

Anglo-American Elite Escalates Its Anti-Zimbabwe Campaign

by Dean Andromidas

The Anglo-American policy elite continues to escalate its campaign to overthrow the government of Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe. The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the part of the U.S. “Project Democracy” apparatus linked to the Democratic Party, issued a report on May 22, charging that the “conditions for credible democratic elections do not exist in Zimbabwe at this time.” The report is the result of an NDI-organized fact-finding mission sent to observe the political situation leading up to parliamentary elections set for June 24-25.

The NDI has also been deeply involved in the international campaign to unseat Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori, by declaring the Presidential elections fraudulent if Fujimori were to win reelection. Fujimori, like Mugabe, has landed on the U.S. State Department’s list of unacceptable Third World leaders. (See our *International* lead, in this issue.)

Although the NDI team was formally led by former Nigerian Vice President Alex Ekwueme and included representatives drawn from other African countries, the NDI itself, as *EIR* has documented, is nothing more than a “privatized arm” of the U.S. State Department. The NDI made several recommendations in the report, including a demand for an end to violence, and for more so-called transparency. But, the NDI is only one player in a broader operation aimed at cracking any resistance to Anglo-American radical free-market policies, including International Monetary Fund austerity and globalization, not just in Zimbabwe, but throughout southern Africa and around the world.

This broader operation is being orchestrated by a tightly knit network of Anglo-American financier and mining interests, who are well aware that the international financial bubble is about to burst, and who aim to reinforce their control over the oil, mineral, and land resources of the southern African continent. For this group, violence and civil war are part its objectives.

Brits Want To Recolonize Africa

As *EIR* documented in its May 12 issue, two of the organizations spearheading this operation are the London-based Zimbabwe Democracy Trust (ZDT) and the South African-based Helen Suzman Foundation. Both came “out of the

closet,” through some revealing articles in the British press.

R.W. Johnson, the director of the Suzman Foundation, penned a commentary in the May 22 *Daily Telegraph* with the brutally candid title, “Sooner or Later Africa Must Face Some Form of Recolonization.” Johnson first goes through the familiar litany of how the corruption and incompetence of the African leadership have been responsible for the current catastrophe on the continent. Then, he writes, the world has three options in dealing with Africa: “To put in place a long-term UN mandate system—in effect recolonizing the place; to allow private companies to do the same; or to walk away.” He writes that the West should “break up some of the bigger countries,” including “the biggest state of all, the Sudan,” where war “pits northern lighter-skinned Muslims against black Christians in the south. Why not face reality, partition the country and start again?” He writes that the Democratic Republic of the Congo should suffer the same fate: “Surely it would be better to partition it into more manageable units.” And, of course, the same for Angola, whose renewed civil war “similarly suggests a partition between a UNITA-ruled south and MPLA-ruled north.”

After another racist attack against the African “big man” and “communalism” culture, Johnson concludes: “What is staring us in the face is a reversion to the old mandate system; an acknowledgment that decolonization has not really worked. . . . At present such a reinvention of colonialism—for that is what it is—brings gasps of politically correct horror. But sooner or later this is what will have to be faced.”

Johnson is merely defining the policy that powerful Anglo-American interests are currently implementing, through their backing for rebel forces against the central governments of these countries. Johnson himself is deeply involved in the anti-Mugabe campaign, having recently penned an article attacking Mugabe which was featured on the ZDT website.

A glance at the British military intervention into Sierra Leone should leave little doubt about the recolonization process. A senior European Africa specialist recently told *EIR*, that the British “are no doubt preparing people’s minds for a possible military intervention into Zimbabwe if the situation gets further destabilized, and it is certainly on track to be further destabilized.” While pointing out that President Mugabe, in his opinion, was not handling the situation intelli-

gently, he underscored that the British were “playing with fire,” because a civil war in Zimbabwe would very easily spread throughout southern Africa.

The wall of silence in the international press appears to be cracking, on this Anglo-American operation. On May 19, for example, *The Herald*, a daily backed by the government of Zimbabwe, ran a brief article citing *EIR*'s exposé on the ZDT under the title, “U.K., U.S. Plot To Oust Government Exposed.” The daily wrote, “Some individuals in Britain and the United States have hatched a plot to topple the government. . . . According to an American publication, the *Executive Intelligence Review* (*EIR*), an organization called the Zimbabwe Democracy Trust was launched on May 3, 2000 to topple President Mugabe and his government from power.”

