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DESTRUCTION OF ZIMBABWE'S BACKBONE INDUSTRY IN PURSUIT OF POLITICAL POWER

**A qualitative report on events in
Zimbabwe's commercial farming
sector since the year 2000.**

**Report prepared by the Justice for Agriculture
Trust [JAG] & the General Agricultural and
Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe
[GAPWUZ].**

April 2008

"It is perfectly justifiable to use necessary force to overcome resistance to the transformation of the economy in favour of the black majority to achieve economic justice."

Robert Mugabe

"The courts can do whatever they want, but no judicial decision will stand in our way... My own position is that we should not even be defending our position in the courts. We cannot brook interference by court impediment to the land acquisition programme."

Robert Mugabe

"Operation Murambatsvina¹ should also be applied to the land reform programme to clean the commercial farms that are still in the hands of white farmers. White farmers are dirty and should be cleared out. They are similar to the filth that was in the streets before Murambatsvina."

Didymus Mutasa²

"I support ZANU PF because it is the ruling party."

Augustine Chihuri³

¹ Operation Murambatsvina – drive out the filth – was an operation which saw an estimated 700 000 people of urban poor and informal traders driven out of the cities when their homes were destroyed by Government agencies. Portrayed by Government as an "urban regeneration project" its motivation was obviously the removal of the politically volatile from the cities.

² Minister of State for National Security, Lands, Land Reform and Resettlement in the President's Office.

³ Commissioner of Police

Preface

In February 2000, the war veterans led by the late Chenjerai Hunzvi charged into the white owned farms acquiring land. The move was quickly adopted by the government to become what is now known as the land reform programme.

During the process there were an enormous number of human rights abuses that amounted to murders, torture, abuses, summary evictions, displacements, dismissal of workers, loss of livelihood and income, and destruction of shelter targeted on both the farmers and the workers.

Due to their vulnerability and defencelessness, farm workers suffered in so many ways.

Eight years later the effects are still being felt and as a union that represents agricultural workers, GAPWUZ gives a summation of the trauma that their constituents went through during this period assessing the damage suffered in conjunction with the experiences of the farmers who suffered the same fate.

Gertrude Hwambira

Secretary-General, General Agricultural and Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe

FOREWORD

Land acquisition and re-distribution matters have dominated the political, economic and legal affairs of Zimbabwe since February 2000. During the period, the country witnessed gross, widespread and systematic human rights violations, a decline in the country's commitment to and observance of the rule of law, human rights and democratic values, a cataclysmic collapse of the economy, serious challenges to judicial independence and the effectiveness of the administration of justice.

These developments have caused untold suffering to Zimbabweans and resulted in large numbers of people finding it impossible to live and work in their country of birth. Indeed, the country has been turned into a tragedy of immense proportions. No Zimbabwean can dispute the importance of an equitable system of land ownership and utilization. However, it is indisputable that the manner in which the land issue was dealt with in Zimbabwe is a classical example of what ought to be avoided to ensure equity, prosperity and adherence to values of a modern, democratic and prosperous nation.

Documentation of most of the major events of the era will assist in lifting the country from the deplorable state in which it is today, in efforts to restore it to democracy, human rights and prosperity and in the knowledge of what ought to be avoided. Furthermore, documentation will assist in the identification of the injustices of the era, in creating models for transitional justice and in resolving difficult issues such as restorative justice, repair and redress, the promotion of reconciliation and resolution and reduction of conflict.

Accordingly, any work which contributes towards research and documentation will be an invaluable tool in the essential restorative justice work that will need to be carried out when the country re-enters democracy and respect and observance of property rights. This work is one such.

STERNFORD MOYO, 29 APRIL, 2008

Executive Summary

The findings of this study severely undermine the Zimbabwean Government's public rhetoric on the invasion and acquisition of white-owned farms from late February 2000 to the present. This study presents considerable evidence that the Zimbabwean Government has carefully manipulated public perception of these events to tie in with its anti neo-colonial, anti-Western, pseudo pan-Africanist and nationalistic rhetoric. The Government has persistently claimed that the farm invasions were spontaneous eruptions of popular discontent at perceived injustices in the distribution of land in Zimbabwe; in fact, as this study shows, the invasions were carefully orchestrated by the Government to achieve its own narrow political ends, and the main beneficiaries were members of the political and governmental elite.

The study presents the qualitative data obtained from interviewing 71 evicted informants, of whom 69 were farmers and 2 worked in farm security operations. These interviews were combined with other documentary evidence obtained from informants and analysed. The data shows an organised and state-sponsored breakdown in the rule of law.

The invasion of white-owned farms was conducted by organised groups consisting largely of ZANU PF youths headed by War Veterans. These groups were supplied, paid and transported by Government agencies including the Zimbabwe Republican Police, the CIO and the Zimbabwe National Army.

These groups of settlers and others were responsible for gross human rights violations perpetrated on white farmers and their black workers.

Distribution of violations reported by the survey sample [n=71]

VIOLATION	NUMBER OF CASES	NUMBER OF VICTIMS
Murder	6	6
Torture	14	22
Assault	93	216
Eviction	85	175
Abduction	11	13
Arson	10	79 entities - mainly huts
Barricade/Jambanja	43	66
Death Threats	30	50
TOTAL	292	627 – includes 79 arson

The victims of these violations were primarily the farm workers; of the 216 assault victims, 51 were farmers and 165 were farm workers. These extensive violations against the farm workers strongly suggest that the Government's agenda extended beyond the purported farmer-State conflict to the enforced political submission of a million people. In addition to the violations tabulated above, the study reports mass psychological torture on farm workers, work stoppages, theft, extortion, poaching, destruction of equipment and, most significantly, political intimidation.

The settlers on the farms conducted a violent campaign for ZANU PF by beating, torturing and murdering members of the opposition party, the MDC, who were the Government's real targets. Compulsory rallies were regularly held, as were all night *pungwes* where farm workers were forced to stay awake, singing and shouting in support of ZANU PF and beating those accused of being "sell-outs" or MDC supporters. Roadblocks and barricades were impossible to pass through without demonstrating possession of a ZANU PF card. MDC T-shirts, flyers and registration books were destroyed or forcibly "confiscated".

The organised violence on the farms was implicitly condoned by the police, who failed to uphold the law or to protect life and property. The survey sample records 82 incidents where police either failed to take reports, lay charges and arrest perpetrators, or else were themselves directly involved in criminal acts. Policemen described in the survey sample: transported settlers to farms; witnessed evictions, abductions, assaults, torture and arson without reacting; refused to evict illegal settlers even when presented with valid court orders; assaulted people; failed to intervene in serious assaults

involving fire-arms; failed to assist farmers being barricaded into their houses for periods of up to 7 weeks; covered up the murder of a worker; handed over a detainee to War Veterans for illegal incarceration; encouraged theft; made comments inciting racial hatred; and illegally evicted farmers.

Police explained this litany of crimes of omission and commission with the excuse that they couldn't assist because "it was a political matter". Ironically, of course, this was true in the sense that it was a political matter. It appears clear from the survey sample that the police had been ordered not to intervene whilst ZANU PF forces conducted a crippling and nationwide assault on farmers and farm workers who were perceived as MDC supporters. In the rare cases where police did intervene to stop serious incidents they were always successful. Also suspicious were the frequent transfers of sympathetic policemen from their posts.

Other Government agencies were also directly involved in crimes on the farms. Most notably, the Zimbabwe Air Force, the Zimbabwe National Army, the CIO, DA's and Provincial Governors are alleged to have committed acts ranging from theft right the way through to murder. These acts were committed with general impunity as police failed to arrest perpetrators in numerous instances.

A combination of these pressures forced farmers into leaving their farms. 100% of the interviewees in the survey sample were evicted without an eviction order from a competent court. These illegal evictions were generally carried out with the full knowledge of, and in some cases by, the police.

The survey sample demonstrates trauma on a massive scale. 45% of the farmers interviewed demonstrate clinically significant levels of trauma. The human cost of the "land reform" exercise has been devastating.

The chief beneficiaries of the exercise have not been the landless poor. The majority of farms in the survey sample were allocated to A2 settlers with strong ties to the Government and ZANU PF. This list of settlers includes: close relatives of Robert Mugabe, Ministers and Deputy Ministers, Senators, DAs, judges and magistrates, officials from the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture, Agritex, GMB, the ZRP, ZNA, Zimbabwe Air Force, CIO, National Parks, and Government doctors and nurses. This blatant system of patronage is a double-edged sword. Whilst the new A2 farmers have been rewarded with the allocation of farms, they do not possess the title deeds for this land, and are thus in a precarious position. Any show of disloyalty can result in the immediate confiscation of their farm. This encourages and ensures their continued support for the embattled regime. This political elite are thus in a highly compromised and vulnerable position. The fact, for example, that Judges have been given farms places serious doubts on the impartiality of the courts, particularly in cases involving land.

It is clear that the Zimbabwean Government has been highly successful in its manipulation of the public perception of these events. It must be stated bluntly: there was no revolution. The invasions were State-inspired, sponsored, instigated and supported. Gross human rights violations were perpetrated on the farms, committed with the full knowledge of, and by, the State.

Most importantly, the survey sample suggests that the division of white farmers and black farm workers into separate constituencies is misleading. Farmers and farm workers should be viewed as constituting one entity as they both suffered from the same policy and for the same reason: their perceived support for the opposition MDC party. The chief motivation for this exercise was indeed, as the police repeatedly stated, "political" - a politically driven campaign by ZANU PF to reassert its authority in rural constituencies in the wake of its defeat in the February 2000 referendum.

The farm invasions have had a devastating impact on black farm workers. If human suffering is to be measured by numbers, then the hardships endured by the black farm workers have been vastly greater than those of their white employers. The workers were not resettled on the farms after their employers were dispossessed. Instead, they were evicted along with their employers and were scattered throughout the country, left to face an uncertain future without adequate means of support. A further survey is being prepared, describing their plight and showing how the farm invasions have destroyed their lives. Because of the difficulty of locating and interviewing them, and

because so many people are involved, it has not been possible to complete that survey in time to be presented together with this one.

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Introduction

This report is intended as a qualitative sequel to an initial quantitative report on human rights violations arising from farm invasions titled *Adding insult to injury: A Preliminary Report on Human Rights Violations on Commercial Farms, 2000 to 2005*⁴ and referred to herein as “the quantitative report”.

The results of the survey leading to the quantitative report establish that the extent of gross and other human rights violations that occurred during the land invasions was much greater than had been previously assumed.

The main findings from that report are the following:

- A total of 53,022 people – farmers, farm workers and their families – reported that they had experienced at least one human rights violation. Many had experienced multiple abuses. These abuses included assaults, torture, being held hostage, unlawful detention and death threats.
- If this figure from the limited survey is extrapolated to include all commercial farms nation-wide, the number of people suffering abuses during the farm seizures could be more than one million. This is underscored by the fact that in 2000, on commercial farms there were about 350,000 families of full-time employees, and 250,000 seasonal or casual workers.
- War veterans and members of ZANU PF were the largest number of perpetrators of the violations, followed by the police. Other significant perpetrators were found to be members of Parliament, officials from the President’s office, Provincial Governors, and other Government officials.
- According to their own estimates, the total financial losses incurred by white farmers who responded to this survey amounted to US\$368 million. If the survey’s figures are extrapolated to the entire commercial farming sector the figure could be in the region of US\$8.4 billion, which is in line with other estimates by economists.⁵ By giving active support to land invasions, the Zimbabwe Government is legally liable for very large scale damages.
- Only 6% of 189 respondent farmers reported that they were still on their farms.

The quantitative report also provided detailed background to land resettlement in Zimbabwe prior to 2000, so there is no need to go into the same detail here. It is enough to say that in early 2000 the Government’s land resettlement programme was abandoned in favour of what was announced as a programme of radical agrarian reform. Robert Mugabe put it thus:

The Government is fighting a Third ‘Chimurenga.’ This new ‘war’ is a struggle to achieve economic justice for the black majority. The Second Chimurenga war was fought to liberate the country from the yoke of white minority rule. This armed struggle resulted in the political emancipation of the black majority, but not economic emancipation as after 1980 a tiny white settler community continued to dominate the agricultural and commercial economy. In particular, a small number of whites still owned a huge proportion of the most fertile farmland, with the black majority being relegated to poor quality land. This gross social and economic injustice could not be allowed to continue. Thus when the landless people spontaneously invaded white farmland to register their protest against this gross injustice, Government then

⁴ Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2007), *Adding insult to injury. A Preliminary Report on Human Rights Violations on Commercial Farms, 2000 to 2005*. Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum and the Justice for Agriculture Trust [JAG] in Zimbabwe. June 2007. HARARE: ZIMBABWE HUMAN RIGHTS NGO FORUM.

⁵ See, for example, Craig J. Richardson, ‘Property Rights, Land Reforms, and the Hidden Architecture of Capitalism’, *Development Policy Outlook*, No. 2, 2006. American Enterprise Institute.

felt compelled to act. It thus embarked upon its fast track resettlement programme. The new political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), was formed as a front for the whites to resist the moves towards the redistribution of the economic assets of Zimbabwe. Britain and other European powers are sponsoring the MDC because they wanted to protect the property rights of whites and are vigorously opposed to the expropriation of white-owned farmland. These Governments are also waging a vicious propaganda campaign against Zimbabwe. The Government was justified in taking all necessary measures to prevent the MDC and its Western allies from denying the black majority the economic justice they cried out for. It was perfectly justifiable to use necessary force to overcome resistance to the transformation of the economy in favour of the black majority to achieve economic justice. After all, the colonial regime had violently dispossessed the black majority of their land and had brutally suppressed them for many decades.⁶

This statement is interesting both for its admissions as well as its omissions. It also encapsulates the narrative that Mugabe wished to present to, and which resonated with, a willingly credulous pseudo "pan-Africanist" and "anti neo-colonial" constituency in the region and beyond.⁷ This narrative postulates that:

- The land invasions are a Third Chimurenga (liberation struggle) and continuation of the Second Chimurenga (the war of independence) against white minority rule and British settlers⁸.
- That these British settlers expropriated land from the black majority with little or no compensation and it is this land which remains in the hands of the descendants of these British settlers.
- That anger over this inequity by the dispossessed had finally boiled over with such ferocity and intensity of feeling that Government, even if willing, was helpless to prevent its manifestation in land invasions.
- That Britain wished to prevent the land being handed back to land-hungry and impoverished Zimbabweans and, to protect its citizens in Zimbabwe and help them to keep the land, had caused the formation of and financed a new political party, the MDC, for this purpose.

As the testimonies below amply demonstrate, this narrative is overwhelmed by evidence to the contrary and has little evidence to support it. In addition to being at odds with the testimony in this report, Mugabe's narrative jars with other salient facts. The Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) indicates that over 80% of its members had bought their farms at prevailing market prices after independence in 1980, and after Government had exercised a statutory right of first refusal to the land⁹. 75% per cent of the respondents stated in the quantitative survey that they were Zimbabwean citizens and thus identified themselves as Zimbabwean, not British. Many displaced commercial farmers have Afrikaner surnames indicating that they are of South African, rather than British, origin.

In late 1999, an Afrobarometer public opinion survey found that for Zimbabweans the most pressing issues were the economy (74%), job creation (37%) and health (18%).¹⁰ Only 1.1% of those

⁶ Cited in Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2001), *Politically motivated violence in Zimbabwe 2000–2001. A report on the campaign of political repression conducted by the Zimbabwean Government under the guise of carrying out land reform*. (Harare 2001).

⁷ Phimister, I., & Raftopoulos, B. (2004), *Mugabe, Mbeki & the Politics of Anti-Imperialism*, review of African Political Economy, 1001, 127-141.

⁸ The "first Chimurenga" was the early resistance to colonial intrusion in 1897 led by Mbuya Nehanda and Kaguvi which was ruthlessly crushed.

⁹ Introduced by the Land Acquisition Act of 1992 Chapter 20:10.

¹⁰ AFROBAROMETER (1999), *Public Opinion and the Consolidation of Democracy in Southern Africa: An Initial Review of Key Findings From the Southern African Democracy Barometer*, Afrobarometer Paper No.12 .

surveyed were of the opinion that land was an important issue requiring Government action. Similar results were found in a series of surveys carried out by the Helen Suzman Foundation in 2000. Land was scarcely mentioned by respondents as amongst the 'most important things Zimbabwe needs'. In order of importance, it was found that the issues of significant concern of Zimbabweans were peace and tolerance (no violence), less unemployment, economic growth, rule of law, change of government and better health care.¹¹ This lack of interest in land was further reinforced by a second Afrobarometer survey in 2004, in which only one percent of responses and four percent of respondents mentioned land as an issue.¹² These surveys were supported by the facts on the ground after the seizure of land. The Government's own land audit conducted in 2003 by the Utete Commission revealed that of 11 million hectares seized from large scale farmers only 6.5 million had been occupied by the end of 2003. 134 452 land allocations were made on the A1 scheme, but only 93 800 had taken up offers. Of 15 000 planned A2 farmers¹³, only 7 260 had taken up land.¹⁴

However, certain sections of the rural peasant population certainly suffered from land hunger, and what Government referred to as "squatter" invasions on commercial farm land took place throughout the 1980's and into the 1990's. These invasions were met with firm, and often brutal, evictions by the police. Resettlement, which had proceeded fairly swiftly immediately after independence on abandoned and derelict farms, slowed after 1983, hampered on occasion by a lack of funds to buy farms on a willing buyer-willing seller basis and simultaneously rising market prices for prime land¹⁵. By 1983, 3.8 million hectares of vacated farm land had been identified by farm valuers as available to the Government from willing sellers who left the country after 1980. Bureaucratic constraints designed to foster co-operative farming and identify proper recipients also made the process painfully slow. At the end of 1989, part of the funds provided by the British Government for land reform remained unclaimed¹⁶. Through the 1990's some land acquired by the State was not resettled, and large swathes were leased to Government supporters at a nominal rental instead. Pursuant to farm invasions in 1997, and an international Land Donors' Conference in 1998, the British Government thus made transparency in land allocation a condition of providing further funding for land reform. Mugabe was reluctant to countenance abandoning this ready source of patronage. Britain thus did not release the money which it had set aside for land reform in Zimbabwe. Notwithstanding this, in June 1998, the Government indicated it would continue with its target of redistributing an additional five million hectares of land within six years, and mass land designations took place.

There is nothing in this background which suggests any motivation for the sudden abandonment of a systematic resettlement policy in early 2000 for the chaotic and radical policy which ensued. The motivation thus is to be found elsewhere and the timing of the land invasions suggests that it is to be found in the result of the February 2000 referendum. Although the referendum was ostensibly a vote for or against a new constitution for the country authored by the Government, it was interpreted by the electorate as a vote for or against Mugabe. The subsequent "No" vote had grave implications for ZANU PF. The rural constituencies, from which ZANU PF had complacently assumed support would be forthcoming, had voted in surprising numbers against the constitution. With a general election only months away and a presidential election two years away, the result was a strong warning of possible electoral defeat in usually dependable seats. The 350 000 permanent and 250 000 seasonal workers on commercial farms, in addition to their dependants, some of whom would have been of voting age, were seen as having played a key role in the referendum defeat.

¹¹ See Helen Suzman Foundation, *Public Opinion in Zimbabwe.2000*. Johannesburg.

¹² See Chikwana, A., Sithole, T., & Bratton, M. (2004), *The Power of Propaganda: Public Opinion in Zimbabwe, 2004*, Afrobarometer Report No. 42.

¹³ A1 schemes are small scale farming models, A2 schemes are larger private commercial farming models.

¹⁴ Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum and the Justice for Agriculture Trust [JAG] in Zimbabwe (June 2007)

¹⁵ For an early critique on the land policy see Sam Moyo *The Land Question in Zimbabwe the Political Economy of Transition 1980 – 1986* Ibbo Mandaza (ed) CODESIRA (1986)

¹⁶ Statement by Peter Freeman, the first British development agency representative to Zimbabwe, published in The Zimbabwean newspaper October 2007.

As this population may have comprised as much as a fifth of the total 4.5 million voters in the electorate, ZANU PF moved swiftly to re-establish its control over rural constituencies. White commercial farmers were perceived as being part of or sympathetic to the newly formed Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) opposition party, as providing significant financial and infrastructural support to the MDC and influencing workers on the farms politically.¹⁷ The attacks on white commercial farmers and invasion of the farms began within days of the referendum results. At the same time anti-white propaganda pervaded the State media and pronouncements of Mugabe and senior ZANU PF officials with such virulence that it drew the attention of Genocide Watch¹⁸. A two-pronged policy was implemented against the white farmers. Portrayed as enemies of the State, the first prong of the attack was to make it clear that they were no longer to be afforded the protection of the law. The second prong was to incite as much lawlessness as possible on the farms. The tacit justification and incitement for this lay in Mugabe's portrayal of the issue as the Third Chimurenga.

The implication was that niceties of law had no place in the context of war. The lawlessness involved murder, torture, beatings, theft, arson, kidnappings, unlawful detention, destruction of property and jambanja – where the farm family is barricaded on the farm (or in the farm house) by a noisy and threatening group surrounding the perimeter for days, weeks and, in at least one case, over a year. These crimes were often accompanied by acts designed to humiliate the farmers and by displays of obscene cruelty to livestock and animals on the farms with the intention of causing trauma, fear and extreme psychological stress. While much of the world's attention focussed on the attacks upon white farmers, the effect on farm workers who bore the brunt of the assaults was sidelined. Most of these workers ended up displaced, jobless¹⁹ and, more significantly from ZANU PF's perspective, unable to vote²⁰.

