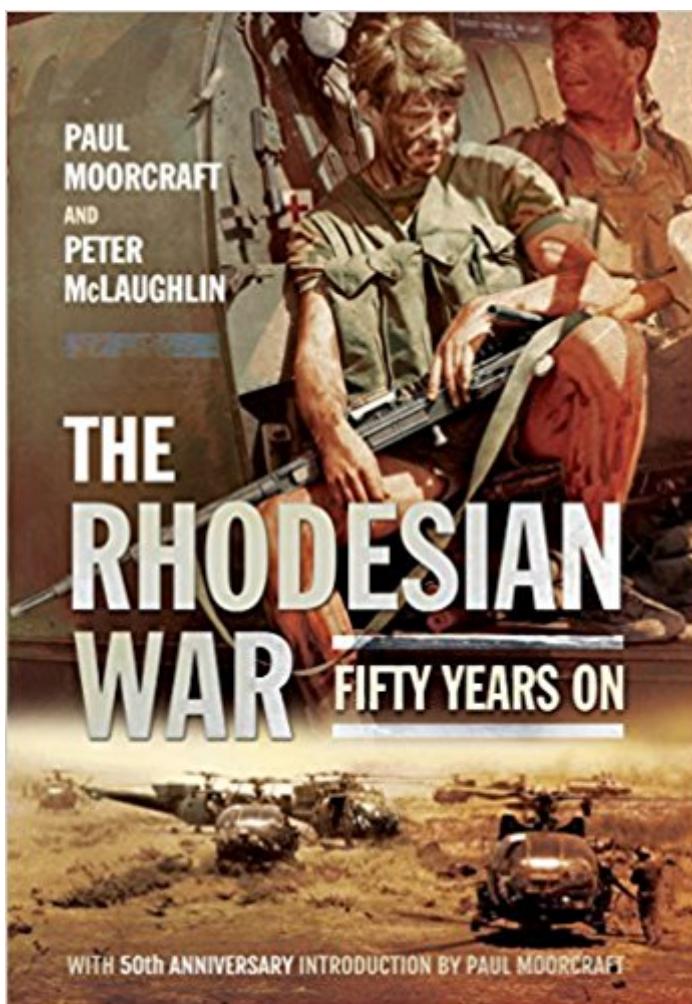


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The Rhodesian War: Fifty Years On [From UDI]



Synopsis

Fifty years on, this superb and exciting book depicts the military history of Southern Rhodesia from the first resistance to colonial rule, through the period of UDI by the Smith government to the Lancaster House agreement that transferred power. There are vivid accounts of the operations against the black nationalist 'guerillas' by the security forces and the intensity of the fighting and courage of the participants will surprise and enthrall readers. Atrocities were undoubtedly committed by both sides but equally the protagonists were playing for very high stakes. But this is more than just a book on military operations. The Authors are able to provide expert analysis of the historical situation and examines events up to the present day, including Mugabe's operations against rival tribes and white farmers. For a thorough work on its subject this book cannot be bettered. Essential reading for those wishing to learn more about a counterinsurgency campaign. The ingenuity of the Rhodesian military fighting against overwhelming odds and restricted by sanctions is impressive but the outcome culminating in the Lancaster House Agreement was inevitable.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Professor Paul Moorcraft is a published author and journalist living near Guildford. He was a senior instructor at Sandhurst but lived for many years in South Africa and Zimbabwe. He is currently Visiting Professor at Cardiff University and Director of the Centre for Foreign Policy Analysis, London. His published works include Axis of Evil (2005), Inside the Danger Zones (2010), The Rhodesian War (2011), Mugabe's War Machine (2011) Shooting the Messenger (2011), The Total Destruction of the Tamil Tigers (2012) and Omar al-Bashir and Africa's Longest War (2015). Peter

McLaughlin was in the Rhodesian policy during the civil war. He still lives in Zimbabwe and is an academic and author.

Excellent read, very informative and well presented. Unbiased account of what really transpired during the war. A must read for anyone interested in the Rhodesian war.

This is a remarkable book whose first edition was published in South Africa in 1982, very shortly after the events related in the book, when these were still very fresh in the actors' minds. It has been updated and republished in 2008 and now in 2015 for the fiftieth anniversary of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (or UDI) of what was then called Rhodesia (or even South Rhodesia). Despite being told from the side of the Rhodesian security forces, the book is, as another reviewer mentioned, a surprisingly non-partisan and lucid analysis of their counter-insurgency operations. The authors show that despite the superior organisation and training, the undermanned, outnumbered and outgunned Rhodesian forces were fighting a losing war almost from the very beginning and explain why this was the case. While the book is written in a lively manner and makes no mystery about the atrocities that took place on both sides, it clearly shows how both the government and the security forces lacked a clear strategy and clearly defined objectives. It also shows how their propaganda only reached the small white minority that they were fighting for, and not the huge black majority which became increasingly politicised over the years as the regime gradually lost control of much of the countryside. A further merit of this book is to show to what extent Rhodesian forces and government became increasingly dependent upon the barely covert support they were receiving through and from South Africa. It also shows how the latter's Vorster government used them, applied pressure on them and manipulated them to suit its own interests. Finally, it makes no bones of the internal divisions and "at times" "rivalries that hampered their war effort, divisions that were matched by those of the Marxist and Maoist guerrilla forces and parties that were opposing them. Above all, however, this is a book about military history, the history of a war that "at least in retrospect" seemed impossible to win for the white Rhodesian minority although it refused to accept it and believed otherwise. It is also very much topical with regards to counter-insurgencies, with the events and operations that it includes still being studied in Western war schools. Finally, and although the authors' tone remains factual throughout the book, the book's last section is about doom and gloom. It concludes on a war that could only be lost, the emigration of the (small) white minority and the complete and disastrous mismanagement of a country that used to be portrayed as

a breadbasket but has known several famines since 1980. Five stars.

Written by a pen pushing when we ! Much prefer the actual factual books written by people who did the job

very hard reading , no earth shattering news, very over rated.

Great rendition of the war that raged for decades over on the East side of Africa. I was a missionary there at the time and the people and events are set out as they happened. Gritty book, gritty time, gritty place. But written in a lively manner and like it was. Now the place is starving and the UN calls it a Kleptocracy, a government of thieves.

Highly recommend this book. If you are at all interested in the Rhodesia conflict it gives a pretty unbiased look at the operational and strategic levels while still adding enough tactical info to keep it interesting.

Read this in conjunction with a Handful of Hardmen a biography of a Rhodesian SAS soldier. The book being reviewed gave a more political overview of the conflict. The book was detailed about the support for the various protagonists and particular Russian and Chinese support for the "freedom fighters. It was well researched and eye opening particularly for someone who moved to Rhodesia in the late 70's

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