

Genocide Watch News Monitor for Zimbabwe

News Monitor for 2001

February 2001

Dispatch (South Africa) 20 Feb 2001 Image of 'God's other son' in ruins. By Michael Hartnack in Harare. **THE ruling Zanu(PF) party's kindergarten or "Twenty-First February Movement" is likely to content itself today with a series of children's parties around the country in honour of the 77th birthday of President Robert Mugabe. In past years taxpayers and state employees, headed by the loyal cadres of the Central Intelligence Organisation, were expected to club in for the cost of far more lavish celebrations. Parents were exhorted to give their children presents so the day became associated in young minds with a supplementary -- or alternative -- Christmas. Deputy Minister Tony Gara once reminded Zimbabweans they were blessed to be under the rule of "God's other son", Robert Mugabe.** The head of state was "the carpenter's son" -- a reference to his father's employment as a mission artisan. Few men would resist having their head turned by this kind of adulation. Times were when Mugabe received it abroad as well as at home. Before the release of Nelson Mandela, he was, more than anyone else, the living symbol of "progressive" Third World leadership, triumphant black power. **At the time of the 1982-87 Matabeleland genocide, in which up to 20000 people died according to churchmen and human rights lawyers, little damage occurred to Mugabe's image despite his blunt assertion: "The people must be re-oriented. The solution is a military one. Their grievances are unfounded. The verdict of the voters was given in 1980. They should have accepted defeat then."** What was happening here was overshadowed by the horror of death squad killings in South Africa and the pressing need to eradicate apartheid. Unfavourable publicity for Mugabe was thought to aid PW Botha. The similarity in the finger-wagging truculence of the two men went unnoticed, as did the resemblance between Mugabe and the even more verkrampste BJ Vorster who, like Mugabe, was a master of playing "the ethnic card" when all else failed. Hardly a year after the Matabeleland slaughter ceased, the Pope paid a state visit. Hangings of convicted murderers, including Matabeleland dissidents, were kept secret in order not to offend his Holiness' sensibilities, but Vatican apparatchiks seemed determined to look the other way as 2000 security force members and ruling party members were granted pardons for mass murder. The recent gross partiality in the application of justice is no new phenomenon, although only recently noticed by the world. In 1989 the then British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, paid a formal visit, complimenting Mugabe on his "policy of reconciliation" and displaying solidarity with his fight against "terrorism" (her word) in the form of the Renamo rebellion in Mozambique. In 1991 came the entire Commonwealth heads of government and Britain's Queen Elizabeth. Only the year before, the state of emergency had finally lapsed. While it was in force, the authorities had enjoyed virtually unlimited powers of detention, search and seizure. Not only critics but victims of private vendettas by ministers were held without charge for years. My colleague Jan Raath was detained because The Times of London used same-size photographs of Ian Smith and Mugabe with an article listing recent instances of the use of torture, proven in open court. But that made only a brief stir among Mugabe fans. When Mugabe's long-roumoured secret polygamous marriage was confirmed in 1995, it did little damage to his standing either at home or abroad, although the Zimbabwean Financial Gazette said it suggested "serious character flaws" for a man who vaunted himself as a practising Catholic to take the wife of a young security force member as his concubine during the lifetime of Sally Mugabe. Roman Catholic Archbishop Patrick Chakaipa was only too happy to marry the couple after Sally died and Grace got a divorce. **Mugabe's friend Chakaipa also strove to suppress a church report on the Matabeleland victims.** Mugabe's first really ruinous public relations blunder was to embroil himself in needless controversy with the minuscule group, Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe, over their inconspicuous display at a book fair later that year. The display was totally inoffensive, merely offering a few pamphlets on counselling. But in what appeared to be an attempt to posture on the moral high ground, he launched into the first of an interminable series of extravagant attacks. Gays and lesbians were "lower than pigs or dogs", "deserved no rights at all", he said. This did nothing to draw attention away from Grace Guriraza née Marufu, 40 years his junior, and raised questions why Mugabe had this obsession. Yet, initially, the forces of world "pink power" were reluctant to deploy against Mugabe. Peter Tatchell, leader of Outrage!, sent Mugabe a plaintive letter recalling how he had been "a long-time supporter of Zanu and the Zimbabwe struggle for independence, majority rule and social justice", helping raise funds in the 1970s. Tatchell expressed his "sadness" and blamed the evils of colonialism for homophobia in Zimbabwe. Only as rhetoric persisted did Mugabe mobilise against himself the vocal and well-organised international gay lobby. Still, Mugabe might have passed as an international elder statesman with an odd quirk -- rather like Britain's prime minister Gladstone with his noted passion for befriending young prostitutes, which so shocked Queen Victoria. Yet worse was to come. The abduction and torture of two independent journalists, Ray Choto and Mark Chavunduka, in January-February 1999 set the entire media fraternity against Mugabe and his government. Instead of pleading ignorance under the Machiavellian rule that "the prince must never admit to knowing", Mugabe vastly compounded the blunder by a nationwide broadcast in which he justified the use of torture. He told judges who had voiced concern that if they were unhappy with his human rights record they and all the 70000 remaining whites should "pack and go". Threats he had made for years about seizing white-owned farms -- previously ignored as mere rhetoric -- began to be noticed and taken seriously by the international community, contributing to relentless downward pressure on the Zimbabwean dollar and spontaneous riots over the cost of living. The core of foreign sympathisers who might have been relied upon to put a favourable construction on the dispatch of Zimbabwean troops to the Congo saw it as a mere grandiose adventure. The African-American caucus in the United States, which had for 25 years regarded Mugabe as a hero, wanted to hold him at arm's length. Now Mugabe's government is seeking belatedly to repair its image by ridding the country of foreign correspondents, stipulating that overseas media organisations will be required to employ Zimbabweans.

This, they believe, will end "negative publicity", revive investment and tourism. The BBC's Joseph Winter is being expelled along with Mercedes Sayagues, correspondent for the Mail and Guardian. More will follow, we are told. Sayagues, here since 1992, has given eye witness accounts of Zanu(PF) use of terror in elections but Winter, here since 1997, has been criticised for his assumption that farm invasions constitute a genuine attempt at land reform favouring the rural poor, not a mere pretext for victimising opposition. A stringent new system of "accreditation" is to be imposed on all journalists. Far from Mugabe being the victim of a western conspiracy, as he claims, he for years led a charmed existence. His international image was destroyed by his talking his way into trouble, and by persistent, reckless breaches of international norms of statesmanship.

