

NOTES

1. J.J. McCuen, The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War (Faber and Faber, London, 1966), p. 53.
2. R. Thompson, Defeating Communist Insurgency (Chatto and Windus, London, 1966), p. 56.
3. Ibid., pp. 124-5.
4. According to the Rhodesian Army manual Military Support to the Civil Power (MCP) (restricted, as amended, dated 1 May 1976), p. xvi, a no-go area was

... one from which all civilians are excluded by an order of the Protecting Authority, in terms of Section 4(1)(b) of the Emergency Powers (Maintenance of Law and Order) regulations as published in Government Notice 739/73, as amended in order to ensure that they do not become involved in operations conducted by Security Forces against terrorists. Only authorised members of the Security Forces, on duty, will move in no-go areas and no action may be instituted against them for any death or injury caused to any persons within the area by any act performed in good faith in the course of operations conducted during the time whilst the order is in force.
5. P. Stiff and R. Reid Daly, Selous Scouts: Top Secret War (Galago, Alberton, 1982), p. 89.
6. Africa Research Bulletin (1-31 Jul. 1974), p. 3311.
7. According to District Commissioner Bill Johnstone 63 000 truckloads of personal possessions in 5 ton lorries were used. Rhodesia Herald (13 Dec. 1974).
8. It is interesting to compare the approach used by the British in Malaya, where squatter families were compensated for their movement. For building new homes, each family received a cash grant eventually totalling \$100 (US) with the timber and thatch for new huts being supplied at cost price. Transportation was free. In addition each family received a subsistence allowance. J.J. McCuen, Art of War, p. 157.
9. Rhodesia Herald (4 Oct. 1974).
10. See for example the statement made by Internal Affairs Minister Jack Mussett as reported in the Sunday Mail of 1 December 1976.
11. During 1975 the District Commissioner responsible for Kandeya Tribal Trust Land, Jim Herd, attempted a new approach. He established a system of

protected patrol bases throughout the Trust Land which would enable Department of Internal Affairs patrols to maintain contact with the local population. Patrols were made on horseback between these bases. The system was maintained until such time as Kandeya was resettled. The effectiveness of these attempts could not be ascertained.

12. Rhodesia Herald (10 Oct. 1977).
13. A breakdown of Protected Villages (PV's) and Consolidated Villages (CV's) is as follows: Maramba TTL, 3 PV's; Uzumba TTL, 17 PV's; Kandeya TTL, 39 PV's; Masoso TTL, 5 PV's; Karutana African Purchase Land, 1 PV; Mukumbura TTL, 3 PV's; Shisuiti TTL, 6 PV's; Chesa African Purchase Land, 9 PV's; Pfungwe TTL, 3 CV's and 1 PV; Mzarabani TTL, 3 PV's; Mutoko TTL, 26 PV's; Ngarwe TTL, 7 PV's; Mudzi TTL, 2 PV's; Chikuizo TTL, 2 PV's; Chiweshe TTL, 21 PV's; Madziwa TTL, 10 PV's; Bushu TTL, 4 PV's; Mtentengwe TTL, 4 PV's; Diti TTL, 2 PV's; Chipisc TTL, 2 PV's; Wankie TTL, 1 PV; Sangwe TTL, 2 PV's; Sengwe TTL, 5 PV's; Matibi No 2 TTL, 8 PV's; Holdenby TTL, 9 PV's; Mutusa North TTL, 5 PV's; Manga TTL, 1 PV; Mutema TTL, 8 PV's; Musikavanhu TTL, 4 PV's; Chikore Mission, 4 PV's and Ndpwayo TTL, 9 PV's.
14. Rhodesia Herald (24 Jun. 1978).
15. Rhodesia Herald (9 Sep. 1978).
16. Rhodesia Herald (10 Oct. 1978).
17. Sunday Mail (4 Oct. 1979).
18. The other half was used for district administrative duties.
19. The Guard Force, for example, received no pension fund benefits, while the regular Police, Army and Air Force members received better pay than their Guard Force, Auxiliary and Internal Affairs equivalents.
20. Sunday Mail (1 Dec. 1974).
21. Ibid.
22. Sunday Mail (2 Feb. 1977). Distances to fields were up to 12 km.
23. Before resettlement Chiweshe produced half of the Rhodesian Burley and 18% of the total tobacco crop. Rhodesia Herald (1 Nov. 1981).

Chapter 4

BORDER MINEFIELD OBSTACLES

In the period 1974 to 1979, Rhodesia invested nearly Rh\$ 10 million in capital expenditure alone to establish border minefield obstacles. Although the strategy was only vaguely defined at national level, it did constitute an important element of military strategy at Joint Operational Centre and Army brigade level of command. At these levels the construction of such obstacles was linked, in varying degrees, to the establishment of no-go areas, curfews and the resettlement of the local population into Protected Villages. This was specifically the case in Operations Hurricane and Repulse along Rhodesia's eastern borders with Mozambique. (2)

4.1 Cordon Sanitaire

To be effective any border control system must fulfill three related functions, namely detection, delay and neutralization.

Simply stated, border control operations should impede movement of insurgents across the area under surveillance and cause them to commit acts that will lead to detection. During the delay, firepower and intercepting forces can destroy the insurgents. (1)

Undoubtedly the creation of an impenetrable cordon sanitaire is almost impossible. More recent examples that have, however, proved effective are those dividing the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, and along the Israeli borders with Lebanon and Syria. As was the case in Algeria with the Morice line these barriers represented a major undertaking and massive capital expenditure.

The basic characteristics of such cordons are

1. Physical obstacles that delay any breaching operation.
2. An alarm system indicating the location of any attempt at breaching the cordon.
3. Quick reaction forces that react immediately to any alarm.
4. Constant patrolling and vigilance along the total length of the cordon, day and night.
5. Finally, these cordons were typically constructed along the entire length of a border. The aim was thus to halt all cross-border movement, and not to channel or limit any such occurrences.

4.2 Rhodesian Cordons Sanitaires

The origin of the Rhodesian strategy for the creation of a cordon sanitaire remains uncertain. Even more vague is the initial concept and empirical data that the operation was based on. A single fact that is, however, self-evident can be deduced from the date of the first such attempt. During 1974 the insurgent threat to Rhodesia was confined to the North-east, and to all intents and purposes provided no evidence that suggested its rapid spread to the rest of the country. Events in far-away Portugal could, similarly, at this stage not have implied the rapid transfer of power in Mozambique. It would thus seem that when construction began on the first attempt at a cordon sanitaire, the scope planned was strictly limited to the North-eastern border.

Construction on this first Rhodesian attempt, officially termed the Cordon Sanitaire (Corsan), started during May 1974. It took 24 months to complete the 179 km of Corsan at a cost of Rh\$ 27 000 per kilometer.

According to official classified documentation:

The original Cordon Sanitaire was designed to act as an obstacle which would provide warning of people crossing in either direction, and in itself be a deterrent to crossings taking place. Timely warning would theoretically enable troops to react and eliminate the group.

The design of the Corsan is shown diagrammatically in Figure 4.1. It consists of two game fences approximately 25 metres apart within which was enclosed a minefield. Blast mines were laid in the minefield at a density of 1 to 3 mines for every meter of Corsan

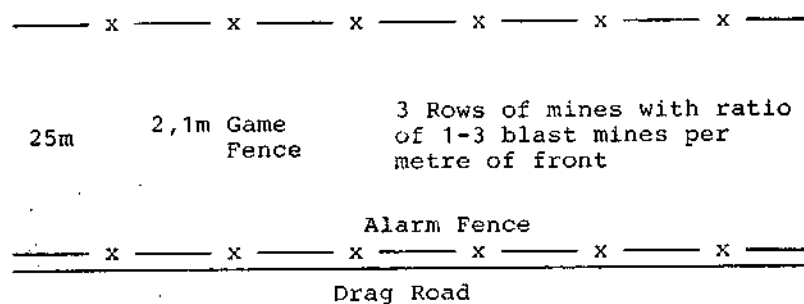


Figure 4.1: Cordon Sanitaire

length. (Blast mines rely on the force of the explosion rather than on shrapnel for their effect). A 'drag' road was constructed along the Rhodesian side of the inner fence to facilitate the location of tracks. (Drag roads are constituted by bulldozing areas of bush to create strips of cleared ground regularly swept and examined for footprints left by transgressors).

The 25 metres of minefield were treated with a defoliant known as HYVAR-X which totally destroyed all vegetation. Attempts to further defoliate strips of 150 metres each on either side of the Corsan met with lesser degrees of success, largely as a result of the cheaper herbicide used as TORDON 225.(3)

At a later stage an alarm fence was fitted to the inner fence. The original system installed was a YEAL system, but proved too sensitive and unreliable. After a high level delegation had studied both the YEAL and DTR 78 systems in Israel, the latter was chosen for further installation. Although initial planning provided for the installation of an alarm system along the total length of the Corsan, this objective was not achieved.

