

The Mulungushi Camp which trained the regular army was his main responsibility, but he also supplied food for the women at Mkushi Camp. When they were attacked he, along with members in Kabwe, played a big role in rescuing the survivors and getting them to Kabwe hospital. Before moving to his farm in Mkushi Madonko occupied a smaller farm near Lusaka, where he regularly accommodated some guerrillas who guarded caches of arms which he stored for ZPRA.

These were the roles which a member could play; few were as active as Madonko. But without people like him it would have been difficult to manage such large numbers of military cadres and refugees.

Mtshana Ncube discusses how the administration attempted to deal with so many issues at once, and also goes into a little more detail on the manner in which education was handled. He talks about how not only members living in Zambia but also many of the administrative personnel could easily become confused about the overall plan and progress towards the ultimate goal. Hence an overall strategic vision was drafted and communicated to the party members as well as the general public. This vision was known as the “Turning Point”. Most other interviewees as well as writers of ZAPU history have understood the Turning Point as a purely military strategy. Probably that was what came across most clearly to the public, but Ncube, who drafted the document which was read by Nkomo at a press conference, presents it as an all-embracing vision which was meant to inspire and motivate all members. Interestingly enough, this new strategy was taken so seriously that every member of the Revolutionary Council, being privy to further information that was not released to the public, participated in a signing ceremony during which they had to pledge to secrecy:

So we were signing what was called a secrecy agreement which each individual leader was asked to sign – swear and sign – before the President, affirming their own understanding that they were being held responsible if any information should be leaked which they came to have by reason of service to the struggle.

Various aspects of the administration are referred to in many of the interviews. It was a complex thing, running several departments, especially towards the end - a large publicity department with its own printing press and photo laboratory, schools for several thousand children, transport, even a research unit, and few individuals would have had a clear grasp of the many processes at work. The fact that it worked at all and moved the struggle forward must be a tribute to the dedication and leadership qualities of many.

1980 ELECTIONS

At the end of the Lancaster House conference in December 1979, agreement was signed on a constitution for an independent Zimbabwe, a ceasefire process and an election in March 1980 for the first independence government. Parks Ndlovu was interviewed specifically on the topic of this election, and Dumiso Dabengwa also referred to the election process during his interview.

Dabengwa had major responsibility for ensuring that guerrillas entered the assembly points and observed the ceasefire. This was not an easy task, as the ZPRA forces had already defeated the Rhodesians as they tried to destroy them in Zambia, and had crossed some of their regular units with heavy artillery into Rhodesia.

... they thought they could really give the Zimbabwean [Rhodesian] forces a hiding when the ceasefire arrangement was then brokered. And when we got to the camps and told them that it was necessary for them to cease the fighting and congregate at assembly points they were very suspicious about the whole idea.

But things began to go wrong for ZAPU very quickly:

When we parted at Lancaster it had generally been agreed and in actual fact, we almost at Lancaster decided to choose the Patriotic Front leadership - who would be president, who would be secretary general and so on, but then other people said, "No let's go and do this at home. When we get home let's ... let's choose the Patriotic Front leadership". So we almost were confident it was going to be done. People like Tongogara, the late Tongogara, wanted to make sure that that would be done, because he actually threatened at Lancaster that "If you people go into the country as separate parties after we have agreed on this unity arrangement, and you lose that election we are going to salute Muzorewa if he wins the election".

But, without consultation, ZANU decided to go it alone, as Dabengwa explains:

ZAPU was surprised on the final day of the registration when they were told by the Registration Office that they were waiting for them because ZANU had registered to participate in the elections as ZANU PF and what was the position of ZAPU. And we rushed at the last minute to go and register.

Parks Ndlovu, a trained fighter with considerable experience, was the ZPRA regional commissar in southern Matabeleland. When news came of the ceasefire agreement it was his task to persuade his men that they must move into the assembly point from where they would be either demobilized or integrated into a new Zimbabwe national army:

We were given to Brunapeg, my home area, that's where we had our first assembly point. I did not stay more than four days. Then came Dumiso [Dabengwa] who saw me "Oh you are here, commissar". "Yes " "We are looking for commissars to go and work, so I'm going with you"

So Parks entered the campaign, mobilizing people to vote. He worked from a base in Bulawayo, under the leadership of Abel Siwela, a ZAPU activist and chairman of the party in Bulawayo. He states that he was not optimistic from the beginning that ZAPU would win:

I was telling them... "Madala", they said, "we've got a lot of support". But I said, "Yes even if you have a lot of support, there will be a lot of rigging here. You must be prepared for a surprise"...According to how I read the books I knew there were no fair and free elections. He [Siwela] said "Why". I said, "No there are a lot of things involved in election things. One, we don't have I.D.s. People don't have I.D.s here. I don't know whether the register is in order

They proceeded to campaigning, and he travelled throughout the country organizing rallies and ensuring that people were able to attend. Huge rallies were held in Bulawayo which were attended by people from all over the country, at White City and at Barbourfields Stadium. In rural areas:

... they would walk even twenty kilometres ... because they liked their party. Even we ... the party would provide ... party members would provide transport, those who had transport and they would use even scotch carts, bicycles to go in those areas

Harare showed considerable support as well, with large meetings being held, and enthusiastic supporters being transported by bus from as far as Hurungwe. The party regalia were openly worn,

Our campaign materials, the pictures, were showing ZPRA ... now we are using a ZPRA logo ... you see a soldier carrying a baby, two hoes. Now there is peace. We are



TOP, LEFT: Joshua Nkomo addressing the crowds at a PF ZAPU rally at White City Stadium in Bulawayo
TOP, RIGHT: Joshua Nkomo addressing a rally at Barbourfields Stadium





BOTTOM: Crowds gathering at the Godlwayo rally



assuming that now there is peace. People can have children, people can go and plough, assuming that we were going to win.