Daily News (Harare) 3 Mar 2001 **Zanu PF set to revive youth brigades** By Nyasha Nyakunu, Features Editor. The boys will be back in town. At least, there are plans to recall them. **While many will welcome the return of Zimbabwe's 16 000 soldiers from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), those to be recalled are of a completely different breed.** All-night parties will be in order when the soldiers complete their tour of duty in the DRC, whenever that will be, as relatives are reunited once more with their loved ones. However, one can only wonder whether similar scenes of jubilation will erupt when this particular breed hits town. **People in general do not have very fond memories of the now defunct Youth Brigade - the young girls and boys sired by Zanu PF to ensure maximum attendance at pre- and post-independence rallies. The youth brigades, easily identifiable in their green shirts and khaki trousers, were particularly active during the early 1980s when they force-marched people to Zanu PF rallies. They served as the party's "ears and eyes" in the communities. Drawn mostly from the ranks of the unemployed and former scouts-cum-cooks of liberation war fighters (the chimbwidos and the mujibhas), they were projected as the vanguard of the gains of liberation during the de facto one-party state era.** Then, it was difficult to plan for an easy Sunday morning as the youth brigades went from door-to-door, hauling township residents from their homes to a Zanu PF rally. **Refusing to attend such meetings would result in a beating or being labelled a sellout or a dzakutsaku, the slogan of the United African National Council led by the prime minister of the short-lived Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, Bishop Abel Muzorewa.** As Zanu PF consolidated its hold on power during the de facto one-party state era, the youth brigades saw their usefulness fizzling out as society began to resist their crude tactics. **The youth brigades had become a law unto themselves, much like the war veterans of today, harassing innocent civilians in the townships and during football matches, under the guise of maintaining orderly behaviour.** They soon vanished from the scene, with an odd one or two here and there to be seen at Zanu PF rallies in the rural areas. With Zanu PF facing stiff opposition from the MDC ahead of the Presidential poll next year, the ruling party is considering reviving the youth brigades. Forbes Magadu, the party's acting chairman for Harare Province, said last week plans were underway to revive the brigade. They would be deployed to mobilise people to support Zanu PF, he said. Plans to resuscitate the youth brigades come hard on the heels of a proposed national service programme expected to be implemented early this year. Border Gezi, the Minister of Youth Development, Gender and Employment, has said the programme will start "any time now". He denied the youths would undergo military training, saying: "It is meant to instill a sense of belonging, patriotism and mould responsible citizenship among the youth, preparing them to enter colleges and universities." **More than 300 000 youths signed up for service in the Youth Brigade in 1983 when the late Ernest Kadungure was the Minister of Youth, Sport and Recreation. The youths were to undergo training and be given guns to defend the country "against the enemy".** At that time, the idea was to build one training centre in each province and one training centre in every district. "The youth brigades are going to be brought back to mobilise people when the party is being challenged by a formidable opposition force to scare off supporters of the opposition parties," says Professor Masipula Sithole of the University of Zimbabwe's political science department. While Zimbabwe had its fair share of harassment from the youth brigades, their revival conjures up memories of the Malawi Young Pioneers (MYP) during the draconian rule of Dr Kamuzu Banda. Banda asserted his authority by using the paramilitary MYP, who had powers of arrest, as tools of political control. They served as an effective intelligence network at every level of society. Accounts abound of individuals being arrested and detained for long periods because of unguarded remarks made in private conversations. During that era, every Malawian was required to carry a party card on every occasion which had to be produced in order to enter a market, board a bus or obtain health care. Ostensibly established to spearhead agricultural development, the Young Pioneers were moulded along a movement of the same name in Ghana where Banda had practised as a doctor before returning to lead the struggle against colonialism in the then Nyasaland. However, from the early days of his rule, the Young Pioneers were an armed Paramilitary body with powers of arrest. When, in 1965 the MYP were given arresting powers and immunity from prosecution, Banda reportedly told parliament: "The Young Pioneers cannot be arrested by any policemen without my consent. If a Young Pioneer arrests anybody . . . and brings them to the police station, the police officer in charge of that station must not release them. If he does release them, he is committing a crime." Although Gezi said the idea of the youth brigades is designed to foster a sense of "belonging, patriotism and responsibility among the youths", Sithole says such thoughts were characteristic of a party that has failed to transform itself from being a liberation movement to a political party. **"We are seeing Zanu authoritarianism after 20 years in power precisely because Zanu PF has not made the necessary leap forward from being a liberation movement to a civilian party," says Sithole.** He said liberation movements tend to be regimented and build their structures in militarist fashion. "What we are seeing are the manifestations of the residue of authoritarian and commandist politics that has no room in democratic governance. "But what is certain, though, is that the commandist character of our politics is going to be swept from the pages of history as happened in Malawi and elsewhere in the world." For now, there is no going back as far as Zanu PF is concerned, the youth brigades will be back in town to instill a "sense of belonging, patriotism, and responsibility" among the youths. Any citizen who believes that the nation will be enriched politically and economically by these copycats of Banda's Young Pioneers may be in for the shock of their lives

BBC 9 Mar 2001 **Murdered Zimbabwe farmer is buried** Farmers fear renewed attacks from Mugabe supporters Hundreds of people have attended a funeral service in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, for Gloria Olds, the 72-year-old widow who was murdered on her farm last Sunday. Her son, Martin, was shot dead on his farm less than a year ago, and opposition leaders believe both killings were politically motivated. Daughter-in-law Kathy Olds doubts she will ever return She was the

eighth member of Zimbabwe's white farming community to be killed since ruling party militants and veterans of the country's independence war began occupying white-owned farms last year with the backing of President Robert Mugabe and his government. In all more than 30 opposition supporters and officials have been killed. When men need semiautomatic weapons to murder a 72-year-old woman, they are not men, they are scum, they are cowards Minister Paul Andrianatos Farmers' leaders say they are afraid a new campaign of political violence may be starting against white land owners. Mrs Olds' friends and neighbours, many of them white farmers, packed the small Presbyterian church in Bulawayo, shocked by the brutality of her murder. 'Strong-willed' Mrs Olds died in a hail of bullets as men with automatic weapons opened fire as she came to her gate. She attempted to crawl to safety but the gunmen forced the gate and fired more shots at her where she lay. She had refused to give the farm up even after the murder of her son, Martin. But his widow, Kathy Olds, did and now lives in Britain. The minister, Paul Andrianatos, described her as a strong-willed, no-fuss, independent person. Farm occupations were backed by the government "When men need semiautomatic weapons to murder a 72-year-old woman, they are not men, they are scum, they are cowards," he said. Mr Andrianatos also officiated at Martin Olds' funeral, where he described Mr Mugabe as a criminal and a murderer. The minister has now had his work permit cancelled and is due to leave Zimbabwe on Sunday.

Financial Gazette (Harare) 1 Mar 2001 **Gestapo-Style night raids on journalists and government foes by men in cars with fake number plates and mysterious bombings of newspapers have left a trail which human rights bodies and security and political analysts this week said heavily implicated the government's spy Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) and the army.** While in the past the government's refusal to prosecute its supporters accused of crimes against the opposition had underscored the authorities' complicity in lawlessness, tactics have changed. There are increasing reports of violence by state security organs under the direct charge of President Robert Mugabe and his Cabinet, human rights watchers and analysts said. "The modus operandi has changed from war veterans perpetrating violence to more and more the CIO, the army and other state security organs," said Tony Reeler, director of Amani Trust, a local non-governmental organisation at the forefront of research into political violence and human rights abuses in Zimbabwe. Mugabe and his trusted lieutenants have simultaneously cracked down on the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and growing dissension within ZANU PF. Five of the ruling party's provincial executives are being dismissed under the guise of a restructuring programme but insiders say the executives are being punished for not toeing the line. Human rights organisations and observers told the Financial Gazette that some aspects very peculiar to some of the most recent acts of violence against the opposition and individuals perceived as anti-ZANU PF could only point to state security organs. Eighty-four people, most of them members of the opposition, have since the beginning of last year been murdered in political violence, according to Angela Cheater, who has researched political violence on behalf of the Non-governmental Organisations Forum. -- WP (3 Mar 2001) While South Africa and many of Zimbabwe's other neighbors are busy building the democratic institutions that were neglected or suppressed during decades of white minority rule, this country of 12 million -- once considered a model of what Africans could achieve when freed from colonial intrusion -- is deconstructing a democratic infrastructure assembled in the years since its first all-races election in 1980. "We're in the endgame now," said a Western diplomat here. "These are the last desperate measures of an imploding regime. It's Mugabe's last stand." The government plans to replace all five members of the Supreme Court and nearly a third of the judges sitting on the nation's next-highest bench, the High Court. "They want to create a puppet judiciary," said the MDC's Ncube. "They are desperate to stay in power, and they don't care how much damage they do to this country." Mugabe has blamed the country's economic woes on its white citizens, who account for less than 1 percent of the population but own 70 percent of the arable land, which has made land reform Zimbabwe's hot-button political issue for decades. And he has repeatedly characterized anyone who criticizes his government as either white racists or their black pawns.

