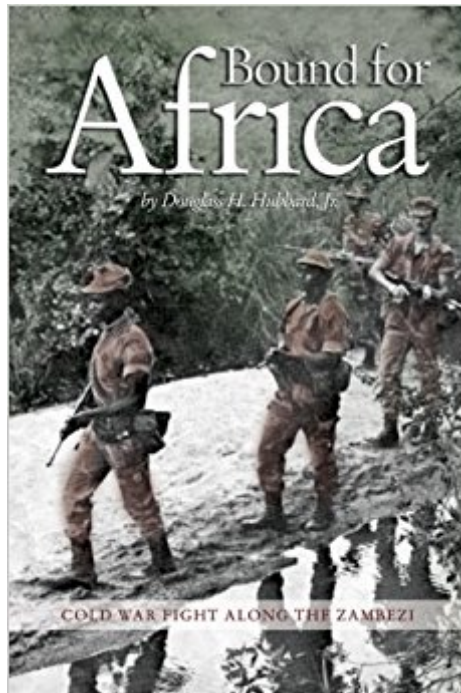




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Bound For Africa: Cold War Fight Along The Zambezi



Synopsis

Bound For Africa is the story of one man's introduction to Africa at a time when much of the continent was in the grips of Cold War skirmishing between the free world and opposing communist forces of China and the Soviet Union. The author, frayed from three years of service in the Vietnam War, traveled to Africa intending to become a rural policeman in a quiet area of what was then Rhodesia. The counterinsurgency war flared soon after, a conflict which bore many of the same characteristics of the country he had just left. Asked to train new police recruits, Hubbard explains his assimilation into the force and Rhodesian society and tells of the challenges and satisfaction of leading and training young Africans while providing an insider's view of how the war was fought in the early days. Bound For Africa is a very personal story that recounts the frustrations living in the shadows of a political settlement which always seemed to be just beyond reach and the attitudes and spirit of the broad racial mixture which formed the national security forces. It will appeal to readers with an interest in the history of what is today Zimbabwe, a less-known chapter of a tragically unsuccessful war.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Douglas H. Hubbard Jr. is a consultant who has spent more than three decades working with the disadvantaged in Asia and in Africa. He is also the author of Special Agent, Vietnam, a memoir of his years in counterintelligence for the NIS in Vietnam (Today known as NCIS).

BOUND FOR AFRICA EVOKES MEMORIES OF A TEMPESTUOUS ERA A story told with empathy

and understanding about the Rhodesia of old. In 1971 a young American on furlough from the red-hot war in Vietnam first set foot on African soil, triggering a lifelong affection for Africa's diverse peoples and a perspicacious empathy for the situation they found themselves in during the tough Rhodesian bush war against Communist-backed nationalist movements. During that brief but intensive visit to a strange land in the middle of southern Africa, Douglass H. Hubbard Jnr. was sufficiently perceptive to appreciate the quiet and dusty majesty of the African bush and its wildlife, the determination of Rhodesians to write their own future and the warm friendliness of everyone he met. He made contact with Rhodesian security forces, including the now disbanded British South Africa Police, at that time one of the best in the world despite its relatively small numbers, with a history for fair and just bush and city policing stretching back to the previous century. His experiences made such an impression on him that three years later he was back in Africa to sign up as a Patrol Officer in the BSAP, undergoing the rigorous training and preparation required for young men of that rank. It was the start of a lifelong love of Africa to which he returns to this day. Thirty years later he wrote *Bound for Africa*, a book recounting a young American's intensely personal perceptions of the momentous time, people and places with which he came in contact. Rhodesians who read this will quickly realise that the author is a perceptive man who has captured the spirit, friendliness, do-anything ethos of the Rhodesians and a bygone era remarkably well. The same applies to his descriptions of his feelings on first encountering the vast quiet of the African bush and the thundering power of the Victoria Falls, emotions that will resonate strongly with most Rhodesians of that generation. And his grasp of the regimental family atmosphere that was so characteristic of the BSA Police and its commitment to be the best of the best is also well illustrated. The book covers the now largely forgotten period following the Unilateral Declaration of Independence through which Rhodesia tried to disconnect itself from the British government. The British could not support an evolutionary change of power to the majority of Rhodesia's inhabitants, instead favouring a more immediate course of universal suffrage. The disasters of this sort of policy elsewhere in African colonial handovers persuaded Rhodesia, already a self-governing colony, to cut the ties starting a 15 year war of world sanctions and military attrition that eventually extended to most of its borders. Hubbard eventually ended up a Section Officer instructor with the BSAP's famed Support Unit or "Black Boots", a paramilitary outfit that enjoyed outstanding success against Communist equipped guerillas until a political settlement was reached which ended the costly bush war. Hubbard's experiences both on the ceremonial parade ground and out in the bush faithfully capture the relationships between the multiracial staff of the Unit and the tribulations as well as the excitement of operational duty. The book additionally takes a wider look at the war and

