

London Headquarters Established To Overthrow Zimbabwe's Mugabe

by Dean Andromidas

The Anglo-American policy elite has established a new London-based headquarters committed to overthrowing the government of Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe. The Zimbabwe Democracy Trust (ZDT), an international group, publicly launched on May 3, aims at ensuring that “democratic elections” are held in Zimbabwe. But in the ZDT’s lexicon, “democratic” merely means “anything required to topple Mugabe.”

EIR has learned that, in April, the ZDT arranged for the visit to London and Washington of Morgan Tsvangirai, head of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), the leading opposition party in Zimbabwe (see *EIR*, April 21). In London, Tsvangirai met with British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, as well as a bevy of powerful business leaders, from whom he hoped to solicit political and financial support. In Washington, he met with Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Susan Rice, and had dinner with Deputy National Security Adviser James Steinberg.

Days after Tsvangirai left Washington, Vice President Al Gore threw his support squarely behind the anti-Mugabe crusade. He was quoted in the *Boston Globe* and the German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on May 3, declaring, “I think it’s disgraceful. I think it’s horrifying.” He claimed that the United States has done “everything” to stabilize Zimbabwe and influence President Mugabe to “stop this disgraceful encouragement of racial violence.”

At the same time, military contingency plans are being drafted by the British Joint Staff for the possible evacuation of nearly 20,000 people who hold British passports. According to press reports, this “humanitarian” operation would include Britain’s two aircraft carriers and their squadrons of Harrier jump jets, and the deployment of several thousand troops, including from the Special Air Services and Special Boat Services. A headquarters for the operation has been established in neighboring Botswana, where an undisclosed number of British troops have been deployed. More alarming are reports that the Defense Ministry has gathered a contingent of British soldiers and officers, mostly from the SAS and SBS, who were born in Zimbabwe, and deployed them back into the country on “extended leave,” under the cover of reconnoitering possible “escape routes” for British nationals.

The patrons of the ZDT comprise a rogues’ gallery of people who have been overseeing the genocidal policies re-

sponsible for the current catastrophic economic and political conditions in Africa, including the wars that have engulfed the continent for the last two decades (see below).

These patrons include Dr. Chester Crocker, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs during the Reagan and Bush administrations; Baroness Lynda Chalker of Wallasey, who has been leading the attack on the government of Sudan, and is the primary backer of professional insurgent for hire John Garang, head of the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA). Also, Lord David Steel, former leader of the British Liberal Party and business partner with Tony Buckingham, the founder of the infamous Anglo-South African mercenary firm, Executive Outcomes. Another member is Lady Soames, daughter of Winston Churchill.

Public relations are being handled by Bell Pottinger, the firm of Lord Timothy Bell, who was former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s media adviser. The firm’s more recent clients have included Augusto Pinochet, during the latter’s recent legal embarrassment in Great Britain. Bell also worked for Prince Philip’s World Wildlife Fund (WWF, since renamed internationally as the World Wide Fund for Nature).

If one wants to donate money to the ZDT, one is instructed to send it to a trust managed by Maitland & Co. The latter is the trust subsidiary of the South African law firm of Webber Wentzel and Bowens, who are the lawyers for Anglo American, the world’s largest mining company which dominates the South African economy. Founded in 1868, the law firm has been representing Anglo American since its beginning.

Lord Bell’s connection to the WWF is significant. Several of the ZDT trustees are drawn from the highest levels of the WWF and British conservationist movement. *EIR*’s Special Report, “The True Story Behind the Fall of the House of Windsor,” detailed the role of the WWF as a cover for political-intelligence operations targetting national political forces throughout Africa.

The Spearhead for a Broader Operation

The role of this political grouping, which includes figures drawn from the old Bush-Thatcher policy circles and old Anglo-American Africa hands, confirms that the targetting of Zimbabwe is actually the spearhead of an operation aimed at crushing any political resistance to the genocidal policies of the multinational financial institutions in southern Africa. If

these forces succeed in throwing Zimbabwe into a bloody civil war, the genocidal conflicts that have engulfed Central Africa will spread throughout southern Africa as well.

The MDC should take this warning as seriously as does the government it wishes to overthrow. Although the ZDT publicly supports the opposition, *EIR* has learned that these circles see MDC leader Tsvangirai as incapable of leading the country, and they have no intention of bringing a viable regime to power, one that would turn Zimbabwe into what the ZDT calls "the jewel of Africa." Quite the contrary, this grouping aims at the same type of natural resources and land grabs that have devastated other parts of Africa.