Reuters (Middle East Times) 27 Apr 2001 **Qadhafi wants Africans to expel whites** Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi urged Africans on April 22 to drive white people out of the continent and make them pay compensation for their exploitation of it. "The white colonialists have no place in Africa and their presence is unlawful," said Qadhafi, addressing a gathering of African women activists in Tripoli. Qadhafi, whose remarks were reported by the official Libyan news agency Jana, monitored in Tunis, also urged Africans to rid themselves of the white man's cultural legacy, including language. "This is another battleground before us, to shake off the leftover of the colonialist culture," he said. "Their languages and the colonial culture cannot express our feelings and thoughts, which we can do only by speaking the languages of our forefathers," he added. **Qadhafi urged Africans to take their cue from Libya's experience when it expelled some 20,000 Italians during the late 1960s, and to do the same with whites who are still settling in other African states.** "We (Africans) demand compensation from them and (then) send them packing because they colonized us and slaughtered us and made the most of our lands during the colonial era," he went on. The 59-year-old Qadhafi is the driving force behind a project to unify the 53 African nations into one state modeled on the United States of America. He hosted the signing of a declaration by 46 African countries in March announcing the birth of an African Union to replace the four-decades-old Organization of African Unity (OAU). **Qadhafi said he was amazed to hear some white farmers in Zimbabwe asking for compensation from President Robert Mugabe, who vowed last week to continue his controversial drive to seize white-owned firms for redistribution to blacks. "Colonialist whites exhausted the African land, turned it into desert, destroyed forests and impoverished its soil," said Qadhafi.**

BBC 2 May 2001 **The bishops spoke out against the intimidation of the independent press Roman Catholic bishops in Zimbabwe have issued a sharp rebuke against President Robert Mugabe's government over the level of political violence in the country.** Violence, intimidation and threats are the tools of failed politicians. Bishops' letter The pastoral letter did not name Mr Mugabe or the governing Zanu-PF party but accused the holders of power of abusing their fellow human beings. **It also criticised militants and self-styled war veterans who have launched a campaign of intimidation against opposition groups and white landowners. The bishops urged the government to uphold the rule of law. "Violence, intimidation and threats are the tools of failed politicians. We must point**

out to them that they are engaging in an unjust activity," the letter says. Condemnation Referring to the war veterans the bishops say: "It is the duty of government to ensure that the nation is not held to ransom by a few. "We urge the government to allow the law enforcement agents to perform their duties without interference so that there is a sense of security in the country." The bishops say that land reform is a pressing issue left over from the colonial era, but in trying to solve the problem new injustices should not be created. The letter will be distributed to every Catholic church, school and institution in Zimbabwe. Correspondents say the bishops' statement is the harshest by a religious group in Zimbabwe against the government. In the past the church has been accused of not speaking out against the violence and intimidation in Zimbabwe. The BBC correspondent in Zimbabwe says that in a predominantly Christian country the bishops' statement is a significant development.

BBC 30 May 2001 President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe has responded angrily to recent criticism of his government by the US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, during his recent African tour. Mr Mugabe said that the United States and Britain were leading a campaign to demonize Zimbabwe's role in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and its human rights record at home. At the same time, he said, these countries were **condoning acts of genocide** and gross looting by rebels and their allies, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi.

BBC 15 June 2001 The United States has criticised new restrictions announced by Zimbabwe on foreign journalists as troubling. Reporters from abroad wishing to work in Zimbabwe will now have to seek government approval one month in advance, where previously they could apply for permission on arrival. A US State Department spokesman said the new rules accused the Zimbabwean Government of attacking the independent media and trying to limit reporting of events. State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said: "We find this new development particularly troubling in view of the presidential election slated to occur in the first quarter of next year, 2002." The BBC's Joseph Winter and another foreign reporter had to leave in February after officials accusing them of biased reporting against the government. Media war Earlier this year the printing presses of the Daily News, the country's leading independent newspaper, were blown up. Information Minister Jonathan Moyo accuses opposition groups, independent and foreign journalists of working together to fuel violence. The government's new conditions came a day after it announced the price of fuel was increasing by 70%.

BBC 30 June, 2001 Mugabe targets 1,000 new farms Law now supposedly protects occupiers from eviction The government of Zimbabwe has released a new list of farms to be nationalised under its controversial resettlement programme. With about 1,000 new white-owned farms targeted, more than 4,000 of the country's roughly 5,500 farms have been marked for seizure. One has to wonder if they want any commercial farming at all Renson Gasela, opposition MDC The government says it is trying to redress inequalities in land ownership that resulted from colonialism. But the vice-president of the predominantly white Commercial Farmers' Union, Colin Cloete, said the policy "makes a mockery of the entire resettlement scheme". Last December, the Supreme Court sharply criticised the government's resettlement scheme as illegal under Zimbabwean law. It gave the government until 1 July of this year to restore law and order on the farms occupied since February 2000 by militants who support President Robert Mugabe. Redistribution President Mugabe announced last year that the government would seize about half of the country's commercial farms. Mr Mugabe has been criticised by Zimbabwe's Supreme Court He said that 4,500 white farmers own about 70% of the country's best farmland, and that the nationalised properties would be turned over to black Zimbabweans. But farmers' union official Colin Cloete said he thought the government actually intended to seize every white-owned farm. "It's all part of politics," he said. The Supreme Court has ordered the government to come up with "a workable programme of land reform". But last month the government passed a law outlawing the use of force to remove occupiers from farms. Criticism Critics, including the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, charge that the seizure policy has been a disaster for Zimbabwean agriculture. "One has to wonder if they want any commercial farming at all," shadow land minister Renson Gasela of the MDC said. At least 34 people died in the run-up to elections last year The MDC supports land reform but opposes the violence that has accompanied the Mugabe-inspired seizures - which has been directed against opposition supporters as well as white farmers. Mr Gasela said the government has done nothing to support farming on the lands seized from white farmers. Agricultural experts say the country may face shortages of critical food crops such as maize and wheat this year due to the upheaval on commercial farms. Correspondents say that having to import food would be humiliating for Zimbabwe, which has been producing enough food to feed itself for many years.

