



Director of
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BRIEFS AND COMMENTS

RHODESIA: Death of ZANU Military Commander

The accidental death on Wednesday of the military commander of the Zimbabwe African National Union, Josiah Tongogara, adds to the uncertainty about the durability of the Rhodesian settlement.

ZANU leader Mugabe told [redacted] that foul play was not involved in the automobile accident in Mozambique that claimed the life of the ZANU commander. There inevitably will be speculation, however, that Tongogara was killed either by enemies within ZANU or by the Rhodesian security forces. [redacted]

Tongogara had played a key role during the London conference in persuading ZANU to accept Britain's cease-fire proposals. In addition to his military command, he was a political force behind the scenes and a potential political rival to Mugabe because of his ambition, popularity, and decisive style. His death will hurt ZANU's morale at a crucial time; he was expected to play the major role in keeping ZANU troops under control during the cease-fire. [redacted]

We do not know whether Tongogara's deputy, Rex Nhongo, will succeed him. Nhongo, who led the group of ZANU military officers that arrived in Salisbury on Wednesday, does not seem to have Tongogara's political or military skills. [redacted]

[redacted] the British Governor in Rhodesia, told the US special representative in Salisbury on Monday that the British were far from confident that the cease-fire will hold. [redacted] expected that "hardcore" ZANU guerrillas will not assemble at the designated points and that the Commonwealth monitoring force may suffer some casualties during the "crucial" early weeks of the cease-fire. [redacted]