Within 48 hours of *The Herald*'s article, the May 21 London *Observer* ran its own article on the ZDT under the title “British Cash Behind Bid To Combat Mugabe; Top Tories Backing Pro-Democracy Trust Are Accused of Promoting Their Own Interests.” The article begins, “A prominent group of British and American politicians and businessmen — many with energy and mining interests in Zimbabwe — are behind an international organization to fund the opposition to the regime of Robert Mugabe.” It accuses several ZDT patrons of using the organization “as a cover for promoting the interests of Western multinationals.”

‘Like-Minded People’

Carefully avoiding the political issues, the article underscores the “personal interests” involved. For example, it reports that one of the leading movers behind the ZDT is Sir John Collins, the chairman of National Power PLC, Britain's largest energy company, which signed a contract in 1998 to develop a \$1.5 billion power station in Zimbabwe. Similarly, it identifies Sir Malcolm Rifkind, Foreign Secretary in the previous Conservative Party government, as working for a huge Australian mining company, Broken Hill Proprietary, which has been “involved in a wrangle with the Mugabe government over a mine in Zimbabwe.”

The article mentions another patron, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Dr. Chester Crocker, who is a director of Ashanti Goldfields, which owns the largest gold mine in Zimbabwe. When approached by the *Observer*, Crocker said, “I have nothing personally to gain from supporting the ZDT. They were reaching out for like-minded people and I am like-minded.”

The article reports that “concerns about European funding of the Movement for Democratic Change [MDC, the opposition party] were raised by South African ministers visiting Britain last week with President Thabo Mbeki.”

The article reports that analysts and advisers close to the MDC have raised concerns that getting support from the ZDT only plays into the hands of Mugabe. John Makumbe, a lecturer at the University of Harare and supporter of the MDC, admitted, “It cannot be ruled out that the ZDT viewed the

MDC as a way of facilitating their own interests. It is largely white Rhodesians who are backing the Trust.”

Despite this apparently useful exposé, the *Observer*'s motivation might be to preempt the real story, as exposed by *EIR*, from getting out. It is standard practice for a leading British paper to run coverage on such a sensitive political operation in a controlled manner, to ensure that other press don't pick up on it, on the premise that it has become “old news,” or simply an “*Observer* story.” This view is supported by what the *Observer* piece did not mention, as well as the fact that the *Observer* and its sister dailies, the London *Guardian* and the South African *Mail and Guardian*, have been leading the pack against Mugabe's government.

While the *Observer* dealt exclusively with the Conservative members of the group, it failed to mention ZDT patron Lord David Steel. As *EIR* reported (“London Headquarters Established To Overthrow Zimbabwe's Mugabe,” May 12), Lord Steel is a patron not only of the ZDT, but also of the Suzman Foundation. Steel is also close to the directors of a branch of the *Observer-Guardian* group of newspapers, the Fourth Estate Ltd. According to the latter's 1997 filings at Companies House, Great Britain's national regulatory authority, among its directors are Andrew Gifford, the managing director of the political lobbying group GJW. Gifford has strong ties to the Liberal-Democratic Party, and is a personal and political assistant to Lord Steel, one of the most important leaders of that party. Another director of the Fourth Estate is Tony Buckingham, a close friend and business associate of Gifford, and the founder of the infamous Anglo-South African mercenary firm Executive Outcomes. Gifford sat on the board of Buckingham's Heritage Oil and Gas, as did Lord Steel at one time.

Shell, the Vestey Group, and the Royals

The article also fails to observe that Collins is the former CEO and chairman of Royal Dutch Shell, a corporate pillar of the British and Anglo-Dutch monarchies, which are both key shareholders. Collins seems to be close to things “royal” in other ways, which could become useful in what is clearly a special political operation. After retiring from Shell, where he served extensively in Africa, he became CEO of the Vestey Group, the company of the family of Edmond and Lord Vestey, among Britain's top 50 billionaires. Worth £500 million, the privately held Vestey Group is one of the most secretive companies in the world. Involved in shipping, farming, and food distribution, it has huge landholdings throughout South America and is believed to have ranches in Zimbabwe as well. The Vestey family is famous for its closeness to the British royal family, and Edmond is a member of the 1001 Club of super-wealthy who finance Prince Philip's World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF, a.k.a. the World Wildlife Fund). The WWF has financed extensive private game reserves in Zimbabwe, some of which are bigger than the country of Luxembourg.