NYT 25 June 2001 Editorial U.S. Courts Become Arbiters Of Global Rights and Wrongs BYLINE: By WILLIAM GLABERSON **excerpt:** "While visiting the United Nations in September [2000], President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe was served with a civil suit saying he ordered killings, torture and terrorism in his country and seeking \$400 million in damages."

Zimbabwe Standard (Harare) July 2, 2001 Ex- Army Officer Adopts Genocide Orphans Thabo Kunene, Harare **A former army officer who served in the notorious North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade, which was involved in the mass slaughter of thousands of Zapu supporters in the 1980s, has adopted two Tsholotsho orphans whose parents were killed during the genocide.** The actions of the former Gukurahundi man took the small community in the Phumula area of Tsholotsho completely by surprise. The 43 year-old former officer, who wished to remain anonymous and who claims to be a born-again Christian, adopted the orphans at a meeting with the villagers two weeks ago. He had gone to the village in the company of his church pastor. On arrival, the two men went straight to the homestead of the village head and told him that they had come to apologise to the families of people who lost their loved ones during the massacres. At first, the village head thought the two men were drunk but on realising they were serious, he called other villagers to an urgent meeting with the two. According to eyewitnesses, the former soldier made an emotional appeal before the villagers and confessed that he had been among hundreds of Fifth Brigade troops who had rampaged through

the villages of Matabeleland and the Midlands slaughtering innocent people. "I know I am guilty because I also took part in the killings of your loved ones. Some people lost bread winners because of what the Fifth Brigade did here," the former officer is said to have told the shocked villagers. "God spoke to me one day and I decided to ask my pastor to accompany me to Matabeleland to apologise for causing suffering and pain to many people," said the former soldier, who now lives in Zvishavane with his wife and three children. He told the villagers that many Fifth Brigade soldiers now regretted the part they had played in the genocide which occurred soon after independence. However, some youths, irked by the presence of the ex-officer, tried to beat him up as he apologised for the massacres. They were restrained by the villagers. The eyewitnesses said most of the villagers who attended the meeting had accepted the former Gukurahundi officer's apology. After apologising to the villagers, the ex-army officer then asked the locals to identify two orphans who lost their parents during the massacres. After the villagers identified two orphans, the former officer adopted them as his own children. He told the villagers that he would take care of all their educational needs, including the paying of school fees and the buying of uniforms and books. Their education would be covered by his insurance policy, he told them. The two orphans he adopted are doing 'O' and 'A' level, in Bulawayo and Tsholotsho, respectively. The relatives of the orphans confirmed their adoption by the former Gukurahundi soldier, but said the children would continue staying with their relatives. "I can confirm the adoption. The former soldier also gave them \$2 000 before he left," said one of the relatives who declined to be identified. The former officer later told The Standard that God had changed his life after his conversion to Christianity. "I am now a new person. I want to serve the Lord," he said. His pastor described the Tsholotsho meeting with the villagers as fruitful but said the visit had been risky as some people had threatened to kill the former soldier. **The Fifth Brigade, which comprised mainly former Zanla guerrillas, was unleashed on the opposition Zapu supporters in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces in 1983 on the pretext that the soldiers were tracking down dissidents. Local and foreign human rights activists estimate that at least 20 000 civilians perished during the campaign to crush Zapu, which was then led by the late Joshua Nkomo.** Perence Shiri, the founder commander of the Fifth Brigade, was later promoted by President Mugabe to the rank of airforce commander amid protests by local human rights activists who included former Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, Sir Garfield Todd.

AFP 25 Aug 2001 **Angola, Congo and DR Congo to create conflict prevention organ** The governments of Angola, Congo-Brazzaville and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), already tied by a security pact, have agreed to set up an organ aimed at conflict prevention, a statement said. The organ will be an expansion of an existing commission set up in 1999, which has primarily been deployed to resolve security problems arising on the common border of the three African neighbours, the statement said. It was issued late Friday at the end of talks here between the three countries' interior ministers. It said the new organ will group either the interior or the security ministers of Angola, Congo-Brazzaville and DRC, and will comprise a revolving presidency and a secretariat-general. The statement did not specify when the revolving presidency would come into effect nor where the secretariat-general will be sited. Under their existing security pact, the three countries are obliged to support each others' loyalist forces in the face of armed rebellions. The Angolan army is already committed in the DRC, backing Kinshasa -- along with troops from Zimbabwe and Namibia -- in its three-year-old battle with rebels supported by Rwanda and Uganda. Despite the military alliance, relations between Brazzaville and Kinshasa are marked by mistrust, fuelled by repeated rumours that the DRC is supporting Brazzaville rebels, and that Brazzaville is backing DRC rebels. Both sides have continually denied the claims.

Daily Mail and Guardian 27 Aug 2001 Last month alone more black opponents of Mugabe's rule were killed in politically motivated violence than white farmers since the land grab began early last year. Kamonela was murdered in the deprived Harare suburb of Epworth by the government militia because of his opposition sympathies. Another Epworth resident was burned alive a few days earlier when a petrol bomb was thrown into his home. **The Amani Trust in Harare, which monitors human rights abuses in Zimbabwe, recorded 11 political murders, 61 disappearances, 104 cases of unlawful detention by the authorities and 288 incidents of torture last month.** Nine white farmers have been killed since April last year. While a surge of international protest usually accompanies attacks on whites, putting some restraint on the government's actions, the campaign against ordinary black Zimbabweans is relentless. "These figures are only part of the picture, the ones we can confirm with certainty," says Anthony Reeler of the Amani Trust. "The state has very few inhibitions about using violence. We hear lots of reports of people dying, but the people are very unhelpful at giving us those statistics. There have been many more deaths in the post-election period than before. Up to 40 people were murdered in political violence during the run-up to the June 2000 parliamentary election, which the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) came close to winning. Since then the Amani Trust estimates that twice that number have been killed. Torture, including beatings, electric shocks and even mock drownings, is widespread, committed by the police, the self-styled war veterans or by militants of the ruling Zanu-PF party. Some farm workers on occupied land have been burned out of their homes, which have then been looted. Many have been forced to attend political rallies where they were expected to identify MDC supporters among them. Opposition sympathisers were then beaten, or worse, as a warning to others. Teachers and health workers in rural areas have been targeted by the militias because of their presumed sympathy with the opposition. Dozens of opposition MPs have been arrested or assaulted. "Some of the disappeared turn up a few weeks later, tortured, severely maltreated," says Reeler. "They say they have been held at Zanu-PF bases or occupied farms. The torture is purely intimidatory, not to extract information. It's to terrorise people, to stop them being politically active. Often it's done publicly to send a lesson to others." Such abuse has been made possible by the rapid transformation of state institutions, such as the police and judiciary, from largely autonomous bodies to tools of the ruling party. The police, purged of those suspected of disloyalty to the regime, are in effect another Zanu-PF militia. War veterans, in many rural areas, have taken control of police stations in villages. The force is then used to harass and detain opposition supporters, while ruling party activists get away with intimidation, assault and even murder. **The actions of the army and Central Intelligence Organisation, the Zimbabwean secret police that is solely accountable to Mugabe, are little different.** Nor can people look to the courts. Many magistrates are sympathetic to Zanu-PF or too intimidated to rule against the government. The Human Rights Forum in Harare, a coalition of 10 groups including the Amani Trust, Amnesty International and the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, published a damning report last week. "The rule of law has been replaced by rule by thugs. Armed militias roam the countryside assaulting people whose sole 'crime' is to support

