

LaRouche Youth in Zimbabwe Fight For Solutions to the Crisis in Africa

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Media denunciations of the Zimbabwean government have become shriller and shriller as the European Union/Africa summit in December draws nearer. This hysterical journalism sheds light on the strategic significance of the fight for true independence and justice for Africa in this time of world crisis, with some articles even calling for the immediate arrest of President Robert Mugabe as soon as he sets foot on EU territory. Others have sunk so low as to demand the withdrawal of aid to any African country that supports the out-of-favor regime, an act which would starve millions of innocents in a recolonization effort à la Cecil John Rhodes!

In the former Rhodesia, the yoke of colonial rule came in the form of a private company—the so-called British South Africa Company, chartered by the monarchy, subject to no one except the laws of the free market. It was exactly Rhodes' policy then to rid Africa of Africans in order to make way for a luxurious holiday resort populated by only a handful of servile blacks.

So, the rabid cries for regime change, using code words such as “good governance” and “rule of law,” assume an even more sinister tone, when the escalation of violence, even within the ranks of the celebrated Zimbabwe opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), threatens to spill over into unchecked anarchy. The IMF-instigated destruction of the health-care system in the early '90s has raised the death toll in Zimbabwe to alarming heights, with 170,000 lives claimed yearly due to HIV/AIDS-related diseases alone. At the same time, forced cuts in government subsidies of basic commodities have allowed the largely foreign-owned private sector to control prices, allowing for inflation to run rampant. Rhodes' imperial legacy lives on.

As the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, put it at a recent Southern African Development Community conference in Tanzania:

The fight against Zimbabwe is a fight against us all. Today it is Zimbabwe; tomorrow it will be South Africa; it will be Mozambique; it will be Angola; it will be any other African country. And any government that is perceived to be strong, and to be resistant to imperialists, would be made a target and would be undermined.

A System of Genocide

As even the most renowned skeptics or fantasy-land inhabitants are now being forced, by reality, to accept: this glob-

al financial system is disintegrating. The putrid smell worldwide from the recent collapse of the U.S. mortgage-related gambling bubble is the last reminder of the bankruptcy of a system that has been rotting from the inside for far too long. The destruction of the Bretton Woods system in 1971, its replacement by a floating-exchange-rate global casino, and the later super-high interest-rate policy, not surprisingly coincided with an adoption of genocidal policies against African countries. The use of “Bankers' Arithmetic” multiplied Third World debt, which then had to be serviced at the expense of thousands of human lives—per day!

Third World leaders who refused to comply with the imposed conditionalities, demanding that their countries be developed before any money was paid, were taken care of by regime change. John Perkins describes, in his *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*,¹ how, if economic pressure failed, “the jackals” would be sent in to make the relevant leader “meet with an accident,” as in the cases of Ecuador's Jaime Roldos and Panama's Omar Torrijos. If the jackals, in turn, fail, an invasion, as recently in Iraq, is the next option.

In light of what is at stake, in the midst of this breakdown of the world monetary-financial system, the oligarchy's unbridled obsession with Zimbabwe is no coincidence. Ironically, the efficiency of the country's British-trained Secret Service, and the unwillingness of the neighboring countries to allow British and American air force bases on their territory, have thus far prevented regime change by any of the means described by Perkins. As a result, the imperial mafia has resorted to the equally well-tested tactic of cultural warfare; in other words, dumb people down to such an extent that they believe that their slave-master is their best friend. In the case of Zimbabwe, this has had the effect of selling a policy of virtual recolonization by the British under the labels of “democratization” and “liberalization.”

The Bush-Cheney Administration's ugly complicity in the British raping of Zimbabwe is shown with stunning candor in a U.S. State Department report:

To encourage greater public debate on restoring good governance in the country, the United States sponsored public events that presented economic and social analyses discrediting the government's excuses for its failed policies.

1. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2004.

To further strengthen pro-democracy elements, the U.S. Government continued to support the efforts of the political opposition, the media, and civil society to create and defend democratic space and to support persons who criticized the government.²

In Defense of Sovereignty

Nearly ten years have passed since the British Tony Blair government reneged on the obligations of its predecessors (the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979) to fund land-redistribution in Zimbabwe. Blair's then-Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, wrote a letter to the Zimbabwean Ministry of Agriculture in 1997 stating:

I should make it clear that we do not accept that Britain has a special responsibility to meet the costs of land purchase in Zimbabwe. We are a new government from diverse backgrounds without links to former colonial interests.

2. "Supporting Human Rights and Democracy: The U.S. Record 2006." Available at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/shrd/2006/80586.htm>.

The letter ended with a threat:

It follows from this that a programme of rapid land acquisition as you now seem to envisage would be impossible for us to support. I know that many of Zimbabwe's friends share our concern about the damage which this might do to Zimbabwe's agricultural output and its prospects of attracting investment.

The sanctions began two years later, after the so-called "land invasions," and a shocked Britain looked on as its former vassal disobeyed imperial orders.

First, in September of 1999, the IMF suspended all financial support, and in October of the same year, the IDA (International Development Association) stopped all loans, credits, and guarantees to Zimbabwe. In 2000, all previously approved loans to ongoing projects were frozen, but the death-blow was not to be dealt until December 2001, when the U.S. Senate approved the bill, euphemistically named the "Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001."

It called for Zimbabwe to be indefinitely spurned by all international lending institutions, of which the U.S.A. was a

The British in Zimbabwe

1890: The Pioneer Column of the British South Africa Company forcibly seizes the territory later to become known as Southern Rhodesia.