Sir John Collins is also a director of the Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co. Founded in the beginning of the 19th century, P&O became one of the pillars of the British Empire. Its current chairman is Lord Sterling of Plaistow, who was a major financial backer of former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Another director is Lord Hambro, of the famous merchant banking family, whose father, Sir Charles Hambro, was chief of the Special Operations Executive, the Anglo-American arm of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service during World War II.

Sharing business links with Shell and the Vestey Group, P&O still operates under the Royal Charter it received in 1840. This is not simply a nostalgic relic from the past. Operating under a Royal Charter means that the company is not registered under the Companies Act, nor does it have to file with Companies House. Thus, such firms are allowed to conduct certain business practices which would be considered illegal under British corporate law. In fact, as a Royal Charter company, its regulatory authority is Her Majesty's Privy Council Office.

There are no fewer than six Privy Council members among the ten patrons of the ZDT. This includes Lord Steel, and Sir Richard Luce and Sir Malcom Rifkind, whose backgrounds *EIR* detailed in its May 12 issue. The other Privy Council members include Lord Geoffrey Howe, Lord Douglas Hurd, and Lord Peter Carrington, who only recently joined the ZDT. *EIR* detailed the backgrounds of these former Conservative ministers as well. As Privy Council members, they are afforded certain privileges which are useful for such special political operations.

There was another glaring omission in the *Observer*: After identifying one Patrick Robertson as the official spokesman for the ZDT, it failed to inform its readers of Robertson's other significant connections. In 1998, Robertson served as the official spokesman for Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov's 1998 visit to London; Maskhadov came on the invitation of Lord MacAlpine, former treasurer of the Conservative Party. *EIR* exposed how Lord MacAlpine promoted reputed Chechen mafia boss Khozh-Ahmen Nukaev, by co-founding the Caucasus International Chamber of Commerce ("Russia's North Caucasus Republics: Flashpoint for World War," *EIR*, Sept. 10, 1999). Nukaev is believed to be one of the principal gun-runners for the Chechen rebels and is part of an Anglo-American operation to destabilize Russia by blowing up the Caucasus.

Robertson and Lord MacAlpine are part of the right wing of the Conservative Party which was linked with the late Sir Jimmy Goldsmith. In fact, Robertson handled Goldsmith's personal public relations. Goldsmith's multibillion-dollar fortune still exists. Sir Jimmy's son-in-law, former Pakistani cricket star Imran Khan, is one of the principal international supporters of the Chechen rebels. Sir Jimmy was also close to the royal family, and was a big contributor to the WWF, as is his ecologist brother, "Teddy" Goldsmith.

Western Policy Toward Africa Is Bankrupt

by Uwe Friesecke

When Richard Holbrooke, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, left the Eritrean capital of Asmara on May 9, and said that he feared a new outbreak of war between Eritrea and Ethiopia, it was obvious, that months of hectic activity by American diplomats in Africa had been in vain. Holbrooke had led a UN Security Council delegation, which consisted of ambassadors from the United States, France, Great Britain, Tunisia, Mali, Namibia, and the Netherlands, first to Kinshasa, Congo, then to Kigali, Rwanda, and to Kampala, Uganda, to speed up the implementation of last year's Lusaka agreement over Congo; finally, they went to Adis Abebe, Ethiopia and Asmara to persuade the two governments on the Horn of Africa to settle their differences without a new round of war. But only three days after the delegation left Ethiopia and Eritrea, fighting broke out again in this two-year-old war. Simultaneously, since the beginning of May, another U.S./UN-brokered peace accord collapsed completely, that of Sierra Leone. U.S. President Bill Clinton last year had appointed the Rev. Jesse Jackson as his special envoy, in cooperation with the British government and the UN, to force the government to accept a deal with the murderous Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

The U.S. government had started the year 2000 with an ambitious agenda for Africa. In his capacity as rotating president of the UN Security Council, Holbrooke declared January 2000 the "Month of Africa," which he hoped would be "a turning point for Africa, the United Nations, and the United States relationship with both."

On Feb. 17, Clinton opened a national Summit on Africa in Washington, which for five days was attended by 2,300 people from around the continent and the United States. President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya, Secretary Salim Ahmed Salim of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and Vice President Abubakar Akito of Nigeria were among the high-level African participants.

A week later, Clinton addressed the Burundi peace talks, which are chaired by Nelson Mandela in Arusha, Tanzania, from the White House by teleconference. In the meantime, high-level officials of the U.S. government, including Susan Rice, Tony Lake, Howard Wolpe, and Harry Johnston, were moving around the continent to bring American pressure to bear on the various parties to so many unresolved conflicts in Africa.