In theory the system was linked to control points every 10 km along the Corsan where an alarm was sounded. From here reaction forces could be directed to the point of violation. From the start inadequate force levels and the demands of other, urgent, tasks precluded the effective deployment of such reaction forces along the length of the Corsan. Even at this early stage security forces relied increasingly upon regular patrols along the Corsan in place

of highly mobile reaction forces. A variation entailed the direction of artillery fire for immediate retaliation. This was attempted for a short period in the Mjumbura area during 1975. The large number of Corsan violations that occurred, however, resulted in an inordinate expenditure of ammunition and the operation was abandoned.

Further cover of the Corsan was provided by regular patrols of mounted infantry. These forces were specifically aimed at picking up tracks and signs of interference with the Corsan.

Although the initial concept had seemingly originated from the Army, in an almost panic reaction to the insurgent threat of 1973, a Corsan committee was set up at inter-departmental level to co-ordinate all civil/military aspects of the project. Chaired by the Deputy Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister, it consisted of senior representatives from the Army, Air Force, Police, Treasury, Internal Affairs and the Department of Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Control. This last department had wide experience in the construction of game fences and was initially made responsible for all Corsan fencing.

Within the Army the Corps of Engineers lay the minefield while the Signal Corps installed and maintained the alarm system. A civilian firm, Agricura (SA) Pty Ltd, was contracted for the defoliation.

Some initial success was achieved by the Corsan, but this came from casualties caused by blast mines and not from Security Force reaction to violations. Very few of the casualties were captured, most leaving only a blood spoor leading into Mozambique. The lack of concrete evidence regarding the effectiveness of the Corsan soon led to a loss of confidence in the obstacle and even less effective policing of it.

The configuration of the Corsan had, in effect, determined its own failure. There were several major contributing factors: the limited width of the mined strip the ineffective type of mine used; the effects of the heavy sub-tropical rains on these mines; the placements of the alarm system on the inner fence, and the difficulty encountered in maintaining the minefield.

Since these factors constantly recurred in subsequent additions and extensions to the Corsan, each will be discussed in turn.

Within weeks of construction, the narrowness of the minefield became the first evident shortcoming

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in the obstacle. The Rhodesian Corps of Engineers later assessed it as follows:

The depth of 25 metres for a barrier minefield was somewhat ludicrous, as with normal breaching techniques this could be breached within two hours.

The method of breaching developed by the insurgents was in fact even less time-consuming. They simply dug holes at stride length, thus avoiding the detailed breaching of the total width of the minefield. Breaching could furthermore take place at night across a clearly demarcated, defoliated, strip. Defoliation and the heavy annual summer rains further significantly reduced the effectiveness of these mines. Heavy rains exposed mines, tumbled and shifted them. It also buried a number deep enough to avoid their detonation through the pressure exerted on the ground by the weight of a man. Furthermore, the Rhodesian Engineers were later to state:

Maintenance was impossible. The conditions described above made the minefield more dangerous to breach than to walk over.

In the final instance, placement of the alarm system on the inner fence, and the lack of depth and density of mines mentioned already ensured the ineffectiveness of the Corsan. Insurgent members leaving Rhodesia could, in the first place, trip the alarm and still have enough time to breach the minefield before the reaction force arrived. In the second place, insurgents entering Rhodesia only activated the alarm as a last obstacle. In this case the alarm merely indicated that a breach had occurred. The insurgents were thus already a distance into the country before the reaction force arrived. In the absence of sufficient and effective quick reaction forces the installation of the alarm system in itself was questionable.

The advantages mentioned above regarding the insurgents, were further increased by the slow reaction of Security Forces to any indications of breaches. Yet this was largely due to the large number of false alarms caused by wild game either activating the alarm system or detonating mines.

The lessons learnt from the Corsan led to the experimental construction of a Modified Cordon Sanitaire (Mod Corsan). Only 18 km of this version were constructed at a total cost of Rh\$ 288 000, or

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Rh\$ 16 000 per kilometer (see Fig 4.2). Due to various delays the Mod Corsan took 4 months to complete. It was, however, largely a further development and extension of a tract of existing Corsan.

The Mod Corsan consisted of a modified double apron fence (rows of semi-coiled barbed wire on top of each other) constructed about 300m inside the existing Corsan with a drag road on the inward side. Three rows of mines were laid in the strip between the apron fence and the Corsan at a total density of 2 mines per meter of front (ie. a lesser density than in the 25 metres of the Corsan).

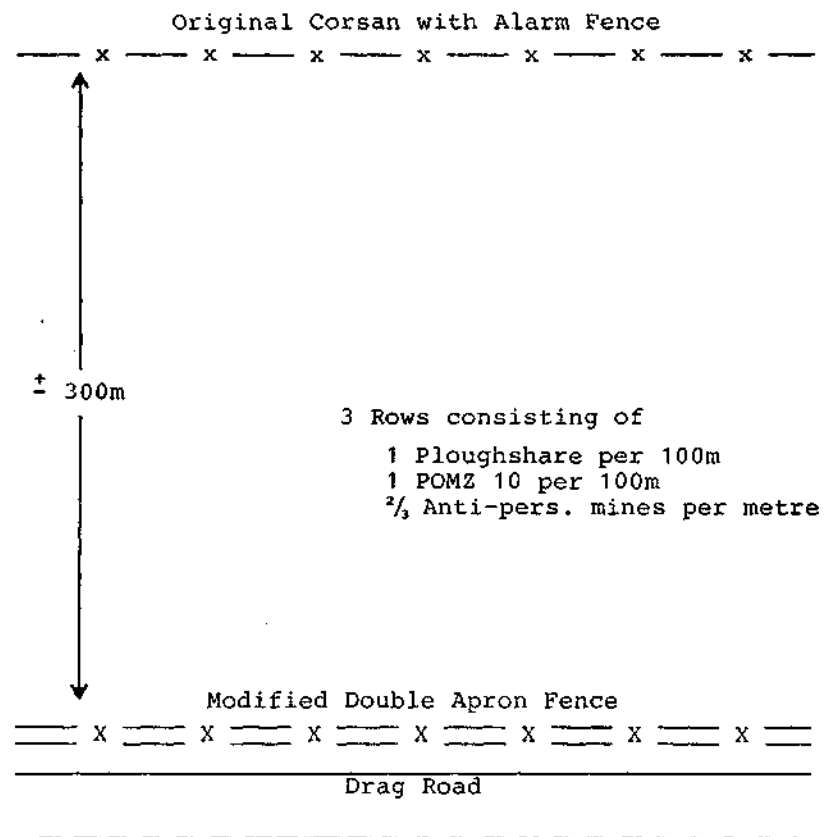


Figure 4.2: Modified Cordon Sanitaire

The use of directional shrapnel mines termed ploughshares was instituted, however, as well as omni-directional POMZ 10 shrapnel mines. Both were attached to trip wires and had to be placed above ground level. To conceal these mines and to lessen the effect of rain the 300m of minefield were treated with herbicide.

The natural camouflage proved to be an advantage while also lessening the effect of rain on the pressure mines, but the devices were now susceptible to the regular veld fires that occur in the area. A further advantage was that the Corsan alarm fence was now on the enemy (ie. Mozambique) side of the minefield. On the other hand, maintenance of the alarm system, and close investigation of it, could not easily be undertaken owing to access problems. Little attention had apparently been given to the problem of maintenance during the planning stage of the obstacle.

The construction and maintenance teams that had completed the task were redeployed immediately after completion and the Mod Corsan subsequently rapidly deteriorated to ineffectiveness.

The Mod Corsan was mainly an Army project, with the Engineers responsible for construction of the modified double apron fence. After evaluating the effectiveness of this fence it was decided that the Department of Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Control would again construct all future fences. These, in turn, were more of the conventional game fence types.

Furthermore, it once again became clear that greater emphasis had to be placed on maintenance. A final conclusion was reached concerning doubts about the cost effectiveness of the alarm system in the absence of sufficient/effective reaction forces.

At this stage 6 Composite Squadron, consisting of infantry, engineers and signallers was responsible for patrolling and maintaining both the Corsan and Mod Corsan. Owing to the ineffectiveness of the obstacles that had been erected and the concurrent lack of maintenance, the squadron was achieving very little success.

In reaction to the threat of a possible FRELIMO (Army of Mozambique) attack on Mutare (formerly Umtali), the construction and maintenance teams engaged on the Mod Corsan were hastily redeployed. It was decided to install a further improvement on the Mod Corsan, known as the Mod Mod Corsan (see Fig 4.3) in the area.

The design used entailed the construction of a

game fence with a fitted alarm system parallel to the existing border fence, 300 metres in depth, on the Rhodesian side. An all-weather road was cut through the mountains surrounding Mutare, parallel to the game fence.

