

Secret money printing by the government, subsidised grocery shops set up in military barracks and a quarter of a million US dollars handed over in cash to Mnangagwa's daughter – just some of the stories circulating in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe has long been a member of the club of failing states which, with Russia's help, include such corrupt regimes as Iran, Syria and Venezuela. An article in the UK Times this week explained how these regimes prosper from catastrophe: how the unbelievable becomes the reality.

The writer, Roger Boyes, concludes that 'enforced poverty depoliticises rather than radicalises the population'. He says: 'Revolutions erupt because of rising but thwarted expectations. So the primary task of kleptocrats is to banish ambition. The ambitious, the able-bodied, the desperate flee the country in droves. And the leaders are OK with that, too. One day, they figure, the pressure of refugees mounting up in western countries will force the outside world to strike a deal with leaders who have demonstrated their survival skills. Allowing their states to fail gives them a perverse advantage: it makes them indispensable. As a result many people in these miserable states don't even pretend to trust their leaders. Better muddle through with the ruler we know, is the short-term calculation, than topple him and risk the wholesale collapse of society.' (See: <http://www.zimvigil.co.uk/vigil-news/campaign-news/1063-why-do-some-failing-states-never-fail> .)

A sobering assessment, which perhaps explains Russia's renewed interest in Africa's raw materials and profitable reasons for propping up the Zanu PF regime – with or without Mnangagwa, whose tenure in office may soon be terminated, according to the maverick former Zanu PF minister Jonathan Moyo, stirring up trouble from the safety of South Africa.

Moyo talks of an exit package being agreed with military chiefs under which Mnangagwa would get a settlement of US\$10 million and continued benefits on leaving office, as well as ‘a modest motorcade’. In a separate tweet Moyo speaks of Mnangagwa’s daughter collecting an apparent down payment of a quarter of a million dollars from the Reserve Bank as part of a payment of \$5 million (See: <https://zwnews.com/mnangagwa-daughter-fraudulently-gets-us250k-from-rbz-no-receipts-for-transaction/> .)

In Harare’s febrile culture these stories may prove to be off mark, but allegations of secret money printing by the Central Bank are anchored on a statement by the International Monetary Fund. IMF officials found that more of the dodgy Zimbabwe dollars were being printed to provide subsidies for gold producers (see: <https://www.ft.com/content/4ae27da8-5967-11ea-abe5-8e03987b7b20> ).

As the cost of living soars the government have resorted to providing soldiers with subsidised basic commodities to stem unrest (see: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/africa/Zimbabwe-military-shops/4552902-5471140-tqj028z/index.html> ) . The police will have to be next . . . and then teachers . . . until the only ones paying the cost will be – who else but the people.

A welcome revelation came in the state-owned Herald newspaper that the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission has identified over US\$7 billion in cash and assets stashed abroad. ZACC Chairperson and former High Court judge, Loice Matanda-Moyo, said ‘Informally, we have now identified over US\$7 billion worth of property and cash all over the world which were siphoned by our former leaders, current leaders, private sector and individuals. So this information we only got informally, so now we have to formalise the process so that we start the processes of repatriating the monies back home’. (See: <https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/economy/zimbabwe-pursuing-billions-of-dollars-stashed-in-foreign-countries-43505463> .)

Good luck to judge Matanda-Moyo but the Vigil bets the odds on jailing any 'former or current leaders' are approximately zero.

## **Other points**

- The Vigil was bewildered by how the MDC was persuaded to waste its energies during the Government of National Unity on a new constitution, which we knew would be altered later. Now Zanu PF is seeking to cancel, through amendments, key concessions made during the constitutional reform process (see: <http://constitutionnet.org/news/fortifying-zimbabwes-imperial-presidency-proposed-second-amendment-constitution>).

- Thanks to the intrepid few who braved the foul weather to help set up the Vigil today: Beulah Gore, Alice Majola, Rosemary Maponga, Philip Maponga, Tapiwa Muskwe, Ephraim Tapa and Kevin Wheeldon. Thanks to Rosemary and Alice for looking after the front table and for taking photos, to Kevin and Tapiwa for handing out flyers and to Rosemary for providing hot drinks.

- For latest Vigil pictures check: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/zimb88abwevigil/> . Please note: Vigil photos can only be downloaded from our Flickr website.

**FOR THE RECORD:** ---9 signed the register.

## **EVENTS AND NOTICES:**

- **ROHR general members' meeting.** Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March from 11.30 am. Venue: Royal Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, Belvedere Road SE1 8XX. Contact: Ephraim Tapa 07940793090, Patricia Masamba 07708116625, Esther Munyira 07492058107, Enniah Dube 07367504747, Daizy Fabian 07708653640.

- **Itai Dzamara Remembrance Day.** Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March from 2 – 5 pm. Venue: Zimbabwe Embassy, 439 Strand, London WC2R 0JR. Join us to remember Itai Dzamara's bravery and legacy. Contact: Patricia Masamba 07708116625, Daizy Fabian 07708653640, Benjamin Molife 07490919900.

- **The Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe (ROHR)** is the Vigil's partner

organisation based in Zimbabwe. ROHR grew out of the need for the Vigil to have an organisation on the ground in Zimbabwe which reflected the Vigil's mission statement in a practical way. ROHR in the UK actively fundraises through membership subscriptions, events, sales etc to support the activities of ROHR in Zimbabwe. Please note that the official website of ROHR Zimbabwe is [http://www](http://www.rohrzimbabwe.org/)

[w.rohrzimbabwe.org/](http://www.rohrzimbabwe.org/)

. Any other website claiming to be the official website of ROHR in no way represents us.

- **World Day of Prayer for Zimbabwe.** Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March. This year the focus is on Zimbabwe and the service has been prepared by Christian women in Zimbabwe. The theme is 'Rise! Take you mat and walk'. Christians all round the world will be praying for Zimbabwe. Try to get your own church involved. For more information check:

<https://www.wwdp.org.uk/>

- **Living on the Edge.** Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March from 7 – 9 pm (doors open at 6 pm). Venue: Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR. The event is organised by the Mike Campbell Foundation. Among the speakers are Chief Felix Ndiweni and Beatrice Mtetwa. For full details of the event check:

[https://media.wix.com/ugd/02876c\\_5b68a136280c42ebbf39f8ebbb722299.pdf](https://media.wix.com/ugd/02876c_5b68a136280c42ebbf39f8ebbb722299.pdf)

- **The Vigil's book 'Zimbabwe Emergency'** is based on our weekly diaries. It records how events in Zimbabwe have unfolded as seen by the diaspora in the UK. It chronicles the economic disintegration, violence, growing oppression and political manoeuvring – and the tragic human cost involved. It is available at the Vigil. All proceeds go to the Vigil and our sister organisation the Restoration of Human Rights in Zimbabwe's work in Zimbabwe. The book is also available from Amazon.

- **Facebook pages:**

**Vigil:** <https://www.facebook.com/zimbabwevigil> ROHR: <https://www.facebook.com/Restoration-of-Human-Rights-ROHR-Zimbabwe-International-370825706588551/>

ZAF:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zimbabwe-Action-Forum-ZAF/490257051027515>