Government's protestations that it was unable to do anything to contain the land invasions are rendered implausible by the support it gave to the process. While some land hungry peasants did move quietly onto farms to occupy a portion of the land, the position was very different when the Government's intention was to remove the farmer from the property. Documents emanating from war veteran committees have fallen into the hands of some of these farmers which refer to "Operation 'Get up and Leave' "²¹. In this operation, the farmer was not simply marched off the land at gunpoint; instead, a motley gang of what is best described as lumpen-proletariat, headed by a war veteran, would begin a war of attrition against the farmer and family, with a series of lawless acts designed to make life intolerable for the inhabitants of the farm. This process appears to have been well co-ordinated and organised. The war veterans would usually be armed, and since war veterans did not retain their arms after independence, the most likely source of these weapons is one or other branch of the armed forces. Anecdotal evidence suggests that perhaps 20% of the armed forces were sent on compulsory 'leave' in 2000 so they could co-ordinate the invasions, posing as war veterans. These soldiers carried their own weapons with them but dressed in civilian clothes. Farmers often remarked on the military character of the invasions. The groups of invaders were on occasion supplied with transport to the farms in Government vehicles²², which would also bring money and food to sustain

¹⁷ Some farmers were indeed active supporters of the MDC, some even standing as candidates, but it is very doubtful that the whole farming community had expressed active support for MDC.

¹⁸ See <http://www.genocidewatch.org/africa/zimbabwe/news/2002/>

¹⁹ A separate report on farm workers will be released at a later date.

²⁰ See below.

²¹ Part of the document reads the operation should be "carefully planned so that farmers are systematically harassed and mentally tortured and their farms destabilized until they give in and give up." A copy of the document was supplied by a former farmer.

²² See the testimonies below and also Angus Selby *QEH Working Paper Series – QEHWPS143* Working Paper Number 143 *Losing the Plot: The Strategic Dismantling of White Farming in Zimbabwe* 2000-2005. This well researched paper from a fellow of Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford mirrors many of the conclusions reached here and has elsewhere been relied on to support statements made in this document. At p 8 & 17.

them during the attrition process. On occasion, local police would attempt to enforce the rule of law in their area. They would then be displaced by other police officers, often from outside the area, who would ensure that no intervention took place when acts of lawlessness occurred. When farmers tried to defend themselves or their property, they would often find that they were accused of assault or some other spurious charge and held in custody for several days²³. Members of Parliament, officials from the President's office, Provincial Governors, and other Government officials often participated in the process²⁴.

In addition to this direct support, the police refused to implement orders from the High Court to restore order on the commercial farms. When the Supreme Court made a finding that what Government had by then declared to be a "fast-track" land reform programme was not a "programme" at all, lacking as it did any planning or financial or infrastructural support and was simply general lawlessness²⁵, the Government hounded the judges out of office. With the aid of intimidatory tactics and threats of violence by war veterans, the Government secured the resignations of the majority of Supreme Court judges and stacked the Supreme Court with compliant judges headed by a handpicked Chief Justice. Judges in the High Court were also replaced with ZANU PF sympathisers²⁶.

The Government then introduced a barrage of legislation designed to bolster the process. Successive amnesties were granted to all those involved in "politically motivated violence"²⁷. The Citizenship of Zimbabwe Act²⁸ was amended so that any citizen of a foreign country would automatically lose Zimbabwean citizenship and thus the right to vote. It is thought that 30% of farm workers were of Malawian, Zambian or Mozambican origin, and by virtue of that origin were citizens of those countries even if they had been born in Zimbabwe. The Government-appointed Registrar-General interpreted the legislation to mean that anyone merely *entitled* to claim foreign citizenship automatically lost Zimbabwean citizenship, whether they held such foreign citizenship or not. The result was the disenfranchisement of hundreds of thousands of farm workers, negating the possibility of them voting against the Government in the then impending presidential election.

Regulations²⁹ introduced in 2002 compelled farmers to pay termination benefits to workers on the acquisition of a farm. The Regulations worked very effectively to divide the farmers from their workers. War veterans would convince farm workers that the farmer was about to be removed from the farm and that the workers would be rendered jobless. The war veterans would then offer to "assist" the workers in extracting maximum "termination" benefits from the farmer. Accordingly, although some farm workers initially and sometimes fiercely (whether out of self-preservation or loyalty) aided the farmer in resisting removal, once removal seemed inevitable, the promise of a generous payment facilitated by the war veterans turned workers against the farmer or divided the work-force.

The process of compulsory acquisition laid down in the Land Acquisition Act³⁰ entailed an initial notice of designation, indicating to the farmer that the State intended to appropriate the land, and then a

²³ Selby op cit p 18

²⁴ Ibid for example at p8

²⁵ Commercial Farmers' Union v Minister of Lands & Ors 2000 (2) ZLR 469 (S)

²⁶ See generally Matyszak D.A. *Creating a Compliant Judiciary in Zimbabwe 2000-2003* in *Appointing Judges in an Age of Judicial power*, Malleson & Russell (eds) University of Toronto Press (2006)

²⁷ Clemency Order No. 1 of 2002 S.I. 192A/2002 & Clemency Order No. 1 of 2000 S.I./2000

²⁸ Amended by Act 12 of 2001 – see section 9 thereof

²⁹ Labour Relations (Terminal Benefits and Entitlements of Agricultural Employees Affected by Compulsory Acquisition) Regulations, 2002 (Statutory Instrument No 6 of 2002) (referred to in the text as "S.I.6").

³⁰ Chapter 20:10

notice of appropriation coupled with an order requiring the farmer to vacate the property. These became known as section 5 and section 8 notices respectively. The legal protections provided for in the legislation and the provisions requiring the payment of compensation (for improvements to the land, and not the land itself) were diluted by successive amendments to the Act. These culminated in an amendment to the Declaration of Rights in the Constitution³¹ removing the right of the farmers to challenge the acquisition of their farms at all in any court. The Rural Land Occupiers (Protection From Eviction) Act³² made it illegal to evict land invaders from farm property.

Under current law almost all farmland is now regarded as the property of the State³³. A notice published in the Government *Gazette* and identifying any piece of rural land is sufficient to transfer ownership of that land to the State. The former owner has no recourse to the courts, no right to compensation. Once a farm has been acquired by the State, it is allocated to a new occupier simply by giving him an "Offer Letter" signed by the Minister of State for National Security, Lands, Land Reform and Resettlement in The President's Office³⁴. Although this letter ought only to be issued after recommendations by Provincial and District Land Committees, the process is far from transparent and the opportunity to continue the policy of using the allocation of land as a system of patronage, as had been the case before 2000, is obvious³⁵. As the testimonies below demonstrate, prime farming land has been handed out to influential ZANU PF supporters and officials. When the allocation of these farms proved to be an insufficient boon to the recipients, since they lacked resources and equipment to continue farming operations (rendering the farms little more than weekend retreats) the Government decided to provide them with the necessary resources and equipment at the expense of the farmers from whom the farms had been taken. Accordingly, the Government passed legislation prohibiting farmers from removing their moveable property – tractors, combine harvesters, irrigation equipment etc - from the farms after designation³⁶. This time, the Government did not argue, as moral justification for the forcible acquisition of the farmers' moveable property, that it was simply restoring to the Zimbabwean people that which had been stolen from their forefathers by settler colonialists. It made no attempt to justify the legislation.

Having parcelled out the land to those it deemed politically compliant³⁷, the Government then repealed the Rural Land Occupiers (Protection From Eviction) Act and introduced legislation making it illegal to be on rural land that had been acquired by the Government unless one had an "Offer Letter"³⁸. The legislation gave the lie to the Government's earlier claims that it could do nothing about the farm invasions; it also rendered illegal the presence of genuinely land hungry peasants on land that was now in the hands of ZANU PF officials.

The support which the Government gave to the farm invasions, and the supportive legislation which it enacted subsequently, indicates a very different picture from that of a spontaneous invasion by land-hungry peasants and war veterans. It points rather to a systematic campaign to reassert control by ZANU PF in the rural areas, and the destruction of any financial or electoral support to the MDC. In the testimonies that follow it will be noted that there is a dearth of rhetoric in relation to land and

³¹ Amendment No 17.

³² Chapter 20:26

³³ Section 16B(2) of the Constitution, introduced by Constitutional amendment number 17 Act 5 of 2005

³⁴ An interesting and revealing combination of portfolios.

³⁵ Particularly as all these committees comprise war veterans and ZANU PF party stalwarts.

³⁶ Acquisition of Farm Equipment and Material Act [Chapter 18:23] (Act No. 7 of 2004)

³⁷ Selby *op cit* estimates that half of the land allocations in the areas surveyed by him have been to members of the army, police or CIO.

³⁸ The Gazetted Farms (Consequential Provisions) Act [Chapter 20:28] (Act 8 of 2006) - see section 2 thereof - enacted in terms of section 16B(6) of the Constitution.

restoring it to its rightful owners by those involved in land occupation, and an abundance relating to dismantling any form of support for the MDC.

1. TESTIMONIES

1.1 Preliminary note.

The extracts from interviews below are presented according to the violations alleged. The methodology employed in the survey is set out in an annexure at the end of this document [see Appendix 1]. Considerable care has been taken to ensure that the identities of all farmers and other informants who reported incidents included in this Report are not disclosed. Informants constitute a small group, and if their identities were to be disclosed they may well suffer further persecution.

Thus informants are referred to simply by assigned numbers. Randomised initials are used instead of the names of other people involved in specific incidents, and instead of the names of geographical features, towns, districts, farms, farming companies and other entities by which interviewees might be identified. Randomised initials are also used instead of the names of perpetrators as their identification could possibly lead to the identification of informants. Many of these perpetrators occupy positions of authority and the disclosure of their identities could lead to the further persecution of informants.

The testimonies consist of verbatim extracts from interview transcripts, as well as verbatim extracts from any documentation provided to the interviewers.

As can be seen from Table 1 below, there are eight kinds of tabulated violation: Murder, Torture, Assault, Eviction, Abduction, Arson, Barricading/Jambanja and Death Threats. A total of 292 violations were recorded, involving about 627 people. Multiple unnamed victims (such as 'the workers' or 'houses in the compound') have been counted as two victims.

Table 1
Distribution of violations reported by the survey sample [n=71]

VIOLATION	NUMBER OF CASES	NUMBER OF VICTIMS
Murder	6	6
Torture	14	22
Assault	93	216
Eviction	85	175
Abduction	11	13
Arson	10	79 entities- mainly huts
Barricading/Jambanja	43	66
Death Threats	30	50
TOTAL	292	627 – includes 79 arson

1.2 Tabulated Violations

1.2.1 Murder

Six cases of murder are reported in the survey sample. One of the victims was a farmer, four were workers, and the last was a War Veteran who acted sympathetically towards a farmer and was subsequently murdered.

Farmer 44 reports that in 2001 a farm builder, 'G', who was a strong MDC supporter, was murdered. G spoke openly about his MDC affiliation and he was also part of the farm soccer team which was very active in the district league. On the day in question G went on to the field to play against a team from Z Farm. The opposition team substituted three of their regular players off and replaced them with three ZNA soldiers, wearing steel-toed boots. In the middle of the match the soldiers on the opposing team assaulted G, kicking him repeatedly as he lay on the floor. The Farmer took him to hospital but the army doctor on duty refused to admit him, saying 'he's a known MDC supporter, get him out of here'. The farmer tried to get him into Parirenyatwa Hospital in Harare but the staff was

on strike, so they returned to the farm and he looked after the worker there for the night. The next morning the Farmer took him back to the hospital:

I took him back to the hospital and said 'you've got to admit him, you know he needs help' and they said 'put him in that bed there' and we put him in the bed. We went home to fetch food and everything for him and the clinic helper who could sit with him and they would not, they wouldn't help him. He died in that hospital. His stomach, he actually, his body almost exploded with the internal bleeding.

The army doctor refused to give the farmer his name.

Farmer 66 reports that a settler who was sympathetic towards the farmer helped them to retrieve firearms and equipment from the farm.

M professed to be a war veteran, but in actual fact he grew up on one of my neighbour's farms and played with my brothers and that. So, from that sort of era. So there's no ways he was, you know, a war vet, but he was in a position of so-called power and he was actually quite decent to us. He helped us to go back when we went to get those weapons and that stuff. He was there. On the way back when we'd got the stuff out, they stopped us. He was told to, he was told to remain behind because they wanted to have a meeting. They killed him. They beat him to death. The same C [CIO³⁹ operative active in area] and those guys killed him. And, uh, he died of his injuries – what, it must have been about six weeks later.

Interviewee 59 who was employed on the several farms of Interviewee 47 as a security manager alleges that on one of the farms, P, in Norton an assistant farm manager G was murdered by unknown perpetrators. Interviewee 47 corroborates this allegation, but as neither of them witnessed the event it is difficult to be certain of the circumstances surrounding G's death.

All the senior staff members on P farm received threats almost every day and had been told to move out. And G had been moved off the farm house where he was living in and again he was, another house was allocated to him at P by the farm manager there. So he, it was just threats and threats there. That's when G was killed. And the police stated it was an accident, a motorbike accident. I didn't believe the story but it's unfortunate that I didn't see G on that very same day when he died. And I wasn't called out to the scene before the body was moved off from the scene. Other people on the farm also suspect that he was killed. But we don't know who killed him.

³⁹ Central Intelligence Organisation. Although almost universally referred to as such in Zimbabwe the branch was re-constituted as the Department of National Security in the President's Office several years ago.

1.2.2 Torture

There are 14 cases of torture reported in the survey sample, some involving multiple victims. It should be noted that strictly speaking most of the violations in the survey sample should be classified as torture under the definition of the UN Convention Against Torture. According to this definition, an act of torture must encompass all of the following elements:

1. Severe pain and suffering, whether physical or mental;
2. Intentionally inflicted;
3. With a purpose;
4. By a state official or another acting with the acquiescence of the State.

However, for the purposes of this Report we have simply recorded as torture those incidents described as such and excluding the cases of assault which are described under that heading. The types of torture reported by interviewees included the following: mock drowning, sensory over-stimulation, being forced to assault colleagues or near relatives, mock execution, being submerged in cold water for long periods of time, standing on head, falanga, and sexual humiliation in detention.

Interviewee 58 ran a farm security company in Mashonaland East, providing guards and dogs to farmers in several districts near Town F. Throughout the land invasions the ZRP maintained a policy of minimal involvement on the farms, claiming that crimes committed by settlers were 'political' and that this somehow absolved them from taking action. Interviewee 58's company took on many of the traditional duties of the police, such as investigating reports and making citizens arrests of perpetrators of crimes, and this resulted in huge conflict between Interviewee 58's company and the settlers present on farms.

On Wednesday 20 June 2001, whilst checking his guards at E, police arrived to arrest Interviewee 58. The police did not give a reason for the arrest, or formally charge him. He was thrown into a small cell for the night, where another person vomited on him and he was not given any food or blankets. As he had been arrested in the middle of the day he had been wearing shorts and a shirt, but it was the middle of winter, and the night was consequently very cold. The following morning, the Assistant Inspector, with whom the interviewee had always had a sound working relationship prior to the land invasions, arrived to see him. Apologising for the interviewee's detention, the Assistant Inspector said that there was nothing he could do as he was subject to orders from his superiors. Later that morning, police brought into the cell representatives from ZFTU⁴⁰ who demanded that the interviewee pay severance packages to his guards, despite the fact he was fully operational and had no intention of closing down his company. This was evidently an attempt to eliminate the presence of the Interviewee's security company on the farms.

I said, 'Pay what? I am operational, you know, we're fully operational, so why should I pay anybody?' So they said, 'No, we want \$21 million.' I said, 'You can forget it. I'm not paying a bloody thing.' 'Ah, [Interviewee 58], now you're going to know the new Zimbabwe.' So I said, 'Oh well, whatever. Whatever you want to do – do it.' So they take me outside and they put me into the truck. They're going to put me in the truck in the middle of the... you know. The driver and then this guy, I said, 'No, I drive this vehicle or I don't get in.' 'We'll push you in,' I said, 'You try and push me in, I'll cause such a fight here, my friend, you'd know this.' So anyway, reluctantly they gave me the keys. I said, 'Give me my cell-phone, now, otherwise I'm not moving.' They gave me my cell-phone, I messaged somebody – X. I messaged him. I said, 'Right, they've got me, they're going with me, I don't know where they're going.' Anyway, as I got out at the Police Station X and some others were there and they followed. They took me around to – I had two offices, one in A, which was my cash-in-transit and alarms and then my other office, which was up by the other B, which was my dogs and the guards and all that sort of thing. So that's where they took me and they demanded this severance pay, so I said, 'I refuse to pay.' So, I kept saying, 'I refuse to pay, I refuse to pay.' That was

⁴⁰ The Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions, believed by most to be a body created by Government to counter the disaffected Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions.

on the Thursday. I think it was Thursday. Ya, and then they said, 'No, well, you can't go anywhere.'

After having been abducted from the police station in the full presence of the police, the interviewee was taken to B, where he was locked inside his own small office, which was also witnessed by the police. Using his cell phone before the battery ran out the farmer telephoned his lawyer who got a High Court order for him to be released. Later this High Court order was urinated upon by the war vets who abducted the Interviewee. As he was still only in shorts and shirt, and the war veterans did not supply him with any blankets in the middle of winter, the Interviewee got very cold. At night, huge speakers were positioned right outside the open window and the volume turned up to a high volume.

They just blasted, when I mean 'blasted' you could hear it the other side of F, in town, the noise, the music. And the guys said 'Jeez, how's [Interviewee 58] coping with that?' 'Cause it was so loud, it was so loud, jeez. And I was only from here to those speakers. So this went on for three days.

Spending three days with this music at high volume right outside his window depriving him of sleep the Interviewee was also denied access to a toilet. On the Sunday of the three day period, notorious war veteran C arrived in his twin-cab and Interviewee 58 was allowed out of his impromptu cell to exercise.

He walks – he's a short little guy, I don't know if you've seen him, or – he's a short little bugger, I mean, stand up against me he looks like a dwarf. So, he says, 'you, [Interviewee 58], you pay your money, understand?' I said, 'you, you little shit, you, I will beat you – now, you and me, together, one time. Just listen to you. You people, let's see how big this man is. Him and I will fight here and whoever wins then can walk free.' Voom! He was gone! But he was cross. Then they read me, jeez, then they got hold of me. They tied me up against a, a, um, my flagpole, with just my underpants on. And then war danced and spat all over me as they danced around, you know. I got slapped I don't know how many times. But, uh, then they put me back in there, but thank God, they gave me my bloody shirt back and my shorts. Thought they were going to leave me in my underpants. I tell you, I've never been so cold. Jeez!

The interviewee was allowed meals which were delivered by friends. Later on the Sunday, after his third day of deafening music outside his window, a friend who was a doctor provided an ingenious means of coping with the situation.

He pitched up on Sunday. It was his turn to give me food. So he got up the guard and the guard follows him and whatever. So he gives me an ice-cream container and he said, '[Interviewee 58], your, your lunch is in there. Sunday lunch.' I said, 'Gee, I'm going to get something really nice.' Anyway, I opened it. It was one pork chop. And inside, inside the pork, inside there was silver paper with some pills. So they couldn't see, he hid it in the gravy, so I went to my room, opened it and it said, 'Just take one a night.' Well, this thing just knocked me straight out – pow! These guys were playing music, I was snoring, they couldn't understand, this just wasn't working well. So I hid the tablets in my drawer, in the drawer, in the side of the drawer so they couldn't find them there. So, er, that went on for another three days.

On the seventh night (including the initial night in the police cell) that the interviewee was incarcerated, he managed to escape. A farmer managed to surreptitiously open the gate and Interviewee 58 ran and jumped into the car. All of the Interviewee's property had been stolen.

I did write everything down, but they burned every single document. They took all my desks, my computers, my trucks, my radios, my... My life just finished in three days. Well, in the six days, whatever it was. But they took my trucks. Took my trucks. I ended my security operations in two days, three days. They came in, took all my trucks. Every single truck they took – they took nine trucks. When I came to Harare, I had maybe \$100 to my name. 'Cause what happened, what had happened, I'd just bought two trucks and I'd paid off my company, and I was finished, I was in the black. So, and then they just took everything away from me. And then people say, 'Well, you must be...' I've been to counselling, I've got divorced in the meantime because I started drinking after this. So, they took everything from me. All I've got

left in my life is a carving table. I had a smallholding with two lounges, a swimming pool – nothing. I don't even own a glass.

The Interviewee is still taking medication for his damaged hearing following the torture.

Farmer 19 also reports this incident in which his employees were tortured:

They hired the youth, the ZANU PF youth from the mine, they came to the farms, one neighbour they broke in to his house like five in the morning, gave him grief⁴¹. Left him alone, went to next door, U, gave him a hard time, took his tractor, came round, we were reaping tobacco, stopped us reaping. Took all our workforce, brought them to the house. Went through the gates and they had quite a few of our workers. But you could see they didn't want to be there. Then they made me run down to the barns with them, barefoot, on the centre ridge of the road. One person in control. If I challenged him more I think I might have got away with it, but with the kids are there, the kids saw everything as well. So I agreed to run, I said, let's go down to the barns, right, that got them out of the yard. Went down to the barns.