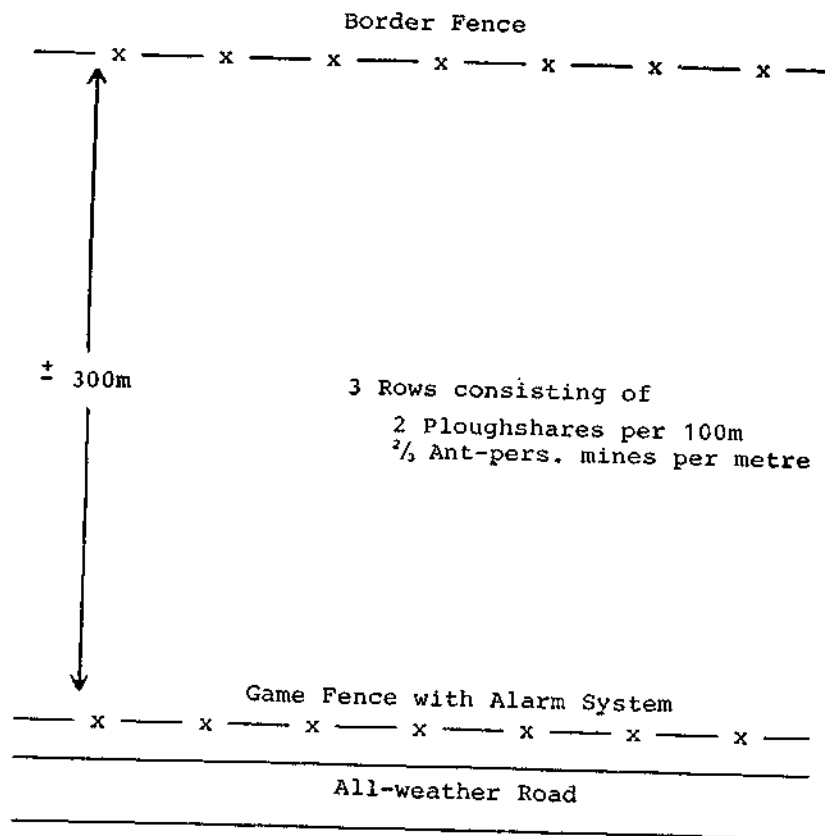


Figure 4.3: Modified Modified Cordon Sanitaire

The minefield laid between the two fences consisted of three rows. Only ploughshare and pressure mines were used to a total density of slightly over two mines per meter of frontage.

At a later stage about 50 so-called Radio Activated Devices were also installed to strengthen the

minefield. These 'devices' consisted of 44 gallon drums filled with explosives and shrapnel that could be detonated by radio link.

The Mod Mod Corsan was probably the closest that Rhodesia came to the construction of a cordón sanitaire in the accepted sense of the term. Until lack of maintenance nullified its effectiveness, it was the most successful attempt undertaken by the Security Forces. In terms of cost, however, it was also the most expensive. Only 20 km of Mod Mod Corsan were constructed, but at a total cost of approximately Rh\$ 600 000 or Rh\$ 30 000 per kilometre. The high cost was mainly due to the expense of road and fence construction.

In spite of previous expense maintenance problems were immediately apparent. This was largely the result of bad minelaying practices and, once again, the lack of a pre-planned maintenance scheme. Again an urgent request had led to hasty and ill-planned execution.

Following the construction of the Mod Mod Corsan, an analysis of the results achieved, in relation to the costs involved, was undertaken. The following conclusions were reached:

1. Local production of pressure mines would contribute meaningfully to the lowering of costs.
2. The limited effectiveness of the alarm system was not cost-beneficial.
3. The cost of constructing game fences and an all-weather road was deemed too high.

4.3 Border Minefields

Following the conclusions reached regarding the Mod Mod Corsan, the following principles were officially formulated for the future construction of border obstacles:

1. The alarm system would be discarded.
2. The imported pressure mines (Rh\$ 7,00 per unit) would be replaced by a locally produced version (Rh\$ 2,60 per unit).
3. Minefields would be constructed along existing roads as far as possible to reduce costs further.
4. No further game fences would be constructed. A normal cattle fence for demarcation of the minefield would henceforth be erected on the homeward side of the minefield only.
5. Minefields would be a minimum of 300 metres wide.

6. The minefield itself would largely consist of ploughshare mines. Pressure mines would only be used to protect the more effective ploughshare mines.

When implemented, these measures reduced the cost per kilometer to Rh\$ 2 300. A total of 864 km of Border Minefield was eventually constructed at a cost of ± Rh\$ 2,298 million (ie. Rh\$ 2 660 per km).

The Border Minefield that was laid consisted of 3 rows each containing a combination of pressure and ploughshare mines. During the final stages of construction, the density of pressure mines was increased. A pull/release switch was also incorporated (ie. the mine was detonated by either an increase or a decrease in tension of the trip wire).

By August 1978, when 700 km of the total minefield had been completed, the Rhodesian Corps of Engineers stated that

... terrorists are now crossing the minefield relatively easily ...

This was in spite of the fact that the Border Minefield had again been added to the existing stretches of Corsan, Mod Corsan and Mod Mod Corsan. A factor that could have been used to Security Force advantage was that all insurgent crossings were now taking place by day. But by this stage crossings were only

... normally discovered within 24 hours of occurrence.

Border minefield obstacles were rapidly becoming expensive history lessons.

Having moved away from the concept of a traditional cordón sanitaire, the Rhodesian Security Forces were attempting to construct obstacles that in themselves would result in insurgent casualties. Again these could not be of real value since they were not patrolled and guarded effectively.

As with all previous attempts, maintenance was a further serious problem. This was most evident in those areas where the minefield bordered on game parks such as Gona Re Zhou and Hurange (formerly Wankie). Since only cattle fences were now used to demarcate the obstacle, both larger and smaller game detonated mines to the extent that a 30% replacement rate was required to prevent the rapid deterioration of the obstacle.

In belated recognition of the over-ambitious schemes that had been executed up to that stage, the

majority of funds allocated for the construction of border minefields during 1978-9 (Rh\$ 4 million) was now used for maintenance purposes. Furthermore projected extension of minefields along almost the total length of the border with Mozambique was postponed. Indifferent to the lessons of the first Corsans, the Engineer's themselves, as well as the various Joint Operation Centres were once again all calling for the further extension of these fields in varying degrees.

The official Engineer's study (referred to above) concluded during August 1978 that

Finally, the Border Minefield can be said to be the battle of Engineers in this war. Where superiority by own forces was gained in 1977 and the early part of 1978, parity now exists. In order to regain the superiority once held it is necessary to:

- a. Increase the sophistication of the existing minefield to try and eliminate their specialists.
- b. Increase the sensity (sic) of existing minefields to ensure maximum kills.
- c. To construct as many new minefields as possible to:
 - i. Further limit terrorist crossing points
 - ii. Stretch their Engineer resources as far as possible and eliminate him (sic)
 - iii. Gain further intelligence on routes used and methods of crossing.
- d. The implementation of the above can only hamper their ability to conduct the war effectively.

A single corps in the Rhodesian Army thus saw itself as fighting its own war. The corsan and minefields had by now gained a life of their own, independent of broad military strategic planning. Further efforts were all based on these dubious concepts.

Two attempts to strengthen the Border Minefield were known as the Reinforced and Superimposed Border Minefields.

The Reinforced Border Minefield entailed the addition of pressure mines to a stretch of 110 to 120 km of Border Minefield in the South-east. It was completed during April 1979, but revealed a need for even further depth in the minefield.

The Superimposed Border Minefield constituted the final addition to the system of border minefield obstacles. It was completed during November 1979 and

entailed a further extension of the Reinforced Border Minefields. The latter had been laid between two to five km inside the border. To this were added four belts of marked ploughshares and unmarked pressure mines. The total density of pressure mines per metre of minefield thus constituted four, with a ploughshare every 15m.

As clearly indicated by these final attempts, the Security Forces were now attempting to establish a barrier that in itself would be a formidable obstacle, without the addition of large numbers of policing forces. Obviously neither own lessons learnt, nor those of other countries were deemed to be valid.

4.4 Conclusion

When the first Corsan was constructed Mozambique was still for most parts firmly in Portuguese hands. Geographically the Rhodesian border, across which insurgent infiltration was taking place, was thus limited to that in the North-east. It is conceivable that at that stage, Joint Operation Centre Hurricane aimed at establishing a Corsan along the whole frontage facing Tete province. As soon as Mozambique had gained its independence, however, the situation changed dramatically. The entire eastern border became a potential infiltration route.

Whereas previously, the Security Forces, with a major commitment of both material resources and manpower, could have reasonably attempted to create a cordon sanitaire in the North-east, the task now became virtually impossible given Rhodesia's limited resources.

Although the initial strategic concept was never clearly formulated, it would seem that Joint Operation Centre Hurricane did not envisage a Corsan along its total north-eastern frontier. Apparently the idea was rather to deny insurgent forces certain routes and to force them to use others, better suited to Security Forces countermeasures. Yet as insurgent infiltration spread across the eastern frontier, this rationale changed. Through successive extensions of the existing obstacles the aim eventually became totally unrealistic to seal the eastern border. Ample evidence in this regard is provided by the requests for further border minefields received from Joint Operation Centres in 1978-9.

