



ON TARGET

- NEWS HIGHLIGHTS
- BACKGROUND INFORMATION
- COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance —

Registered By Australia Post — Publication No. VBH 0999

Vol.27, No.40

October 18th, 1991

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: "At any given moment there is an orthodoxy, a body of ideas which it is assumed all right-thinking people will accept without question. It is not exactly forbidden to state this or that or the other, but it is 'not done'

"Anyone who challenges the prevailing orthodoxy finds himself silenced with surprising effectiveness. A genuinely unfashionable opinion is almost never given a fair hearing, either in the popular press or in the highbrow periodicals."

- George Orwell

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ZIMBABWE: On the eve of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Zimbabwe, with Comrade Mugabe the host, we received the following special report from "Rhodesia Christian Group", whose President is the Rev. Fr. Arthur Lewis, who served in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) for many years. The Director of "Rhodesia Christian Group" is Mr. W. Denis Walker, who was a Member of Parliament in Rhodesia prior to "independence". In view of the theme of the current Commonwealth conference in Zimbabwe, "Human Rights", the following report deserves the widest possible distribution. Prime Minister Hawke might care to comment on the report after his return from Zimbabwe.

The report is entitled "TORTURE AND FORGET", and reads:

"At the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting due to begin in Harare on 16th October the issue of human rights is expected to be prominent. It is ironic that the host nation is itself one of the most cynical abusers of civil liberties in Africa. While there are many cases which could be used to highlight the way the Zimbabwean Government of Robert Mugabe has ridden roughshod over the constitution, just the following examples, that of the former Member of Parliament Mr. Wally Stuttaford and the former Cabinet Minister, Mr. Stanley Malumisa, will serve as an illustration.

"Mr. Stuttaford was the Member of Parliament for Bulawao South. In

mid-1981, following Prime Minister Mugabe's public declarations of his intention to turn Zimbabwe into a one-party state, Mr. Stuttaford and others started holding talks to seek constitutional ways to oppose this proposal.

"Under powers granted by the state of emergency, Mr. Stuttaford was arrested. He was tortured by the secret police, the C10, to try to force him to 'confess' to acts he had not committed. Given that Mr. Stuttaford was, at the time of his arrest, a sixty-two year old man, the brutal treatment he received at the hands of the police and the C10 makes it remarkable that he was able to survive detention.

"The torture took several forms. Pens and sticks were placed between his fingers, which were then squeezed by the interrogators. This caused immense pain in his hands. He was forced to run on the spot, to bend over with his finger touching the ground and then to run round in a circle. He was forced to squat against the wall on an imaginary chair. When, through exhaustion, he was unable to continue these activities, he was beaten again.

"During interrogation he was forced to sit with his legs stretched out. When he gave an answer that did not please his torturers, they stood on his ankles causing severe pain in his legs. He was forced to wear handcuffs and these were made so tight that they cut off the blood supply to his fingers. As well as the physical torture, there was the ever-present fear that he might be removed by his jailers and 'disposed of' in some remote corner of the country.

"While in detention at the notorious Chikurbi prison, he was kept in solitary confinement for 195 days. He was denied adequate exercise and kept in appalling conditions. As a result of this Mr. Stuttaford has suffered from poor health ever since. He was brought to trial and his name was totally cleared, largely by the evidence given to the court by Mr. Stanley Malumisa who had been a Minister of Internal Affairs during the transitional government. (This very brave witness has disappeared in a similar way to that of other leaders during the past eleven years.)

"After much pressure from the international community, Mr. Stuttaford was released in October, 1982, after 308 days in captivity. He sought compensation for his wrongful arrest and for the torture he suffered while in detention. On 5th July, 1982, he was successful when the presiding judge, Mr. Justice J. Waddington, awarded him damages of Z\$18,000 and costs of Z\$3,628.

"Prime Minister Mugabe introduced Statutory Instruments which would make it impossible for members of the public to sue for compensation if it was decided that the minister had been acting in what could be called 'good faith'. The Supreme Court disagreed and ruled in August, 1984, that this government regulation conflicted with the constitution and was therefore void.

"Having failed to use legal means to escape its liabilities, the

government simply chose to ignore the Court's ruling which is a violation of the constitution and of the human rights of Zimbabwe citizens. No payment, to date, has been made to Mr. Stuttaford. An additional problem was caused by the economic collapse in Zimbabwe which has resulted in the value of the award being reduced to less than half. Mr. Stuttaford and his wife, who has since tragically died, have relied on a small pension and he has been forced into a hand to mouth existence in his old age, a time when he has every right to expect proper provision.

