

“The epicenter of hell is Britain, and the Queen or King in power at the moment is the Devil.”

This comprehensive indictment summarises the message of the vitriolic new book produced by the Zimbabwe government in its all-out determination to win the parliamentary elections due on March 31 st. This “election” is already so extensively rigged that it is impossible that Mugabe’s party (ZANU-PF) will fail to “win”. The army has been put in charge, and it is plainly in the past that the Opposition will not be allowed to take power even if it wins the ballot. It is hardly surprising the new Secretary of State of the United States, Condeleeza Rice, should have pronounced Zimbabwe “one of the last outposts of tyranny”.

It is true, of course, that Britain betrayed Rhodesia into the hands of the African terrorists, who now govern it. For all practical purposes she betrayed the country into the hands of Mugabe himself, since his was the most effective intimidation and it ensured him success – and continues to do so to this day. But even the most ardent Rhodesian does not equate the Queen with the Devil!

It is ironic that Mugabe should spew such hatred against the country that for all practical purposes, installed him into power and even today continues to offer Zimbabwe so much practical help.

### **THE SACRIFICE OF RHODESIANS**

**We need to remember that the struggle of Rhodesians for the survival of their country was wholly right and justified.** Rhodesia had its faults, but was paradise on earth – for black and white – in comparison with Mugabe’s Zimbabwe. We continue to owe an enormous debt to those who made such huge sacrifices to defend one of Africa’s most advanced, civilised and happiest countries. It was indeed successive British governments who threw us to the wolves and, ultimately, made survival impossible.

### ZIMBABWE TODAY

Cathy Buckle's weekly Internet newsletters, on contemporary Zimbabwe, carries a description of the arrest of women in Bulawayo who publicly carried flowers with the message "Choose the power of love rather than the love of power." They were attacked by police. She goes on to describe the breaking up by the police of a gathering of prospective opposition candidates, and of a street demonstration calling for free and fair elections. (Mugabe has signed up to these latter with his fellow leaders in the Southern African Developmental Community, but merely disregards his commitment.) Cathy then writes of the expulsion of a fact-finding delegation of the country – on arrival at Harare airport – after the expulsion of two South African trade union groups. She goes on to write of the country's schools, some of which have pass rates of 3 to 8%. Thousands of children, of course, can no longer afford to go to school at all.

Many of you, I am sure, are already praying for Roy Bennet, imprisoned by the Zimbabwe parliament after he finally lost his temper under intolerable provocation. Mr. Bennet, serving a year's hard labour in cruel conditions, has nevertheless agreed – entirely legally – to stand again as opposition candidate for his seat at Chimanimani. The nomination court, illegally, has refused to allow him to stand; and while the matter is being battled out in law courts (or what is left of them) his wife Heather has agreed to act as a stand-in.

### ELECTORAL PROBLEMS

*The Daily Telegraph* on February 18<sup>th</sup> described the obstacles to standing in the forthcoming Zimbabwe elections. "Finding (candidates) is not difficult. Checking that they appear on the electoral role is the hard part. The latest register is almost impossible to obtain and can be issued by only one government office in the capital, Harare. One opposition MP spent eight days trying to obtain a copy! The list costs (the equivalent of) £ 100 or a month's salary of an MP. All candidates must then present their credentials to the electoral officer responsible for their constituency. But these officials have not been named. Even if the unknown official can be found, a prospective candidate must hand over a fee of £ 200. As a result the (Opposition) acknowledges that it may be unable to put up candidates in every seat and that some MPs from Mugabe's ZANU-PF part could win unopposed."

*The Daily Telegraph* has, at the time of writing, the only remaining foreign correspondent in the country. Jan Raath of *The Times* of London is among three journalists to be forced out. Three Zimbabwean newspapers have been closed down, including the popular

*Daily News,*□

and more than 70 Zimbabwean journalists have been arrested and charged with crime. We have no figure of the number imprisoned or tortured.

We do know that the average life expectancy in Zimbabwe has plummeted to 34.

It will be appreciated that obtaining news from, or in, Zimbabwe is very difficult. President Mugabe has succeeded in keeping out of the world press most of what is happening in one of the world's most newsworthy states. And one of the hardest things on which to report is the food situation. We know that people are dying a ghastly death by starvation and that food is being imported to try to replace the shortage brought about by Mugabe's land seizures. Yet, Cathy Buckle reports empty shelves in Marondera and large visible stacks of grain in the local Grain Marketing Board depot. We know that most outside help has been banned, along with the voluntary organisations, which have done so much to support ordinary Zimbabweans in the past. Only government-registered NGOs (non-government organisations) are now tolerated, and in practice many such organisations have gone under or ceased to operate.

We also know that food is being used as a political weapon, being denied to Opposition supporters and targeted at Government supporters.

So, what little we in the RCG can do we must continue to do, with redoubled efforts. We must build, for as many as we can, hope among the ruins.

Things cannot continue as they are for long. Even Mugabe is mortal, and the country must implode sooner rather than later. Our efforts depend on you, your prayers and your help, and the need for them is not going to go away in a hurry.

We do not know God's plans for the future. What we do know is our own job now.

***“Be ye faithful until death.”*** Revelation 2:10

Father Arthur R Lewis  
The Rhodesian Christian Group  
PO Box 5307, Bishop's Stortford,  
Hertfordshire CM23 3DZ  
United Kingdom