Extension of border obstacles was undertaken on request from Joint Operation Centre within the

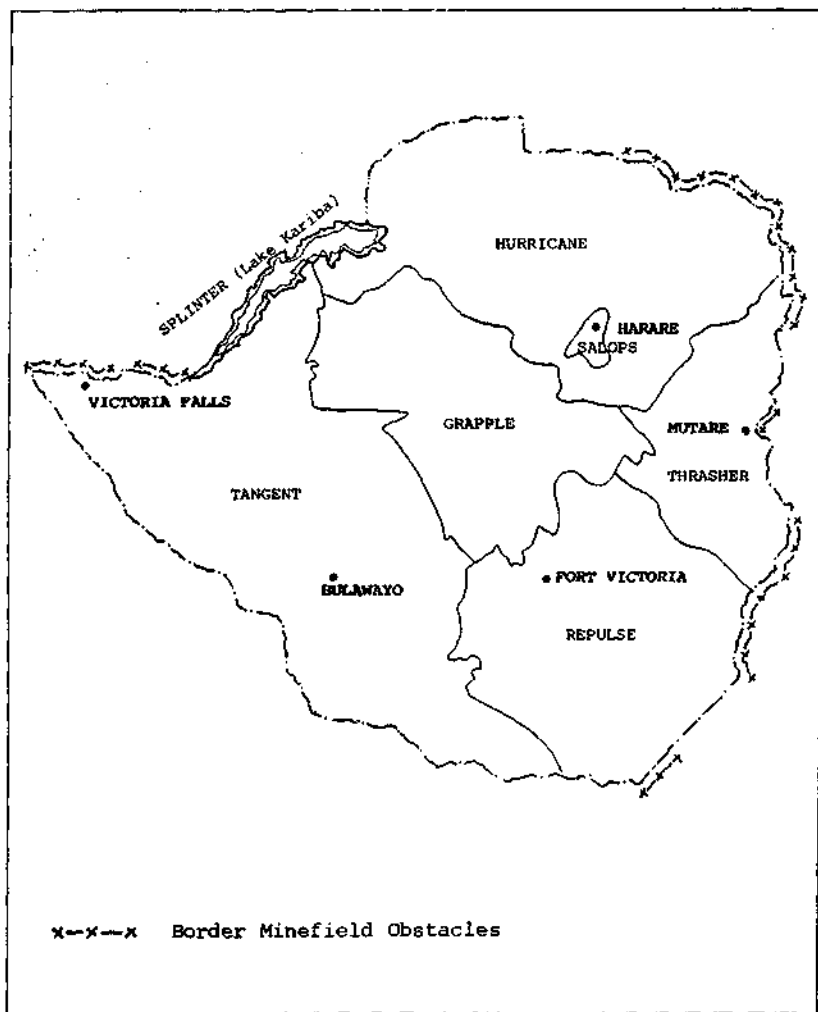


Figure 4.4 Border Minefield Obstacles

framework of available resources, and not within a broad national strategic plan. Rhodesia had neither the manpower nor material resources to institute an effective border control device along its total eastern border. As such, this strategy provides clear evidence of the lack of a clear and coherent military strategy at national level.

If we consider the concept of a cordon sanitaire as expounded in the introduction, it also becomes clear that Rhodesian planners placed higher priority on some characteristics than others. Instead of a constantly patrolled and policed obstacle, Security Force authorities emphasised an impediment along the total length of border. The limited means available further necessitated that neither an effective alarm system, nor, specifically, quick reaction forces, could be deployed along the whole length. (See Figure 4.4)

To the observer, it would seem that, once instituted, the Cordon Sanitaire gained an identity of its own, independent of sound strategic considerations. Despite the fact that the concept of a cordon sanitaire in Rhodesia proved to be ineffective at an early stage, Security Forces persisted with further refinement and extension of the scheme. The lack of broad strategic guidance resulted in the continuation of an ineffective scheme.

NOTES

1. J.D. Deiner 'Guerilla Border Sanctuaries in Counterinsurgent Warfare', The Army Quarterly, vol. 109, no. 2 (Apr. 1979), p. 170.

2. Border minefields were, as a rule, constructed in established no-go areas. The only exceptions were at Mutare, at Victoria Falls and in the Chipinga Mountains. The former two are tourist attractions, while the labourers working on the tea farms at Chipinga were commuters from Mozambique and members of a tribe hostile to the Shona insurgent.

3. This later led to a claim by the former Rhodesian government against the firm responsible. A further reason for the failure of TORDON 225 was stated as being a result of not maintaining a 90% overlap in each strip sprayed.

Chapter 5

PSEUDO OPERATIONS AND THE SELOUS SCOUTS

5.1 The Concept

The concept of 'pseudo' insurgents, i.e. members of the counter-insurgency forces posing as insurgents, is a well established, if lesser known, method of gathering intelligence and one often used by police units involved in crime detection.

In practice select members of the Security Forces are trained in the habits and modus operandi of their enemy down to the smallest detail. Groups then infiltrate known insurgent areas, attempting to establish themselves as genuine insurgents. In counter-insurgency terminology this phase of the operation is known as 'validation' and is aimed both at convincing insurgents and members of the local population of the authenticity of the group.

Once a pseudo team has established its credentials as insurgent forces, the focus shifts to gathering all available information on insurgents and local support for them in the area. In this way pseudo operations can contribute substantially to the total Security Force intelligence picture. In an area where insurgent presence has already been established, as was the case in north-eastern Rhodesia in 1973, and where traditional Security Force intelligence sources have been eliminated through popular support for the insurgent cause, pseudo operations may prove to be the only reliable source of intelligence.

Within the cycle of any pseudo operation, validation and the acceptance of both local population and insurgents of the pseudo team, invariably proves to be the most difficult. To succeed, pseudo teams need to emulate insurgent forces in every respect. Furthermore, the insertion of these teams into an area is in itself a very delicate operation.

Pseudo Operations

In most cases success is only possible if the pseudo team contains a number of former insurgents, recently captured by Security Forces and persuaded to change sides ('turned', in counter-insurgency jargon).

Again, this need not go hand-in-hand with physical intimidation as might seem necessary. Numerous studies on the motivation of 'revolutionary' forces indicate that ideological commitment to the cause of 'liberation' plays a far less important role in motivation than is generally believed. (1)

Research has substantiated that there is a willingness among captured insurgent personnel to change sides in the traumatic post-contact and initial period of capture. Should a captured insurgent not be presented with obvious means of escape and be physically involved in counter-insurgency operations on the side of Government forces he, in effect, becomes committed to the latter cause.

With the aid of these former insurgents, pseudo teams are able to establish contact with the established insurgent support structures within local communities. Through the local population, further contact with insurgent groups could also follow. Information gleaned in this way is passed on to the traditional elements of the Security Forces for action. Only in very exceptional circumstances would a pseudo team itself use intelligence obtained to eliminate insurgent forces. For, if in the latter case, the operation is not entirely successful, the pseudo team would immediately risk being exposed as government forces and thus lose all prospect of gaining intelligence.

But pseudo operations are not exclusively aimed at obtaining intelligence leading to insurgent casualties. The aim of these operations can also be much less subtle. By passing themselves off as insurgents, pseudo teams could sow distrust between the local population and insurgent forces in general. Such actions could include acts of indiscretion towards property, women and cattle, or local customs and tribal beliefs. If, as was the case in Rhodesia, competing insurgent forces (ZANLA and ZPRA) are vying for local support, pseudo practices could fan any friction between such forces into open armed hostility. Ethnic affiliation could aid in this regard.

However, if the strategy is to survive, it needs to be tightly controlled and limited in practice. Once members of the local population and insurgents become aware of the strategy, their

security becomes stricter and further validation and establishment of pseudo teams becomes increasingly difficult. There is the danger, also, that pseudo operations may be used as licence for transgression of the law. If the two factors are combined and members of the local population become aware of Security Forces posing as insurgents and committing crimes in this guise, the real insurgent forces are presented with an ideal propaganda weapon. At such time both Security Forces and the Government are likely to lose some of their claim to legitimacy that seems a natural product of their position as enforcers of, and compliers with, the law.

In recent counter-insurgency history, pseudo operations were first conducted by Special Branch in Malaya. Since the concept was only introduced towards the latter stages of the campaign, the impact was limited. The idea was, however, regenerated and expanded during the Mau-Mau emergency in Kenya under the driving leadership of Capt (later General Sir) Frank Kitson. (2) It was from these experiences that Rhodesian pseudo operations were born.

5.2 The Formation of the Selous Scouts

In the period after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence Special Branch was the first to employ methods of gathering intelligence that could be termed as pseudo operations. These were first conducted in the Zwimba and Chirau Tribal Trust Lands during 1966 and were continued in these areas on an informal basis up to 1973. These first attempts were unsophisticated and mainly aimed at determining the loyalties of members of the local population.

Within Rhodesian Army circles pseudo operations were apparently first suggested by the second in command of the Rhodesian Light Infantry, Major John Hickman. Sometime before 1966 he forwarded a paper to Army headquarters outlining the possible implementation of such a scheme. Subsequently after much delay, a pilot scheme was jointly run during 1966 by the Army, Special Branch and the British South Africa Police. This met with little success, for, at the time, the vast majority of the local population could still be considered passive, if not hostile to the insurgent cause. Little intelligence could thus be gained by posing as insurgents. Moreover, pseudo modus operandi was at an early and rudimentary stage of development. For the time being

serious Army interest abated.