"To date no award has been made. This clearly illustrates the brutality of the Zimbabwean regime. First in its use of emergency powers to detain someone without trial, secondly on its abuse and torture of that person while in custody, and thirdly its refusal to obey the rulings of the courts.

The International Response: "In a speech on 18th August the British Minister for Overseas Aid and Development, Mrs. Kybda Chalker, stated that the time of handing out taxpayers' money to self-serving dictators was over. We suggest that the country with which she makes a start is Zimbabwe. The case against the Zimbabwean leadership is clear. Over the past eleven years there have been numerous incidents of detention without trial, torture and disappearances. This year the government passed a law allowing it to arbitrarily fix levels of compensation for landowners without permitting any option of redress by the courts. It is important that the British government, and other Commonwealth leaders, look beyond the plush setting of the Sheraton Hotel and examine the real quality of life in the country. Above all there must be a denial of aid until the government honours the constitution and respects the decisions of its own courts.

The Price of Telling the Truth: "One man above all others helped to secure the release of Wally Stuttaford and, sadly, has paid the highest price for his courage. That man is Stanley Malumisa. After one year of rule following the 1980 elections, Prime Minister Robert Mugabe announced his intention to form a one-party state. Given that there were twelve parties which contested the 1980 elections, this statement caused Mr. Malumisa to call a meeting of interested people to discuss the impact of the government's proposal.

"Although the Zimbabwe government tried to portray this meeting as plotting an insurrection, the agenda of the meeting illustrates a different story. As a practising Christian, Mr. Malumisa's concerns were clear. He wanted to promote peace and reconciliation. Moreover, he was committed to seeking constitutional ways of opposing a one-party state. Mr. Malumisa was also calling for the government to respect the rights of parliamentarians and other leaders as several M.P.'s. had been detained. As the organising secretary of the United Federal Party and Co-ordinator of Internal Affairs in the Transitional government, Mr. Malumisa was an experienced black leader committed to parliamentary democracy....."

The "Rhodesia Christian Group" reports that after being arrested,

along with Wally Stuttaford, Mr. Malumisa was also tortured, this designed to make him give evidence against Stuttaford. Originally Malumisa agreed and was released, but in an heroic gesture at the trial refused to perjure himself, thus securing the release of Stuttaford and several others. Malumisa started seeking foreign aid for an irrigation project designed to help local African farmers in the Bula-wayo area. He mysteriously disappeared in September, 1984, and has never been heard of again.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH "TEMPORARY" IN AUSTRALIA: In his address to public meetings in Australia, courageous Canadian barrister, Mr. Doug Christie, has warned that there is evidence that freedom of speech is under strong attack in Australia. Mr. Christie said that although it appears to be permitted to discuss the sexual preferences of our Lord, Jesus Christ, or debate the proposal that He faked his crucifixion in order to stage a resurrection, some issues appear to be beyond debate.

Mr. Christie drew attention to the proposal from Mr. Jeremy Jones, secretary of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, that "denial of the holocaust" should be a criminal offence in Australia. In a submission to the Australian Law Reform Commission, Mr. Jones urged the Commonwealth Government to produce national legislation outlawing incitement to racial hatred or acts of racial violence. "Holocaust denial" should be specifically included as racism and the promotion of "racial hatred", he said. According to "The Australian Jewish News", which points out that in France and Germany it is a crime to deny that the holocaust occurred, quotes Mr. Jones: "One of the most insidious and evil forms of anti-Jewish racism is the claim that the holocaust never occurred and that the 'Christian west' has been the victim of moral blackmail and financial extortion....."

Canadian Persecutions: It is impossible to believe that Mr. Jones is unaware of the Canadian cases described by Doug Christie, in which a number of men who had questioned aspects of history - including the 'holocaust' - had not only been tried by the courts, but have subsequently lost their possessions in an effort to defend themselves, and freedom of speech. Mr. Jones seems unconcerned by the prospect of such persecution taking place in Australia. "Raising an intellectual question ought to be the prerogative of anyone in a free society but it isn't," said Mr. Christie at his Canberra meeting. "People have gone to jail for that."

Christie observes that those whom he has defended against Canada's anti-discrimination or "hate" laws had all questioned the historical accuracy of the 'holocaust' and believed sincerely that they had a right to debate such issues in a free society.

THE FINAL BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA: What is now happening throughout Australia is the beginning of the final battle for Australia. The next few years are going to be decisive. Every reader is urged to support the Basic Fund, set at \$70,000. The hour is very, very late. All contributions to Box 1052J, G.P.O., Melbourne, 3001.

"ON TARGET" is printed and published by The Australian League of Rights, 145 Russell Street, Melbourne. Subscription \$30 p.a.
Telephone: (03) 650 9749 Fax: (03) 650 9368