Got down there, made me sit down and all my foremen. My foremen were lined up, were there. They were all there. And then they would get people and they would say right. It had all been pre-planned. Right. And then some of our resident settlers came as well. They were in the background. They said, 'Right, that's a horrible foreman there, start beating in front of the people', trying to drown him in a bucket of water in front of me. They were trying to drown them in buckets of water. That's when I lost it and I said to them right, time to get up, I told them their life history⁴² and I said, 'If you want to kill me I am walking out of here'. The masses parted and I walked through.

After a District Councillor was brought to the farm the torture and assault quickly ended. The police however refused to attend the scene.

We phoned the cops, the police wouldn't come, all of that. They wouldn't, they refused. They said it's political, we don't get involved.

Farmer 5 from Mashonaland West reports a torture incident. One night a very large group of people arrived at the compound and forced all the men to march down to the dam. When they arrived they stripped them naked, and forced them to roll in the mud. The farm workers were made to spend the rest of the night sitting in the water up to their necks shouting ZANU PF slogans and singing Chimurenga songs. It was the middle of winter and the water was consequently very cold. Farmer 39 also from Mashonaland West corroborates this form of torture being used on their workers.

They used to take the labour down and then they'd put them in water, you know, standing in the water up to their necks, through the middle of winter and they're like this – they're freezing cold. They had to shout party slogans and you know, it was one or two of the drivers who had been with us for a long time. They were quite loyal to us and they, you know, they felt threatened and I know S was one of them, um, and he said they pushed them into the dam at night and make them stand there up to their neck in water.

Farmer 83 from Mashonaland East has video evidence of an incident where war veterans forced close relatives to assault each other. The Farmer and his wife were in South Africa when their son E phoned to tell them to come back to the farm quickly as trouble was brewing.

We arrived early that morning. It was, um, X and another war vet, H, they then came and said they were taking over all the farms and we said, well, not yet you're not, sort of thing. Anyway, then they went off and then that evening, E and the kids were all in the house and they had to lock themselves in – the war vets had cut the fence. All the labour were forced, or

⁴¹ White Zimbabwean slang for being harassed.

⁴² White Zimbabwean slang for subjecting a person to an angry tirade usually peppered with expletives.

told to come onto the front lawn with all their kit. And then they had a big pungwe⁴³ on the lawn with lots of fires. They, and then they picked out basically the ones who worked more in contact with us, like the mechanic, the cook, and that sort of thing and, um, but they'd take like the mechanic, for instance – his son was working there. They took his son and the son had to beat the father. My cook – his nephew had to beat him. You know, and they had to beat them hard. You know, they started off with small sticks like that which wasn't good enough. It had to be big poles like that. And that cook of ours, he's still, you know, in cold weather like this he still has problems with his back and his sort of hip and stuff. But they, them themselves did not do the beating. The war vets, they didn't do anything themselves. They made somebody else go and beat and they'd say, 'You go and beat one.' The one you've beaten, now he, because you've just given him a hell of a beating, so he's going to beat you even more. You know, so in those ways they were clever. They didn't, H, he did say, 'No, you don't beat like this, you do it this way.' Once or twice, then, you know, you could see on the film, they kept on saying, 'That's not hard enough,' and give them another stick. 'That's not good enough, use something else.'

The police did not arrest anyone over this incident. Farmer 94 reports a similar form of torture on his farm, used to force people into joining a work stoppage called for by the settlers. In a report to the police he writes:

- Yesterday, resident war veteran C came to my compound on W farm at about 1200 hrs.
- He summoned all my employees to come to the compound, as he wanted to speak to them. He sent some of the people, already there, to go to the lands to call other employees
- When they arrived he divided them into two groups, one group were those that were not working and the others were in the second group.
- He made the people that were not working, assist him in assaulting the people that were working. He personally assaulted many of the people, assisted by I, X, R, most of the committee and strangers from other farms

An employee of Farmer 61, an MDC candidate in the 2000 elections, describes an incident of torture in a written statement.

Once inside the security fence I was grabbed by the collar and jostled around, and accused of issuing MDC (Movement for Democratic Change) Membership Cards. They also accused me of involvement in an incident in which some War Vets were beaten in P. It was during the rainy season. I was pushed down and forced to sit in the mud for more than twenty minutes. After that I was forced to stand head down, legs up. I am surviving with a painful neck due to that torture. I was asked (ordered) to leave the place, but it was resolved by the police.

⁴³ "Pungwe" derives from the liberation war and refers to politicisation meetings with villagers conducted by guerrillas throughout the night.

1.2.3 Assault

Along with eviction, the commonest violation recorded, 93 cases of assault are described in the survey sample, most of which included multiple victims. Assaults range in severity and type. In a large number of cases hospitalisation was required; other assaults have been described as 'severe' but there was insufficient information on whether the victims were able to receive medical attention. Weapons used included firearms, sticks, axes, machetes, iron bars, bricks, rocks, rubber tyre strips, fan belts, electrical cord, sjamboks, logs, catapults, knobkerries, chains, wire and fists.

Many of the assault violations recorded involved multiple victims. Farmers are seldom able to give us exact numbers in cases where multiple victims were assaulted. Reports state for example that 'workers' or 'everyone in the compound' or 'half the labour force' were assaulted. If we consider that the average farm workforce is perhaps 80 people (not counting wives and children), reports such as this could include as many as 100 victims and as few as perhaps 2 or 3. So as not to overstate the position, we have conservatively counted all vague reports of assaults on multiple victims as referring to 2 victims only.

The survey sample reports 216 victims of assault, of which 51 are farmers or their family members, and 165 are farm workers. These figures include 29 cases of multiple victims counted only as 2 victims.

14 of the torture cases and 6 of the murder cases also involved assaults. It should also be noted here, as elsewhere, that farmers did not usually have first hand knowledge of the events that happened amongst their workers. It is thus likely that farmers are under-reporting violations suffered by their workers as they are not fully aware of all of these incidents. The full extent of violations upon farm workers will become clearer when a planned project to interview farm workers gets underway.

Farmer 75 from Mashonaland East was 72 years old when he, his wife and his son were all assaulted by youths. His statement reads in part:

I reside and am employed on Z Farm, in Y district.

On Monday 23 June 2003, at 3.30pm two young men (dressed in civilian clothing) came to the locked gate of the homestead fence and asked me to open it so that we could discuss 'important business'. When I opened the gate six other youths suddenly appeared, three of whom are known to me. They are A, (Chairman of the Youth Brigade based on the next door X Farm), B (2 IC⁴⁴ of the Youth Brigade) and C.

My hands were tied behind my back with strip bark and I was marched down to the barns where I was made to sit down and they proceeded to kick me and hit me with flat hands. Then more youths arrived – I would estimate in total there were 38. There were about six women amongst the youths who I presume were wives of ex-farm workers still living in the farm village. The women were reluctant observers, one was crying.

While I was being hit and kicked the youths were saying 'you're a sell out, you are MDC, you are a stubborn old man'. They then pulled my hair into knots and tied it with 'reken' cycle rubber. Some of the crowd was jeering at me, others were laughing. I was then marched back to the house garden where they doused me with water and then put a hosepipe down the back of my shirt and left the water running. They did not seem to be too aggressive but all the same I feared for my life.

My wife D was in the kitchen while all this was going on. At this stage she had not been touched. I asked to go inside to see her but instead they brought her outside and were asking for my firearms. I told them I only had one, a shotgun, which was not locked up at the time so I told them they could take it. One of the youths told D to go back into the kitchen in case the others were stealing. Most of the contents of the deep freeze and pantry were stolen by the

⁴⁴ Second in Command

youths. They took a three legged pot from the lounge and washed it out, they also then 'washed my hair'.

At about 6.00pm my son E arrived in response to a phone call from D. She had asked permission to phone him and when she did one of the youths took the phone and told him to 'send an ambulance because your mother is sick.' The youths asked E for a cigarette which he refused. They then set about beating him with a fan belt whip, dog chain and sticks. Someone else was kicking him so I physically tackled the youth. They continued beating him and it was then D (70 years) who threw herself on top of E to protect him. She sustained a cracked right thumb and severe bruising on both hands. After they had beaten E they doused him with water. One of the youths then asked D to fetch some Betadine for E and offered me some tea.

The crowd was busy cooking the food stolen from our kitchen on a fire in the garden. A youth went inside and brought two dining room chairs for me and E to sit on by the fire. Drums were being beaten. I was told to beat the drums, but refused.

Later, the leader arrived.

At about 9 pm, F arrived. I overheard one of the youths saying to the others, 'here comes the chief, you're dead.'

The youth's leader drove the injured farmer and his wife and son to the police station where they made a report, knowing full well that the man who had taken them there was the instigator of the assault. Several of the youths were identified but the police failed to act on the report.

Farmer 67 ran a large crocodile farm in Mashonaland East and was severely assaulted along with his farm guards by war vets.

I was basically forced into a vehicle at Farm D. All these war vets came and fetched me at Farm D. I went there. I didn't realize that I was going straight into a big trap. And when we got there my security guards all got pulled out and they got thrashed, absolutely thrashed. I got dragged in; they were trying to get more money. It was a totally different group of people again, trying to get more money and I got slapped around, got tied up with barbed wire, I got beaten, I got wee'd on, spat on, you name it happened hey, ah, it was horrible...

Um, ya so that went on for nearly a whole day. And that was the end of it. I just decided that from then there was nothing, nothing further for me to do. I just got everybody, and I, thank goodness our district helped me. I got 17 truck and trailers with their staff with my security from my other properties and we just went in there and uplifted nearly twenty odd thousand crocodiles in three days. If you had a swimming pool I put them into your swimming pool just about. We just tried to find anywhere where we could possibly put a croc, we just moved it and that was the end of Farm F.

Farmer 11 in Mashonaland East reports this incident:

A settler N became very aggressive towards the farmer and his son A, threatening to forcibly evict them on several occasions. On 21 November 2001, A and his wife and their two children were driving back to the farm after visiting some friends when they were forced to stop by a tree that had been deliberately felled across the road. A's wife spotted N behind the felled tree and asked N to move it. As N refused to do this, A got out of the vehicle to move it. As he got out, his wife noticed that N was armed with a .303 rifle so she shouted to her husband to get back into the car. He jumped back in the car but N fired a shot which went through the rear window and hit A in the shoulder and perforated his lungs. A lost consciousness, and was rushed to hospital where he remained in ICU for two weeks. Whilst N was arrested by the police, charged and convicted, he was subsequently released and has now returned to the farm where he is living in the farmhouse.

1.2.4 Eviction

100% of the farmers in the survey sample were evicted illegally. To date, not one single farmer in Zimbabwe has been evicted pursuant to a formal order of a court. Farmers were often evicted by police or State agencies. In other cases farmers were evicted by the A2 settler who had been allocated the land, or simply fled at the threat of increased violence. 74% of the respondents knew which political party beneficiary was currently occupying their former farm, whilst 74% reported that this person was directly involved in their eviction from the farm.⁴⁵

We counted 175 evictions in the survey sample, the great majority including multiple victims. All 71 farmers that were evicted have been conservatively counted as two each despite the fact that many farmers had a spouse and two or more children living on the farm with them, or had a manager and family also present on the farm. Within the farm workers we recorded 14 evictions of 33 people. It is widely believed that many more farm workers were evicted after the farmer left. The clerk of Farmer 45 describes the feelings of the workers when it became evident to them that the farmer was about to be kicked off, despite having a High Court order allowing him to continue farming.

1 week after the court Mr. X came and gave Farmer 45 2 days notice to leave the farm. That was like a blow to most farm workers. The weather was life upside down. That was hard to swallow. We had nothing to say but help packing the boss' goods to send to Harare. Workers were now chicks without hen. The cover shed had been taken away.

Farmer 45 was then subjected to a *jambanja* situation. A day later, 9 workers were evicted from his compound. The clerk records:

The following day after the *pungwe* a group of farm workers were driven out of the compound and out of the farm. The police gave no assistance. These are A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, and I, classified as MDC supporters. My name and J were called. Lucky we weren't present.

Farmer 19 describes this incident of eviction of farm workers by the incoming A2 farmer.

They evicted my workers. They were left there. By then there was twelve, fourteen, I think it was. Lorry driver, the clerk, they just stayed there and I paid them a salary. F evicted them when he arrived, because he knew they were my labour. Before he did this I found out what was happening on the farm, so I won a High Court order stating they weren't allowed to be evicted. F went to the magistrate in Town Z and got an eviction order⁴⁶. They got evicted. With a sheriff of the court, but he got it through a magistrate in Town Z, and my lawyer said to me in town these are their friends. All these guys one morning were picked up by truck and trailer, taken five kms and dumped on the side of the road, in the middle of nowhere. My neighbour saw them, phoned me and said your workers have been dumped, I said, ja, F's done it. My neighbour felt sorry for them. He's with a government to government agreement so he's protected a bit. He collected them, put them in his barns till we could sort this out. They started working for him.

F found out about it, arrived there with the DA and everyone, threatened to evict them if they didn't dump those people back on the road. So they were dumped back on the road again. Now I've got no lorry to move them because my lorry's stuck on the farm, this is how evil they are. So this happened in, two and a half, two years ago. So they were dumped on the road again. I managed to get them picked up. And they got work in T. Lorry came, 20 tonnes, moved all of them there. And then, but they never mixed with people, said it was out of their area...

Farmer 61 from Mashonaland Central was a candidate for the MDC in the 2000 elections. He and his staff suffered severe violations as an express result of this MDC affiliation. A statement from one of

⁴⁵ See Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2007), *Adding Insult to Injury. A Preliminary Report on Human Rights Violations on Commercial Farms, 2000 to 2005*. Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum and the Justice for Agriculture Trust [JAG] in Zimbabwe. June 2007. HARARE: ZIMBABWE HUMAN RIGHTS NGO FORUM.

⁴⁶ Emanating from a lower court, this court order can not lawfully be granted in the face of the High Court order.

his grooms shows how threats of violence made people leave their homes in a hurry and go into hiding.

I, B, do hereby state that: -

1. I am a male aged 27 years and a Zimbabwean citizen and live at M Farm, N Road, O District. I am employed at M Farm as a horse groomer. I have been employed there since 2 November 1999. May I by luck of survival say this –
2. On 20 April 2001 I was warned to vacate M Farm by ZANU PF War Veterans for the reason I cannot really express but I have an idea of it as politically motivated.
3. Then for sure disaster struck on 28 April. I definitely understood what happened. The war veterans came to me in a very disturbing way. They caught me, forced me down on the ground and searched for a gun I have never possessed. All these happened in the eyes of the police. Is there any law that gives some green light to some people to behave nasty in the eyes of the police and get away with it without cautions?
4. I was treated very bad and had to flee to a secret destination to breathe fresh air and seek refuge for three days, leaving my wife and child. All these fuck-ups have caused me to survive through luck. The war vets and their leader have threatened to kill me if I stay visible. They have been hunting for me red faced and gaining orders for my capture.
5. On another occasion that happened on the 1 September 2001, Saturday, I was hunted and got missed since I had already fled to safety. The hunt was led by W who had to hire some youths and staunch war-vets supporter to beat me. Since then I had to keep out of sight for safety. I have no time to think of anything valued for life but only to run away for life saving. My life got risked for being an MDC registered member.
6. T have turned out the worst enemy of my life but I can't remember cursing him in any day of his life. So is this the way I am supposed to live on earth? How can I suffer in the hands of another black man because of my choice.

Signed_____ This 14 day of September 2001

A statement from the wife of one of Farmer 61's workers describes a similar scenario:

1. I am a woman aged 21 and married to K who works and resides at M Farm which is located in Mash Central – District Q.
2. It was a Saturday (01-09-01) at around 11am when a gang of eight war vets armed with machetes, sticks and catapults surrounded our house chanting slogans against my husband. They demanded to see my husband who had fled for safety. They accused him of issuing MDC membership cards and having been involved in several MDC rallies in T. "The suffering is left for you and if we meet K – slaughter is our slogan. We want to destroy the British pig's backbone (Farmer 61)" was the saying by one of the war vets.
3. At around 6pm they came as before and forced me out of my house to attend a rally. There they aggressively asked me to bring all information related to MDC which they said was kept by my husband. They also asked me to remove our property from the house and leave the place or risk my life or my child's.
4. Since they promised to keep on coming at our house, after the rally I escaped and joined my husband in the forest where we slept without food and blankets. We had our eight months old child P.
5. The following day we joined the X family in Z for we were starving to death.
6. We came back on Monday but still we are feeling unsecured. We ponder as to whether this is the real Zimbabwe in which we fought for freedom.

1.2.5 Abduction

The survey sample reports 11 cases of abduction, of varying degrees of severity. In some cases abductions were achieved through physically and violently forcing the victim into a vehicle before transporting him somewhere else. In other cases, the victim was threatened with violence if he did not accompany the abductors.

Farmer 16 reports on his own abduction by war veterans whilst helping out with the 2002 election. As an apolitical gesture to both parties Farmer 16 and another farmer from the district, G, offered to drive around to polling stations and deliver sandwiches and drinks to officials and observers regardless of political affiliation. On their way through a remote area they were stopped by a large tree felled across the road. Their vehicle was quickly surrounded. Their leader L, a well-known war-veteran, frogmarched them to a nearby hill at gunpoint.

L made us take our shoes off and marched us off to the Killing Rock. And he was the guy who was knocking me about. He was knocking me about, he was slapping my face and pinching my face and everything like that before we started getting marched off and I was a bit annoyed at him. He said that he was going to kill us but he hadn't killed a white man without being boozed up and having a few cigarettes of *mbanje*⁴⁷. He hadn't done it and he didn't enjoying killing unless his veins were full, and things like that, this is what he told us. We arrived at this rock at night miles from anywhere. He and this other guy were sitting there and we were guarded by about thirty to forty, 15 to 23 year old youths while L went to drink beer and to get himself smoked up so he was in a lekker⁴⁸ mood so that he could come and dust us⁴⁹, and we just sat there. While he was away getting drunk or whatever, the guy I was with, G, the women who were there they got bits of grass and plaited grass into his hair and they said we got to give you some small pleasure before you die and all that sort of thing. Then, we were bare foot, and they beat the soles of G's feet. They just hold your foot and they just hit it, not hard enough to yell, but it bruises. After half an hour of this you can't walk, the soles of your feet are bruised. Eventually L came back and he just said I am just not in the mood tonight, so you can go. So he let us go, so we walked back to our vehicle, they gave us back our keys and took the radios. But what really annoyed some of them was that there were a couple of red reflective triangles in the car. Well they said, this is MDC.

Farmer 67 ran a large crocodile farm in Mashonaland East.

W was my croc manager there. He carried on living there. When I moved my crocs he carried on living on the farm for a while. And um, Z actually kidnapped his daughter, hid her in the ceiling of the house. Um, there was a lot of harassment against the, W and his family, and his wife and all that. To the extent that you know it really affected his health.
(Farmer 67, Mashonaland East)

⁴⁷ Cannabis

⁴⁸ An Afrikaans word meaning very good

⁴⁹ "Dust" here means "kill"

1.2.6 Arson

Arson was typically used as an intimidatory tactic, whereby people's homes were purposefully destroyed to intimidate them into leaving the farm. 10 cases of arson are recorded by the survey sample. It is possible that a considerable number of cases involving the deliberate burning of fields could have been done simply as part of traditional slash and burn agricultural practices, so these cases have not been recorded as arson in this Report⁵⁰. However, these cases too resulted in considerable damage to property and had serious economic consequences for agricultural activity.

The clerk of Farmer 45 kept a diary of the invasions, and he records an unusual incident when the Black Boots arrived one day and burnt down settler's huts.

The Army (Black Boots) came and burnt down huts built along the road. The villagers were furious.

Farmer 45 corroborates this, saying that 'there was one period when the Black Boots came and they burned them, burned all the settlers' huts again. But we didn't call them, we don't know who did.' The same clerk of Farmer 45 describes another incident of arson, this time when huts in the compound were burnt by settlers.

One Sunday evening, V was heard calling at pole housed people to take out their properties from the huts as they wanted to burn down the compound. He was with no shirt but in short trousers whilst in the compound. Compound workers were now busy shifting out the goods and around 8.00 pm the contract huts for cotton pickers were on fire. Boys rushed to put out the fire and there was a light rain fall too. That helped saving most huts but 9 huts were burnt to ashes.

The case was reported as some properties were destroyed by a guy nicknamed S. The police from D got the report and suspects but no arrests were made.

Farmer 44 reports that every time he had a confrontation with M, a high-ranking politician who had been allocated his farm as an A2 settler, she would retaliate against the labour force.

She would chain people to the trees and beat them and then leave them there without food or water for two days. She went through our worker's village and destroyed every house, she actually burnt their homes, their goods, their... which is what makes it... do it to us, you know, but to our labour? She actually went through and every time we went to the farm or had an argument with her, she went and burnt down another 5 houses down with their contents. She, she was quite a lady and um, we eventually worked out that having left the farm, it was better we didn't keep going back because every time we went back the labour paid.

Farmer 1 from Mashonaland Central reports that after leaving his farm in 2002, he retained a certain amount of involvement with the farm, and continued to pay core staff. In January 2005, 45 youths stormed the farmhouse, overwhelming the guards and stripped the building of anything easily saleable. Piling up the remaining furniture in the centre of the house, they proceeded to set the building on fire; the farmhouse is now a charred shell.

⁵⁰ However Selby op cit p 21 writes: "Livestock mutilations and crop burning mirrored guerrilla tactics from the war years, which had been aimed at breaking farmer resolve. In 2002, north of the case study area at Forrester Estates, hundreds of cattle were driven into a lake and drowned. At Border Timbers, in the Eastern Highlands, mature timber plantations were set on fire and on another occasion stocks of processed planks were burnt. Farming operations were regularly prevented or disrupted on principle."

