governed by its black majority. The name of the country would be changed to Zimbabwe Rhodesia. All citizens over the age of 18 would vote to elect a Parliament of 100 members: 72 seats would be reserved for blacks and 28 for whites. The agreement was condemned by Nkomo and Mugabe, as well as by the presidents of Tanzania, Zambia, Botswana, and Mozambique. Guerrilla attacks increased.

In February 1979, Smith dissolved the Rhodesian Parliament, bringing to an end 88 years of white rule. Elections were held in April. Although the guerrillas tried to disrupt the elections, 64 percent of the electorate voted. This resulted in an overwhelming victory for the United African National Council of Bishop Muzorewa.

In May, Muzorewa was sworn in as the first black prime minister. He appointed Smith as a minister without portfolio. However, the Muzorewa government was opposed by many. The Patriotic Front insisted that it represented the only authentic voice of the black people, and it had the support of the other African nations.
Britain again invited all the parties concerned to a conference in September 1979. This time each side yielded enough so that a settlement was reached. Smith agreed that the whites should no longer be able to block legislation while the Patriotic Front agreed that 20 percent of the seats in the Parliament should be reserved for whites. In December, a ceasefire was accepted by all sides. This marked the official end to the civil war which had begun in 1972.

In January 1980, Robert Mugabe, Joshua Nkomo, and many other black leaders returned to Rhodesia after having lived in exile for several years. Elections were held in February, resulting in an overwhelming victory (63 percent of the total vote) for Mugabe’s ZANU party. Nkomo’s party was second. In April 1980, the country proclaimed its independence and was named Zimbabwe. Robert Mugabe became prime minister. Joshua Nkomo and several members of his ZAPU party were included in the cabinet.

The new country faced many problems. After years of civil war the economy was in very bad shape. The country had once been an exporter of corn. Now it had to import large quantities of corn. Tobacco had always been the main export crop and the chief source of foreign currency. In the early 1980s, however, tobacco was bringing in less money, due to world over-production. There was also a problem in exporting the tobacco caused by a shortage of railway locomotives. The economy of Zimbabwe also suffered from an acute shortage of fuel. Oil had to pass through South Africa, making the country economically dependent on South Africa. The situation was further aggravated when rebels blew up an oil pipeline from Mozambique, which provided a major source of Zimbabwe’s petroleum. Drought, which affected many African countries in the early 1980s, also contributed to Zimbabwe’s problems. Many whites continued to leave the country. Another very serious problem that held back economic recovery was the lack of foreign investment. Foreigners were unwilling to invest in Zimbabwe as long as there was insecurity and political instability.

Efforts were made to deal with these problems. Mugabe urged the white farmers to remain in Zimbabwe, promising them security in return for their contribution to the country’s prosperity. He appealed to foreign countries for economic aid. Britain, the United States, Canada, France, Germany, and many other countries responded with promises of money. A trade agreement was signed with South Africa.

Political instability was a major problem that held back economic recovery. From the beginning, relations between Mugabe and Nkomo and their ZANU and ZAPU parties were uneasy. As time passed, relations between the two deteriorated. In 1982, Mugabe announced that only policies approved by his ZANU party would be adopted by the government. He also stated that he wanted a one-party state. Nkomo denounced these statements and rejected Mugabe’s plan to merge (join) the two parties. When large quantities of armaments were discovered on farms belonging to Nkomo’s supporters, Nkomo and three others belonging to his party were dismissed from the government; they were accused of plotting to overthrow the ruling party. Acts of violence began to spread across the country. In June 1982, the government launched a large-scale attack against its opponents.

During 1984, there was an increase in anti-government violence by guerrillas. The government sent large numbers of troops to crush the guerrillas. The troops were accused of excessive brutality and committing atrocities against civilians. By the end of the year, Mugabe said that the time had come for ZAPU to be declared an enemy of the people. The situation worsened in 1985. Nkomo found it increasingly difficult to address public