While the traditional sources of Security Force intelligence had been functioning adequately inside Rhodesia up to 1971, a drastic change resulted from ZANLA penetration into the North-east during 1972. Security Forces suddenly found themselves in an actively hostile environment late in 1972.

By the end of that year Rhodesian authorities were fast becoming aware that the security situation in the North-east was deteriorating rapidly. What had seemed to be an effective and sound network of informers dried up in a matter of weeks. Although aware of insurgent presence and intimidation, lack of operational intelligence forestalled effective counter-measures. This lack of detailed and accurate information now led to the regeneration of the concept of pseudo insurgents.

The former second-in-command of the Rhodesian Light Infantry was by this stage Officer Commanding 2 Brigade. Against the background of an almost total lack of operational intelligence and declining Army morale, Brigadier Hickman obtained permission to restart a pilot pseudo scheme. Similar interest had been revived in Special Branch.

With the approval of Joint Operation Centre Hurricane, Superintendent Peterson of Special Branch Harare formed an all-black pseudo team on 26 January 1973. The team of six men, two African Detective Constables and four former insurgents were placed under the command of the Special Branch officer at Bindura. Following rudimentary training the team was alternatively deployed in Bushu and Madziwa Tribal Trust Lands, near Saint Albert's Mission and in Chinamora Tribal Trust Land near Harare. While some useful information was gathered, these operations led to no insurgent casualties. At the time the lack of white leadership and expertise in the team was identified as the major problem. For a few months the team was disbanded, but eventually reorganized - this time to include white members.

A few weeks after the formation of the Special Branch team, the Army commenced with two pseudo teams of their own. These consisted of two Special Air Service non-commissioned officers who had been attached to the Army Tracking Wing at Lake Kariba and a number of black soldiers from the Rhodesia African Rifles. Finally, former insurgents were added to the teams.

With the benefit of some weeks of operational deployment with their own pseudo team, Special Branch could train the Army teams in much greater

detail - as well as provide them with vital and detailed intelligence.

Subsequently a third Army team was deployed with the result that operations could be conducted in the Mtepatapa farming area and in Chiweshe Tribal Trust Land. However, Army disillusionment soon reduced the number of teams to two. By this stage effective control of all teams had passed to Special Branch.

The first tangible success attributed to these teams occurred during August 1973 when a ZANLA insurgent was captured along the Ruya River. During the same operation the concept of 'frozen areas' was developed to minimize the chances of a clash between members of the Security Forces and a pseudo team. The official definition of such areas read as follows:

A Frozen Area is a clearly defined area, in which Security Forces are precluded from operating, other than along main roads. Army Security Forces already in an area to be declared "Frozen" will be withdrawn from such an area by the time stipulated in the signal intimating that such an area is to be "Frozen". This signal must be acknowledged by the recipient. The above ruling also applies to all armed members of the Services and Government Departments with the exception of:

- a. Those personnel tasked to operate exclusively along the Cordon Sanitaire.
- b. Those personnel stationed at Protective or Consolidated Villages and establishments provided with a permanent guard in which case they are restricted to 1 000 metres from the perimeter of such establishments.
- c. In the event of a vehicle breakdown, ambush or mine deterioration on the main road within a Frozen Area those personnel involved are to remain in close proximity of their transport. (3)

On 31 August 1973, a pseudo team effected the first ZANLA casualty to result from these operations.

Within both the Army and Special Branch these pseudo operations were being conducted under the tightest security. Co-ordination between pseudo and regular Army units was achieved on an informal basis. As a result, a map reading error led to a clash between the pseudo team and an Army patrol during which the pseudo team commander, Sergeant Rabie, was

killed. Temporarily all pseudo operations were halted.

By this stage the senior Army and Special Branch members involved were convinced of the use of pseudo operations. The death of André Rabie had, however, indicated that pseudo operations had to be conducted within a formalised structure and co-ordinated with other Security Force actions in an area.

During November 1973 a former Regimental Sergeant Major of the Rhodesian Light Infantry, Captain Ron Reid-Daly, was recruited and promoted to Major as Officer Commanding the pseudo insurgent unit to become known as the Selous Scouts. The personal involvement of Lieutenant-General Walls in this appointment suggests that pseudo operations had received official blessing. Henceforth pseudo operations fell directly under the control of Special Branch. Officially part of Army Tracker Wing, the training camp moved to a secluded venue at Makuti near Lake Kariba where a number of vigorous selection courses were conducted, eventually swelling the unit to about 25 members. The regimental base eventually came to be situated at Inkomo near Darwendale.

When the first troop of pseudo operators was ready in January 1974, they were deployed from Bindura, where their Special Branch officer was located, into Chiweshe, Madziwa and Bindura Tribal Trust Lands. By the end of February a second troop became operational and a third during March. All three troops operated in Shona-speaking areas against ZANLA. Each troop was divided into three operating sections of nine to twelve men, a number of whom were former insurgents. Depending on their number, however, sections increased in strength to twenty and thirty men strong in some cases. Although the unit was nominally under Army control, control of intelligence, deployment and in some instances training was in the hands of Special Branch. At no stage were even the military intelligence organisations allowed to exert any influence over the unit.

Security, however, remained a problem, for even at this early stage it was becoming common knowledge in the operational area that the Security Forces were masquerading as insurgents. (4)

Following operations in Omay Tribal Trust Land bordering Lake Kariba during December 1974 the need for Matabele pseudo teams to operate against ZPRA within Matabeleland became apparent. These operations co-incided with the discovery that ZPRA had

started using rubber dingies to cross the lake and enter the neighbouring areas. For the first time Security Forces also encountered insurgent forces using radio's inside Rhodesia. As a result a ZPRA orientated pseudo troop was formed and stationed near Bulawayo.

During the first half of 1974 the success of the Selous Scouts had reached such proportions that Lieutenant-General Walls instructed the unit during May to double its strength from three to six troops. By December this had been achieved with an addition of about 50 former insurgents.

Although the existence of the unit, and to a lesser extent its type of operations had by now become an open secret, official notification of the Selous Scouts was only served during 1977. During April of that year the magazine To the Point reported that:

Rhodesian army chiefs have taken the wraps off a legendary anti-terrorist unit that for two years has played a vital and almost totally secret role in the war ... According to their commanding officer, Major Ron Reid-Daly, they have been directly and indirectly responsible for the elimination of 1 203 of the 2 500 terrorists who have died in the four-year-old war. (5)

In fact, the majority of insurgent casualties inside Rhodesia were the direct result of intelligence obtained during pseudo operations.

5.3 Pseudo Modus Operandi

Depending on the specific circumstances that enabled a pseudo team to enter an area as insurgent forces, pseudo methods and the deception employed varied widely from one area to the next.

According to then Major Reid-Daly the role of the Selous Scouts was to infiltrate the tribal population and the terrorist networks, pinpoint the terrorist camps and bases and then direct conventional forces in to carry out the actual attacks. Then depending on the skill of the particular Selous Scouts' pseudo group concerned, their cover should remain intact which would enable them to continue operating in a particular area ... perhaps indefinitely. (6)

As already indicated, validification was a

prerequisite for success. Detailed operational intelligence was required to enable a team to enter an area without arousing suspicion. The next step was to establish contact with the local population, and specifically with the insurgent agents within local villages. As a final step these agents or contact men were used as go-betweens with the pseudo team and any other insurgent team in the area. Having made contact a meeting was arranged which would be used finally to establish the credentials of the pseudo team.

Patience is essential in almost all types of pseudo operations. Arranging a meeting with a real insurgent group could entail several weeks during which numerous letters were passed back and forth via mujibas (insurgents' youth supporters) and contact men. If successful, a meeting would be arranged between the two groups at a neutral spot in which the senior group was approached by the juniors. Following this, the members of the two groups met and mingled. Information would be exchanged, beer drunk and possibly some revolutionary songs sung. Information gleaned at such meetings, as well as from other sources was then passed back to Special Branch or directly to Fire Force, the helicopter-borne reaction force, for action. One such specific type of operation that proved to be highly effective, was termed the Observation Post tactic.

For obvious reasons white pseudo team members could not come into direct contact with members of the local population or insurgents. When a pseudo team thus entered a village, the white(s) remained outside and as close as possible. After contact had been made between village members and a pseudo team, for example, the village would be kept under close observation. The reaction of villagers very often gave a good indication of the presence and location of other insurgent groups. Upon confirmation of such suspicion, the Selous Scouts team leader would call in an air strike or Fire Force on the insurgent group. To facilitate this, observation posts were manned on high ground close to the village. Former insurgent members with a detailed knowledge of both local customs and insurgent practices proved invaluable in picking up the most minute indications of insurgent presence. The use of observation posts was especially suited to the rugged terrain in the North-east of Rhodesia and proved highly successful in these areas.