1.2.7 Barricading/Jambanja

Perhaps most the typical personal experience for farmers during the land invasion was that of the '*jambanja*', a Shona term for 'violence' appropriated by farmers to describe how unruly and lawless elements set up barricades around their homes. These *jambanjas* were normally conducted by large groups of settlers, in conjunction with farm workers who were often co-opted into this procedure. Either the settlers entered the security fence surrounding the house and performed the *jambanja* in the garden, or they performed it around the perimeter of the fence. They typically occurred for two reasons: 1) intimidation of the farmer to induce him to leave the farm; or 2) extorting from the farmer some service or some amount of money, most usually the S.I. 6⁵¹ severance packages. Usually ZANU PF songs were sung, drums were beaten and various threats were made, as the farmer and his family waited locked inside their home. Sometimes these situations were extremely violent as in the case of Farmer 23 below.

Typically the farmer and his family were barricaded inside the house overnight or for a period of a couple of days, although it could last much longer, as in the case of Farmer 44.

Farmer 44 from Mashonaland East reports that in August 2001 he and his wife were called to the house where a group of 45 people were gathered outside the security fence, led by war veteran Comrade X, who became notorious during the land reform exercise for assaulting and murdering several people. The group requested that two of them be allowed into the fence to negotiate. The farmer's wife agreed to this condition and unlocked the gate whereupon the whole group charged through the open gate and proceeded to assault the farmer and his wife. They were hit with open hands, shoved to the ground and kicked. The farmer was pushed against a tree and machetes were held against the throats of him and his wife, whilst Comrade X shouted, 'Kill them, kill them! Cut their fucking heads off'. Another person in the group put a brake on the violence, whilst several of the group rushed into the house. Inside the house, one of the group fished out the live goldfish from their bowl and proceeded to eat them whole, whilst others looted property. The Police arrived and managed to defuse the situation but the war vets demanded that the farmer and his wife leave the farm within two hours. The Police negotiated with the war vets to allow the farmer to stay another 24 hours.

Leaving the farm at 9.30 the next morning, the couple received a phone call from a female Dispol⁵² officer requesting them to go to N Police station. After spending the entire day at the police station, the Dispol officer told the farmer and his wife to return to the farm, and that they would be protected by a Support Unit officer assigned to them. The couple returned to the farm at 4.30 p.m. and were settling in when at about 7.00 p.m. the same group of settlers that had attacked them the previous day swarmed into the security fence accompanied by the Dispol officer. The Dispol officer told the couple that a new agreement had been reached whereby the couple could stay on the farm but they would not be allowed to leave the cottage. In addition demands were made that lights were switched off at night. When they asked about the Support Unit officer, the Dispol officer said that there would now be no need for that, and left.

The couple remained in this situation as hostages inside their own cottage for a total of seven weeks. During these seven weeks they were constantly harassed and intimidated by shifts of seven or eight people armed with machetes outside their gate.

Yes, yes they had a fire right outside our gate. They jambanjaed, all night, all night they had drums, so that when the drums stopped you thought your heart had stopped, you know. But by then you are so hammered in your head, you've been in this for 18 months and you haven't slept for one night.

During this seven week period they were fed by their driver who would buy food for them in town and pass it through the fence.

⁵¹ See footnote 23 above

⁵² District Police

Crazy. You look back now and you think what the hell was all this about, why did we bother. You know, we should have, in February 2000, said, 'You want it, it's yours guys, carry right on, we're right behind you.' What could we do? Why did we do it?

Eventually the farmer and his wife were allowed to leave the cottage.

Farmer 23 reports that on 10 September 2002 he and his wife woke up to find that settlers had barricaded their gate so they were unable to take their children to school. The farmer went out to negotiate with the settlers who eventually allowed the farmer's wife to drive off to take their children to school. When she arrived at the school she heard her husband calling for help on the radio.

In the meanwhile, the farmer had just finished breakfast when a second different group arrived at his gate, and another big group arrived at the gate of his mother M, who lived about 200 m away. The farmer's sister S and her two children, aged three and one, were also in M's house.

As the farmer went outside the house two people approached him aggressively, armed with shotguns, so the farmer went back inside the house and radioed for assistance, requesting support from the police and his neighbours. During this time he also heard on the radio from S that M had gone outside her house and had been confronted by three armed people. The farmer went back outside his own house armed with a shotgun and a pistol and ordered the invaders to leave his security fence. He then heard a single shot fired, coming from M's house. Fearing that his mother had been shot, he left his own security fence and was immediately surrounded by a large crowd of people who shouted threats and threw stones at him. As the crowd pressed in on him he fired one shot into the ground to disperse them. He subsequently fired several more shots into the ground to keep this group of people away from him. He arrived at M's gate which was locked, so he radioed M and S to get them to open the gate. As he was going round the fence, two people at either corner of the aeroplane hangar on the farm opened fire on the farmer. He returned fire.

So, I had this big group coming along behind me, I'm sort of trotting along firing shots back at them and these guys are firing shots at me and I'm firing forward and feeding bullets in as fast as I can shoot them. Um, anyway, it ... it sort of calmed down because I just carried on going towards them, like they were now behind. I carried on right around the ... the fence, came back and by then they were, we were fairly close from here to the, say ten yards away, pointing guns at each other. They had this whole bunch of guns and I was aiming at them as well.

Somehow all the bullets that were fired missed their targets. S came out and unlocked the gate and the farmer rushed into M's house.

They had both houses surrounded, they had loud hailers, and they were just shouting, (Farmer 23), you are going to die today, (Farmer 23) we are going to kill you, (Farmer 23) get off this farm, all that kind of thing.

Having taken away M's radio and firearm the settlers had retreated from M's house. Realising that the crowd of people outside were trying to break down the gate, the farmer went outside the house after having checked that M, S and her two children were alright.

Um, I went back outside and was threatening them that if they got through that fence I was going to kill them, um going to shoot at them. It was, it was, it was clearly a situation that was seriously out of hand and, and um, I, I thought another Martin Olds⁵³ type of situation. Um, probably about 45 mins outside watching to see what was going on you know, making sure that my mother was armed because she had a shotgun as well but she had like misfired it and the weapon was now jammed, so we cleared that, trying, we made sure that we all had vantage points to see what was going on, um trying to call in the neighbours, trying to call the police, the police took four hours to react, so this whole thing was over by the time the police arrived.

⁵³One of the first white farmers to be killed, Martin Olds was murdered by a large, heavily armed group.

During this time, the farmer's wife had heard the whole situation developing on the radio and driven to the police station in town. Going into the office she demanded to see the Member in Charge:

... and he was sitting in his office, and I said there's a problem on X Farm, there's a lot of shooting, um, can you please send your policemen out there and go and help and stabilize the situation and he refused to acknowledge that there was anything going on and refused to send anybody out to help. Um, and we'd heard explicitly that there were shots having been fired and what's happening and they refused.

Meanwhile, the crowd set fire to the thatched fencing outside the Farmer's house, trying to entice him out with someone on the loud hailer shouting '(Farmer 23), your house is burning!' The crowd then looted the farmer's house, taking jewellery, cell phones, a cordless phone, shotgun rounds, bedside clocks, radios, chargers, cameras, clocks, a video camera, hats, and so on. When the police eventually arrived they asked the farmer to come and check that the aeroplane in the hangar was not harmed. They did not arrest or question anyone despite the farmer pointing out and naming several of the people responsible for all the various incidents. Later the farmer learnt that simultaneously with the *jambanja* situation around the two houses, roadblocks had been placed by the settlers on every entrance road coming into the farm. In four separate incidents, farmers and a reporter trying to pass these roadblocks to get to the houses were shot at. Two of these vehicles were hit by bullets.

Farmer 13, Mashonaland West, reports that he was not on the property when he received an urgent radio message recalling him to the farm. When he returned a large group of people had arrived and barricaded the house, demanding that the farmer leave the farm, which he refused to do. The people surrounding the house first cut off the water and, on the second day of the three-day barricade, they cut off the electricity. As the telephone was out of order, the farmer and his wife relied on their radio to communicate with neighbouring farmers, but it became evident that the radio batteries would soon run out. During this time the farmer and his wife had wired their windows up to stop people from being able to break into the house. Then the group of settlers herded 300 head of cattle into the terraced garden and whipped them into a frenzy in order to start a stampede. The cattle were forced to jump up and down the terraces in the garden which were three feet high.

The farmer and his wife ran out of the house to try and calm the animals down. The farmer's wife carried out buckets of water from the bath which she had retained when the water was cut off. She tried to water the cattle and calm them with the water. It became evident that they would have to get the cattle out of the garden, which they managed to do by opening the security gates, surrounded by the invaders who threatened them verbally and physically with sticks and axes. They returned to their house and locked themselves in.

On the third day, the invaders started fires under the thatched eaves of the house and started to fan them. Realising they were trapped, the farmer went out of the house for the second time in order to try and put out the fires and to negotiate with the invaders. The invaders told him they were going to torch the house in order to make them leave. He managed to control the fires and returned to the house. By this time the farmer's brother P had arrived at the farm and was monitoring the situation from a little way off. The settlers sent a message to P to go into the house and get the farmer and his wife to leave the farm as they would otherwise be killed. P entered the house, but the farmer and his wife refused to leave, as they did not wish to succumb to the intimidation. Before P could leave the security fence, the settlers closed the gates and refused to let him exit. The farmer left the house to try and help P escape. When the farmer left the house the settlers grabbed him, and dragged him off threatening him with an axe and breaking his watch. At this stage the farmer noticed the DA⁵⁴ amongst the settlers. The DA was standing on top of an ant heap shouting, 'Kill that white bastard!' As P tried to drive off, he hit a low tree stump, and the noise of the tree stump hitting the car scattered the settlers. P escaped, and the farmer returned to the house. Later that night the farmer and his wife left the farm.

⁵⁴ District Administrator.

The survey sample records 43 instances of barricading, the majority of which were '*jambanja*' style incidents as described here. The category of 'barricading' however was designed to include other instances where the right to freedom of movement was violated, and so instances such as being locked inside an office are also recorded in this category.

1.2.8 Death Threats

Only death threats were recorded for the purposes of this survey. It is clear that farmers and their workers and their families were subjected to numerous other types of threats on a daily basis. These threats included threats of assault, violence, rape and other crimes. However, these threats are too numerous to record.

Given the all-pervasive threatening nature of the land invasions, many of the farmers interviewed did not even mention death threats to interviewers unless they were specifically asked about these.

Because of the widely publicised murders of farmers and farm workers, farmers and farm workers generally perceived their lives to be in danger throughout the land invasions. Death threats were a highly effective means of intimidating farmers and workers into leaving their farms, or renouncing political affiliation.

In this survey sample there are thirty instances of death threats recorded.

Interviewee 59 who was employed on the several farms of interviewee 47 as a security manager reports that on many occasions he was threatened. He states:

If I went to the farms I would be intimidated, threatened. Being accused of supporting the whites and at one stage a letter was written and thrown into my letter box, which I've got a copy and I gave a copy to the police and I reported it. I've got the police report reference, but I don't know if they did anything. The letter was threatening me with death and, and so on. Well with me I can say I was threatened, but I, many many times because I was working for Farmer 47. I was just living not knowing what would happen to me next.

The text of the letter reads

From the war vets to [Interviewee 59].
We know that you're protecting the whites and safekeeping them yet you are paid nothing and know we want to teach you a good lesson. We know where you stay and we know all your ways. We are going to push to the limit and you will die. Your life's in danger, you are a sell out. Pasi newe⁵⁵.
War vets.

Farmer 93 reports on the kinds of threats that accompanied an abduction and physical assault. He reports that the resident war veteran leader arrived with about eight settlers at the gate to the house of his son D. The settlers had confiscated the rifle of one of the farm security guards, and had brought four guards to the gate. After negotiating with the settlers, it became obvious that the problem could not be resolved without mediation. The farmer, his assistant manager O, the four guards and two settlers got in the truck and drove to the W police camp. The police refused to mediate in the matter. The group got back in the truck to return to the farm when one of the settlers requested to be dropped off in a nearby village.

Dropping him off in the village meant going down to the ZANU PF headquarters in the location⁵⁶, which was a foolish thing to do in retrospect. Anyway, we did and were then surrounded. All my... everyone in the truck was dragged out and they were taken inside, except me and O.

⁵⁵ Shona meaning "Down with you"

⁵⁶ "the location" is a term predominantly used in the pre-independence era to describe a high density housing complex built especially to house workers.

Once they were taken inside the doors were shut. Farmer 93 and O got out of the car to try and obtain the release of his guards. Inside the building a group of about 30 people were busy intimidating and interrogating the guards. Farmer 93 and O were forced to sit down whilst the leaders of the group abused them and their guards, a process which lasted two hours. Intermittently the guards were assaulted during this time. Eventually Farmer 93 managed to get out with O and one guard, but the other guards were left inside the building.

They were beaten up very badly and the one chap was put into Intensive Care in F and he was there for a long time, broken legs, ribs and so forth. The others were assaulted to a lesser degree but they were all beaten. They were saying I was a white pig and this is our land, you've got to get off and we are going to take this land we are going to sort things and they went on and on, reiterating, you know two hours is a long time when they are shouting in your ruddy ear! They kept mentioning my family, my son D in particular. And when I was saying, 'I've had enough of this' they said, 'we are going to kill D today, we're coming now. We're going to kill him today'.

Farmer 14, from Mashonaland East, reports that settlers set up a barricade outside his house. Farmer 14 was the next-door neighbour of J, a well-known farmer whose murder received considerable media attention. Settlers continually threatened the farmer that he would be killed like J. The one woman settler claimed to have been involved in J's murder, and openly said that she had been the one who 'pulled the trigger'.

1.3 Non Tabulated Violations

1.3.1 Mass Psychological Torture

A large number of disturbing cases are recorded of forced attendance at rallies, all night *pungwes*, political 're-education' camps and other events, such as *jambanjas*. This mass coercion, coupled with violence and threats of violence against those coerced, as well as the coercion of victims to conduct violent acts themselves, sometimes against fellow victims, is internationally considered to be Mass Psychological Torture.

As the International Rehabilitation Council for Trauma Victims (IRCT) reports:

The mass psychological impact of the beatings and humiliation of individuals in front of their communities has led to the creation of mass psychological torture, including helplessness and anxiety, on a large scale. [...]

The forced attendance of people at 'pungwes' and political meetings constitutes psychological torture. The additional coercion, supported by some of the cases seen, for persons to publicly renounce their party affiliations causes severe psychological distress, the effects of which have long-term social and political consequences.⁵⁷

These cases have not been tabulated as interviewees were not typically involved themselves, even if they received information about them from their workers.

Farmer 74 gives a good example of this sort of politically motivated psychological torture.

I know they were forced to go to rallies. I know it happened often and I was actually witness to it happening at the barn, once. Umm, there was, I can't remember exactly what the incident was, but there were about 10 or 15 youths that were accused of being sell out and all the rest

⁵⁷ See IRCT (2000), *Organised Violence and Torture in Zimbabwe*, 6th June 2000, Copenhagen and Harare, COPENHAGEN & HARARE: IRCT & AMANI TRUST; IRCT (2001) *Organised Violence and Torture in Zimbabwe*, 24th May 2001, Copenhagen and Harare, COPENHAGEN & HARARE: IRCT & AMANI TRUST.

of it. This actually happened at the barns. The whole compound had been called by the war vets and congregated in the barn area. Umm, the 15 people that were accused were told to lie down. And, we had *matepes* there, you know the sticks that the tobacco was hung on? In one of the Burley barns. And then another 15 labourers were told to take matepes and beat the 15 that were on the ground, on their backs, on their buttocks and that sort of thing. And some of them were accused of not doing it hard enough and they were told to lie down and the people who were being beaten were told 'ok now, you can actually show how to do it.' The war vets themselves never actually, to my knowledge, physically beat, they always got someone else. They never actually did it themselves. The guys they beat were accused of being MDC and being sell outs and that sort of thing. It was definitely political.

On a large number of farms, farm youths were taken away to 're-education' camps for several weeks to 're-learn' political issues. Whilst this project does not have evidence at this stage of the sort of activities which went on within the camps, it is clear that they did indeed happen, and were a concern to the parents of young people forced to go.

The clerk of Farmer 45 kept a diary of the invasions. He describes the forced attendance at 're-education' camps.

2001 Political campaigning was taking place. People under 30 yrs of age in the compound were regarded as youths. They were forced to go at Town D for 2 wks. Parents worried of their daughters' safety. It was really a worrisome time.

The worry of the parents in respect of daughters that had been taken to these camps was obviously concern that their daughters would be raped.

Farmer 4 has collected an interesting series of letters from settlers and war veterans. One letter seeks to extort food from the farmer for feeding of those in the 're-education' camps.

Dear Sir/Madam
Please to let you know that we are really seeking for food right from your section. We are going to train our youth for seven days and we need at least eight people per farm. The total number needed is 60 or so. To remind you, would you please offer enough food for the youth; that is break-fast, lunch and supper. The Youth Chairman will give you the names of those who coming today from your farm.
Thank you,
Vice District Chairman
G

Reply is needed by the end of the day if there is any queries.

Whilst the letter is fairly polite, one must remember the atmosphere of fear and intimidation in which letters like this were received. The farmer complied with the demand for food and received this response from the base commander

Boss
Thanks for the people you send us and the help of food you helped us with.
That shows you are so helpful. We look forward a peaceful votes.
Thanks,
Base Commanda
C

It is clear that the Commander considers that support for ZANU PF will lead to peaceful elections. The farmer however did not agree to the people going to the training camp, and subsequently refused to pay any more towards the upkeep of such camps. He then received the following letter:

To you boss
May you please pay the people who were here on training. If you don't want can you please reply us today. Remember don't make yourself in trouble. Pay these people today. We are not threatening you, but this is from the Presidential Office and you have to pay a day for the one

who went to the rally in N. If not we have got something to do upon that. We were proud of you but we don't exactly know what you think about all what we say. So if you want us to be in connection with us pay those guys peacefully. And also we need all trained youth to Y on Thursday 7 March 2002, and not forgetting the chairman.
Time 7 am. Not even one trained youth is allowed to be absent. And don't worry about transport. If any quiry contact C at J on code – 999-99999

Yours Vice Youth Chairman

F

Thank You!!!

Farmer 61 who was an MDC candidate in the 2000 elections recorded several written statements from his staff. One such statement reads in part:

I, N, 99-999999Z-99, do hereby state that:

1. I am a male aged 26 years. I live and work at M Farm situated in Y. I am an MDC activist.
2. On 21 February 2001 it was around 6 am and I was about to go for work. My door was kicked open by War Vets that were armed with sticks and catapults. They pulled me out of the house and told me to go and attend a rally. There they ordered us to take with us hoes and axes to use in blocking the road to obstruct Farmer 61. The road was blocked with tree trunks and branches. They forced their way to the security fence.

A 'jambanja' type event then took place to intimidate the farmer into leaving the farm. Significant here are the references to forcing the workers to take part in illegal and violent acts. The last part of this statement records an incident of torture and has already been described under the section **Torture.**

1.3.2 Work Stoppages

Very disruptive, though not tabulated in the data, is the very high incidence of work stoppages and strikes⁵⁸, often coupled with extortionate demands by settlers. People would be threatened and beaten for going to work.

Farmer 98 from Mashonaland West records 96 separate incidents occurring on his farm between January 2001 and May 2005, mainly work stoppages and theft. An extract from this record shows the level of work stoppages and strikes that took place at the time. The main purpose of the strikes outlined below was to obtain the S.I. 6 severance package, which was not payable by the farmer as he had not received the relevant section 8⁵⁹ notice from the Ministry, and had no intention of leaving the farm.

work	28)	10/9/2002	STRIKE S.I. 6 DEMAND
	29)	11/9/2002	STRIKE in yard at homestead, turned off water and ZESA, moved
		off in	
			the evening and locked gate from inside
	30)	12/9/2002	STRIKE
	31)	13/9/2002	STRIKE M from NEC in K addressed labour. Told them to return to
			or face dismissal.
	32)	14/9/2002	Labour returned to work
	33)	16/9/2002	Labour go slow. E workers chased from housing by war vet W and
		co.	
	34)	17/9/2002	2 nd address by NEC M at DA T area, no work
			POOR INTERPRETATION OF REGULATIONS
	35)	20/9/2002	PAID S.I. 6 TO E LABOUR
	36)	26/9/2002	STRIKE
		27/9/2002	STRIKE reported to NEC ZRP
			THEFT MAIZE taken for GMB RRB XXXXXX
			LABOUR STOLE TRACTORS Same 100 Case XXXX
		28/9/2002	STRIKE
		30/9/2002	STRIKE
		1/10/2002	STRIKE
		2/10/2002	STRIKE tractor taken to w/vet X
		3/10/2002	STRIKE 5 pm Broke through security fence I was kicked by a
			labourer broke window hose pipe into kitchen water turned on,
			knocking doors, windows with clubs, 5 fires lit around homestead.

It should be remembered that farming is a seasonal activity so strikes and work stoppages at particularly sensitive times of the year could often be devastating for a season's production.

Farmer 78 from Mashonaland East documents the work stoppages, intimidation and general disruption that took place on his farm over the space of a month.

