

Rhodesia raids guerrilla bases in Mozambique

Salisbury, Rhodesia (AP)—Rhodesian security forces have struck at black guerrilla bases in Mozambique in a new major cross-border raid, Rhodesia's defense command announced last night.

The announcement said the targets were forward bases manned by guerrillas from the Communist-backed Zimbabwe African National Union of Robert Mugabe, one of two insurgent groups battling the government of Prime Minister Ian D. Smith.

The brief communique gave no details, stating simply "Rhodesian security forces are presently engaged in self-defense operations against ZANLA terrorist bases in Mozambique. These operations are not aimed at Mozambique troops or civilians."

ZANLA—the Zimbabwe National Liberation Army—is the military wing of the Mugabe organization.

The raid, Rhodesia's sixth acknowledged major action against guerrilla bases in neighboring black-ruled countries, was widely expected following the September 3 shooting down by guerrillas of a Rhodesian civilian airliner.

The raid, however, is not against the bases in Zambia of Joshua Nkomo, leader of the other guerrilla faction, who claimed responsibility for downing the airliner in which 48 persons died.

The communique did not say how many troops were involved or when the raid began.

Rhodesia's last major cross-border strike was two months ago against bases it said contained nearly 3,000 newly trained Mugabe guerrillas poised to step up fighting against the 6-month-old, biracial, transitional government.

The military said yesterday that nearly 600 have died in the fighting so far this month, nearly double the toll for all of 1973, the first year of the conflict. Since the outbreak more than 14,000 persons, including about 8,000 guerrillas, have died, by military figures.

The guerrillas want control of Rhodesia, and say the interim government designed to bring majority rule by year's end is a sell-out.

They refused to join the negotiations that led to the signing of the agreement establishing the interim government March 3. Under the interim agreement power is shared by Prime Minister Smith and three black moderate leaders, the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole, Chief Jeremiah Chirau and Bishop Abel Muzorewa.