According to its website, the ZDT expects to garner support for a group of notables who signed a letter appearing in the April 14 London *Times*, calling for free elections in Zimbabwe (see below). The signatories include the above-cited ZDT patrons, as well as Lord Peter Carrington, former NATO General Secretary and partner in Kissinger Associates; Evelyn de Rothschild, of the infamous banking family; and Lord Renwick, former Ambassador to the United States and South Africa.

The regional intent of this policy is underscored by the role of a kindred organization in South Africa that seeks the overthrow of Mugabe, the Helen Suzman Foundation. This Foundation is responsible for a study which alleges that President Mugabe enjoys less than a 35% approval rating. The Foundation, and its founder, Helen Suzman, are part of the Liberal International, and is linked to the Democratic Party of South Africa. Suzman, a Dame Commander of the British Empire, achieved great fame for her anti-apartheid stance in the 1960s and '70s. She also signed the letter to the *Times*, as did Tony Leon, the leader of the South African Democratic Party. Now in opposition, the Democratic Party has been the leading critic of the African National Congress-led government, accusing it of corruption and anti-constitutionalism, and hitting at any policy that deviates from neo-liberal economic policies. It is also one of the leading groups pressuring South African President Thabo Mbeki to do the Anglo-Americans' bidding and take a hard line against Mugabe. This is something the South African President, along with other southern African leaders, has refused to do. It has been reported that the Zimbabwe farm squatters enjoy a 54% approval rating in South Africa.

In addition to Suzman, the Foundation's patrons include Lord Steel, who is also a patron of the ZDT, and Lord Renwick.

The Tobacco Companies

Interfacing this nest are the Anglo-American tobacco companies. Zimbabwe is the world's third-largest tobacco exporter, and therefore, the tobacco companies are playing a leading role in this destabilization. Although the media blame Mugabe's "thugs" for the collapse of tobacco exports, the reality is that the commercial farmers have stayed away from the market for two reasons: first, because they expect that the

Zimbabwe dollar will be devalued (which the government does not want to do); and second, because of the incredibly low prices being offered by the international tobacco buyers, which are well below the cost of production. In Zimbabwe, prices start at \$1.80 a kilogram, which costs \$2.10 to produce. In Malawi, where many Zimbabwean commercial farmers are bringing their crop, the price being offered is 10¢ a kilogram, one-twentieth the cost of production.

The two most important tobacco buyers are British American Tobacco (BAT) and the Virginia-based Universal Corp., which is the main supplier of Philip Morris.

BAT, the second-largest cigarette manufacturer in the world, stands at the apex of the British corporate empire. Its former chairman was Earl Cairns, who is the current chairman of the Commonwealth Development Corp., now CDC Capital Partners, which, as *EIR* has outlined (see *EIR*, April 21), was part of the land grab in southern African. BAT recently merged with Rothmans, the cigarette firm owned by the Compagnie Financière Richemont, the corporate empire of the South African Jacob Ruppert. Ruppert is a co-founder of the WWF and the Peace Parks Foundation, which seeks to create huge transnational nature parks throughout Africa. Lord Renwick is a director of the Compagnie Financière Richemont.

Universal Corp. is the largest tobacco merchant in the world, and the largest buyer of tobacco in Zimbabwe. Among its directors is George Bush's Secretary of State Lawrence

The Way Out of The Crisis



A 90-minute video of highlights from *EIR*'s April 21, 1999 seminar in Bonn, Germany.

Lyndon LaRouche was the keynote speaker, in a dialogue with distinguished international panelists: **Wilhelm Hankel**, professor of economics and a former banker from Germany; **Stanislav Menshikov**, a Russian economist and journalist; Schiller Institute founder **Helga Zepp-LaRouche** from Germany; **Devendra Kaushik**, professor of Central Asian Studies from India; **Qian Jing**, international affairs analyst from China; **Natalya Vitrenko**, economist and parliamentarian from Ukraine.



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Eagleburger, who is supporting the MDC through his directorship in the International Republican Institute (*EIR*, April 21). Margaret Thatcher is on the Universal's international advisory board.