The modus operandi of the Selous Scouts was particularly well suited for engaging the services

of captured or wounded insurgents. It often happened that Fire Force attacked an insurgent group, eliminating most of them and capturing the remainder.

Immediately following capture and the traumatic memory of the preceding fire-fight, these insurgents would be 'turned' by promise and threat. Along with a number of Scouts these prisoners would adopt the identity of the former insurgent group and function as they had done in an adjacent area sufficiently far enough from the local population who could identify them. In this instance the newly-turned insurgents would introduce the group to contact men and in general establish their bona fides with the local population. This method, however, relied upon total security, specifically in the area of the contact. But even where a prisoner had become compromised he could still be used as advisor or source of detailed local information.

A further variation of pseudo work entailed what were termed 'hunter-killer' groups. In contrast to a purely defensive, intelligence-gathering role, these teams were used aggressively. Having located a specific insurgent infiltration route, pseudo teams were despatched along it on the pretext of returning from Rhodesia for resupply and retraining after an extensive operation. En route further information was collected while the group, in contrast to its normal intelligence function, eliminated all insurgents on the way.

Hunter-killer groups were first used north of Mount Darwin in the Mavuradonha area where the rugged terrain inhibited normal Security Force operations.

In relation to their numbers, the success of the Selous Scouts became an important element in Rhodesian counter-insurgency operations. Both senior Army and Special Branch officers continuously called for the further expansion of the unit. Once the Selous Scouts had two platoons trained for deployment, their tactical headquarters shifted to Bindura. As the war spread across the country, deployment of Selous Scouts was no longer limited to the North-east. The first Scouts troops moved to Inkamo Barracks on 12 July 1974, which became the regimental rear base. During January 1977 it was renamed the André Rabie Barracks.

In general, the Selous Scouts achieved less success in penetrating the tighter, more disciplined ranks of ZPRA than was the case in the unstructured command and control groupings of ZANLA. Three Group did, however, achieve considerable success in a

number of clandestine operations into Botswana and Francistown itself.

Employment of the observation post tactic which had been so successful in the North-east proved ineffective in the rolling savannah plains and less densely populated areas of Matabeleland.

Rhodesian external operations commenced on a large scale during 1976 and were mainly aimed at ZANLA bases in Mozambique. A major limitation until then had been the lack of detailed operational intelligence on the location and lay-out of such a base. As will be shown in Chapter 7, it was a Selous Scouts pseudo operation in Holdenby Tribal Trust Land which led to the capture of a ZANLA insurgent who could compensate for this need. This led to the Nyadzonja raid of August 1976.

ZPRA pseudo teams were almost constantly involved in small-unit operations along the Grove road in eastern Botswana. The group was also responsible for the capture of important ZAPU officials in Francistown. The intelligence obtained from these men led to daring Land Rover raids into Lusaka, which temporarily paralysed the ZPRA conventional threat.

In yet other instances, pseudo team members were deployed deep into Mozambique and Zambia on one- or two-man, reconnaissance missions to determine physically the exact locations of bases, or of specific installations in such bases. For this purpose a Reconnaissance Troop was formed during the latter half of 1976. With a maximum strength of twelve men they specialized in deep penetration in preparation for larger external operations.

To facilitate security, the Selous Scouts constructed prefabricated corrugated iron 'forts' at their forward deployment bases at Bindura, Bulawayo, Mount Darwin, Chiredzi, Mutoko, Rusapi, etc. When operating in an area, the fort would be occupied as forward tactical headquarters from which deployment (at night) was undertaken, and where all captured insurgents were interrogated. All captives were hooded and flown into a landing zone in the fort. If the captives were important enough, eg. a political commissar, section leader and one or two other members of a group, the group would be reconstituted with pseudo operators and returned to the area. In this way the team had a sound knowledge of the area from the start while the former insurgents knew who their contact man in each village was and how to contact other groups.

Should a pseudo team establish itself in an area as an insurgent group in its own right, the

process of validification could entail extraordinary measures. It could entail calling in an air strike by Security Forces on their own position or close to it. Alternatively it could consist of select aggression against Security Forces or civilians. One such example was documented in Africa Confidential

After a white farmstead about forty miles north-west of Salisbury had been attacked, it was discovered that one of the two groups in the assault were Selous Scouts ... (7)

In some cases attempts at validification did more harm than good, as was the case with the first attack on a Protected Village. This was carried out by a pseudo team in the Mount Darwin area in Kandeya Tribal Trust Land during 1974 and precipitated a rash of similar attacks by real insurgent groups. A second example occurred in Nyanga North where a resident pseudo team trained and briefed the local population so well in aiding them that by the time real insurgents penetrated the area, a clandestine organisation had been firmly established for them.

Especially during the initial years, many pseudo operations were conducted to sow distrust between members of the local population and the insurgents. Rudimentary attempts towards achieving this objective consisted for instance of theft or offending local customs. Numerous further refinements were added. One such practice entailed calling in an air strike or Fire Force on the insurgent group after they had left a specific kraal. After two or three such occurrences the insurgents invariably suspected the kraal members of informing Security Forces of their presence. In revenge, and to forestall any repetition, innocent kraal members were executed. This would normally put an end to any voluntary support that the insurgents could expect from the kraal. (At the same time such punishment could also intimidate the inhabitants from helping the Security Forces).

A second method used relatively widely once an insurgent contact man had been identified, was for a pseudo team to eliminate him publicly after labeling him a traitor to the insurgent cause. Since the rest of the kraal members knew the contact man to be a loyal and staunch insurgent supporter, such a death would lead to considerable disillusionment and bewilderment. This practice had become so common by the end of the war that the Rhodesian Criminal Investigation Department had opened a number of

murder dossiers on Selous Scouts and Special Branch members. Invariably poor security led to a general knowledge of these measures. As the war progressed and Selous Scouts operations increased and intensified, this knowledge also spread to the local population and insurgent forces in the field.

Although the short term benefits that were achieved by such illegal actions were substantial, once the local population became aware of these practices, it could only have had a distinctly negative effect on their attitude vis á vis the government in general. The task of government, i.e. judicious law enforcement and maintenance of law and order, is incompatible with substantial transgression of the law. Under these circumstances it becomes extremely difficult for any such regime to claim legitimacy.

Once insurgent forces and their supporters became aware of pseudo activities, various measures were instituted to identify any such teams. Specific bangles and pieces of clothing were worn which would provide positive proof of identification. On specific instruction, members of the local population changed their method of aiding insurgent forces. Instead of leaving nightly food parcels at predetermined spots, each insurgent received his food individually during daylight. Any white member of such a team would thus be identified. It was only during 1979 that the Selous Scouts succeeded in fielding all-black teams to eliminate this problem.

In reaction to these changing means of identification, the Selous Scouts launched an intensive intelligence effort to remain constantly aware of what these entailed in any specific area.

A major success that did result from these operations was the mutual suspicion and distrust between insurgent forces in the field. Contact between such groups was increasingly preceded by lengthy exchanges of oral and written messages and co-ordination of forces for a single operation presented acute problems. This was even more so in those areas where both ZANLA and ZPRA forces were operating. Within ZANLA, groups frequently attacked one another. To increase this breach even further, pseudo ZANLA teams began attacking ZPRA insurgents, thus ensuring that the next encounter between ZANLA and ZPRA would turn into an armed clash. During the period between 1976 and 1978 when ZANLA attempted to encroach on Matabeleland, the success of this method was such that a captured ZANLA commander confessed to having been shocked by the fact that his first

eight contacts were with ZPRA forces. He was captured by the Security Forces in the ninth.

A further method employed in the Mount Darwin area entailed the intimidation of known contact men to aid the Selous Scouts. Shortly after having called in Fire Force on a group of insurgents in the area, the pseudo team visited the contact man. It was made clear to him that failure to co-operate with Security Forces would lead to his death. Thereafter his kraal was kept under constant surveillance from an observation post. Each time an insurgent group entered the area, the contact man would, for example, hang up a certain blanket after which he would meet the Selous Scouts at a predetermined spot to exchange information. Fire Force would then normally eliminate the insurgent group.

The contact men recruited in this manner were code-named 'Lemon' and 'Orange' and collectively known as 'Fruit Salad'. Since they were also paid for their services, the sudden appearance of riches in both cases led to insurgent suspicion and retribution. In his book Selous Scouts - Top Secret War Lieutenant-Colonel Reid-Daly describes a similar operation code-named Market Garden with the two compromised contact men known as Apple and Banana. This incident occurred at the foot of the Mavuradonha mountains in the North-east. (8)

As stated above, the Selous Scouts eventually could claim the highest kill ratio of all Rhodesian Security Forces. Although Fire Force, and First Battalion Rhodesian Light Infantry, which constituted the quick deployment troops of Fire Force, were physically responsible for most of these insurgent casualties, the intelligence that had led them to the insurgents originated from the Selous Scouts.