1. 27/4/2001 R (a locally based war vet) with 7 people peg on B Farm. He meets the farm manager and informs him that B belongs to R and we are to leave now.
2. 27/4/2001 1 Man and 2 Women are instructed to reap pecan nuts on B Farm. At approx. 1230 Hrs. R with 4 men tell them no more reaping is taking place. The 3 workers are then verbally abused and assaulted by 1 man accompanying R. They are threatened with worse to come.
3. 1-2/5/2001. During the night, 21 hydrant caps are removed/stolen from B farm fields.
4. 2-3/5/2001 The farm manager notices that the main entrance gates to B farm have been damaged and notes to the effect '2 weeks to go or you die' have been left attached to the gates.
5. 10/5/2001. R with 7 men instructs the farm manager to leave B farm in 2 weeks.

⁵⁸ See footnote 42 above

⁵⁹ See above page 6

6. 11/5/2001 A with 2 men stops a tractor on F Farm, forces the tractor driver to take the tractor to S service station. Here threats are made that if work continues on the B Farm the tractor will be burnt.
7. 13/5/2001 A, R and P (of S Rural Hospital) address a meeting on B Farm and inform the workers resident on the farm that they have till 18-19/5/2001 to vacate their houses.
8. 21/5/2001 The Foreman and 10 workers are chased by R and 2 other men away from their job on B Farm at 0800 Hrs. At 1300 Hrs R leading about 25 men enter B Farm compound and beat, with sticks and rubber tyre strips, 5 men.
9. 22/5/2001 R prevents the workers on B Farm from attending normal work duties.
10. 27/5/2001 R and 4 others go into B Farm compound and verbally abuse and threaten the residents that unless they leave by 1700 hrs they will be beaten and thrown off B Farm.

1.3.3 Theft

Because of the failure of the police to perform their constitutional duties, the farm invasions were accompanied by a massive and unchecked rise in theft. Even straightforward theft cases would often be met by the police with the rejoinder that they could not act because 'it is political'.

Farmer 83 from Mashonaland East reports how the settlers stripped the roofing from workers' housing.

But they took all 52 – the lovely compound we had – 52 houses, they stripped the roofing. There's just nothing left – all the window frames and bricks. They stripped everything.

Farmer 86 suspects that the Member in Charge was involved in large-scale looting of equipment on his farm, because he refused to enforce the High Court Order allowing the farmer to remove his equipment.

I think he was involved in theft from my farm. I think he had his eyes on my centre pivot and my irrigation equipment. That's my personal belief. Um, shortly after that, I got the message to say that all the pumps and motors and switchboards down at the dam, for the whole irrigation scheme, had been stolen. Everything. And then a vehicle with side-arm crane had come out. Parked on the dam wall – obviously, I would say, an army vehicle. Um, I tried desperately to get details of this. And I believe that the guys that I left on the farm know exactly who, but they were so intimidated they were not prepared to give me any more information. Other than to say that a vehicle with a side-arm crane came, parked on the dam wall, removed the roof, the door, the pumps, the motors, the switchboard and even the big steel manifolds, where the water's sucked out of the dam. That one was left there, but the delivery manifolds were all uplifted and removed.

Farm workers too lost valuable property. This statement from an employee of farmer 31 describes the property lost after he was evicted:

I missed 25 Rumba video cassettes, 2 Church Drama Cassettes, one cassette cleaner, 2 egg beaters machine. My cassettes one cost me \$1000 to the black market. It was a cardboard box full. I bought them one by one for two years.

1.3.4 Extortion

Another typical experience of farmers was that of constant extortion and unreasonable demands by the settlers. As settlers were aware that they were largely outside the workings of the law, they profited from this situation by constantly demanding money and food from the farmers.

Farmer 92 was packing up her household after being told to get off the farm by the resident war vet.

And then they said we can't take our dogs. We had our three dogs and a cat. So I said to Comrade K 'Look, I'm willing to pay you money. Please I want my animals, my dogs.' So he said alright you pay me a hundred thousand. Now in 2002 that was a lot of money. So I said alright I will. Once I see the dogs are in the car and cat is in the truck with my son and I, come to me and I'll give you the money which is what I did. So he allowed us to go.

Farmer 94 in Mashonaland West describes the extortion surrounding the S.I. 6 package. Whilst he had not yet received a section 8 notice for any of his three properties which he farmed in a family company with his two sons, war veterans and workers were still agitating for the S.I.6 severance packages. In a diary of events that took place on his farm he writes that on Friday 20 September 2002:

Y Farm labour very hostile and chased away E Farm labour (evidence on tape). I called MIC⁶⁰ J for a police detail as the labourers were threatening to break into the yard. I was told to pay my labour by the MIC. I told him it was an unsatisfactory answer and then phoned Chief Superintendent G in W. He gave me the run-around until I told him I was going to phone Propol⁶¹ minor. He then phoned the MIC J and told him to give me a police detail. The MIC himself came to the farm and spoke to the labour (we had to fetch him in our vehicle). By the time he arrived we had already spoken to the labour and they had agreed to go with us to speak to the labour union and NEC⁶² people. Until then they had been adamant that they would not speak to those people. He told the labour to go with me to meet S from NEC. He also told my labour that if I hassled them with anything they were to tell him. (discussion on tape)

Sat 21

I took my workers committee and some foremen and we met S from NEC at F Butchery as S was passing through W. (I have the full meeting on tape). He told us that we were right about not paying as we have not even been listed, but because some official, the MIC J, had told them the farm has been taken, we would have to pay our labour the full S.I.6. He said he was shocked to hear that the J police were involved with the illegal activity going on in the area. He also told us that the MIC J had told him that he had received a directive from Harare to make life unbearable for the farmers and to assist with getting the farmers off the land. He told us that if we did not pay the full S.I. 6, we would be severely harassed and the police would not protect us at all, so better we just pay.

In another document, Farmer 94 describes the coda to the incident where he was visited by an armed Lieutenant Colonel, F, from the ZNA a week later on Sat 28 September 2002.

I greeted him and asked him who he was. He told me that he was Lt. Col. F. He told me that I must not try and 'fuck him around'. I must pay the labour their S.I. 6 packages or else he would deal with me. Because of the weapon in his car I realised I should not argue with this person and agreed to pay the labour their packages. I went home and started to calculate the final amounts that I would have to pay the Y workers.

Farmer 16 in Mashonaland East describes the sort of situation that accompanied the demands for payment of the S.I.6 package. Farmer 16 and his son P were locked up for five days by settlers and farm workers to force them to pay the package, even though the farm had not yet received a section 8 notice, and operations were still under way.

They were starting to threaten, 'we will burn the tobacco if you don't do this.' They started subverting our labour and saying 'get your gratuity out of this guy, he's going to run away.' We said to our labour, 'We are not firing any of you. We are going to keep going here. We are not paying the gratuity because we haven't stopped farming and we have still got everything on the farm.' Eventually our own labour started joining in the *jambanja*. They were all put under pressure to join in the *jambanja* because the war veterans' officers all took a 20% cut of the gratuity of every single person that got it and the reason they gave was 'we have given you the opportunity to receive this gratuity, so we are charging you 20 %'.

They actually moved into the garden and started jambanjaing. We had to spend some nights in the office because they had been coming through the house. We had nowhere to go so we

⁶⁰ Police Member-in-Charge

⁶¹ Probably Provincial Police authority.

⁶² National Employment Council.

would cook ourselves a meal in the house and then we would snivel up and sleep in the office. So they would come through and we would open the outside door to the office so we would have a better chance, at least we could escape... In the end we agreed that we would pay it, then they released us.

It should also be remembered that the S.I.6 package itself was viewed by farmers as an extortionist tactic by Government. The package drove a wedge between workers and the employer, as it was paid out by farmers when they left the farms under the instigation of war veterans. This meant that workers on operational farms would hear of the large payouts that neighbouring workers had received, and they would begin to agitate for their own payment, irrespective of the legal situation on the farm. These packages involved a considerable amount of money, which was not always easy for the farmers to raise as a large amount of their wealth was tied up in capital items which had now been compulsorily acquired, with no real prospect of compensation in sight. To add insult to injury, farmers were made to pay tax to Government on these packages.

Farmer 87 gives a good example of a typical extortion tactic by settlers common to a large number of the farmers interviewed. This letter demands money for maize that was destroyed by Farmer 87's cattle, which were purposefully herded into the maize by the war vets.

To Farmer 87

The committee here at J Farm held a meeting, the agenda being the destruction of our homesteads by your cattle. It was at this meeting we agreed that you must compensate before you remove your cattle. \$1500 per person.

Names of People
[16 names follow].

1.3.5 Political Intimidation

There was never any doubt about the political affiliation of settlers during the land invasions. As the Clerk of Farmer 45 described it:

The relationship between the villagers ⁶³and farm workers was really bad. It seemed farm workers were ZANU PF or MDC and villagers were super-super ZANU PF. The conflicts were never ending.

Later in his diary he describes the settlers as 'extremely rough people' and says that 'the relationship between ex-farm workers and villagers is still two parallel lines.'

Farmer 61, who was an MDC candidate in the 2000 election, received an email from the Farmers Association Chairman pleading with him not to stand for election. Part of the email, which clearly shows the success of the Government's attacks on the MDC, reads as follows

Farmer 61,

Thanks for your email – I have spent the last few days wracked with mixed emotions with regard to your predicament. I have however after very careful consideration and soul searching returned to my original conclusion, i.e. to implore you NOT to put forward your nomination. These are not normal times and the normal principled rules do not apply. You would undoubtedly be jeopardising your own life (not just a farm) as well as those of your neighbours. Witness what has happened in the eastern highlands. Also, I have given my word that you will lay low. I am sorry that I have to insist that you give careful consideration to your district even if it goes against your conscience.

Farmer 61 was constantly harangued, threatened and intimidated by ZANU PF supporters and politicians during the 2000 election campaign. His workers were evicted on numerous occasions, constantly threatened and beaten. An affidavit, from the same groom quoted earlier, describes the kind of threats and political intimidation both Farmer 61 and his staff underwent because of their MDC affiliation. Describing a compulsory ZANU PF rally held on Sunday 15 April 2000, the groom

⁶³ Here "settlers".

records that a Deputy Minister, who was also the MP for the area, issued death threats against Farmer 61, and another farmer known to be openly supportive of the MDC. Section 4 of the affidavit continues:

[Deputy Minister] W said that Mr. U and Farmer 61 had used their lorries to carry MDC supporters to C, F and other rallies, and had even carried people from T. He said if we saw these lorries from today carrying people we should burn the lorry and kill the people. If a MDC member makes violence to a ZANU PF member then 20 people for MDC will be killed. Everyone is supposed to vote for ZANU PF. And the whites are the very people who taught the people to vote NO for the referendum. He said that if we vote for MDC, ZANU PF would know and that the farm will be in trouble. He said that Mr U and Farmer 61's farms would be the first to be taken for resettlement as they are the very ones who are taking people to MDC rallies. He said that the foremen should take everyone to voting, make a line and organise the ZANU members with 4 at the front and the chairman at the back so they could make sure everyone voted for ZANU.

(Groom of Farmer 61, Mashonaland Central)

This clearly demonstrates that the primary purpose underlying the farm invasions was violent suppression of the opposition ahead of the upcoming election, rather than correcting colonial injustice relating to the distribution of land. Paragraph 5 of the groom's affidavit describes another rally, held on Sunday 21 May 2000, where the same W, a Deputy Minister and MP, made direct threats against Farmer 61.

W said that if Farmer 61 goes to a rally with the lorry he is not supposed to come back. This means he is supposed to die with the lorry. He also said that we should vote ZANU PF and not MDC, if we vote for MDC in the ballot box they would know and they would sort out the farm. At this meeting he told the ex-combatants that they had not been doing their job as they had not been making reports. He said they were supposed to check the compounds for MDC supporters and make sure all workers had ZANU PF Data Forms and cards.

This is another graphic exposé of the role of the War Veterans on the farms. The same affidavit goes on to describe similar rallies and threats by other politicians, including a second ZANU PF MP against Farmer 61. The last section, 13, describes the eviction of the groom by resident settlers, after he had been interrogated about his membership of the MDC.

They then took me back to their base. They said they were going to give me Chapter 2, if I want to live or the people to work, I should leave the farm. They also said they do not want to see Farmer 61 or the police come to the farm. If the ex-combatants saw them, they were going to die. They then gave me six members who had axes and sticks to accompany me back to the compound to get my things. They then took me to the bus stop with the farm truck. I then went to Harare.

Another employee of farmer 61 describes an incident on 1 September 2001 in the compound where eviction orders were given to those perceived to have MDC affiliations. A written statement from T, who worked in the animal husbandry section, reads in part:

It was a sudden eviction order to everybody accused of supporting MDC (Movement for Democratic Change). The top four guys were made to surrender their MDC articles, and forced to pack off to their home areas. Z and Y led the delegation of eight war vets.

3. During this time, the youths numbering fifteen, armed with sharp machetes, sticks and catapults were wandering in the compound promising marching orders to the farm workers and asking for MDC supporters relating to Farmer 61, the white farm owner, to identify themselves.
4. At about 7 pm they suddenly appeared from nowhere holding the destructive weapons in the form of axes, sharp knives, and two metre dried bamboo rods. People were forced to attend a rally at the farm-yard. Doors were pushed open with sticks and people punched if they delayed or resisted because they were bathing or feeding.

The full statement from this employee describes in detail the various incidents that occurred, including several assaults, evictions, thefts, threats and the destruction of property.

An MDC activist, also an employee of Farmer 61, reports serious political intimidation. A written statement describes a meeting on 29 September 2001 led by a war veteran, F, and reads in part:

- 3) F
- iii) Accused me of issuing membership cards in his presence. He declared me the most deadly weapon in the area. He also pointed out that my case was beyond forgiveness since I turned a lot of ZANU PF supporters to MDC in areas like A, B, C, D and E.
 - 4) I tried to reason with him but he kept on saying 'I will forgive you if you submit the receipt book to me. I want to use that in my findings on MDC supporters.' I think it is better for me to suffer instead of submitting the book and let more than one hundred people, whom I have given membership cards to, lose their lives and property in the hands of this cruel man (F).
 - 5) I am not going to positively respond to the order since I know being an MDC activist is not an offence punishable by death. It is my right according to the Constitution of Zimbabwe

NB I am only worried for my wife and son (nine months old) since F promised to make visits to my house if I resist leaving the area. I don't want my family members to be political victims.

The extent of intimidation during this period means that even today those involved are scared to reveal the extent of their association with the MDC during this period.

Wife of Farmer 95: And, um, Farmer 95 was a little bit involved in the MDC and the fact that he went round and...

Interviewer: Monitoring and stuff? What did you do?

Farmer 95: I don't know if it's a good thing to say on tape...

It later transpired that Farmer 95 had merely helped with election monitoring. It is quite remarkable that five years later the farmer should still be fearful of publicising his participation in the MDC. From remarks like this one gets a very strong sense of the effectiveness of the Government's campaign of political intimidation.

Farmer 23 reports how his workers, who were pro-MDC at the beginning of the land invasions, were gradually intimidated into supporting ZANU PF.

I had some good guys who were MDC. I didn't sort of try hide away my MDC affiliations, I wanted to live in a reasonable country and I thought it was a moral responsibility to have the correct government in place and, I also told all my workers that I thought that that was a good thing. Initially they were all very much on sides but under the sustained pressure from ZANU PF they were, you know, they changed their ways, most of them.

Farmer 46 reports that his farm workers were openly supportive of the MDC at first, and many wore their MDC T-shirts which the farmer had obtained for them. However, as time went by, it became obvious that supporting the MDC would make one a target for violence and intimidation so the workers stopped wearing the T-shirts.

Farmer 66 reports how extreme the targeting of the MDC could be at times.

The one day our manager had two young daughters and he had a, you know how you do hand prints for children, you stick your hand in the paint, and they'd put a red hand⁶⁴, a little child's hand in the paint and then made a hand print. Seven years old, she's like. This guy picks this up, it's got the kid's name on and the date, you know how you record things. And, 'Oh, no, no. This is an MDC printing factory.' Anyway, to cut a long story short, they said, 'Right, that's it. All the labour must go.'

The farm workers were forcibly evicted from their houses because of this incident and most of them were retrenched and paid severance pay. The remainder who stayed on had to sleep in the farm

⁶⁴ The MDC adopted the open palm as its party symbol and gesture, in contrast to ZANU PF's clenched fist, and red as its party colour, derived from a referee's red card at football and suggesting the dismissal of Robert Mugabe.

abattoir, the only shelter available. Whether or not the settlers actually believed the story that the farm was an MDC printing factory is difficult to judge, but one would have thought presumably not. However, what is important to note is that the settlers obviously believed that having an MDC printing factory on the farm constituted a sufficient justification for evicting the workers from their homes.

Farmer 8 from Lomagundi reports three cases of political intimidation of the opposition.

When the group of settlers arrived on the farm they moved into the farm playschool at first, because it had a security fence round it. Soon after their arrival they took an MDC T-shirt, ripped it up and hung it on the fence as a warning to people not to support the MDC.

A farm driver was given an MDC T-shirt before the invasions and often used to wear it. After the land invasions began the farmer never saw the driver wear the MDC T-shirt again.

The farmer had satellite TV in his house. Because the land invasions were often in the international news at the time, the farmer would often invite his gardener and maid to watch BBC, Sky and CNN. However, as these channels carried stories critical of the invasions, and were deemed sympathetic to the MDC, the gardener and his brother were summoned across the river to the war vet camp on the neighbouring farm where they were assaulted because of this activity.

1.3.6 Lawlessness

Farmer 95 describes the general attitude of the settlers towards the law.

The main war vet guy was the one who came over to the house the one morning and said, 'Right, Farmer 95 – you're not co-operating with us guys properly and you're not' – um, obviously I wasn't helping them in their eyes properly with land preparation and seedlings and everything else. So, they then said, 'Ya, you're unco-operative and we're taking your farm.' And I can remember saying to him, 'Ya,' and I said, 'We don't even have a Section 8, so how can you take the farm?' He said, 'I am the Section 8. So, what I say is what goes.'

Farmer 19 from Mashonaland West describes a particularly blatant disrespect for court orders in the story of the double eviction of his workers (see above under **Eviction**).

1.3.7 Sabotage of Equipment

Sometimes intimidation strategies involved destroying a farmer's equipment to make him leave the farm⁶⁵.

One example of this comes from Farmer 67 from Mashonaland East.

You know we had like all our irrigation pipes stacked and that, these guys stole my big four wheel drive tractor and they drove my tractor straight over the top of the pipes. On my crocodile units especially they harassed us a lot like on our big blast freezers they used to go at night and just release the oil out of the big blast freezers, so you know the engine runs without any oil they just bomb that thing and that was huge money, huge, huge, huge money, those big 40 foot containers. Um, they'd interfere with the thermostat on our incubators, they would go and turn up the heat on all the croc houses or cut the pipes so there'd be no water flowing through so you'd get there in the morning and the crocs are baked. Um, they'd disconnect the electrics and put it onto, onto piping so if my workers touched the piping they'd get electrocuted. There was one particular youngster, that we, um who was employed by us. The war vets then grabbed him there and they, they held him in one of the compounds there and we've since found out that he was involved in, in assisting them, or being forced to, to do a lot of this sort of stuff around the croc unit to cause us a lot of problems there. And particularly on, on stealing the crocodile food as well. They used to break the locks quite regularly on our big blast freezers and steal a huge amount of meat, hey. All at this gate that

⁶⁵ See footnote 42 above.

I told you about when um, the vehicles were coming in with food for the crocs they would off load a huge amount of stuff. That became quite a nightmare from that point of view. Um, on our equipment as I say, like the tractor driving over our irrigation pipes, pumps being stolen um, and then the one trick they had a lot of fun with was getting ball bearings and dropping them into gear boxes of the tractors and then driving the tractor and just smashing the gear boxes. So we got a lot of trashed equipment off.

1.3.8 Poaching

Farmer 80 describes the rise in poaching on the game ranches since the land invasions. In thirty years the farmer had increased his rhino herd to 18 black and 23 white, and had not lost a single rhino to poaching. Within four years of the start of the land invasions at least two of the rhino on his farm have died in 'suspicious circumstances', as have several from the adjoining conservancy.

Farmer 61, the MDC candidate in the 2000 election, reports on the huge number of poaching incidents that took place on his farm, linked, the farmer believes, to the police seizing the weapons of his game guards. In one month alone he counts twenty distinct incidents involving poachers, beginning the day after police arrived and illegally seized his firearms. A random extract from his statement reads:

6. On the same day guard A reported that on 22 September 2001 @ about 12.00 noon he saw blood spoor of an animal that had been killed near Land 23. The spoor led to the boundary with F Dam.
7. On the same day A reported that H had reported seeing six poachers and about 18 dogs at the Dip dam at about 12.00 noon. They ran away when they saw H and he was unable to identify them.
8. On 1 October 2001 A reported that he and guard B had heard two rifle shots in the vicinity of Land 20 at about 9.00pm the previous evening.

1.4 State Complicity

1.4.1 Government's Material Support to Land Invaders

Farmer 86 compiled a comprehensive list of people involved in his first invasion.

