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Rhodesian guerilla asks students to break "conspiracy of silence"

By ERIC McMILLAN
(The Varsity)

Racist laws, political execution and concentration camps in Rhodesia are "covertly supported" by the super powers, claimed an African guerrilla leader in an interview Monday.

Michael Mawema of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) is touring Canada to break what he calls the "conspiracy of silence" about American and Soviet intervention in Zimbabwe (the native name for Rhodesia).

"Rhodesia is the blue-eyed boy of the West," said Mawema. He claimed South Africa and Rhodesia receive arms from NATO and the U.S. and "thousands of mercenaries" from America and Europe.

Although the United States supported a United Nations resolution to impose trade sanctions on Rhodesia, there is "no country that exploits Rhodesia like the U.S." said Mawema. He cited examples of multi-national companies which profit from Rhodesia's resources and noted, "The best chicken producer in the country is Nelson Rockefeller's farm."

Mawema termed the Soviet Union "neo-colonialist" because it

backs "collaborationist" Joshua Nkomo, who is seeking an end to the 85 year liberation struggle through negotiations with the white minority in Rhodesia.

Zimbabwe blacks outnumber whites 26 to one but are not allowed to own property, can elect only 15 members of the governing body to the whites' 50 members, and in many cases are kept on "reservations", Mawema pointed out.

He claimed ZANU, banned as a political party, is carrying out guerrilla warfare with the support of 90 per cent of the Zimbabwe people and controls almost 70,000 square miles of the country.

In resisting ZANU the Rhodesian army is herding rural blacks into "protected villages" which Mawema charged are really concentration camps surrounded by 12 foot barbed wire and policed by German shepherds. Epidemics of cholera have broken out in the filthy conditions of the camps, he said.

Mawema himself was imprisoned for "creating hostility between blacks and whites" in 1964 but escaped in 1971. In prison he was allowed only two pairs of pants and two shirts per year for clothing. The authorities have used "a dozen of the best torture experts from Vietnam" against political detainees and captured guerrillas, he claimed. He also charged that the Rhodesian army employs Vietnam-style "scorch

the earth" tactics which include poisoning streams and destroying wildlife.

ZANU is not seeking arms from Canada, Mawema said, but needs financial and material aid in the form of educational supplies, clothing, and medicines for Zimbabweans.

The stated aims of ZANU are "to politicize the masses and direct the political consciousness of African peoples toward the destruction of colonialism and imperialism on Zimbabwe soil."

Once in power ZANU would establish "a socialist democratic government" which would not be "a carbon copy of what you call Western democracy or Eastern democracy", said Mawema.

ZANU has accepted some aid from China because "China has no imperialist designs on its friends and supports the people of the Third World against colonialism" Mawema alleged. He pointed to the example of Angola in which China supposedly withdrew from the struggle once liberation was in sight as compared to the U.S. and U.S.S.R. which stepped up their campaigns. Mawema said, "We are learning from Angola what superpower intervention can do."

Mawema expressed surprise at the "tremendous and overwhelming" support he has so far received on his Canadian tour and said, "I believe students of Canada will not be party to the conspiracy of silence."

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Ritch blocks \$1,500 grant

By ANNA VAITIEKUNAS

The annual Bethune-CYSF negotiations over the allocation of central services funds nearly came to a halt last Thursday when Dale Ritch opposed Bethune's proposal to give Excalibur \$1,500.

At the CYSF meeting last week, Ritch told the council that he didn't see any reason to fund Excalibur this year.

"We didn't see any need to allocate funds for the paper because they never approached us for any money. We thought they didn't need any."

Bethune college president James McMurdo told Excalibur that he "tried to remind Ritch that central services (Harbinger, Radio York, York Day Care Centre) funding is matter of policy," rather than a hat-in-hand matter.

Excalibur has rarely approached CYSF directly for funds though it has established with Bethune College that it would be included as a central services recipient.

Further negotiations between the two councils, however, are expected to reach a compromise over Excalibur's funds. Every year, Bethune College and CYSF negotiate over the allocation of the money raised by the college that would normally go to CYSF had Bethune been a member of the council.

Of the \$10 per student that would normally go to CYSF, \$2 are retained by Bethune and the remaining \$8 are allotted to central services, to be distributed to campus organizations by mutual arrangement between CYSF and Bethune.

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