1930: The Land Apportionment Act displaces many African families from the richest soils to "tribal reserves" on non-arable lands.

1965: Ian Smith's apartheid regime declares its Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

1979: The Lancaster House Agreement lays the ground for Zimbabwean independence in 1980. It stipulates that for the first ten years of independence, the Government's acquisition of land is limited to the "willing buyer, willing seller" principle.

1992: The Land Acquisition Act removes the "willing seller, willing buyer" clause. Land redistribution speeds up. IMF imposes structural adjustment programs, whose conditionalities will come to include the abolishment of free education, health-care and government subsidies for basic commodities.

1997: Clare Short, Britain's Secretary of State for International Development, writes a letter repudiating Britain's colonial responsibility for land reform.

1998: International Donors' Conference on Land Reform and Resettlement is held in Harare.

1999: Movement For Democratic Change (MDC) is founded through landowners and the UK's Westminster Foundation. White farmers increasingly resist the resettlement, often substantially destroying equipment and other property before leaving farms.

2000: Referendum on a new constitution is defeated by a well-funded campaign of the MDC. A Constitutional amendment is passed in parliament, allowing Government acquisition of farms on condition of compensations for improvements made. There are farm seizures by war veterans, and violence between ZANU-PF and MDC supporters.

2001: George W. Bush signs into law the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (S. 494), which, among other things, imposes sanctions on Zimbabwe, that hit the economy and the people hard.

2005: Operation Murambatsvina receives widespread attention in Western media as shacks in downtown Harare are bulldozed as part of the government strategy against poverty and crime. Operation Garikai, the building of new housing for the poor, gets much less coverage. MDC splits into two factions due to disagreements over parliamentary elections.

2007: Members of the leadership of both competing MDC factions are beaten by the police while they are trying to break in to a police station during an illegal demonstration. MDC supporters retaliate with petrol bombs against private homes of police officers, several of whom are severely injured. Only the first of the incidents is reported by British-controlled media.

member, as well as any businesses or corporations associated with Zimbabwe.

For a child growing up in Zimbabwe during this period, this was the first time bread would cost more than Z\$100, when only a few years before it had cost less than a dollar. It was the first time that basic commodities disappeared from the shelves in the stores, and parents came home on foot, because their cars had run out of petrol, and the petrol-stations were empty. The electricity went out more frequently, while water shortages became a common occurrence—people died younger, and gangs of orphaned street-kids took over the cities.

It was at this point that the government, in order to address the grievances of the population, adopted the policy of fast-track land reforms, but it has been an uphill struggle ever since.



Some of the LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM) in Zimbabwe.

To Farm or Not To Farm: That Is the Issue

In response to a question from a LYM member in Harare, Lyndon LaRouche said the following:

From the beginning of the liberation of Zimbabwe, of Rhodesia, the issue was, were we going to allow the indigenous African population, who were farmers, to have access to farmlands, and to the development of those farmlands for production? The idea is simply, you would have an African farmer, and there's a European farmer next to him: Would the African farmer have the opportunity to rise to the same conditions of production as the European farmer, the same system, the same advantages? 'No,' was the point.

So, the issue here with Zimbabwe, was that the British set out, with the complicity of a rotten U.S. government, to oppress Zimbabweans historically, to try to bankrupt the place, in short. And got the other African states to collaborate with the British, because the other African states were frightened, and therefore they collaborated with the British; because the British kill! That's what they do best. They don't know how to build, they know how to destroy. . . .

Zimbabwe, while it has political independence, is not really given the right to exercise its independence, and it's on the issue of the British control over the agricultural production and other things in Zimbabwe. They're out to destroy the government! And destroy the state. It's a crime against humanity.³

Sowing Seeds of Hope

The solutions for Africa are clearly defined in what LaRouche advocates as the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Legacy that could be taken up at any moment by the U.S. Congress. A

3. LPAC webcast "LaRouche Defines Steps to the End of the Post-FDR Era," *EIR*, July 25, 2007.

new world economic order, modelled on the Bretton Woods system, would secure long-term credit lines for the whole African continent, which can be channelled into infrastructure projects such as rail-transportation systems, power systems, and large-scale water-management systems. The fact that South Africa is building the world's best pebble-bed nuclear reactors for commercial use throughout the continent is a stepping-stone in this direction.

But beyond the economic reconstruction of Africa, there must come an intellectual mission-orientation to forge a future for the continent, free of the oligarchical tradition of the likes of Rhodes. The centuries of bloodshed, unnecessary warfare, and oppression of African peoples by foreigners and, oftentimes, each other, could not truly come to an end without the emergence of a movement from within African culture itself, which affirms what it means to be human. Just as the emergence of Bach and Leibniz in the wake of the century-long killing fields of Europe rekindled the passionate ideals from the Italian Renaissance, so the beginnings of a LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM) in Africa are sowing the seeds of hope for centuries to come.

This began on a Sunday afternoon, on July 22, when we had the first of several meetings with four other youth who later committed themselves to found the LYM in Zimbabwe. Despite transportation problems due to petrol shortages, there were smiles all around as the aspiring "LaRouchies" held up their *EIR* magazines proudly for the camera. They had just had a three-hour discussion on history, science, economics, and music.

There would most likely be no electricity at home that night, and although the next day would find bread yet again missing from the breakfast table, as with milk and sugar for that matter, it was FDR's legacy for the reconstruction of Africa and Bach's "Jesu, meine Freude" motet that occupied their thoughts, as well as how one Kepler in the beginning of the Seventeenth Century could have discovered the principle of universal gravitation.