

The Marxist president of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe came to power over 21 years ago through a vicious terrorism campaign. Ever since then he has ensured that he stays in power through terrorism.

In the last few weeks the country's only independent daily newspaper, The Daily News, has been firebombed; as has the printing company which prints the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) election campaign leaflets. Since the new security laws came into effect in mid January, 67 MDC political rallies have been cancelled by the police or broken up by ZANU-PF mobs. Three MDC Members of Parliament were shot at and beaten by soldiers. One is in a critical condition. The MDC reports that more than 90 of their supporters have been murdered.

The violence against the opposition in all 120 Parliamentary constituencies in Zimbabwe is being co-ordinated by the National Command Centre at ZANU-PF headquarters in Harare. The systematic invasion of thousands of farms and businesses, wholesale arson, looting and murders have destroyed the economy of this once thriving country. Inflation throughout 2001 averaged 112 percent. Unemployment is officially over 60%. Tourism has evaporated. Literally 3 million Zimbabweans have fled the country, including some of the most skilled nurses, doctors, teachers, accountants and engineers. Before independence the Rhodesian dollar was much stronger than the US dollar. Today two Zimbabwe dollars are barely worth a half an American cent! One US dollar is worth Z\$ 350 on the black (or parallel) market.

Eliphaz Mukonoweshuro, Professor of Political Studies at the University of Zimbabwe, evaluated the situation: *"The current regional and international debate about whether or not there will be a free and fair presidential poll in the country is simply idle talk and an excuse for inaction. Under the prevailing conditions on the ground in Zimbabwe, there can never be free and fair elections. If the international community does not impel Mugabe to abandon and revoke his anti-democratic and authoritarian legislation and if it does not take measures to ensure that Mugabe rolls back the frontiers of violence, then we can all resign ourselves to the fact that the presidential poll stands rigged even before the first ballot is cast. In fact in circumstances such as these, normal elections cannot be held, so there will be nothing to rig. What we will witness is a fatal defeat of democracy on a violent electoral field. This is precisely Mugabe's intention and he has prepared elaborately for it."* (ROCA Report, February 2002)

Even Lord Robin Renwick, who as a key British Foreign official in 1980 played a major role in bringing Mugabe to power in 1980, has gone on record as saying (Sunday Times 3/12/02): *"Mugabe's conduct is entirely in character, throughout the liberation struggle, he advocated the use of terror as a political weapon. He is a terrorist in the strictest sense of the term. He also believes, as he used to tell me, that power comes from the barrel of a gun. ... Mugabe has no intention of allowing the opposition to win."*

Sir Garfield Todd, a former Zimbabwean senator who was acclaimed by Mugabe as *"a champion of the liberation struggle"* has come out in condemnation of Mugabe's policies. Todd, who is 93 years old, says that he is *"horrified by the destruction of our economy, the starvation of our people, the undermining of our Constitution, the torture and humiliation of our nation by ZANU-PF. Just as we stood with courage against the racism of the past, so, today, we must stand with courage against the terror of the present"* (ROCA Report).

In 1980 Bishop Desmond Tutu rejoiced over the accession to power of Robert Mugabe declaring that: *"The Kingdom of God has arrived in Zimbabwe!"* Now he opines that Mugabe *"has gone bonkers!"*

The brave Zimbabwean pastor who wrote an Open Letter to the President calling on Mugabe to repent, still anticipates being arrested under the new security legislation. Eleven Christians, including four pastors, were arrested for organising an interdenominational prayer meeting in Bulawayo last week – just as Rev Carlsen's Letter to the President was sent off.

Dr. Derek Carlsen writes: *"It is now a week since the letter was first launched and I haven't yet been arrested. This delayed reaction on their part is amazing, not only to myself, but to many others as well. I had a call last night from a fellow pastor who had been out of town and thus had only just learnt of my letter and he was very supportive and also amazed that I was not yet in detention. My view on this is that it highlights the reality of the spiritual battle we are in. Mugabe is steeped in witchcraft and consults the spirits to guide and assist him. What God, in His grace has done is to stir up and seize the hearts of Christians around the world to pray earnestly for Zimbabwe and against the wickedness and darkness in this nation. As a result of this, the authorities either don't know what to do, or due to God's ordering, have decided that to act against me would be an unwise strategy at this time. This doesn't mean they will not still react, but their slowness certainly shows the power of prayer and the confusion or indecision in*

*their camp.*

*"In the mean time, many people within our nation are being encouraged to stand for righteousness. May God alone get all the glory, because it is due to His mercy that so many have been burdened to pray for our deliverance. It is only God who can move people to pray in the way He has done and I am extremely humbled by the response to my letter and am filled with worship and awe for the Lord whom I serve. Both I and my wife Elise have prayed for the grace to drink the cup that the Lord has for us and told Him that we don't want our wills but His will to be done—this prayer also comes from His grace alone, which is given to us for His glory alone. We continue to hope that the Judge of all the earth will exalt His justice in our land.*

*"Please do keep praying with us for the millions of people in our nation that are being subjected to intense suffering. I was in a meeting with a number of ministers yesterday, who pastor in the rural areas of our country and their stories of persecution and terror were horrible to listen to. These heinous acts being perpetrated every day, are sanctioned from the highest levels of authority in our nation. Pray that God would not only free us from the tyranny of our wicked rulers but also from the tyranny of our own sin and that He would, through all that has transpired in our nation, bring many to true repentance and into zealous service for His Kingdom.*

*"A fellow servant in Christ's merciful and just Kingdom..*

*Derek Carlsen"*

Those who want to send messages of solidarity and support to this courageous Zimbabwean pastor can do so by writing to: Dr. Derek Carlsen, Reason of Hope Ministries, PO Box 3348 Paulington, Mutare, Zimbabwe or e-mail: [rhm@syscom.co.zw](mailto:rhm@syscom.co.zw)

Please also mobilise protests by letter, e-mail, fax and phone to the Zimbabwean embassy or consulate nearest you.

Write to the Zimbabwe Ambassador in Washington DC. This is his official title:

*His Excellency Dr. Simbi V. Mubako,*  
*Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary,*  
*Embassy of Zimbabwe*  
*1608 New Hampshire Ave NW*  
*Washington DC 20009*  
*USA*  
*Tel: 202 322 7100*  
*Fax: 202 483 9326*  
*E-mail: [zimemb@erols.com](mailto:zimemb@erols.com)*

*or:*

*Zimbabwe High Commission*  
*798 Merton Avenue*  
*Arcadia*  
*Pretoria*  
*South Africa*  
*Tel: (012) 342 5125*