But the names ZAPU and ZPRA did not appear - they used T shirts that had been printed when it was still believed that they would contest as the Patriotic Front.

In spite of Parks' scepticism, ZAPU were confident:

All over there was ZAPU, only that because ZAPU had structures ... ZAPU was a party which had structures. Having structures, it was easy for us to communicate even if we failed as campaigners to get into the area, people were knowing that we were for ... ZAPUwe as ZAPU, we knew that we have got structures all over. I think it came again as a complacency part of it because we had everything, all the materials were in place; we were fighting for this ... freedom of expression, association, what you can name ... whatever freedoms you can think of, it's what we were fighting for...

ZANU, Ndlovu says, had not built structures, but relied rather on the gun, and what he refers to as "violence which is non-violent", having sent mujibas to the assembly points and left many of their trained cadres in the communities to influence the elections:

... these people who had guns, they would rob old people you know where there is the barrel of the gun there is that aiming thing. They would say it is a telescopic thing ... "You see that thing that is peering there..." "Yes" ... "It is going to see you in the box who you are voting for". That is ... intimidation. That's why most of the people, even in Mashonaland they voted for ZANU because they were intimidated by ZANLA who remained in the bush.

Dabengwa described the situation this way:

ZANU decided to say there were no-go areas, there were certain areas in the country where they would not allow [a] political party to participate in ... and those are the areas where ZANLA forces had had a strong presence. ZAPU believed that that would not be allowed... Nkomo actually made a very strong protest to Lord Soames to say that we can't call that a free and fair election where you have one party refusing people to come and campaign in the areas where their forces are.

Nevertheless, that occurred in the north-eastern and eastern areas:

And Lord Soames had promised Nkomo that those elections would not be counted in actual fact, those votes would not be taken into account and he said "Leave them, since they have refused to abide by the ceasefire arrangement, the rules of the ceasefire arrangement, we are going to make sure that those votes are not brought in", but after the elections, the polling had stopped, those votes were counted. And the British still called that a free and fair election.

ZAPU was thus very disappointed when the results of the election were announced and showed a strong win for ZANU. They looked for an explanation, after all the support they had found on the ground during the campaign throughout the country, and even during the war. Ndlovu comments that ZAPU was not a tribal party as later alleged, In spite of being headquartered in Bulawayo, the top leadership was primarily Shona with Chinamano as Vice President, Msika, Secretary General, Munodawafa, Chairman, and others such as Madzimbamuto and Musarurwa in senior positions.

TOP: Supporters in front of the Zengeza branch banner during the 1980 election campaign in Harare
BOTTOM: ZAPU supporters being transported by bus during the 1980 election campaign in Harare







ZAPU supporters during the 1980 election campaign in Harare



Their loss was then attributed to two factors – ZANU did not play by the rules, using violence and intimidation, and the British had deliberately favoured ZANU.

Parks states:

ZANLA did not go to the assembly points. They did put mujibas and most of these senior ZANLA people remained in the... in the bush.

Dabengwa takes a strategic view of the election process and its outcome, assessing how the British saw the situation. He imagined they would be asking themselves:

who of the two parties ZAPU or ZANU will be able to block the MK ANC coming through and who is behind those parties. ZANU - they say “China ah China we don’t think it’s a problem”.

But the Soviets were a different matter, and they had supported ZAPU:

The Russians have already gained ground in Angola, which is independent. They have already gained ground in Mozambique, which is also independent. The only obstacle between those two oceans, the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, is Zimbabwe. If Zimbabwe falls under ZAPU the Russians’ presence is going to be very strong again. So the Russians have got the whole territory from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean and they will come in and they will just push into South Africa ...And the whole of Southern Africa is going to be under Russian domination. That was the consideration, and of course the South Africans also feared that sort of scenario.

And so Dabengwa concludes that there was deliberate collusion between the British and ZANU, with the aim that ZANU should win the election and form a government. And he makes the following rather chilling statement, with great import for the post-independence history of Zimbabwe:

So they actually, they actually taught ZANU PF ... how to rig the elections and how to make sure that the only way you can win an election is by the use of force. So it was two things, two factors: you must use force in order to win an election and two, you must have the tactics of ... of rigging.

POST-INDEPENDENCE POLITICS

The 1980 election set the stage for everything that followed. ZAPU was deeply suspicious of ZANU, believing that no true will of the people was reflected in the election result. ZANU, apparently, feared ZAPU, presumably because of its continuing military strength by virtue of the heavy weaponry, including armoured cars, that it had brought across the Zambezi. Nevertheless a coalition government was formed, to include not only ZAPU ministers but also a representative of the white settlers. ZANU did not need to include ZAPU, so the question must be asked – why did they? Dabengwa believes it was done knowing that they had cheated ZAPU so now they must compensate somehow:

I think it must have been again some advice by some of the people who ... knew what had happened and who probably wanted to make sure that there was peace, and that it would then be wise instead of leaving ZAPU on their own, ...it was important that they should bring ZAPU into a coalition arrangement, so at least they are be there with them and they would be able to monitor them.

Top: Reading the election results in *The Herald*

Bottom: ZAPU PF leaders Joshua Nkomo, Josiah Chinamano, A. Nxele and S.K. Moyo