Here's the list of our very first invasion, um, when we were, this is 21 October 2000. Okay. We recorded the police vehicle numbers from both A and B and the key personnel involved were Assistant DA from C, Mr. Z, Detective Inspector Y of B, Constable X from B, Inspector W of D, Chief V of D, Mr. U, the nasty fellow who then got promoted to ZANU PF in E, but he was the teacher from F. Mr. T of D, Mr. S— he was the co-ordinating committee of D — Mr. R, Land Councillor, D, Mr. Q — he was a war vet — Mr. P, war vet, Mr. O, war vet. These are official war vets, uh, not made-up ones. And then N, President's Office in E, Mr. M, President's Office in E and various other ZRP and CIO officials. A variety of settlers and so-called warvets were sent, were all part of the original thing, this original sort of meeting/jambanja, which was basically, 'get off the farm.' L, K, J, Political Commissar I. H, the guy that I told you was involved in a lot of theft on the farm, G and ZZ. These were the main guys. The police vehicles brought this whole crew. This was the whole resettlement crew, where they basically came out to us and they said, 'Do not interfere. These people are being put on your farm. You're out of here.' That was the basic message. Their police vehicles were registration numbers ZRP-999X from A post and ZRP-999X from B.

This statement reveals the high degree of complicity between various arms of the State in co-ordinating the invasions. The above record shows co-ordinated participation from the following State agencies or related entities: the President's Office, the Assistant District Administrator, the police, the Ministry of Lands, the CIO, the Chief of the area, ZANU PF and War Veterans. The statement also clearly undermines arguments about the spontaneity of the invasions.

Farmer 8 reports that on Thursday afternoons it was difficult to drive through the clinic in W because all the war vets from the area would assemble there to receive money and food as payment for their actions. Farmer 44 describes how the settlers were supplied by Government and consequently had a relatively easy existence:

They were happy days. It was actually easy street for them because they were provided with army tents, and the bread was delivered and the milk was delivered and the food was delivered because it was all on the delivery route.

Farmer 74 describes a conversation he had with the chief war veteran on his farm.

I had a one on one with the head war vet, who ran the place. We sat down and had a cup of tea in his hut and while no one was listening he was quite happy to tell me what he was doing was wrong. And I said to him 'but you know, forget about it its right or wrong, you're an old man, how does this sit with your Shona cultural values? What you are doing?' And he said, 'It doesn't sit right at all. But we have to do what we have to do.' They were definitely controlled. And a lot of them were doing it under sufferance. They would often, you, you soon realised when it was pay-day when a vehicle arrived with mealie-meal and they all had money. They were definitely paid to do what they were doing.

Farmer 2 from Mashonaland Central also reports that in June 2001, the first invaders to arrive on their farm came in

...little green Peugeots, you know those 306s , the ones the army gets issued, you know the junior officers. And there was a CIO woman from E.

1.4.2 Police Inaction

The Commissioner of Police, Augustine Chihuri, has openly declared, 'I support ZANU PF because it is the ruling party'.⁶⁶ It is hardly surprising therefore that the police should be partisan in the performance of their constitutional duties. In numerous cases the ZRP refused to act, take reports or arrest in cases involving allegations of criminal acts perpetrated by ZANU PF and War Veteran settlers.

In various court cases Chihuri declared that the police did not intervene when farms were invaded because the matter was "a political one". In the light of the data from this survey sample, it seems that this odd argument should be interpreted as meaning that the police had been ordered by ZANU PF not to take appropriate action on the farms.

After the initial wave of invasions farmers received very little help from the police in evicting the illegal settlers. Farmer 93 from Mashonaland West reports that the police refused to evict the illegal settlers at the outset of the land invasions; 'They said well they would come back to us; but they weren't going to move them.'

Farmer 79 reports that the police acted in contempt of two High Court orders, one of which was an order to evict illegal settlers on the property. After the farm had been invaded in July 2002 Farmer 79 instituted legal proceedings to evict the illegal settlers through the High Court.

Meanwhile we had been in continual comms with our lawyer and on the 7th August a High Court order was issued allowing us, in fact instructing us to continue farming and all related activities. And the copies were served on the police, the ministry and the settlers with absolutely no effect whatsoever. In fact on the 12th August the settlers changed all the padlocks including my son's house and refused to move claiming the property for himself. The settler, P and his side kick, this um this B and the um I keep calling him a majiba⁶⁷, but um the, the green bomber⁶⁸, um yeah, what's his name, J and E. Um, we wrote a letter to T [name of MP] updating him. On the 14th August attempted to phone the Member

⁶⁶ See Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2007), *Their words condemn them: The language of violence, intolerance and despotism in Zimbabwe*, May 2007, HARARE: ZIMBABWE HUMAN RIGHTS NGO FORUM. This report details many other instances of blatant threats and support for acts of violence by senior members of the Government.

⁶⁷ A "majiba" was a youth who assisted guerillas during the liberation war, supplying food, carrying messages, etc.

⁶⁸ "Green Bombers" is the name given to members of the Youth Training Camps distinguishable by their green uniforms and propensity for violence.

in Charge because the High Court order through the Sheriff. We attempted to phone the Member in Charge to ask why the High Court order appeared to be ignored, um, no response he wasn't available. 17th a settler and 4 colleagues entered the homestead area and issued threats. 18th the two green bombers, they broke into my son's house, police informed, no response. 19th the settlers and Agritex moved the pump; our big pump unit from um, pivot block and put their own pump into position. On the 26th following up from the, because the first High Court order was um ineffectual at that stage, on the 26th August we were issued with another High Court order, it was an eviction order and the eviction order was for these P and B and their lackeys to head⁶⁹. Of course, nothing. Um the copy was served on the 27th to the Q Police, copies issued on P, um, copies to T and so on and just... Now we get to the, um 9th September where that was D-day for that Section 8. My eldest son was on the farm; the local police, Inspector Z with the so-called Task Force, arrested him. Um he was released on a technicality in that he was not the owner. Um, but we were told that it had happened and not to go back.

This case is instructive; it shows the police ignoring a valid eviction order for the illegal settlers, and simultaneously illegally evicting the farmer without a valid eviction order.

Farmer 78 from Mashonaland East describes in writing his eviction which took place with the full knowledge of the police but with 'no help' being 'forthcoming'.

A report to this effect was made to the S police who no longer have a Report Received Book, and are therefore unable to issue either an RRB No. or make an official report of any reports received.

An employee of Farmer 31, from Mashonaland West, describes the police reaction to his assault.

I phoned the police to come at the same time about the assault. They did not come. I kept phoning now and again daily from 30/6/01 up to 7/7/01 when the police came for the statement. They wrote it up on a rough paper. No docket was made. They were 3 policemen, A, B, C, who took my statement. But nothing was done. I wasn't called for hearing.

Interviewee 58, who ran a security company in Mashonaland East, alleges that on numerous occasions the police failed to react to serious breaches of the law committed by war veterans and allied parties. On one occasion Interviewee 58 and his security firm were called in to react to the serious assault of a farmer. Interviewee 58 collected the police to take them to the scene of the crime where the farmer and his wife, an elderly couple who grew pecan nuts and tobacco on their smallholding, had been severely beaten. Interviewee 58 describes the police reaction to the incident.

The police did nothing. Nothing, not a report, not a single reaction, not dogs, dogs didn't come out. We brought our own dogs, we did the tracking, we did everything.

On another occasion, another couple were assaulted. Interviewee 58 rushed to the crime scene dressed only in a pair of shorts, and saw the farmer lying by the bedroom door and his wife lying in a pool of blood in the passage.

So I got them to hospital, I got the truck and my guys in and we tracked them [the perpetrators]. We got the police, brought them, I went back, I didn't bring the police at the same time, brought him back, got the police in. They said 'ah, we can't do anything.' Nothing, nothing, nothing. Nothing.

On a third occasion, Interviewee 58 entered the police station at the time of a severe and widely reported assault in order to collect the police to help stabilise the situation.

I was in the [town X] Police station, telling the Inspector, 'Come on, let's go. We've got to go.' He said 'nothing to do with me' and I was in his office, sitting on his... I forced my way into his office and was sitting on his desk. I said, 'Mr. [farmer's name] is in trouble. This is against the law, my friend.' Anyway, nothing. Nothing, they wouldn't even record... and then when the perpetrators were all gone, they said 'Okay, okay Mr. Interviewee 58, we can go now.' I said,

⁶⁹ "Head" here in White Zimbabwean slang means to leave.

'Why go now? They've all gone. They've all gone. What are you reacting to? So you're not going to do anything.'

On a different occasion Interviewee 58 attempted to aid his wife's family, whose farm was under siege.

They asked me to go out there and have a look, so I thought, 'Be clever and go out at night'. Didn't work and I went through a boom and these settlers came out and they smashed my windscreen and everything. And I went and got the police, went back – nothing. Every time I did something, I reacted with the police. I did everything. Everything was recorded. I recorded every single thing, but the police did nothing.

And again in another incident:

Z he got *zondered*⁷⁰ on his verandah. Fires on the verandah, big fires. I called, I went to Y Police Station, called in – nothing. Wouldn't react and from the Police Station to the farmer's house, you could see the fire from the Police Station. You could actually see it. You know, he was on top of the hill. No reaction whatsoever. Nothing.

And again during another reaction:

So, I went on and I did, was doing my duties and I got hold of this war vet and I grabbed him by the scruff of the neck and I took him into my truck and I took him into the police station and I put him down and I said, 'This is the one that's caused the trouble. He – I'm charging him. This one here, I'm charging him.' The policeman just said, 'Ah, [Interviewee 58], [Interviewee 58],' and they wouldn't charge him.

Interviewee 58 personally suffered the effects of police failure to act when he was abducted from inside a police station, accompanied to his place of incarceration with police witnesses and tortured with sensory over-stimulation in confinement for seven days as set out above under the section **'Torture'**.

Farmer 44 left the farm after having paid the S.I. 6 severance package. However M, the high-ranking politician who had been allocated the farm as an A2 settler, told the workers that they had been cheated of their full packages and encouraged them to go into Harare and invade the farmer's house. 32 people gained entry to the farmer's property in a central suburb in Harare, and spent four days and three nights carrying out a farm style *jambanja*. Several windows were broken and the invaders lit a fire underneath the farmer's vehicle. Attempts were made to set fire to the curtains in the house. On the fourth day, the invaders demanded food from the farmer who refused to supply it. Later that day, the invaders went to fetch a GAPWUZ representative, who turned out to be exactly the same man who had calculated the farm's severance packages along with a representative from the NEC, and thus already knew the farmer to be in the right. This GAPWUZ representative went through the severance package with each employee and showed them that it was correct. During those four days the farmer and his wife requested police protection several times:

We asked the police to come and help us and the police wouldn't come. And then finally, after X from GAPWUZ had been through the calculations with the labour the police came from Z [a Harare] Police Station. The Member in Charge from Z Police Station arrived after three days, we hadn't been able to leave the fence and um, you know what he said to them. He sat down under the tree and I said, 'Please can you help us. There's no dispute now about the packages. I'm asking you to protect my property, protect me against, to protect me against...' He said, 'No, we can't do that'. Then he turned to the workers and said, 'These are white people and they don't count and when ZANU PF is finished I know that I am in trouble so we might as well do the best we can now. If there's anything in this fence you want, you take it because these white people have got a house and you haven't.' And we had all our tractors from the gate, all our tractors in a line, all our trailers, our irrigation, everything was here, everything...You know, and these guys, but the police, that is the man who is supposed to uphold the Constitution. But in my opinion, when this is all over, the first people that must account to me

⁷⁰ Slang meaning "abused, attacked".

for what they have done is the police, because they are not political and they are supposed to uphold the Constitution of the country and protect the population and uphold the law. If you are a politician you can almost excuse it but the police let us down. And that was a policeman in November 2002. He said, 'You take what you want out of this fence. It does not matter, these people have no power: they are white. Whatever you want, you take it.'

This racist statement from a ZRP Member in Charge supports the view that not only were whites not afforded the protection of the law by the police, but that the police actually incited incidents of lawlessness against them.

Interviewee 59, who was employed on the several farms of Interviewee 47 as a security manager, reports that on 28 February 2002, one of the security guards, M, was assaulted for being a 'sell-out'. He was badly assaulted and was swollen all over his body, so he was taken to the police station. The police brought in one of the alleged perpetrators for questioning, but he was released later that day with no charge being laid. Interviewee 59 also alleges that the police covered up the murder of assistant manager G, and recorded it as a motor cycle accident.

Farmer 67, in Mashonaland East, reports how the police reacted to violent situations.

So, our Member in Charge there was a guy by the name of Inspector J, and J was a great help to us. The guy who took over was a very big problem, hey. He was, you know he was a yes man, he would say ya I will try and assist and that, you know we had some guys severely beaten, um, a little bit later on our compound got burnt from one end to the other um, and he wasn't interested in assisting us at all. He just said that it was political problems, I can't help you. We'd get the, the guys from the department of um, the political department of the F police and we used to go and report to M Police because we fell under the District of M and um, it was all just basically a waste of time hey. You know we'd go and fetch the police, bring them they'd stand by and watch while some of our staff were getting beaten even. You know, it was absolutely hopeless.

Farmer 69 also reports on the general failure of the police to carry out their duties, even in cases of blatant theft.

Actually, in April 2002, this one guy came and I was actually having lunch. He took the keys for my shed, took my fertiliser keys – everything. Said he was now in control. I was not allowed to even park inside my barn complex. I had to park outside and walk in after being searched. And I said, 'Look, this is bulldust, I am going to call the police.' Phoned, phoned the police, they said, 'Oh no, no, we've haven't got transport.' Went out and fetched them, they came, I said, 'Look, the guy's stolen my keys, he's got the keys for my sheds and everything.' And the police just said, 'We must negotiate with them.' They refused to help. And even through 2000, I think 2001 was mostly the worst year for theft. I think I'd planted like 100 hectares in November 2000, you know, to reap in 2001 and I think I eventually only reaped about 10 tonnes. They actually, they were actually, we had them in lorries in the maize lands and I reported it to the police – it should still be... if they did record it, they said they were going to record it. I mean, the one time I reported the theft of 120 tonnes of maize and the police just said, 'It's political, we can't do anything about it.' But I mean it was, uh, it was blatant. I mean, they would be walking up the road with mealies in their hands, they didn't even try and get off to the sides and hide that they were stealing. No, and if you phoned the police they would just say, 'It's political, we can't do anything about it.'

The Clerk of Farmer 45 reports in detail on a serious incident which the police actually witnessed but thereafter failed to arrest the culprits.

Q, P, A, L, Z and M lead a group of invaders to the compound. They started burning the bar in the morning. We tried to talk to them in order stop them from burning the compound but they turned a deaf ear. A instructed his people to attack D. A beat him with a chain on the forehead and had a big cut and was rushed to the hospital. The case was reported to the police by phone and D reported also on his way to U hospital. D collected policemen on his way to the farm. On arrival at the farm P, Z, A and a group of about 300 settlers arrived at the farm and started attacking farm workers with sticks and stones. The workers ran and hid in nearby bushes. P, Z and A started burning houses, and encouraged his group to do the same. They burnt 42 houses. Clothes, blankets, furniture and kitchen things were all burnt and destroyed.

All this happened in the presence of policemen led by the Member in Charge Y. Wounded farm workers were rushed to the hospital by Farmer 45. Some worker were absent for work for due to the injury. Police just took statement but no arrests were made and no action was taken until now.

He also reports on another incident the police failed to react to in a responsible manner.

G led a group of 120 youths to the farm compound. He encouraged his people to move out workers H, T and Y from B Farm. His youths removed clothes and furniture outside the houses and force drivers to take goods to N Shops. Some of the property was destroyed, they also looted some property. The police were called but did nothing except stand and look. All this happened during the presence of the policemen.

The case of Farmer 23 from Mashonaland West, described above under **Assault**, is an incident in which the police refused to act knowing full well that a full-scale shoot out was taking place on the farm in question.

There were some police officers who responded professionally when farmers sought their assistance. However, the farmers do not want to name such officers because they fear retributive action. Farmer 39 in Mashonaland West would not give the name of a sympathetic policeman who assisted her when road blocks were set up on her access road. She states:

There was a very good sergeant who – I won't give you his name, because I don't think it should be publicised, because he's still in the police – and he was very good and he said, 'No. Phone me. If they do a roadblock, phone me and I'll come out right away.'

This policeman kept his word; the next time the settlers set up a roadblock the policeman arrived and had it dismantled within 20 minutes of it being reported. It is revealing that the farmer believes that giving the name of this policeman, who was merely doing his job properly, could result in adverse consequences for him five years later. It shows the extent to which the farmer considers the police to have been under instruction to behave in a partisan manner. It also shows that in some instances when the police acted in line with their constitutional duties, they were entirely capable of solving the problems presented by settlers.

1.4.3 ZNA⁷¹

Farmer 44, whose builder G was murdered by the ZNA as detailed above⁷², had a very big problem with theft, right from the start of the invasions when general lawlessness set in.

My farm became known as the S GMB depot because whenever anybody came past who felt like it you had to give so many bags to them. And they had vehicles coming in and taking bags and driving off with them. We were trying to get as much of the maize off the farm as much as we could. We only got about 40% of our crop off that year. We had a very big grain drier, we could do a hundred and something tons at a time dried. They used to bring the lorries and start the auger, and that was the end of the maize. I never grew another crop of maize because I knew I wouldn't get it. It was actually in the grain drier and the army used to come in army lorries with guns and start the auger and we'd call the police and they'd come and stand and say it's terrible, it's terrible, look what they are doing. And didn't, they couldn't stop it, they couldn't stop it. Ya, they wouldn't, wouldn't do anything to stop it, they couldn't do anything.

Farmer 91 set up a security company on the farm with guards and a dog section.

Twice we had the whole army with cannons, 100 army personnel accusing us of training MDC militia, the guards barracks was raided, our houses were, you know they checked us out completely. It might have been 2000 and then 2002. It was before both elections, when they are all jumpy and everything. Literally, the army descended with tanks. They arrived. They

⁷¹ The Zimbabwe National Army.

⁷² See page 8.

surrounded the whole place and we were grilled. They wanted to see all the records, search the place. Of course there were no arms or anything. No. we just had the dog section and umm the guards and the whole roster of all the farms and they took down this and that.

Farmer 20's farm was allocated to a senior army officer, Major S, who has subsequently been promoted to a position of even greater authority. In October 2003 Major S stationed four uniformed army guards at the farm, armed with AK 47 rifles, claiming that the farmer had received her Section 8 and was soon to be evicted. The farmer disputed this as she was challenging the original Section 5 in court. After living in relative peace with these army guards for several months, the situation flared up when a dispute arose between Major S and the farmer as to who owned the movable equipment. The situation then deteriorated, and the army guards moved their tent right outside the farmer's house. The farmer moved off the farm and on 24 May 2004 returned to the farm with the cook in order to fetch the cook's belongings. Whilst looking for a sack of weaner plates, the army guard threatened to kill the farmer and the cook with his AK. The farmer and cook quickly left.

On 27 May 2004 the farmer returned to the farm accompanied by her son. Whilst they attempted to take down a sack of weaner plates, the guard threatened to shoot the farmer's dog with an AK. When the farmer and her son went to try and put plates on the weaners, the second guard arrived and again threatened them with a loaded AK. They quickly left.

Several days later the farmer returned to the farm, accompanied by her son and several workers, in order to put the plates on the weaners. The same army guard arrived, apparently under the influence of some form of narcotic, and with his AK forced the workers to sit, whereupon he assaulted them. The workers then fled. The farmer and her son moved quickly to the house to try and remove some of the farmer's kitchen equipment. The army guard followed them into the security fence. Realising the situation was volatile the farmer and her son quickly got into the car, when the army guard proceeded to hold his AK against the farmer's son's head and to cock the weapon demanding all the farmer's keys. The farmer jumped out the car and ran to try and open the gate when the army guard ran after her and assaulted her with a stick. Fearing for their lives, the farmer's son handed over the keys but the guard still refused to open the gate. The farmer's son then rammed through the security gates and picked up the assaulted workers. The workers were taken to the M police station where the officer on duty refused to take any report or issue an RRB number, either for the workers or for the farmer.

Farmer 78 gives this written statement about ZNA and police involvement in a serious incident on his farm:

On Wednesday 5 September 2001 four uniformed members of the Z.N.A armed with AK47 rifles were deployed from S Police Station in a Police Landrover Defender reg. No: ZRP 999X driven by Constable O. They were tasked to follow up on a complaint made by a bus conductor of assault by two members of Q Resettlement. The two accused were located and beaten. On returning from Q the vehicle was stopped by 'warvets' from A Farm who complained about the refusal of A management to stop work and evacuate the farm. The main gate Security guard was the first to be beaten by the soldiers. A tractor and trailer was next encountered, the workers on the trailer were held at gun point on the ground and severely beaten by the soldiers with Constable O joining in. The driver, who refused to abandon the tractor, was also beaten. Death threats were then issued to be passed on to the manager of A Farm, W, and his African assistant and instructions to evacuate the farm by Saturday 8th September 2001 were also given. The next morning, Thursday 6th September 2001, W and his African assistant spent half an hour in the office of the Member in Charge, S Police, making a report on the above incidents. At a Security meeting the same afternoon the Member in Charge, Insp. T, denied all knowledge of the incidents at A Farm. When asked what the role of the army was in S, he stated that they were there to protect the 'settlers/investors' from Commercial farmers. The Member in Charge issued a stern warning to W and his assistant to be 'very careful' as the 'warvets' might invade Mr W's homestead.

Farmer 16, from Mashonaland East, was evicted by a Captain from the Presidential Guard who was fairly candid about being used by his superiors. He arrived at the farm before a Section 8 had been issued.

He was very pleasant. He said to us 'my job is to move you I will be doing my job so don't think that because we are talking nicely that you will be allowed to stay. You will not be allowed to stay. I will be moving you so just understand that and the more peacefully you go the better for all of us.' Uh, so that was, he was given his orders and he followed them.