Yet, the very success of pseudo operations led to constant demands for the further expansion of the unit. Originally a single platoon of highly skilled men, the Selous Scouts grew into a disproportionately large unit of 1 800 men. A substantive portion were, however, territorial soldiers and thus not permanently attached to the unit. The rapid increase in numbers in itself led to a number of problems. In the first instance the unit was forced to lower its entry standards to obtain enough personnel to comply with Combined Operation demands. This led to a general lowering of operational standards in the pseudo role as did the widespread use of the less-demanding observation post tactic. The latter did not require as high a standard of training and experience as did normal pseudo operations. On the other hand, these

recruits were not all suitable for pseudo-type operations, while their training could not be as thorough.

As a result pseudo operations again shifted in emphasis away from that of gathering intelligence to a more aggressive role where insurgent casualty figures became all-important. This process was aided initially when substantial bonuses were paid for insurgent casualties.

5.4 Conclusion

The major problem touched on above, that of the widespread use of pseudo operations and the illegal nature of some of these practices, relates to a much wider problem, namely that of legitimate political authority. Without a legitimate claim to authority in the eyes of a substantial portion of its population, a government would have to rely on coercion alone to enforce compliance to its laws.

Legitimacy is a political necessity, for it reduces ... dependence on naked power by allowing (the government) ... to rely on authority. (9)

Furthermore, Claude E. Welch points to an important factor in relation to government resorting to force

inconsistent use of coercion can both speedily alienate individuals and focus their discontent upon political institutions. (10)

As a legitimate institution, authorities lay down and enforce compliance to laws that govern human activity in any country. Should this same government provide evidence of not abiding by these same laws, it stands to lose much of its legitimacy in the eyes of those affected. Such loss of legitimacy of necessity focusses on the political structures and institutions of the country. Within rural areas such dissatisfaction is aimed at the manifestations of government, i.e. local administration, the police and other government institutions and agencies.

In the following quotation Frank Kitson addresses the same problem, if more directly relevant to pseudo operations

... there is absolutely no need for special operations to be carried out in an illegal or

immoral way and indeed there is every reason to ensure that they are not, because they are just as much part of the government's programme as any of its other measures and the government must be prepared to take responsibility for them. (11)

Pseudo operations were used extensively in Rhodesia and in the long term proved to be counter-productive. In such operations the population inevitably become the battleground. If adequate protection from the insurgents is not provided, pseudo operations cause the local population to be yet further alienated from the Security Forces. In fact, the widespread use of such operations in Rhodesia trapped the local population between the two opposing sides: the insurgents on the one hand and the Security Forces posing as insurgents on the other. Both sides were ready to exact retribution should the local inhabitants assist the enemy. Yet, purely as a military measure pseudo operations were probably the most effective means of effecting insurgent casualties. According to a study by the Directorate of Military Intelligence in 1978 a full sixty eight percent of all insurgent fatalities inside Rhodesia could be attributed to the Selous Scouts.

Casualty figures in themselves, however, are not a sure indication either of success or failure in a counter-insurgency campaign. This is particularly true in pseudo operations: although numerous insurgents were killed, Security Forces failed to gain any permanent hold over rural areas. Such operations did succeed in creating distrust and confusion both amongst the insurgents themselves and between the insurgent forces and the local population. At the same time the punitive approach to subverted and potentially subverted rural people led to the simultaneous creation of distrust and confusion between the rural population and Security Forces. Security Forces completely lacked a strategy by which they could steadily gain control over increasingly subverted rural areas. Therefore, the Selous Scouts were merely the instruments of an overly aggressive and punitive strategy, simply directed at killing as many insurgents as possible and punishing the rural black population to force them to desist from support for the insurgent forces.

Security Forces should not have attempted to exert an uncertain control over all contested areas. The most seriously subverted Tribal Trust Lands should have been temporarily abandoned. Those areas

securely under government control should have been identified. Working outwards from these secure bases, Security Forces would then have been able to concentrate their resources on adjoining areas which were as yet only partially subverted. These threatened areas could have been consolidated by means of strict population control and by involving the local population in their own defence and development.

Within the structure of the Rhodesian Security Force apparatus the affiliation of the Selous Scouts presented problems of its own. Army control of the unit was initially vested in the Commander of the Army, Lieutenant-General Walls. When appointed as General Officer Commanding, Combined Operations, General Walls retained this relationship. COMOPS involvement in the planning of special force operations has been discussed in Chapter 2, 'Command and Control'. In addition friction developed between the Selous Scouts and the Special Air Service each vying for the status as primary special forces unit.

A particular problem resulting from Special Branch's control over all pseudo intelligence activities was the almost total absence of co-operation with the Directorate of Military Intelligence. The Selous Scouts were in fact under specific Special Branch instructions not to divulge any information to the Directorate of Military Intelligence. It would seem that professional jealousy and personal animosity played a major role in these co-ordination problems. When the concept of pseudo operations was initially put into practice, military intelligence organisations were by their own admission, incapable of controlling them.

Selous Scouts liaison with brigades also left much to be desired. An area would be frozen, pseudo teams would move in, complete their task and be withdrawn with very little intelligence passed on to the brigade headquarters in whose area it had taken place. Again Frank Kitson has very definite ideas on the subject

... special operations must be organised and implemented under the auspices of the normal machine for directing the campaign and the advantages to be gained from them weighed against the psychological implications of them becoming known. Furthermore normal Security Force units should be informed as to the nature and purpose of special operations as far as it is consistent with the requirements of security so that they come to regard Special Forces as

helpful colleagues and not as wild, irresponsible people whose one purpose is to steal the credit from those who carry out more humdrum, but necessary roles. (12)

In the final analysis the technique of pseudo operations in Rhodesia proved highly successful and re-emphasised its value as a method of gathering intelligence. The problems encountered and deviations from the concept were less the result of the Selous Scouts and Special Branch than they were the result of the absence of a coherent Security Force counter-insurgency strategy and a punitive approach to the whole problem of the insurgency.

NOTES

1. See for example A.R. Molnar et al, Human Factors Considerations of Undergrounds in Insurgencies (Department of the Army Pamphlet No 550-104, Washington DC, 1965).

2. See F. Kitson, Gangs and Counter-gangs (Barrie and Rockcliff, London, 1960); Bunch of Five (Faber and Faber, London 1977 and Low Intensity Operations, (Faber and Faber, London, 1971).

3. Rhodesian Army, Military Support to the Civil Power (MCP), (restricted, as amended, dated 1 May 1976), p. xvi.

4. P. Stiff and R. Reid-Daly, Selous Scouts: Top Secret War, (Galago, Alberton, 1982), p. 84.

5. To the Point, (1 Apr. 1977), p. 53.

6. Stiff and Reid-Daly, Selous Scouts, p. 76.

7. Africa Confidential (20 Oct. 1978), p. 3.

For an earlier example see Stiff and Reid-Daly, Selous Scouts, pp. 90-94.

8. Ibid., pp. 125-129.

9. R.M. Mombiose, Blueprint of Revolution, (Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, 1970), pp. 6-7.

10. C.E. Welch Jr. and M.B. Taunter (eds.) Revolution and Political Change (Duxbury Press, Belmont, 1972), p. 11.

11. F. Kitson, Bunch of Fives, p. 298.

12. Ibid.

Chapter 6

INTERNAL DEFENCE AND DEVELOPMENT: PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS, POPULATION AND RESOURCE CONTROL, CIVIC ACTION

6.1 The American Concept of Stability Operations

The first Western armed force in modern history to develop and employ a counter-insurgency approach directed at the political and socio-economic roots of an insurgency was the British Army, but it was left to the US Army to formalize and structure these ideas within a coherent doctrine.

Even before his presidency, John F. Kennedy held strong personal convictions concerning the world-wide threat of communist-inspired insurgency. Challenging the fundamental views held by his country's professional military establishment, President Kennedy actively intervened in the formulation of a new American military doctrine. This high level concern, together with an increasing military involvement in South Vietnam in the ensuing years, led to a rapid evolution of counter-insurgency doctrine within the US armed forces. A number of new concepts which have proved enduring in counter-insurgency theory were developed. The first of these is the use of the term 'stability operations' in place of counter-insurgency.

That type of internal defence and development operations and assistance provided by the armed forces to maintain, restore, or establish a climate of order within which responsible government can function effectively and without which progress cannot be achieved. (1)

This view was a departure from previous military conceptions which regarded the strategy to defeat insurgencies mainly, if not entirely, as a counter-guerilla problem undertaken largely by military and police actions. Viewed as part of the broader,

national problem of internal development, the prevention of insurgency came to be recognised as including measures for internal political, economic and social development. Therefore, the total counter-insurgency effort should thus entail a combination of both effective military operations and socio-economic reform comprising three primary elements.

1. Environmental improvement A program designed to eliminate the causes of popular discontent and restore confidence in the established government.
2. Resources control A program designed to isolate the guerrillas from the people and their resources.
3. Counter-guerrilla operations A program designed to neutralize and eliminate the guerrilla organisation. (2)

Stability operations combine two mutually interdependent and supportive concepts: defence and development. Internal defence is intended to create a climate of internal security and relative peace within which internal development can assure national growth through controlled social, economic and political improvement and change.