In 1993, Universal bought a tobacco merchant, Casalee, founded by former Rhodesian Jan Bredenkamp in 1976. During the white-minority regime of Ian Smith, when Rhodesia was the target of UN sanctions, Bredenkamp reportedly traded Rhodesian tobacco for the weapons that the Smith regime needed to suppress the liberation movement, including Mugabe's Zimbabwe Africa National Union. After the establishment of Zimbabwe, Bredenkamp reportedly became one of the biggest arms dealers in the world, supplying both Iraq and Iran in their 1980-88 war. He was also a close confidant of Thatcher, has extensive interests throughout central and southern Africa, and is believed to still be a major arms dealer for the region.

Documentation

Patrons of the ZDT

Dr. Chester Crocker: Currently the James R. Schlesinger Professor for Strategic Studies at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., Crocker was Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in the administrations of both Presidents Ronald Reagan and Bush. Crocker sits on the Board of Directors of Minorco SA, the Luxembourg-based holding company of the Oppenheimer family's mining giant, Anglo American. Crocker is also director of ASA Ltd., a New York Stock Exchange-listed investment fund which concentrates on investing in gold mines in Africa, and the Modern Africa Growth Investment Company LLP, another investment fund linked to, among others, Citigroup, Microsoft, and Soros Associates.

Lord David Steel: Former leader of the British Liberal Party, and former president of the Liberal International, Lord Steel is a member of the House of Lords and the Scottish Parliament. As chairman of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, Lord Steel is business partners with Tony Buckingham, the founder of Executive Outcomes.

Sir Malcom Rifkind: He is a former British Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in the Conservative government of John Major, and a member of the Queen's Bodyguard for Scotland.

Baroness Lynda Chalker of Wallasey: Former Minister of State for Overseas Development, Chalker has been leading a bloody crusade against Sudan for the last decade. Her Christian Solidarity International has been the main supplier of the SPLA of John Garang, who has been waging a civil war in southern Sudan. In the United States, Chalker is close to the circles of former President Bush.

Lord Taylor of Warwick: Former cricket player and the first black member of the House of Lords, Taylor is a member of the joint South African-British Parliamentary group and a

member of the Conservative Party.

Sir Richard Luce: Governor of Gibraltar and a member of the Conservative Party, Luce is an old Africa hand, having served in the civil service, and has conducted business in Kenya.

Lady Soames: Daughter of Winston Churchill, Lady Soames's late husband, Lord Soames, a leading member of the Conservative Party, was Governor General of Southern Rhodesia during 1979-80, and oversaw the transfer of power to black majority rule. Lady Soames is a patron of the Zimbabwe Trust, an organization that builds community support for so-called nature conservancies in Zimbabwe.

The Helen Suzman Foundation

In addition to Lord Steel and Helen Suzman, its patrons include:

Graf Otto von Lambsdorf: Chairman of the German Free Democratic Party (part of the Liberal International), former Economics Minister of Germany, and president of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation.

Lord Renwick of Clifton: Former Ambassador to South Africa and the United States. Lord Renwick, in addition to being chairman of the Robert Fleming merchant bank, is an adviser to the Hakluyt Foundation, the British equivalent of Kissinger Associates, in which he is also a partner. He is also a director of Compagnie Financière Richeumont, a multinational cigarette company controlled by South Africa's Jacob Ruppert, one of the co-founders of the WWF and founder and chief financier of the Peace Parks Foundation.

The Letter to the Times

The signators of the open letter to the London Times calling for free elections in Zimbabwe, in addition to Baroness Chalker, Chester Crocker, Richard Luse, Lord Renwick, Malcolm Rifkind, Lady Soames, and Helen Suzman, include:

Lord Peter Carrington: The initiator of the letter, Carrington was former NATO Secretary General and Cabinet minister in various British Conservative governments. He is a partner in Kissinger Associates. As Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1979-82), he, along with Lord Soames, oversaw the transfer to black majority rule in Southern Rhodesia.

R.A.C. Byatt: A career Diplomatic Service officer, Byatt is an old Africa hand, having served in Rhodesia. He later became British High Commissioner to Zimbabwe, and Ambassador to Morocco. He is a trustee of Beit Trust, which was founded by Otto Beit, one of imperialist Cecil Rhodes' closest associates.

Evelyn de Rothschild: A scion of the infamous banking family and currently chairman of N.M. Rothschild.

Douglas Hurd: Former Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in the Conservative government under John Major. Hurd was nicknamed "Hitler Hurd" by his classmates at private school, because of certain personal traits he shared with the Nazi dictator.