1.4.4 Air Force

Farmer 56, located in Mashonaland Central, reports:

Over 100 people arrived at the farm in several buses, including two people who later identified themselves as air force personnel. Storming into the farmer's security fence they grabbed the farmer, took him into the garage and started to push him from one to another armed with axes and machetes. Many of the people had beer bottles and were evidently drunk. The leader, however, a war vet by the name of Comrade H was sober, as were a couple of other leaders. After attempting to kill the farmer's dog, they shoved the farmer into his own truck and forced him to give them a tour of the farm, the two air force personnel accompanying them. Forcing the farmer to switch off his radio, they proceeded to drive into the bush, whereupon the police arrived and defused the situation. Later, one of the air force personnel identified himself and told the farmer that some of them were staying on the farm, and demanded that the farmer slaughter a beast for them.

Farmer 79 describes their eviction which took place when two uniformed men and a third arrived at the farm.

There were two people in uniform, I think they were Air Force, they came in a vehicle, it was a Saturday morning, I don't know which Saturday, it was towards the end. And they came in and they drove right up to the house and we had run to the office which was just outside. We ran and locked the doors because this chap was rabid and they had iron bars. They were actually hitting the door trying to get in and I actually was trying to take a photograph and my family were getting mad with me and telling me to get away. And in the end he was just shouting, 'Get out of my complex! Get out of my complex!' absolutely rabid. And the other two eventually quietened down and I think he was probably drunk, he drinks a lot of whiskey apparently, Glen Fiddich, he always said come and have a Glen Fiddich with me. Um, and they went off and they said we are coming back. That was when our son said, 'come on, we'd better leave the farm,' and we piled dogs, the parrot, everything into the car. I've actually got a video of that, us driving away with the parrot squawking.

1.4.5 CIO⁷³

It is obviously difficult to be certain of CIO involvement in all the incidents that are reported because the CIO do not wear uniforms and are thus not always identifiable. However, many farmers allege that members of the CIO were directly involved in the process of eviction. Minutes of one meeting between farmer and settlers were taken by a police officer, and indicate the presence of two unidentified CIO operatives at the meeting.

Farmer 61, who stood as an MDC candidate in the 2000 elections, reports in a written statement that an operative from the CIO in R had come to visit his farm to get him evicted.

Whilst I was on the farm the R War Veterans Chairman, G of R Central Intelligence Office and I, also a war veteran, visited my farm and left a message that what the Member in Charge had told the settlers was to be ignored and the previous deadlines should be enforced. This message was conveyed to me by J the resident war veteran on the farm, and in the presence of the foreman.

Farmer 66 alleges that the CIO were involved in an incident that occurred in his area in 2000. After the High Court and the Supreme Court declared that the invasions were illegal and instructed the police to evict the settlers, several farmers in this area united together to evict the settlers

⁷³ Central Intelligence Organisation – see footnote 32 above

themselves, considering that the police refused to do so. The farmers combined their labour forces and went round from one farm to another to evict the settlers.

Anyway, um, it ended up in a, in a, well, a showdown with CIO. 'Cause we were moving up and they came and we were, at the time, sort of going from farm to farm and we met up with the police. We stopped at the police and said, 'This is what we're doing.' And we were so busy talking to the police that we didn't hear the guys coming behind us and they just opened up, 'ko-ko-ko-ko-ko-ko' [imitating sound of gunfire]. And we had a lot of employees out, there must have been about 250, 300 employees and I don't know how many farmers. Everyone just bombshelled⁷⁴. They were firing shots over our heads. So there was pandemonium. Everyone ran out, ran away and, well, most of the people ran away, but there were some older farmers there also and a couple of us stood our ground and they just came in, beating us with sjamboks⁷⁵ and I got pistol-whipped. I was told sit down and take your shoes off. Then they had us there, but didn't know what to do with us. So, there were 13 of us. My truck came driving up, because they did... we had cooked food and stuff for the labour. It was quite a long process. Came driving up and they saw this pandemonium, so the driver jumps out and the CIO guys all start walking towards it. And the guys from my truck turned around and the CIO guys start shooting over their heads. So, my guys run back to the truck and they jumped in. Now everyone's lying flat. In the back of the truck, our 8-tonne truck, you know. They fired a shot through the back and to this day, it's a miracle, I don't know what happened. The shot was about that high off the bed. It went through. Now, the guys are lying flat. Went through, went through the next wall into the, and stopped in the radiator of the, of the vehicle. Didn't damage the radiator, just that, you know, protection thing. Anyway, the driver sped off and he was chased by the CIO guys. And eventually they unfortunately came into a herd of cattle that were on the road. Anyway, they baled out and ran away. But how anyone was not shot I don't know how, how...

The police then arrested the 13 farmers who had remained behind, and took them to the police station.

So then they took 13 of us to P police station and so we're sitting there with the Member in Charge and by now the sort of farmers that got away have got hold of everyone. There's farmers from Harare South, even as far as Marondera came down and like came to the police station. Because now we're inside and the CIO guys are inside and everything. So, the Dispol guy, he calls us in and there were three of us – myself and a guy called AB and a guy called CD, who's, who's in P. He's quite a liberal guy, but they still respect him, you know. So, he's also like a spokesman. So, he was called in to mediate the CIO guys and the Dispol. And he, the Dispol guy said, 'Right, tell us what happened.' We gave our story and the CIO guy just said, stood up and he said, 'I'm not talking to you. [then to the others] You can come and arrest me once you pick up their bodies.' So, the Dispol guy said, 'You can't speak like that.' Anyhow, he walked out, he says, 'I told you to come and arrest me once you pick up the bodies.' Anyway, they made a court case against him and he was charged. But it all fizzled out. It was put out, put out, put out. He was then transferred to Gweru. The CIO guy that was involved was the same guy who murdered a headmaster in W.

Unfortunately the incident did not end there.

They didn't know what to do with us. So then, when the CIO guys left, the guys outside, the first vehicle got out, this was [name of CIO operative] and they didn't realise who it was so they let them through. The second one, some of the guys recognised him and the CIO guy, they stopped the car. The CIO guy pulls his gun out and points it at the one farmer. And before he knew it, another farmer had put his gun to this guy's head. Said, right, one for one type thing, you know. Anyway, then it got a bit out of hand, because the one farm worker recognised the one guy that had assaulted and with a pole he smashed him off the back of the bakkie⁷⁶, just ran up and clobbered him. Anyway, then there was pandemonium and the one farmer actually fired two shots in the air and that stopped everyone. The CIO guy ran back into the police station, out through the back and over the hill and gone.

⁷⁴ Meaning "Scattered in different directions"

⁷⁵ Leather hide whips

⁷⁶ "Bakkie" is an Afrikaans word for pick-up truck.

District Administrators[DA's]

Farmer 93 reports that the DA brought settlers onto his farm and allocated them plots before the farm had even received a Section 5 notice:

Anyway he was across allocating plots, this was on Farm Q and my son D hauled across there in a fury, he was cross about it. He called them, um, I must get this right, he said, 'you ruddy clown, you don't even know how to do your job, cos you are allocating land to these people you've got no right to do this and you haven't even issued a Section 5 on this farm'. And of course he was not popular having said that but those were his words and he was very cross about it and they were very cross and they refused to move off. This was the District Administrator. He was actually physically on this farm, he brought these people.

Farmer 44 reports the following incident involving the District Administrator from his District.

I recorded every single conversation that I ever had with anybody from the day they arrived on the farm. When he came I said to him, 'What do you want?' and I switched it on. I didn't hide it, he saw I had it, and he went berserk. He had policeman with him and um, the policeman said you come out and talk to us or we come in, so I went out the gate and he, he, you know I'm not easy to push around and he shoved me against the electric fence and grabbed my recorder. So I said to him, well this will look good in The Herald tomorrow; you know that a District Administrator has been put in jail for theft of electrical equipment, electronic equipment, this is going to be great. The DA actually got off the truck and slapped me and he threw the recorder at the policeman who caught it. The policeman said we will compromise and took the tape out and gave me back my thing, so ya, crazy times, crazy times, when I look back I think what a waste of effort.

Farmer 56 reports that in September 2002 the DA arrived to evict him. Having been arrested by the police supposedly for overstaying the 90 days of the Section 8 notice, the farmer's lawyer fought the case in court and won it. Having obtained a judgement in his favour that he could continue farming, the farmer took the document to the District Administrator who told him to continue operations. Despite the judgement from the magistrate the farmer remained wary that he would be illegally arrested for a second time by the police, so he decided to go away for the weekend. Returning on Monday, he showed the judgement to the police who told him to continue farming. Three days later, on Thursday, the DA arrived at the farm with CIO and uniformed police details armed with AK47's. One of the plain clothes officers, whose identity was not known to the farmer, told him that he had 12 hours to vacate the property as he had broken the law. The farmer showed him the documents from the court ordering him to continue farming, but the unnamed officer said, the farmer alleges, 'throw them away, we are higher than that.' Appealing to the Member in Charge, who was also present, the farmer reminded the Member in Charge that he had told the farmer three days prior to this incident that he could continue farming. The Member in Charge shrugged his shoulders and said there was nothing he could do. The farmer phoned his lawyer, who advised him that if the people on his property were carrying firearms the wisest action would be to vacate the farm in order to avoid unnecessary violence. The farmer left the farm that day.

1.4.7 Police

An employee of Farmer 31 from Mashonaland West records how a Constable was involved in the looting of the farmer's house, after the employee was badly assaulted. When the group of 50 settlers arrived at the farm on the 9th of August 2001 it was clear what their political allegiance was:

They came singing Chimurenga songs doing slogan 'Pamberi with ZANU, Pasi⁷⁷ with MDC'. As a Christian I did not raise my hand up for the slogan they took me as MDC man.

Because of failing to do this, the employee was assaulted:

⁷⁷ "Pamberi" and "pasi" commonly used in ZANU PF political sloganeering meaning "Forward with" and "Down with" respectively.

E told the gang that I am MDC man. A group leader holding a gun beat me. One man beat me with a stick on my forehead still holding me bleeding. I said to A as a leader, B as Secretary, C Chairman, D Constable, please I understand your point you people that you want dagga⁷⁸ which is understood by every one of us now, and you want Farmer 31 to leave the place and move his property today. I am going to do so. But why can't you live us alone to pack the property as per your request?

The employee goes on to describe the looting:

Even some of our workers did not have voice or power. They were afraid of being beaten. Busy packing on an unmanageable situation. Sheets, two chargers, clothes, all types or kind of clothes were stolen of Farmer 31's wife and her two younger daughters.

Elsewhere the employee lists other stolen items

Spoons, cups, pans, pots, forks, small dishes, nothing left. There were three standing fridges, everything was taken there. Cooked food were eaten at the spot.

He then saw the same Constable D forcing the tractor driver to go and harrow his A1 plot. When the main police arrived, they did not take a report on his assault:

Within an hour came DA Coordinator W and some police. DA asked me is there any problem? I said yes. I was beaten by A and another guy hit me with a stick on my for head and I was still bleeding my shirt had blood all over. He said that is not serious. It is like kids fighting within the family. They asked me what was wrong with you? Were you trying to defend your boss?

The police on Farmer 93's farm not only failed to evict the settlers, they actually loaded them up and moved them so that they were positioned right outside the farmer's house. The Superintendent referred to has subsequently been promoted.

But as far as war vets are concerned this crowd moved onto N Farm onto an irrigated land fairly close to my seedbed site. And I protested to the police about this and a little while later Superintendent A came out. He went down, he didn't come to see me at all, he just drove onto the farm went down to see these people, told them to move and brought them right up to the gate where they stayed to intimidate us.

Farmer 47 reports that the police in his area were quite capable of making arrests when the person making the allegations was a settler. D was driving down the road one day when he spotted the wife and daughters of a settler who had been causing trouble on the farm. D stopped and told the three women to stop threatening his workers. Before the end of the day, D had been arrested on three counts of attempted murder. D spent two nights in a small and crowded police cell with no room to lie down. The three women alleged that D had tried to run them over in his vehicle, and had actually hit the mother in his vehicle, which D vehemently denied. Later the farmer discovered that the woman had gone to get a medical report from a doctor who was a close friend of another settler on the farm, and the medical report referred to a chronic health problem she had had for many years. D's lawyer asked repeatedly for the Investigating Officer to remind the women of the consequences of perjury which he failed to do. After two days in the cells, the case came before the C Magistrates Court where D was released on bail. The case faded away and D was never tried.

Farmer 67 reports how the police harassed him into leaving the farm, acting in collusion with the war veterans:

But the cops were the worst though, you know. For me, it was getting arrested so often, as I say in my last 14 days I was arrested seven times. Prior to that quite a few times, to the

⁷⁸ Cannabis

extent that we offered to even get the police camp tidied up for them which the district did, cleaned up, the cells cleaned and all that hey. Ya, that, it was amazing you know, the actual average cop was a reasonable guy but their political division was totally bad. So while it was all political and it was hot and all that, and the political guys were around we'd get harassed, as soon as they'd leave the hand cuffs would go back, you'd be given your shoes and your belt, and told, sorry for that, you can go home, can we now come and buy some meat from your butchery this afternoon, you know? It was unbelievable. That just went on and on and on. And on my last time I got arrested and taken to the police camp they just showed me some guys and they said look if you want to be like Martin Olds, Dave Stephens or Alan Dunn⁷⁹, these are the guys that we use for it. You either pack and go or otherwise your wife's going to be raped, your kids going to be killed and you are going to end up like them and that was me, finished. I just said well, no point in that. You know the guys were even introduced to me. So, then I just packed my bags and said well, fine there's nothing more we can do about it, no point in staying.

A PISI⁸⁰ Constable J was actively involved in the illegal eviction of several farm workers on the farm of Farmer 61, who stood as an MDC candidate in the 2000 elections. Written statements from two employees of Farmer 61 describe how a police Land Rover with uniformed police, the police Support Unit, PISI and army details arrived at the farm on Wednesday 26th November 2001. The first employee, a foreman, quotes PISI Constable J as saying:

You must stay with your boss and discuss about the money, otherwise you will be chased away by night time. Don't delay or you will go without anything⁸¹.

The other employee, a clerk, corroborates this account, saying that Constable J told them:

There is no reverse on the move taken on this farm; the workers should leave the farm before they risk eviction during the night time.

The same statement goes on to quote Constable J as saying it was a 'plan by Government which we don't want to reveal' and that the group said 'we must leave the farm by Friday'.

The Foreman's statement ends:

After they left I felt so shaken because we thought the police were to uphold the law and so now we feel so unprotected.

⁷⁹ A reference to three white farmers murdered during the course of the land invasions.

⁸⁰ Police Internal Security and Intelligence.

⁸¹ See the comments on S.I 6 above.

1.4.8 ZANU PF

It is clear from the survey that ZANU PF played a leading role in the land invasions. It encouraged its supporters, consisting of war veterans, the unemployed and youths, to participate in the process; it ensured that Government agencies paid and fed the occupiers; it ensured that law enforcement agencies gave little or no support to the farmers under siege and their farm workers; party officials including Government ministers, were actively involved in the process of invasions. After the invasions, ZANU PF supporters launched a campaign of violent intimidation against supporters of the MDC.

Describing the wedge that was formed between him and his workers over the S.I.6 packages, Farmer 67 talks about ZANU PF involvement in the issue:

Because by then we had a brand new team which we realized was a Government instigated team um, through quite senior members of ZANU PF, these guys were directly under ZANU PF headquarters. These guys used to come out and try and negotiate on behalf of our staff. This went on for three months hey. I did three months of absolute torture, trauma there. Um, ZANU PF headquarters, I went there, they grabbed me, they beat me at the headquarters, um, all to do with our packages.

He goes on to describe the general importance of ZANU PF membership in order to escape intimidation.

Everybody was forced to take on the ZANU PF card hey, no question about it. If you wanted to go through that gate, if you didn't show your card, you didn't get through. I was made an honorary ZANU PF member, I've still got my card, life member. Ya, they even gave me my card for free, I didn't even have to pay for it. I've got it here. Here it is. Stupid thing but anyway.

So, with a big school and with total dependants on E Farm numbering about 3000, all the rallies were on E Farm. All the big rallies for the whole district were on our big football field there and um, ya, no, you either joined the party or you were dead meat basically, no question about it.

Farmer 92 also describes this tactic of blocking roads for those who didn't carry ZANU PF cards.

I'm apolitical – I don't get involved in, in politics – neither in ZANU PF nor in MDC nor anybody else. I did, at that stage, take out a ZANU PF card, in spite of being apolitical. They had roadblocks on the Y road, which was our access road and, with a ZANU PF card, one could get through that roadblock quite comfortably. Without it, you didn't. Um, it was really as a means to an end that I held that wretched thing. I'd be quite happy to be able to say I'd never had one, but...

Farmer 23, in Mashonaland West, records an assault on one of his guards at ZANU PF offices. His written statement reads:

INCIDENT AT H FARM – 7 JUNE, 2000

At about 11.45 am today a group of 5 'vets' arrived at my shed complex wanting to talk to me. This was in connection with an incident on about 3 June 2000. At about 4.00 am on 3 June 2000 I was told one of the guards houses had been burned down. He was out on duty. The house and contents were destroyed. He had been threatened by an employee 'D' to curtail his success at catching maize thieves, or he would have his house burned down. I called the police (RRB No. XXXXXX) who came out 2 days later. They questioned D then released him: insufficient evidence.

The vets today wanted to know why I had 'fingered' a ZANU PF man. I explained that it was a criminal matter, I did not know who the perpetrator was, they would investigate. Lots of accusations: I was an MDC supporter, enemy of the state, had all the land, etc etc. Made me sign away the whole farm, backdated to 10 March 2000. I have no copies. They also wanted me to take them to W ZANU PF office. I refused. I had to 'sign' that I refused to transport

them to ZANU PF. They also wanted me to sign that the reason was because I was not a ZANU PF supporter, which I denied to do. The consequences of having a kangaroo court at ZANU PF offices in W may have been serious. They called up the guard and berated him as well. As I refused to give them transport they said that no tractors are to be used in the lands. If they were found working, they would be burned. They left, on foot, with the guard (Q), whom, I imagine, they will re-educate in the best ZANU PF tradition. They have told the labour not to be seen working in the lands.

PS Q returned later – he had been beaten up, rolled in the mud, had his shirt removed and the letters MDC written all over it in marker and then the shirt was taken. He came back in his trousers. He has since made himself scarce.

Signed
Farmer 23
(Farmer 23, Mashonaland West)

1.4.9 Transfers

One recurrent theme in the interviews is that police officers who tried to perform their duties professionally during the land invasions were transferred or subjected to other sanctions. Interviewee 59, who was employed on the several farms of Interviewee 47 as a security manager, reports that the police often tried to take action but were thwarted by their superiors. Helpful officers were transferred.

You know, it was very difficult for the police. They were quite helpful sometimes. When we went to the police reporting anything they would take down the report. And if you asked for the reference they would give you reference. But I think their actions were limited because of what was happening in the country at the time. I'm not sure now, but I know that time the Member in Charges were being moved. I don't know why but maybe it was because of these reports and what was happening on the farm and if one was alleged which was, which was not good then you would be transferred to somewhere else. Yah, but what I know is they were, umm, Officer in Charges were just transferred.

Commenting on the transfer of a sympathetic policeman, Farmer 44 describes the general difficulties of dealing with the police throughout the invasions.

You know, you are working with ghosts because that's what they were. If a policeman helped you on your farm, you know N was a wonderful policeman, he was a Matabele, he helped us on one occasion when we really needed help. He was transferred the next week. So you know, it sounds like now we didn't make records and we didn't try but they are ghosts, ghosts. You'd go to the police station and they'd say "we'll send in an officer" and he comes and "what's your name" and he would say "oh, I'm Comrade so 'n so" and you'd go back the next day and he's not there and then they brought in war vets as policemen. Um, you know you were working with ghosts in the end.

1.4.10 Patronage

The survey sample records 62 new farmers directly linked to Government, whether politicians, civil servants or members of the armed forces. The survey sample records the following A2 settlers: several Ministers, the brother of a senior politician, several Senators, the wife of a Minister, a Deputy Minister and MP, a Deputy Mayor, a former Mayor, a District Administrator, a magistrate, a judge, a Zimbabwean diplomat posted abroad, a senior figure in the Department of Lands, a Rural Councillor, several Agritex Officers, a Government doctor, various policemen, army and air force officers, an officer from the Presidential Guard, members of the CIO, an instructor from a Border Gezi Youth Training Camp, a member of the Lands Committee, a secretary to a Minister, senior figures from National Parks, various prominent ZANU PF businessmen and a ZANU PF District Secretary. A1 settlers also include large numbers of soldiers and policemen. In addition, foreign nationals from Libya and China were allocated the land of farmers in the survey sample.

Allocation of land to these "new farmers" reinforced a patronage system between Government and its supporters. By securing the loyalty of these new farmers, the State managed to invest itself with a

strong and sustained political network in the commercial farming sector, thereby ensuring the continued political intimidation of its opponents. This patronage system, however, is doubly sinister. Not only has the State bought the loyalty of its supporters, but it is in a position to punish those who renege on their political obligations through immediately confiscating land under the new laws enacted to remove white farmers. This gives the patronage clients a double motivation to continue to support ZANU PF. Not only must they show their gratitude for the farm that has been given to them, but they must also constantly be aware that the farm can be taken away at any stage. In the cases, for example, of the magistrate and the judge allocated land in the survey sample, this means that they will be wary of making judgements that go against the State, and this compromises their judicial independence. The assault on property rights that took place during the land invasions thus serves to further entrench ZANU PF political power. Furthermore, placement on a farm secures access to other many lines of patronage, such as fuel provided to the farmer at the official price and unavailable to anyone else without political connections. Since the price of this fuel was usually about 1000th of the open market price, ready money is to be made if the fuel is not used for farming operations as intended but is resold. This kind of patronage is replicated for farmers with several other commodities and cheap finance.