the opposition party. The victims receive little or no protection from the law enforcement agencies; worse, members of these agencies sometimes participate in the assaults," it says. "To retain power in the face of increasing opposition, Mugabe has been prepared to subvert the democratic process, the independence of the judiciary, the freedom of the press, and the professional neutrality of the police and the army. He has deliberately stirred up violence, race hatred and political intolerance, and he has brought economic destitution to his country." The government, which ignores the courts at will, uses the law as another weapon. The MDC leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, faces subversion charges for warning Mugabe that if he attempts to hang on to power by force he might be removed by force. Yet the Mugabe government repeatedly issues public death threats against its foes. In June the foreign minister, Stan Mudenge, told trainee teachers: "As civil servants, you have to be loyal to the government of the day. You can even be killed for supporting the opposition, and no one would guarantee your safety." Mugabe's opponents expect the violence to get worse. A state of emergency is expected in the coming months, either as an excuse to call off next year's presidential election or to provide cover to rig the ballot.

IRIN 5 Sept 2001 SA Spies Also to Blame for Matabeleland Massacres **Three South African spies jailed in Zimbabwe have revealed that the former apartheid government sponsored a small dissident group which sparked the civil strife in Matabeleland province in the 1980s, which left thousands of civilians dead.** President Robert Mugabe's government sent soldiers from the North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade to crush the uprising in Matabeleland. In an exclusive interview with the government-owned 'Sunday Mail', the former South African intelligence agents said the blame for the massacres should not lie squarely on the Zimbabwe government but also on South Africa. Kevin Woods, Phillip Conjwayo and Michael Smith, now in their 13th year of life terms, were imprisoned for a fatal raid on a house belonging to South Africa's then outlawed African National Congress (ANC) in Zimbabwe's second city of Bulawayo. **The three alleged that South Africa helped create a dissident group out of the then Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) party led by the late nationalist and vice president Joshua Nkomo. They alleged that a small number of the Super ZAPU guerrillas became active in Nkomo's home province of Matabeleland where thousands of people were brutally killed in the conflict which began around the same time that Mugabe sacked Nkomo from his coalition government.** "(Zimbabwe) government was blamed for atrocities that they did not commit," Conjwayo told the paper. "In fact Super ZAPU elements did more murders than the Fifth Brigade and the whole episode is blamed solely on the government when South Africa should also be blamed," he said. "South Africa recruited, trained and funded Super ZAPU elements to carry out murders while camouflaged as members of the Fifth Brigade and the blame was laid on government," claimed Woods.

Vanguard (Lagos) 20 Sept 2001 EDITORIAL Mugabe And His War Veterans Those unleashing terror on whites in Zimbabwe are not war veterans, but youthful brigands with the backing of Robert Mugabe, writes Oladipo Omole .LAGOS on the eve of Zimbabwe's independence, Mugabe had declared "if yesterday I fought with you as an enemy, today you have become a friend and ally with the same national interest". He was addressing whites in Zimbabwe who are now the objects of his mood swings; his whims The population of Zimbabwe was expected to reach 9.4 million in the mid_ 1990s, with a population density of over 20 people per square kilometre and growing at a rate of 3.1 per cent per annum. Fairly recent reports show that the proportion of the population living on the land as peasant farmers was an estimated 70 per cent. Agriculture is the second largest contributor to Zimbabwe's GDP and accounts for almost 50 per cent of foreign exchange earnings. As at 1991, there were approximately 6,000 commercial farmers in Zimbabwe who are white. These white farmers largely employ workers in the agricultural sector of Zimbabwe's economy. Records show that the contribution of over 750,000 communal and small-scale peasant farmers was becoming increasingly important both in numbers and level of output. There are conflicting reports on how the foreigners including the whites acquired land in Zimbabwe. Records show that for instance in 1573 the Portuguese and Mawanamutapa Nogomo signed a treaty which gave the Portuguese possession of a number of gold mines and other minerals. Ngomo also gave the Portuguese the permanent ownership of a strip of territory along the south bank of the Zambezi from Tete to the sea. The same report had it that, at the close of the 1940s the African Voice Association were embroiled in a struggle with the white government over a scheme which included the forcible removal of masses of peasants from their homes and land and de-stocking their cattle. In addition there was the Lancaster House Agreement which protected ownership of property and allowed for transfer only on a "willing seller/willing buyer basis in local currency. This agreement could not by any means be interpreted to subsist only between whites. Blacks who had the means are also affected. Then the minority regime did not prohibit ownership of land in Zimbabwe by blacks, hence no peasants will be engaged in farming as they are now. Mugabe had a laudable and noble objective: The resettlement and rehabilitation of war veterans, but his motives and strategy are suspect. To put it bluntly they are sinister. Who are the real beneficiaries of Zimbabwe's new land policy and what criteria will be used for distributing seized land? When were these war veterans disengaged? What has been happening to them since disengagement? Are there blacks engaged in agriculture in Zimbabwe. These questions raise a lot of suspicion on Mugabe's real motive. It is on record that the approximately 6,000 commercial white farmers provide employment for Zimbabweans so their settlement in Zimbabwe is functional. Mugabe's present disposition to white farmers and his war veterans is not commendable and neither is it justified by any stretch of the imagination. The truth is Mugabe has been in power for 21 years and he is not willing to let go. He has denied this allegation but it remains his latent motive. The man really has nothing else to offer Zimbabwe. He has an option he has refused to take because of his obsession for power. Instead of propagating brigandage, Mugabe could actually rehabilitate his army of war veterans with little or no skill or experience in commercial farming by giving them jobs that suit their skills, knowledge and abilities. He has enlisted the support of Nigeria in his mission of justifying voodoo economics but apart from the failed indigenisation policy of Gowon's regime Nigeria allows foreigners to own property including farmlands. It is not exactly clear what role he expects Nigeria to play and how Nigeria will reconcile his motives with her foreign policy objectives. If he expects an army of occupation or any form of moral or political support it is futile and he is not on firm ground. Zimbabwe has agreed to act against self-styled independence war veterans who have been occupying white owned farms during a meeting of Commonwealth foreign ministers in Nigeria. So the Commonwealth of Nations does not share Mugabe's idea of land reform nor does Foreign Minister Stan Mudenge who led Zimbabwe's team at the Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting in Nigeria as he declared that government would move swiftly to evict illegal land invaders. Within the framework of the Abuja accord, Zimbabwe has

