

The Army and Politics in Zimbabwe: A History of Unrest and Intervention

Zimbabwe, a landlocked country in southern Africa, gained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1980 after a long and bitter liberation struggle. Since then, the country has been led by only two presidents: Robert Mugabe, who ruled for 37 years, and Emmerson Mnangagwa, the current president. The army has always played a significant role in Zimbabwean politics, both during the liberation struggle and in the post-independence period. This article will explore the history of the army's involvement in politics in Zimbabwe, from the liberation struggle to the present day.

The Liberation Struggle

The Zimbabwean liberation struggle began in the 1960s, as the African majority fought for independence from white minority rule. The two main liberation movements were the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). Both of these movements had armed wings, and they waged a guerrilla war against the Rhodesian security forces. The liberation struggle was a long and bloody one, and it claimed the lives of thousands of people.



The Army and Politics in Zimbabwe: Mujuru, the Liberation Fighter and Kingmaker by Blessing-Miles Tendi

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The army played a crucial role in the liberation struggle. The guerrillas were able to operate effectively in the rural areas, and they gradually wore down the Rhodesian security forces. In 1979, the Rhodesian government agreed to negotiate with the liberation movements, and a peace settlement was reached. The following year, Zimbabwe became an independent republic.

The Post-Independence Period

After independence, the army was integrated into the new Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA). The ZNA was initially tasked with maintaining peace and security in the country. However, the army soon became involved in politics. In 1982, the ZNA was deployed to Matabeleland, where it carried out a campaign of violence against ZAPU supporters. The Matabeleland massacre, as it became known, resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians.

The army's involvement in politics continued in the years that followed. In 1985, the ZNA was deployed to quell a rebellion by the Fifth Brigade. The rebellion was eventually crushed, but it resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people.

In 2000, the army played a key role in the land reform program. The land reform program was a controversial measure that saw the government seize white-owned farms and redistribute them to black farmers. The army

was responsible for evicting white farmers from their land, and it was accused of using violence and intimidation.

The army's involvement in politics has continued in recent years. In 2008, the army was deployed to support Mugabe after he lost the presidential election to Morgan Tsvangirai. The deployment of the army contributed to a wave of violence that forced Tsvangirai to withdraw from the election. Mugabe was eventually declared the winner, but his victory was widely disputed.

In 2017, the army played a key role in the overthrow of Mugabe. Mugabe had been in power for 37 years, and he had become increasingly authoritarian. The army intervened after Mugabe fired Mnangagwa, his vice president. The army placed Mugabe under house arrest, and he eventually resigned. Mnangagwa was then sworn in as president.

The Role of the Army in Zimbabwe

The army has played a significant role in Zimbabwean politics since the country's independence in 1980. The army has been involved in a number of controversial incidents, including the Matabeleland massacre, the Fifth Brigade rebellion, and the land reform program. The army has also been accused of using violence and intimidation to support the ruling ZANU-PF party.

The army's involvement in politics has had a number of negative consequences for Zimbabwe. The army's use of violence has resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians. The army's involvement in politics has also eroded the rule of law and corrupted the electoral process. The army's

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It is important for the army to remain neutral in politics. The army should not be used to support the ruling party or to suppress dissent. The army should only be used to protect the country from external threats and to maintain peace and security. If the army remains neutral in politics, it will be able to play a positive role in Zimbabwe's development.



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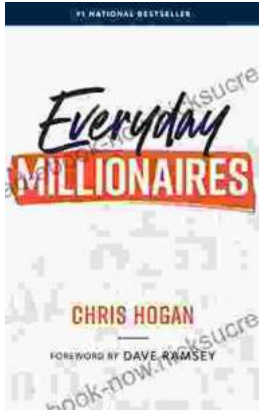
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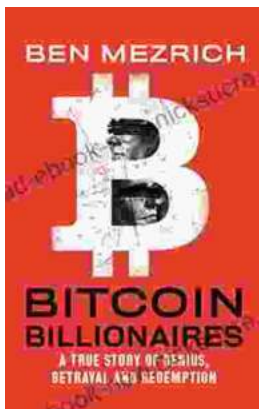
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