the activities of other security force units such as the Selous Scouts, publishing little or unknown details of bush fighting both within and outside Rhodesia from interviews that Hubbard conducted with leading figures who commanded the operations of the time, including the renowned OC of the Scouts, Ron Reid-Daly. The audacity, ingenuity and capability of Rhodesian troops, who consistently punched above their weight for years on end with aging equipment is revealing. Hubbard was medically discharged after a training accident deprived him of his right hand, and the harrowing experience of being seriously injured in the bush makes absorbing reading, as does his subsequent medical treatment and recovery as a patient of a famous Rhodesian plastic surgeon, himself badly hurt as a fighter pilot in the Second World War. Reluctantly, Hubbard turned down a desk job and left the force he had come to value so highly. He left Rhodesia and started a successful career as a global security consultant...but that's perhaps meat for another book sometime in the future. Bound for Africa is a factual and personal story that kept me engrossed from start to finish. It engendered not a little nostalgia for a time when Rhodesians defiantly faced the world and ran a successful industrial and agricultural economy despite the enmity of most governments, a misguided application of sanctions and a widespread war on several fronts. That success stands in stark contrast to the disaster that is Zimbabwe today, which is on the precipice of economic collapse despite being given every opportunity to succeed over the past 20 or more years of Robert Mugabe's rule.

Review of: Bound For Africa/Cold War Fight along The Zambezi by Douglass H. Hubbard Jr. Although I have known the author since 1969 when he and I were both Special Agents with the Naval Investigative Service and roommates while serving in DaNang, Vietnam (see Special Agent, Vietnam) it was not until I read his current memoir that I began to understand his love for and understanding of Africa and its tragic history, of which Rhodesia is just a microcosm of what has happened on this continent in many countries since the end of colonial rule. The book is autobiographical to an extent, chronologically relating author Douglass Hubbard's first experiencing Africa while on leave from Vietnam, his deepening attachment to the land and its people, his joining the ranks of the British South African Police, his training and experiences in this elite group, and his subsequent departure from Rhodesia after a devastating training accident. Yes, it is an autobiography and a history, and enjoyable from that standpoint alone. But this book is more than an autobiography. It is a short history of sadness and melancholy in many respects, and this underlying sadness permeates throughout. The reader quickly understands the author's deep attachment to this sorry but beautiful and intriguing land but one has the feeling from the very beginning, without

even knowing the history of this land over the past thirty years, that all will not end well for the country and peoples of Rhodesia, both black and white. And as it was for many of the other countries that threw off colonial rule during this period in African history and quickly descended into brutal dictatorships and economic and social hell, Rhodesia followed suit, pushed in this direction by the communist trained and funded guerillas. You can feel this sense of desperation by the author; it is almost palpable. And then you become more understanding of the inevitability of the progress of the insurgencies into Rhodesia and surrounding areas, supported by the Soviets, Chinese and North Koreans, as author Hubbard relates this distressing history to us. Yes, it is a very sad book and unfortunately the possibility of reversing the horrors perpetrated upon the peoples of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) does not seem to be in the cards. But, the sadness should not deter anyone from reading it. The book is beautifully written; the descriptions of the country and the wildlife are vivid and heartfelt; and the friendliness and frontier character of the people the author meets make one wish to have experienced what author Hubbard did. But the real sadness is in knowing that this can never happen, and that author Hubbard is fully aware of this. Read this book. It is thoroughly enjoyable.

In his book "Bound for Africa" (and in his book "Special Agent Vietnam"), author Douglass Hubbard Jr. has educated me on the sensitive balance between war and peace. I have learned in general that civil societies must play out their aims and diplomacy. Citizens not happy (or those abused by) with any particular governments status quo, can "fight" (argue for)/advocate for any societal needs and causes, by going through established or otherwise appropriate societal channels (like legal/political/other manners), instead of resorting to things such as "terrorism" (on their own or through their or outside governments or other entities). In Bound for Africa, author Hubbard Jr. teaches history, geography, science, sociology, and more. Furthermore, Hubbard Jr. gives readers a glimpse of an unconventional life and most of all, his own personal story. Readers from all walks of life can enjoy and learn from this book. Bound for Africa is a book I'll read many more times in my life. I consider myself a liberal on most issues and by reading his books, Douglass Hubbard Jr. has helped to bridge a gap of mine, which is my perception of the balance of war and peace. From David Wilson, MSW (social worker) and 20 year military (retired) veteran

After finishing this book I sorta-kinda felt like I had just taken a college level course on something like "Rhodesia in the Mid 70's". I had never read any book about the history Africa before but along with the author's account of his personal experiences there I found this to be an informative and

enjoyable book to read.

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