agreed to stop landless blacks from invading white-owned farms and to acquire farms for black resettlement on a fair and legal basis. As a matter of fact Britain has agreed to co-finance compensation for farmers, whose land was acquired, under the Abuja accord as well. It is not only the Commonwealth of nations that does not share Mugabe's idea of a land reform. South African President Thabo Mbeki has urged Zimbabwe to uphold the rule of law and has called on the international community to honor pledges of financial assistance for Zimbabwe's land reform programme. Mbeki recognises that Mugabe and his war veterans are operating above the law. Robert Mugabe and his war veterans are also undermining the economy of Zimbabwe and surrounding states. This is evident in the statement credited to a senior South African official, Mboweni who told an investment conference that Zimbabwe's crisis was one of several factors affecting the rapidly depreciating Rand adding the situation has become untenable when it is seen that the highest office in that land seems to support illegal means of land reform, land invasions, the occupation of land and violence. Mboweni went a step further as he added the land problem in Zimbabwe must be solved, but this must be done within the law anybody who acts outside the law must be locked up and brought before the courts." Southern Africa is indeed apprehensive of a possible spill over of violence from Zimbabwe to the whole of Southern African region as groups of brigades within the area might act ie Mugabe and his war veteran. This is not good for peace, security and business. The 14-nation Southern African Development Community (SADC) has called for a meeting to drive home the consequences of Zimbabwe refusal to honor the agreement reached in Abuja. Bakili Muluzi, the president of Malawi and chairman of SADC said regional stability was the prime concern "of great concern to all of us is that, if the land issue is not urgently resolved amicably and peacefully, the economic and political problems of Zimbabwe could easily snowball across the entire South African regions." Muluzi also expressed fear, on critical direct foreign investment in the region which may not be forthcoming any longer due to increasing political instability. White farmers are not the only targets of Mugabe's war veterans black farm workers had their homes burned in the village of Beatrice, leaving more than 200 farm lands homeless. In the past 18 months black farm workers have been assaulted and thousands forced from their homes by violence which political analysts link to Mugabe's campaign to retain power. In essence Mugabe and his war veterans are not in the business of land reform. No authority in the South African region recognises or sympathises with their agenda. As a matter of fact Museigbe and his cohorts have become something of an embarrassment to the whole South African region and the commonwealth. Mugabe's objective is not the rehabilitation of war veterans which he could have done much earlier by absorbing the war veterans into the national army where their skills are needed; he wants to sit tight but he has played dangerously and foolishly into the hands of the opposition who do not see any sense in his wasteful venture.

IRIN 10 Sept 2001 **Amnesty International said in a statement at the weekend that it was "appealing" to the Commonwealth and the broader international community to send observers as a matter of urgency to monitor the human rights situation in Zimbabwe. "Amnesty International is concerned that the months preceding the presidential election due in 2002 will likely be marked by an upsurge in human rights violations.** Thus the process of sending monitors should start as soon as possible," the rights group said. In reference to an interim agreement reached on Thursday at a Commonwealth ministers' meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, Amnesty said: "For the Abuja agreement to be successful, the Zimbabwe government should provide an atmosphere in which all people, including opposition candidates and supporters, are free to express their political beliefs, peacefully assemble and campaign without the fear of violence". The Abuja deal on land reform was aimed at ending Zimbabwe's political and economic crisis. According to Amnesty, the human rights climate in the next by-election, on 22 and 23 September in the Chikomba constituency in the Mashonaland East Province of Zimbabwe will be the first true test of the willingness of the government to abide by Thursday's agreement to end political violence. "Members of the Commonwealth delegation to Abuja, including representatives of Kenya, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom, should closely monitor the run-up to the Chikomba balloting to ensure that human rights are respected," the statement urged. It said that the agreement had come too late to prevent human rights violations in the Makoni West constituency. The rights group said that the run-up to this weekend's polling had been "marked by beatings, burning of houses and forcible displacement". News reports on Monday quoted the country's main opposition - the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) - as accusing the ruling ZANU-PF party of "massive rigging" and of harassing MDC members during the Makoni West by-election and a mayoral poll in the country's second city, Bulawayo, at the weekend. The 'Daily News' reported that a group of ZANU-PF youths in Makoni West allegedly stormed a church service on Sunday morning and forced scores of worshippers to go and vote. Wilcot Mushore, a presiding officer at Gurure Primary School, was quoted as saying that a headman aligned to ZANU-PF was seen by polling agents recording the names of people from his area who turned up to vote. "The headman was reprimanded. We told him to stop what he was doing because it was against the provisions of the Electoral Act," Mushore said. Remus Makuwaza of the MDC and ZANU-PF's Gibson Munyoro are battling for the parliamentary seat left vacant after the death of Moven Mahachi, the minister of defence, in a car accident in May. Vote counting was expected to begin on Monday morning, with the results expected on Tuesday. Meanwhile, the 'Daily News' quoted the MDC as alleging that "thousands" of ZANU-PF supporters were bussed in from outside Bulawayo to cast their votes in the mayoral election. It added that the poll was marred by incidents of violence and voter apathy. In one incident, police reportedly raided the Bulawayo offices of the MDC on Saturday and arrested three members. "We were surrounded by riot police. They took away one of our vans and arrested the bodyguards of one of our MPs," MDC mayoral candidate, Japhet Ndabeni-Ncube, was quoted as saying. Ndabeni-Ncube said five Land Rovers and "a truckload of riot police" descended on the MDC offices in Bulawayo shortly after 6.00 pm. They arrested the bodyguards working for Bulawayo South MDC MP David Coltart, Ndabeni-Ncube said.

Business Day (Johannesburg) EDITORIAL September 17, 2001 **African Union Needs New Approach to Deal With 'Third-Termers'** Johannesburg YOWERI **Kaguta Museveni, Uganda's president, once famously described the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) as a trade union of dictators. The OAU's dictators may just be on the way out or transforming themselves. But as the OAU mutates into the African Union (AU), it is finding that its membership is gaining more leaders who want to cling onto power at all costs.** Related to this is modern day Africa's other challenge: that of dealing with human rights violations and/or leaders who abuse their citizens to hang in there. After the independence struggles, ordinary Africans have had to endure years of unconstitutional changes of governments in their countries. West Africa elevated the practice of toppling governments into an art form. In fact,

