

Zimbabwe:  
The Land That Weeps

by

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## Foreword

I was born in Gwelo, Southern Rhodesia on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1933.

My family left Rhodesia in 1942 in order that my father could enlist in the Royal Natal Carbinieres and serve in the African campaign of WW11.

After attaining a medical technology diploma and subsequently a degree in geology, I pursued my chosen career working as a field and mining geologist, rock mechanics engineer, planning manager and part time lecturer for several large mining houses in the RSA.

Having divorced and remarried, I accepted a post as a Regional Geologist in the Geological Survey of Rhodesia (1979). During the late stages of the second parliamentary general elections held in 1985 in Zimbabwe, I was approached by Mr A. Berkhout, an MP in Ian Smith's CAZ party, to stand as a candidate.

The CAZ nominee had withdrawn at short notice due to Mugabe's pre-election vitriolic rhetoric. This was my initiation into the realm of politics. On election I resigned from the Geological Survey to concentrate on my role as an MP.

These memoirs relate to that period of my life and affords the reader an intimate insight into the current problems of the land that weeps. A latent explosion of Mugabe's tactics to engulf other states in Africa, specifically the RSA, is expounded on and predicted.

I was not re-appointed as a "political appointee" by Mugabe in the 1990 general elections, but was left with vivid premonitions of the outcome of his ever-increasing dictatorial abuse of power to undermine the

status and welfare of, not only, the minor ethnic groups, specifically the “colonial whites” but also the Povo, his own people!

The content herein affords the reader food for thought on the aspirations of the Africans’ thoughts and fears for the future. It also reveals my post-political career and gives the answer to why I have retired to live here in Wetherby, West Yorkshire, reliant on benefits to survive, complete my Phd thesis and rehabilitate.

Since my departure, as expected, all my assets including two gold mines, have been “confiscated” by Mugabe’s elite regime!

## CHAPTER 1

### **My initiation into politics**

During 1985 the second General Election after the Independence of Zimbabwe, formerly Southern Rhodesia, took place under the Lancaster House Agreement. Twenty of the one hundred parliamentary seats were to be contested by non-black candidates to represent the non-black citizens of the country.

In the initial Independence elections of 1980 the Rhodesian Front, led by Ian Smith, had won all these seats. Subsequently, however, several of Smith's Members of Parliament defected to either stand as Independents or form a splinter party later to become known as the I.Z.G. under the leadership of Bill Irving. The Rhodesian Front was then reconstructed as the Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe (C.A.Z.)

Due mainly to the anti-white, fiery and rhetoric outbursts unleashed during the build-up to the 1985 elections by a biased media and members of the ruling party, Zanu (P.F.) led by Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo's PFP Zapu, a number of CAZ candidates chosen to present the voters in the twenty non-black constituencies withdrew from the contest at short notice prior to the election date.

In the preceding and aftermath phases of the 1980 election, similar ethnic related outbursts, supported vehemently by the enfranchised blacks, had taken place, but to a lesser extent.

Within a matter of weeks, prior to the date of the elections, I was approached by Tony Berkhout, a staunch R.F./C.A.Z. Member of Parliament, whom I had met previously, as to whether I would consider standing as a

substitute candidate for the C.A.Z. party.

At this time I was employed as a Regional Geologist in the Geological Survey of Zimbabwe and as such was a civil servant.

Jokingly, I replied to Berkhout that the Ministry of Mines would have to condone this action if I were to consider it seriously. I pondered on the proposal and consulted the Director of the Geological Survey, Ewin Morrison, on the matter. Following on the discussion with him, he encouraged me to participate and subsequently cleared the way for me with the Ministry. I am eternally grateful to this gentleman for his support and subsequent guidance.

My resignation from the civil service was effected on 6<sup>th</sup> June, eleven days prior to the election, and my venture into the field of politics began. My Parliamentary CV testifies to the fact that I am a scientist or technologist by instinct. Having graduated at the University of the Witwatersrand in the R.S.A. I became a naturalised citizen of that country in order to pursue my career with the large mining houses based there. I was therefore entitled to vote in the local elections. However, apart from the reservations I held with regard to the practise of genuine democracy and, to a greater extent, the other major political doctrines in general, I could not conceivably have voted for an apartheid regime in which I had no belief. Neither could I have voted for an opposing party not representative of a non-racial universal suffrage. Accordingly, I refrained from voting.

On my return to Zimbabwe/Rhodesia, with the ensuing Lancaster House Agreement leading to non-racial suffrage, a bright future seemed to be on the cards for the country of my birth.

However, I refrained, yet again, from voting in the 1980 independence elections due to my personal political convictions.

Within days of notifying Berkhout of my willingness to stand as a candidate I met Ian Smith and was designated to contest the Highlands/Greendale constituency in Harare. The candidates in opposition were Messrs. Meyer, an Independent, and Naude, representing the I.Z.G. Party.

Up to and including the date of the election I carried out a frantic, condensed but intensive campaign with a bare minimum of assistance from party helpers. I personally erected posters in the streets, carried out house calls, distributed pamphlets, attended party rallies and completed the pre-election formalities. This proved to be an 18-20 hour daily operation. On the more humorous side, Smith requested that I make brief appearances at the old age homes in my constituency. I did so, speaking frankly to the aged inmates and their attendants. On the day of the election, Naude, the opposing candidate, supplied buses to transport these people to the polling booth, where most of them were noted to have voted for C.A.Z.!

The election was held on 17<sup>th</sup> June. I was elected, obviously as a novice and unknown political entity, but mainly due to the backing of Smith's loyal supporters. Of my opposition, Meyer accepted defeat amicably and we subsequently became friends. Naude, however, was so upset that it was rumoured that he would not speak to his office staff for some time after the event. Smith's party won fifteen of the twenty reserved seats.

The first session of parliament commenced and C.A.Z. caucus meetings were held each Wednesday morning. As

the major non-black opposition, the C.A.Z. was entitled to nominate candidates to be appointed as Senators in the Upper House. I recommended Byron Venturas, a prominent local lawyer, whom I had consulted in this regard previously. Smith subsequently rang Venturas who rudely reprimanded the C.A.Z. leader for not having considered him previously during the U.D.I.era! Both parties, much to my embarrassment, subsequently related this 'uncalled for' altercation to me, Smith's revelation taking place during a caucus meeting.

I met Norman Levine, a local mining magnate at the Meikle's Hotel, Harare in 1990, where he congratulated me on my effort in promoting mining interests during my term in Parliament. On reflection if only I had met this gentleman at the time of the appointment of the senators, I am sure, with his outlook, he would have proved to be a good choice as a senator.

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