US Army doctrine identifies a number of objectives in the execution of stability operations. As regards the insurgent forces the objectives are:

1. The elimination of neutralization of the insurgent leadership and its infrastructure.
2. The defeat of the insurgent armed forces.
3. The separation of the insurgent from the population.

Regarding the population the objectives are:

1. To obtain the support of the population by, in the first instance, providing protection.
2. Removal of the conditions exploited by the insurgents to foster the threat.
3. Instilling the psychological conviction that the government will win and that it presents a better alternative to that of the insurgent forces.

A number of the objectives outlined above are also discussed in other chapters. As was the case with internal development, internal defence was, however, not executed within a broad strategic framework within Rhodesia. Strategies of internal defence that are discussed elsewhere include population resettlement and concentration discussed in Chapter 3, attempts at

providing security for the rural population discussed in Chapter 8 and operations aimed at destroying the insurgent armed forces and their logistical infrastructure in Chapter 7.

6.2 Population and Resources Control, Psychological Operations and Civic Action

Psychological operations (Psyop) constitute an integral part of all internal defence and development activities. They are conducted in support of the objectives outlined in the previous section and are tailored to meet the specific requirements of each area and operation. Psychological operation target groups and objectives are broadly the following:

Insurgents Psyop objectives are to create dissension, disorganisation, low morale, subversion, sabotage, and defection within insurgent forces ...

Civilian Population Psyop objectives are to gain, preserve, and strengthen civilian support for the ... government and its internal defence and internal development objectives. (3)

In their attainment of these broad objectives, psyop techniques appear not unlike those used in marketing and advertising. They involve the planned use of communications through words, symbols and actions to influence the behaviour of selected target audiences in order to promote the achievement of national objectives. The media most often used for psychological operations are face-to-face communication, radio, loudspeakers and printed material. All of these were used in Rhodesia and warrant close examination.

A further aspect of internal defence that has also been discussed in the chapter on Protected Villages is that of population and resource control. While the ultimate aim of this control is to assist in preserving or re-establishing a state of law and order within an area, its immediate objective is to deny the insurgent forces access to the population and its resources. The Rhodesian Security Forces attempted to institute a number of measures complementary to that of resettlement, particularly as regards food control, the establishment of no-go areas and enforcement of curfews. These measures, too, warrant investigation within the context of stability operations.

The remaining aspect of non-military stability operations is that of civic action. The objectives of civic action are the organisation and motivation of the local population in assisting the governmental and military forces through the elimination or reduction of political, economic and sociological problems. Civic action to a degree, aims at bringing the population and armed forces closer to each other, so enhancing civil-military relations. The active involvement of Security Forces in aiding the local population is a prerequisite in 'helping the people to help themselves'. In its broader context, civic action refers to the co-operation between military and other government agencies in development projects. (4)

Two important results desired from civic action are firstly the positive commitment to the government cause obtained by actively involving the local population in government projects. In the second place the involvement of the local population in their own development assures that the schemes jointly undertaken meet real local needs and fit into the specific environment.

... destruction of the revolutionary organisation must be followed by construction of a counter-revolutionary substitute. In other words, police action and territorial consolidation must be followed by civic action to counter-organise the population - the real goal of all other counter-revolutionary operations. (5)

The military unit established in Rhodesia and primarily concerned with the planning and execution of the measures outlined above was known as 1 Psychological Operations Unit. In the context of stability operations it is necessary first to trace the origins and history of this unit and the concurrent development of psychological operations and related measures before even a select overview of Rhodesian stability-related activities can be attempted.

Chronologically, the history is divided into three periods, the so-called Sheppard group, Branch of Special Duties and the formation of the Psychological Operations Unit, and the establishment of a Directorate of Psychological Warfare.

6.3 The Sheppard Group

The committee system approach adopted by the Rhodesian government at political, military and senior public official level to co-ordinate all public sector activities related to the insurgent threat has been discussed in Chapter 2. One of the senior committees formed was the National Psychological Warfare Committee (Psywar Committee) under the chairmanship of the Deputy Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister. This was the only inter-departmental organisation with psychological operations functions in the period immediately after the commencement of the insurgency in 1972.

The Psywar Committee included Commanders of the Army and Air Force, Director of the Central Intelligence Organisation, Minister or Secretary of Information and Commissioner of Police. No Psychological Operations organisation as such existed at lower levels and Psywar Committee decisions had to be executed via the normal departmental channels (as was the case with decisions of the Joint Operation Centres). Disseminating propaganda is an essential part of psychological operations. The establishment of any separate psychological operations organisation was strongly resisted by the Ministry of Information which viewed this as a departmental function to be executed by its Provincial Population Attachés. The Psywar Committee made recommendations to the Operations Co-ordinating Committee of the Joint Planning Staff (prior to the formation of Combined Operations Headquarters) and reported to the Security Council (later called the War Council). Since it was only concerned with the co-ordination of psychological operations, the Psywar Committee functioned on an ad hoc basis.

Initially no organisation aimed at psychological operations or civic action existed within the Security Forces. The need for such an approach came to be recognised by members of the Territorial Army rather than by regular soldiers. The initial idea came from an ex-regular officer and Sandhurst graduate, Ian Sheppard. At the time (1973/4) he performed his Territorial duties at 1 Brigade Headquarters at Centenary.

Sheppard approached the brigade commander, Brigadier Hickman, with the idea of applying basic marketing and advertising principles to the war situation. The aim was to enhance communication between the armed forces, in particular the Army, and the local black population. These talks led to a

presentation given to the senior Joint Operation Centre Hurricane officers on 8 May 1974, on a psychological component for Operation Overload (the resettlement of the population of Chiweshe Tribal Trust Land into Protected Villages). Although this operation was only completed during August, the Sheppard group, as it was later known, became involved in the planning for Operation Overload Two which commenced in Madziwa Tribal Trust Land during the same month.

The informal psychological operations group that had been formed consisted of six members. All six had either a marketing, public relations or public media background. The first recruit into the group was Tony Dalton, at the time employed by an advertising agency and thus having first-hand knowledge of methods suitable for schemes under the Directorate of Psychological Operations.

The senior Joint Operation Centre Hurricane members were largely convinced of the necessity for a 'softer' approach to resettlement than had been evidenced in Chiweshe Tribal Trust Land. The activities of the Sheppard group thus initially revolved around 'selling' Protected Villages in Madziwa Tribal Trust Land to the local population. Since government revenue for rural development was severely limited, the idea was to obtain commercial sector involvement in the development of resettled areas.

The group also attempted to involve the local population in their own development. A major scheme prepared for this purpose was called the African Development Bank, which was to serve as a finance house for the people in Chiweshe Tribal Trust Land. It was planned that funds should be obtained from revenue which the government had held and frozen from international companies operating in Rhodesia. (6) The African Development Bank would then have served as an institute receiving deposits to which the local population could go in groups to buy tractors, etc. The scheme was eventually presented to the Secretary for Finance, but the government refused to underwrite it. The refusal was largely the result of differing perceptions, at Joint Operation Centre Hurricane and central governmental level, of the threat that had developed in the North-east. While the brigade commander and members of his Joint Operation Centre had come to realize the extent of subversion and the nature of their problem, this had not yet permeated to other government department headquarters in Harare. A second unsuccessful scheme presented to the Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Office entailed the division of Protected

Villages into plots to which blacks could obtain free-hold title, as recounted in the chapter on Protected Villages.

The majority of schemes with which the Sheppard group involved itself were self-initiated. However, Joint Operation Centre Hurricane staff also involved the group in two specific projects in an attempt to determine the feasibility and viability of Psychological Operations in general. The first concerned Operation Needle in Masoso and Chinanda Tribal Trust Lands during May and June 1974. Both areas were known to be subverted and local administration had been disrupted to such a degree that the members of the local population no longer had their cattle inoculated. Since there was a drips problem on the area, the Department of Veterinary Services was concerned that the disease could spread further south. The Department of Internal Affairs had recommended a punitive operation to shoot all cattle in the area (possibly in line with the policy of collective punishment introduced in the North-east). The Sheppard group, however, succeeded in presenting an alternative scheme by which teams would enter the Tribal Trust Lands under armed escort in order to inoculate the cattle. Army troops would infiltrate the area beforehand in the hope that insurgent groups would attack these teams.

The operation was approved by both the new brigade commander of Operation Hurricane, Brigadier Shaw, and the Operations Co-ordinating Council, simply because it proved to be a means of inflicting insurgent casualties. The Sheppard group plan was thus executed despite strong opposition from the Department of Internal Affairs. Although the inoculation of the cattle was successfully concluded, very little contact with insurgents resulted, despite the use of pseudo teams from the unit that eventually became known as the Selous Scouts. It was, however, probably the first civic action attempt undertaken by the military since the 1972 campaign began.

The second project concerned a booklet entitled Anatomy of Terror. It had been prepared by the Ministry of Information for both internal and external distribution. The galley proofs for the booklet were sent to Joint Operation Centre Hurricane for comment which passed it on to the Sheppard group. The contents were intended to illustrate the atrocities perpetrated by insurgent forces. Although the group saw it as a sound idea, it was thought to be poorly founded, presenting only the nature and degree