practically all the continent's regions have had an experience with a coup or an attempted one. After years of watching, helplessly, their unalterable rights to vote in (and out) a government of their choice being perverted, Africans can now look to bodies like the AU and the Commonwealth for solace. Commendably, both these bodies, without much clout, have banned from their ranks dictators who shoot their way to power. This no-nonsense stance has forced dictators to rehabilitate themselves into civilian leaders. Still, there are few or no instruments at all to deal with how sometimes democratically elected leaders abuse their citizens to stay in power. The AU's "third-termers" are growing in numbers. After Namibia's ageing Sam Nujoma changed his constitution to give himself a third term, he was joined by Zambia's Frederick Chiluba, the AU's inaugural chair. Popular resistance forced Chiluba to back down on the idea. Malawi's Bakili Muluzi, the chair of the Southern African Development Community, has not given up hope of a third term. Few believed Angola's Eduardo Jose dos Santos when he announced plans recently not to avail himself as a candidate in the next election due only in a year. Apart from the trappings of power, what makes an honourable exit such a difficult proposition? Rule out hard times. Most tend to use their time in State House to prepare for a comfortable retirement. A growing body of evidence, albeit the bulk of which remains anecdotal, is emerging, suggesting that the reluctance to leave office stems from fear of prosecution for mainly gross human rights abuses while in office. As a result, new ways are found to prolong their stay in power. Elections are unnecessarily delayed or the constitution is changed to allow another term. There are several ways of dealing with this problem. One would be to use multilateral instruments say an AU-wide twoterm presidential limit to deal with the third-termers. This would be a useful forward-looking approach. But it would do nothing to help address the current problem of human rights excesses. Africa's apparent answer to this has been disappointing and inadequate. Emerging from the past of its twin evils colonialism and recently apartheid SA's new leaders formed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to look into human rights abuses committed during apartheid. The amnesty-for-full-disclosure approach, coupled with largely symbolic compensation for victims, was to have formed the basis for reconciliation and nation-building. It is early days to say for certain that Archbishop Desmond Tutu's commission was a complete waste of time. But its proponents appear to exaggerate its contribution to reconciliation. Still, this has not stopped other African countries from following this route. Nigeria, under Olusegun Obasanjo, was the first to probe excesses under successive military regimes. Last Wednesday, he testified to the Oputa commission on his role in the Kalakuta invasion, an army raid which he allegedly ordered that led to the death of many, including Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, Fela Kuti's mother. For the record, he has denied ordering the raid. Even before this experiment has played itself out, Ghana's John Kufour has tabled a bill that would probe violations under Jerry Rawlings, his coup-maker-turned-civilian predecessor. The Movement for Democratic Change has promised a TRC-type structure if Zimbabwean voters install its leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, in office next March. Naturally, this would have to reopen Matabeleland atrocities files as well as look into the violence of the past 18 months. The Oasis Forum, a network of civic organisations at the forefront of Zambia's anti-third-term movement, yesterday proposed such an inquiry into Chiluba's human rights performance during his two terms. As happened with SA's National Party and Nigeria's ex-military rulers, Generals Ibrahim "IBB" Babangida and Abdulsalam Abubakar, ex-presidents find such inquiries embarrassing and rattling. They can be equally uncomfortable for sitting ones too. Crucially, though, there is no demonstrable evidence that they aid reconciliation. Neither do they act as a sufficient deterrent against similar rights abuses in future. It is time the AU begins the search for more effective means of dealing with third termers in its transformation to what Museveni, himself a one-time coup maker, might one day call a trade union of democrats and human rights champions. Otherwise it risks inheriting the OAU's reputation as a toothless bulldog.

BBC 2 Oct 2001 Blair promises to stand by Africa Blair has pledged to make Africa a priority **British Prime Minister Tony Blair has described the current state of poverty in Africa as "a scar on our consciences". And he said that if the world as a community focused on it, it could be healed but if not "it will become deeper and angrier"**. In his speech to the annual Labour party conference, Mr Blair called on the international community to back a partnership for Africa, between the developed and developing world based around the New African Initiative. "This would offer greater investment, aid and debt relief for Africa," he said. Blair is ready to use troops in Africa again "But it's a deal: On the African side: true democracy, no more excuses for dictatorship, abuses of human rights; no tolerance of bad governance, from the endemic corruption of some states, to the activities of Mr Mugabe's henchmen in Zimbabwe. Proper commercial, legal and financial systems." In a speech which correspondents described as ambitious, Mr Blair spoke of a "moral duty" to provide international military and humanitarian action in countries anywhere. "If the world continues to ignore the sufferings of African nations, like in the war-ravaged Democratic Republic of Congo, it would breed anger and frustration which would threaten global stability," he said. No walking away **Mr Blair also mentioned the world's inaction during the 1994 genocide in which nearly around 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were massacred by Hutu extremists. World should never let another Rwanda happen And he promised: "If Rwanda happens again we would not walk away as the outside world has done many times before."** Declassified documents obtained by a US non-governmental agency had showed that the United States knew in advance that the 1994 Rwandan genocide was likely to happen but nevertheless insisted that United Nations peacekeepers should be withdrawn. Following his government's intervention in Sierra Leone's civil war, Mr Blair indicated that he would be ready to use British troops to implement future peace plans. During last May's British election campaign, Mr Blair promised that he wanted to make Africa a key priority during his second term in office. He followed that up with a meeting last month with some African leaders to discuss his proposed partnership with the continent.

NYT 17 Nov 2001 Political Violence Strikes Zimbabwe's Second Largest City By RACHEL L. SWARNS JOHANNESBURG, Nov. 16 — **Violence swept across Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city, on Friday as supporters of President Robert Mugabe stoned and burned the headquarters of the opposition party to protest the killing of a colleague who the government said was strangled by members of the opposition.** Supporters of the opposition party denied that they had anything to do with the killing of Mr. Mugabe's colleague, Cain Nkala, and accused the government of using the case as an excuse to crack down on its opponents. The opposition supporters retaliated by burning a college owned by an ally of Mr. Mugabe and by assaulting members of the state-controlled media, the police said. The protesters also tried to march on Mr. Mugabe's party office in Bulawayo, but the police blocked them. "The

situation has been stabilized," a spokesman for the national police, Wayne Bvudzijena, said in a telephone interview. Mr. Bvudzijena said that he could not confirm the extent of the damage but that houses belonging to opposition members were also burned in Bulawayo this week by government supporters. Those supporters were angered by the murder of Mr. Nkala, leader of a group of retired guerrillas who fought in the 1970's to end white rule. Mr. Nkala was abducted last week, the police said, and his body was found on Tuesday in a shallow grave. More than 11 members of the opposition, the Movement for Democratic Change, have been arrested and charged with murder, including a legislator in Parliament. Officials said the opposition had killed Mr. Nkala to avenge the killing of Patrick Nabanyama, an opposition member who disappeared before the parliamentary elections in June 2000. Party officials acknowledged that Mr. Nkala was widely believed to have been behind Mr. Nabanyama's disappearance. Although they denied a connection to Mr. Nkala's death, many opposition members in Bulawayo went into hiding, fearful that they would be attacked by government-backed militants. "The M.D.C. has nothing to do with the abduction of Nkala," the party leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, said in a statement today. "We are a peace-loving and nonviolent party. We believe that the police know the real killers of Nkala and are seeking to protect them by shifting the blame. "If our members are guilty, let the law take its course. But we believe that the people who abducted Nkala are among the war veterans' leadership themselves, arising out of their own power struggles." Opposition officials said they believed that Mr. Nkala had been killed by his colleagues because he was preparing to disclose the involvement of other government supporters in Mr. Nabanyama's death. **Political tensions have been mounting as Zimbabwe braces for presidential elections, widely expected early next year. Mr. Mugabe, who has run the country since white rule ended in 1980, is running against Mr. Tsvangirai and is facing one of the toughest contests of his career. The economy is crumbling. Businesses are closing. Investors are fleeing, and food shortages are spreading. This month, the United Nations announced that it would start delivering emergency food rations to 550,000 people in December. Last year, disillusioned voters shocked Mr. Mugabe by electing opposition legislators to nearly half the contested seats in Parliament. The government has since resettled black squatters on hundreds of white-owned farms in an effort to win support from rural communities hungry for land.** Voters in the two largest cities, Bulawayo and Harare, have been among the opposition party's most vocal supporters. But police officials said Mr. Nkala was challenging the opposition's popularity in Bulawayo. The government announced today that Mr. Nkala had been officially deemed a national hero and would be given a state funeral on Sunday. "We are convinced that this shocking action is nothing but a terrorist action," Information Minister Jonathan Moyo said of Mr. Nkala's killing in an interview broadcast by the state news agency. "We will not accept it, and we will call on our government to take every step that is necessary to protect individuals, to protect families and to protect the people, indeed to protect our nation."

Irish Times 10 Dec 2001 **Mugabe makes Zimbabwe an international pariah** - Robert Mugabe, facing a presidential election after 18 months of state-sponsored violence, now sees himself as the victim of an international conspiracy, writes Iden Wetherell Peering through her looking-glass over a century and a quarter after her fictional debut, Lewis Carroll's Alice would have no difficulty recognising the upside-down world that Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe has created to sustain his campaign for political survival. The evening television news bulletin carries a CNN-style banner headed "Fighting Terrorism". The terrorism referred to is not the violence spawned by Mugabe's armed supporters on farms across the country or their attacks on civil society workers, teachers, and independent newspaper vendors, but the activities of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), allegedly backed by Britain. **Following 18 months of relentless state-sponsored lawlessness which has turned Zimbabwe into an international pariah, Mugabe's spin doctors have embarked on a strategy which involves turning reality on its head. A presidential poll is due before April and Mugabe (77) is treating it as a battle for the very soul of the nation.** The MDC, which has eschewed violence despite every provocation and scrupulously adhered to a legal system that the President has assiduously subverted, now finds itself branded a terrorist movement responsible for the anarchy sweeping the country. Behind this campaign of instability, it is claimed, looms the old imperial bogeyman, Britain. Not only is Tony Blair's government held responsible for destabilising Zimbabwe by backing the MDC, it is accused of mobilising the United States Congress, the European Union, the Commonwealth and Southern African heads of state to thwart Mugabe's programme of land redistribution. Following the passage through the United States Congress of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Recovery Bill last week, Information Minister Jonathan Moyo described the MDC as "a movement for anti-people sanctions operating under the guise of democracy and the rule of law as defined and dictated by racist Americans and Britons". Moyo's mouthpiece, the government-owned Herald daily named MDC president Morgan Tsvangirai and his lieutenants as having "set the stage for the massacre of their own people". These "Uncle Toms shall be judged by history for the evil they have unleashed upon the people of Zimbabwe", the paper menacingly warned. Taking up the official line, Police Commissioner Augustine Chihuri said his force would not tolerate those who were "working in collusion with, and as admirers of, imperialist forces bent on destabilising our country". Police have arrested over 25 MDC supporters in recent weeks, including two MPs, for involvement in "terrorism" despite a conspicuous lack of evidence. Some are accused of abducting and killing a prominent veteran of Zimbabwe's liberation war, Cain Nkala. But his threat to spill the beans on his involvement in the disappearance of an MDC campaign manager ahead of last June's general election could provide a more likely explanation for his death. Meanwhile, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw must be congratulating himself on a global reach that Lord Palmerston would have envied. But the truth is rather less awesome. Mugabe is the sole author of the predicament he now finds himself in. The US Congress, EU, Commonwealth and Southern African Development Community, which includes neighbouring South Africa, have all, for different reasons, been reluctant to implement measures against the rogue regime in Harare. But Mugabe has ensured they all now think alike. Instead of restoring the rule of law his followers have hounded the Chief Justice and other independent-minded judges into retirement and replaced them with more pliant individuals, two of whom have reportedly been recipients of land under the current partisan redistribution programme. The police have been suborned into taking action only against opposition supporters while ignoring the ruling Zanu-PF party's record of terror and mayhem. And electoral laws have been changed to limit potential voters in the 18-30 age group, including the burgeoning diaspora, who are most likely to support the MDC. Last week the government published details of a new media law that will make it an offence to cause "alarm and despondency" or to excite disaffection against the President - including by ridiculing him. It will also prevent publication of details about the fortunes amassed by the ruling

nomenclatura since independence in 1980 and prohibit non-Zimbabwean foreign correspondents from working in the country. None of this suggests a ruler safely ensconced in the affections of his people. Rather it reveals that after 21 years of declining gross domestic product, falling living standards and institutional corruption Zimbabweans have had enough of Mugabe's damaging demagoguery. Land seizures are expected to result in a 40 per cent decline in crop production next year. Already parts of the country need emergency food supplies to head off starvation. South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki is the latest regional leader to condemn Mugabe's failed policies, a criticism that has led to a stream of anti-South African vitriol in the official media. **When voters last year rejected Mugabe's constitutional proposals which would have legitimised his absolutist regime, and then came close to booting Zanu-PF out in the parliamentary election, the President decided he would punish the opposition and their perceived white backers in precisely the way he punished Matabeleland in the 1980s when he unleashed the North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade on the dissident province. That episode left at least 10,000 dead.** Whether his latest campaign of terror will have the same impact remains to be seen. But in setting his war-veteran militias on law-abiding people and persecuting those - probably a majority - who wish to vote against him next year he is only sealing his own fate. Twenty-one years ago Mugabe was hailed in Africa and abroad as a revolutionary hero who had wisely made peace with his former oppressors. Only 10 years ago he was seen as the man who provided education and healthcare to the rural poor. Today he is, in Archbishop Desmond Tutu's words, a caricature of the delinquent African ruler who has lost his way. Comforting himself with the thought that he is the victim of an international conspiracy and locked in the ideological mindset of an era long since past, Mugabe is grimly holding on to power because he cannot imagine a future without it. (Iden Wetherell is editor of the Zimbabwe Independent.)

The Guardian (UK) 28 Dec 2001 **Pro-Mugabe militias kill four rival activists** By Andrew Meldrum in Harare. **Militias which back Robert Mugabe are blamed for killing four members of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) during the past week, raising fears of a wave of state-sponsored murders before the presidential elections due in March.** One MDC supporter, Milton Chambati, 45, was beheaded by 50 followers of Mr Mugabe's Zanu-PF party in the small north-western hamlet of Magunge, according to local reports. Many witnessed the gruesome murder. In Karoi north-west of Harare, Titus Nheya, 56, was stabbed to death allegedly by Zanu-PF militiamen on December 21. As the MDC's parliamentary candidate for the area, Mr Nheya lost to Mr Mugabe's sister, Sabina, in the June 2000 elections. Trymore Midzi, 24, an MDC official in the northern town of Bindura, died on Boxing Day after being stabbed and assaulted by men in the para-military uniforms of the militia, according to the MDC. Laban Chiweta, 24, also died on Wednesday, from head wounds and burns he received from Zanu-PF militiamen in the town of Trojan Mine. The MDC alleges that the men who killed Chiweta were trained by Zanu-PF's political commissar, Elliot Manyika. The holiday killings bring to 87 the number of MDC supporters who have been killed in state-sponsored violence, according to the opposition party. The recent murders come amid reports that followers of Mr Mugabe, 77, who has been in power for 21 years, have established bases across the country and are stepping up a campaign of intimidation. "This government is using millions of dollars of public money to set up terror training camps to train a private army that is given state sanction to kill, abduct, torture and maim," an MDC statement claimed. War veterans and other Mugabe supporters have said that the rural areas of the Mashonaland provinces, where all four of the Christmas killings took place, are "no go" areas for the MDC. The state-owned news media, meanwhile, repeatedly charge that "the MDC and its British sponsors" are spreading violence. But they have very little evidence to back up the claim.