The survey sample revealed that a very small percentage of farm workers were allocated land on the farms they worked and lived on. This effectively displaced a much larger number of people than the number of people allocated land. The Government's arguments about the redistribution of land to the landless poor are specious and clearly not supported by the evidence.

1.4.11 War Veterans

The role of the war veterans appears throughout the testimonies. However, a printed notice in the possession of Farmer 96 presents a succinct cameo of the motivations of the war veterans, written as it is by war veterans themselves, and is replicated below. It will be noted that land redistribution is hardly mentioned in the document.

PROTEST AGAINST WHITE COMMERCIAL FARMERS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED THE MDC'S PLOT TO ASSASSINATE THE PRESIDENT CDE R. G. MUGABE AND WHO HAVE ALSO LOBBIED FOR SANCTIONS AND THE SUSPENSION OF ZIMBABWE FROM THE COMMONWEALTH. THEY HAVE ALSO TAKEN PART IN HOARDING BASIC COMMODITIES AND SUPPORTED THE ZCTU STAYAWAY – 22/03/02

- We are advising all White Commercial Farmers to leave the farms with immediate effect. This decision comes as a result of White Commercial Farmers refusing to reconcile with the government of ZANU PF even after the government had tried its best to reconcile with them.
- We have also realised that White Commercial Farmers are using the farms left with them to re-organise themselves against the ruling part/government for negative publicity on Zimbabwe
- We have also noted that some White Commercial farmers have started buying ZANU PF cards as a strategy to cover up their defeat by ZANU PF during the Presidential elections to protect their interests. It should be noted that this protest will advance to those companies who forcibly closed their companies under the MDC Political Motivation to damage the ZANU PF Government, after its defeat during the just ended Presidential Elections.
- The White Commercial Farmers have again regimented their workers, transported them, and fed them to vote against the ZANU PF Government like they did in the 2000 Parliamentary elections, ignoring the hand of reconciliation given to them by ZANU PF since 1980.
- ZCTU and MDC have managed to do several good things for themselves which Zimbabweans will never forget, to divide Zimbabweans destroying Unity among Zimbabweans and, advocating for Civil War, to advocate for terrorism, to destroy Zimbabwe's economy and to sell our Independence and our sovereignty to the British and American Imperialists. As a result ZCTU is no longer a Worker's Union but a Political Arm of MDC and should therefore be banned with immediate effect.

It is in this regard that we are protesting against the above and with effect from Saturday the 23rd of March 2002, the above protest will be carried out in various farms and later in other

industries which to date are contributing to the destruction of our economy in support of the British American proposed sanctions and suspension on Zimbabwe.

Indians Watch Out !!!.

STRUGGLE FOR LAND CONTINUES UNTIL VICTORY IS CERTAIN

By Revolutionary War Veteran – 3rd Chimurenga

[Name of War Veteran]

[Position of War Veteran] (ZNLWVA)

Contact Cell: 011 XXX XXX

1.5 Non-violent Invasions.

The aim of this section is to provide an example of a farm takeover which was not accompanied by rampant lawlessness and violence. Even without such violence, the psychological stress which resulted is apparent. Of the survey of 71 farmers there are 10 who record no tabulated violations in the tables. This is the story of one of those ten, Farmer 84, who states:

We had a very, well, peaceful time... I must admit, in comparison to a lot of people. Very peaceful, um, ya it wasn't, you know it wasn't nice, but I mean peaceful.

Then in April 2000, before the farm had been listed for acquisition or issued a section 5 notice, the settlers arrived.

In April 2000, we had a group of youngsters, rabble rousers, they were just rent a crowd, they came on and they came and settled in our workers' beerhall and caused a bit of an problem. Yeah, they stayed on the farm, probably about fifteen to twenty 20/22 year olds. They stayed in our beerhall for a couple of weeks. And then two elderly war vets, when I say elderly they were probably about 55, 60. They came from J, they were just the communal farmer type. Then they came and settled there on the farm in the beerhall there for about 6 months, I think. They did nothing, they were harmless. Of the 20 original, young settlers most of them moved out onto other properties in the area and I think we had two left with these two elderly settlers. It was all peaceful.

One afternoon Farmer 84 received a visit from prominent war veteran Z:

So it was an afternoon, you know we were very close to town, so he just pitched up with his two heavies. That was my first encounter with Z, then he had a little rally there, gave me a ZANU PF T-shirt and we got to know each other quite well. I gave him some diesel and a pocket of potatoes and we chatted and you know he wasn't, he wasn't intimidatory. Well, he was a bit intimidatory, I suppose, but um he wasn't as bad as he was made out to be.

After having illegal settlers present on the farm for over a year, Farmer 84 received his Section 5 in June 2001. The farm was then pegged by Agritex.

Agritex came and pegged for A2 settlers. Mr D, he got half the farm, our farm is 1000ha and the other half of the farm was pegged into 10 plots with ten A2 holders, of which I think I met three or four of them.

Shortly after his farm had been pegged, Farmer 84's relative H, who farmed nearby, had a serious *jambanja* style incident.

H actually was in Q when his farm was taken over by Army Officer P and his wife X which was a terrible *jambanja*. H had to rush back from Q and sort it out. And um, H was back in a couple of days, and these people had just moved in and taken over his farm. Vehicles, everything, motorbikes, he wasn't allowed to take a thing off. Well, they were allowed to take off their furniture eventually, but Officer P took over the whole farming as it was and he was very threatening. H had got back from Q. And then he met up with P, and this is when P said 'I haven't tasted a white man's blood since 1980' and 'kneel down' and it was a vicious thing and we could hear it on the Agric-Alert. My relative V was on the Agric-alert and she was calling for help, and what can you do with armed soldiers, you know there were soldiers there.

Anyway, when H eventually calmed P and X down, they had a meeting and X said 'tell Farmer 84 down the road there, he will be the next one.' Cos we were just over the road from each other. Sure enough I think a week later; we got our Section 8.

The 'Agric-alert' which Farmer 84 refers to was a radio system connecting all the farmers in the area. It was at times a mixed blessing for farmers. Whilst it made it easy and efficient to communicate important information, call for help, have evening roll calls, and so on, it also contributed to the climate of fear and uncertainty, as people in serious situations could be constantly heard on the radio calling for assistance. After the Section 8 was issued in April 2002, two years after the settlers had first arrived, Farmer 84 received a call from prominent war veteran Z.

My friend, Mr Z phones me and says Farmer 84, I've got the man who's got your farm, I'm coming to see you tomorrow, I've been negotiating with him. Anyhow, this D comes out the next day in his chauffeur driven Mercedes with Z sitting next to him and they're all in suits and we discuss the takeover of the farm. But D didn't say 'get out now'; in those days the A2 settlers were law abiding. They said 90 days and he didn't say 'leave me all this equipment'. But he did say he wanted to grow some wheat and I said how can I grow wheat when I have got a Section 8. And the DA called us all in because all of a sudden they realised they were going to have no wheat if everybody is kicked off and he hoodwinked us into growing some wheat. So we planted the wheat there in mid-May and then we were off in August. You know, anyhow I managed to reap my wheat by cell phone from here but it was a real problem. I wasn't allowed on the farm.

Before the farmer was finally removed from the farm he tried to give up two of the three properties which were being farmed by his family, in line with the Government's proclaimed policy of 'One Man, One Farm.' However he was not successful.

In the meantime I was working with these three properties. You know, remember the Government saying 'one man, one farm' so we would surrender these two farms, B and C, we wouldn't contest the acquisition of them if we could keep A. And that sounded all very well and it nearly worked but Mr. D had seen our farm and they were going to put Mr. D onto B. No, he said, he didn't want a pig farm, he wanted a farm just here on the main road, very close by and that's when he caused trouble. That's when he kicked my father off. After we had left, my father was there for two weeks. I told my Dad before, I said you're mad to stay here and he said, no no no I'll stay... Anyway two weeks later, he was kicked off. He couldn't stay there on his own, it was just stubbornness and in those days nobody knew what to expect. But I had this document from the Attorney General's office, saying that I wouldn't contest those two farms B and C if we could keep A, as the Government said 'one man, one farm'. I said you can have those bloody farms, if we can keep A, but Mr D had nothing of that.

CFU statistics reveal that there were about 1,800 farmers who owned single farms prior to the land invasions. Farmer 84, like the majority of these single-farm farmers, had expected to survive the land invasions by renouncing multiple-farm ownership. Farmer 84 moved off on the 8th or 9th of August 2002 when the 90 days of his Section 8 expired. His wife reports:

And they were there waiting. D's wife was waiting. He was overseas, he phoned us the night before and he was quite rude on the phone. Mr D. He was at that time the MP for T and a year or two later he got a promotion, Deputy Minister of Q. They moved in literally as we moved out, they couldn't wait for us to get out.

At about this time Farmer 84 had to pay his staff the S.I. 6 severance packages. He did this for all three farms. Now living in town, Farmer 84 describes the theft of his equipment and crops. When he left the farm, Farmer 84 did not manage to remove his entire wheat crop. The A2 settler, Mr D, took 350 tonnes of it and sold it without contributing anything to the farmer's inputs. The uncertainty of the situation meant that Farmer 84's father received very little for the cattle, after he was forced to move off two weeks after Farmer 84.

My Dad was going to look after the cattle. And when my Dad left two weeks after us, Mr D. paid him for the cattle. But it was peanuts. And Mr D. took three tractors from the farm which he said he'd pay for but he never did.

However, in contrast to a large number of the farmers in the survey sample, Farmer 84 did manage to get a large amount of equipment off the farm. Today half of farm A is abandoned.

Ah, that's as I say Mr D. has got half the farm, the other half of the farm is not derelict but just about. You know a beautiful farm, beautiful road structure everything, now they say the roads are finished, like a goat track. One of my labourers came to me the one day and said, um we had a big 100 hectare block of land which is called W. I don't know why but that's what we used to call it and he said, boss, if you walk in W now, you better be careful you might meet a lion. It's that overgrown.

Farmer 84 also talks about the workers who used to work for him.

A few labourers are working for Mr D. but he doesn't pay, so the rest are mingling around. They refused to leave. They said no, this is my pension, you know, my dad did a lot of things for them, so they have carried on living there.

Farms B and C had a similar turn of events from the beginning.

We had a group of about 20 – 30 war vets, full time for about two years and they were growing crops there. We gave them a piece of land and they didn't cause much trouble. They were just sort of local rabble rousers from the area, a few of them. They were genuine war vets and I think they arrived in about June 2000. In fact the first day, the labour chased them off, if I remember correctly but then they were soon back on and then the labour were in trouble. But they were there full time and they had their little piece of land and they thought they were going to get that farm, you know the normal war vets up front but then that farm was taken over by, was given to a businessman, a prominent ZANU PF guy, Mr. S.

Before B farm was allocated to an A2 settler, Farmer 84's brother moved off.

Because at that stage, my brother had left, he was a bit intimidated by these war vets and he'd had enough so we had a manager for the last year. My brother left in May 2001. He'd had enough.

However the war veterans were removed without being allocated land, and it was reassigned to prominent ZANU PF businessman Mr. S.

He got B and C was divided into three, I never actually met any of the three people on there, because um, B was the headquarters and C was just a bit of land next door to it. But Mr S. was a very peaceful takeover because you see at that stage I still had that document from the Attorney General, they'd have those two farms and I'd have the other one, A. So um, Mr S. and I got on well, he bought all the equipment, bought all the livestock, you know because he is a prominent businessmen, he's Chairman of P Bank, Chairman of L. He has his own pig farm as well already in I Communal Land.

Obviously, neither Mr D., who was allocated half of Farm A and is a Deputy Minister in Government, or Mr S., who was allocated Farm B and is a prominent ZANU PF businessman, could conceivably be considered to belong to the landless poor. All three of Farmer 84's family's farms were allocated to A2 settlers.

2. Reconsidering the Government Argument

In view of these testimonies, it is appropriate here to revisit the narrative of Mugabe and the arguments of the Government regarding the invasion and redistribution of land. To reiterate, that position contends:

In February 2000 a spontaneous invasion of white-owned land took place, led by the landless poor. The police were unable to contain this invasion, and the minor acts of violence against the white farmers that accompanied it. The Government then acted to address this invasion by responding to the wishes of its people. Land was then allocated to the landless poor.

The evidence set in this Report clearly establishes a very different interpretation.

As the testimonies reveal, the invasions of white-owned farms were neither spontaneous, nor were they led by the landless poor. The groups of settlers consisted largely of ZANU PF youths led by one or two war veterans. The fact that this structure was so widespread shows that there must have been an organising entity behind the invasions. It is significant too that there were no MDC invaders reported in the survey sample, though MDC voters at the time comprised roughly half of the voting population. If the invasions had indeed been a spontaneous assertion of the people's will, one would expect to count men and women of all political persuasions amongst the settlers. This also shows significant Government organisation. In addition, the survey sample provides ample evidence that these groups were transported, supplied and paid by Government agencies. The CIO, ZRP, ZNA and various DA's, MP's, Governors, Ministers and Judges are all implicated in the invasions reported in the survey sample, along with ZANU PF and the War Veterans.

The survey sample also records numerous instances when police blatantly refused to try and contain the invasions. In the very few instances where the police took direct action against settlers, they were always initially successful in enforcing the law. It is obvious that the failure of the police to carry out their constitutional duties occurred under instruction from the political authorities, and was the result of a lack of will rather than a lack of ability.

Moreover, it is cynical to claim that only minor violations occurred on the farms and that these were all perpetrated against the white farmers. Gross human rights violations occurred on the farms in the survey sample, with the majority of these crimes being committed against the farm workers. This significant fact has been sidelined in the public perception of these events and invites the question as to why farm workers and their families were attacked and their property destroyed or stolen by those invading the white-owned farms.

Within the Government position there can be no answer to this question. The fact that targeting of farm workers occurred suggests that settling colonial injustice was not the impulse that instigated the land invasions; instead, the sustained and violent suppression of the political opposition must be credited as the primary aim of the invasions. As many of the statements considered here reveal, violations were often expressly committed on both farmers and farm workers because of their actual or perceived political affiliation to the MDC.

To claim that Government responded to the will of the people in legalising the whole process is also patently false. The legislation was designed (paradoxically) to facilitate lawlessness. This is revealed in the fact that amnesties were enacted to render those who had perpetrated violence on the farms immune from prosecution and to send a signal to those who would wish to do so in the future. It is also revealed in the very title of legislation such as The Rural Land Occupiers (Protection From Eviction) Act. That legislation not only legitimised what had been unlawful trespass but also prevented farmers from removing from the land those who continued to engage in lawlessness on their properties. Further legislation was designed to facilitate the allotment of the acquired land to ZANU PF officials, and not peasant occupiers, once the white farmers had been removed, as demonstrated by the subsequent repeal of the Rural Land Occupiers (Protection From Eviction) Act and the enactment of legislation imposing severe penalties for occupying land without an "offer letter" from Government. It was also designed to destroy white farmers' ability to finance or support

the MDC in any way, not only by acquiring their land but also by acquiring moveable farm equipment without any meaningful compensation. The legislation gave only a façade of obeisance to the rule of law. Government failed to comply with its own acquisition procedures and failed to comply with a raft of court orders that resulted from such non-compliance. Ultimately dropping this pretence, the Government introduced Constitutional Amendment No 17, which ousted the jurisdiction of the courts from the acquisition process.

The claim that land has subsequently been allocated to the landless poor is also patently false. As the survey sample shows, large amounts of land have been allocated to the political elite, the judiciary and other Government supporters in a move to buttress the system of patronage. This patronage system as has been described above is a doubly effective: it gives the favoured few a farm, but without title or property rights. This means that retention of the farm requires continued fealty to the ruling party as the farms can be taken away from the new occupants at will, on a whim or wisp of perceived disloyalty.

The survey clearly demonstrates that the following conclusions are more compatible with the evidence:

- The land invasions began in the immediate wake of the February 2000 Constitutional Referendum as part of the Government's plan to stamp out the growing support for the political opposition, and to some degree as a punitive manoeuvre against farmers and farm workers who were viewed as mobilising against ZANU PF. These invaders were organised, paid, supplied and transported by the State.
- On the farms they proceeded to undertake a campaign of systematic violence against the farmers and particularly the farm workers and their families. This violence was conducted on a large scale to dissuade people from supporting the MDC. The police had been ordered to neglect their normal duties and allow the organised violence to continue. The State retroactively passed legislation to legalise their position or to grant them indemnity for the violence they were guilty of.
- White farmers were then illegally evicted, along with hundreds of thousands of their workers and their families. The farms were taken over by senior politicians, members of the judiciary and civil servants, as well as those sympathetic to, or supporters of, ZANU PF. This system of patronage allowed Government to obtain violent political control over a large part of the country which had been edging towards dominance by the opposition.
- During this time farmers and their workers sustained massive losses, trauma and injury. The landless poor did not lead the invasions; and the landless poor largely did not benefit from the redistribution of land. There was no revolution.

3. The Human Consequences

There is a considerable literature on the consequences of organized violence and torture, the most enduring of which is persistent psychological disorder, which is most frequently Post-traumatic Stress Disorder or Depression.⁸²

Organized violence and torture has been documented in each of the last three decades of Zimbabwe's history.⁸³ One study showed that 1 adult in 10 over the age of 30 years reported torture and was suffering from a clinically significant psychological disorder as a consequence,⁸⁴ and high rates of torture and consequent psychological disorder were found in a study of former guerrilla soldiers from the Liberation War of the 1970s.⁸⁵ Even higher rates of torture and its sequelae were found in studies of the Gukurahundi period of the 1980s in Matabeleland.⁸⁶ Here it was found that more than 80% of the sample reported torture, and the prevalence rate for consequent psychological disorder was 50% of all adults over 18 years.

In 2005, in the aftermath of Operation Murambatsvina, ActionAid International conducted a community survey,⁸⁷ and this indicated the following:

The major finding was an extremely high rate of clinically significant psychological disorder in the sample. 69% of the sample had scores in the clinically significant range, which indicates a probable population needing psychological assistance of about 820,000 persons. The prevalence was higher in the HIV/AIDS group [75%].

Secondly, a number of significant relationships were found between psychological disorder and the reported "Experience" of trauma:

- *A significant relationship between current psychological disorder and the number of trauma events reported;*
- *A significant relationship between current psychological disorder and trauma due to OVT [organized violence and torture];*
- *A significant relationship between current psychological disorder and trauma due to displacement events [OM items];*
- *A significant relationship between current psychological disorder and repeated exposure to trauma.*

⁸² For an overview see Quiroga, J., & Jaranson, J.M (2005), *Politically-motivated torture and its survivors*, TORTURE, Vol.15, 2-3, 1-111.

⁸³ See Amani (1996), *An Investigation into the Sequelae of Torture and Organised Violence in Zimbabwean war veterans*, HARARE: AMANI; Amani (1998), *Survivors of Torture and Organised Violence from the 1970 War of Liberation*, HARARE: AMANI.

⁸⁴ See Reeler, A.P., Mbape,P., Matshona,J., Mhetura,J., & Hlatywayo,E. (2001), *The Prevalence and Nature of Disorders due to Torture in Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe*, TORTURE, 11, 4-9.

⁸⁵ See Reeler, A.P., & Mupinda, M.(1996), *Investigation into the sequelae of Torture and Organised Violence amongst Zimbabwean War Veterans*, LEGAL FORUM, 8, 12-27.

⁸⁶ See Amani Trust (1998), *Survivors of Organised Violence in Matabeleland: Facilitating an Agenda for Development - Report of the Workshop*, BULAWAYO: AMANI TRUST.

⁸⁷ ActionAid (2005), *An In-depth Study on the Impact of Operation Murambatsvina/Restore Order in Zimbabwe*. ActionAid International, in collaboration with the Counselling Services Unit (CSU), Combined Harare Residents' Association (CHRA) and the Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP). November 2005.

In the only study comparable to the present investigation, a very high rate of significant psychological disorder was found in a sample of displaced commercial farm workers, with 81% reported scores in excess of 4, which is considerably higher than any comparable primary care population, including populations containing survivors of torture.⁸⁸ Again, in a study of Zimbabwean refugees seen in Johannesburg, South Africa, 47% were identified as having clinically significant psychological disorder.⁸⁹

As indicated earlier, interviewees were asked to respond to a simple questionnaire, the SRQ-8, which consists of 8 simple questions concerning the experiences of the interviewee in the week prior to the questions being asked. In the SRQ8 database we have 119 respondents. (This number is higher than the 71 interviewees recorded in our sample, as many interviews include the spouse of the farmer, and both farmer and spouse were tested with the SRQ-8. In addition, this number includes other interviewees not included in our sample as no transcript or supporting documentation was available for them at the time of compiling this report.)

The results are highly significant. 54 out of 111 interviewees (45.38%) answered 'Yes' to four or more of the 8 questions, a score indicating clinically significant levels of trauma, and that respondents should be seeing a mental health professional. 9 interviewees (7.56%) answered 'Yes' to 6 or more of the 8 questions. This prevalence rate is in the same range as several other recent studies of organized violence and torture since 2000, and is markedly higher than the prevalence rates generally found in the general mental health care setting.

There can be no doubt that the Government's land seizures were highly traumatic for many farmers. Only 10 of our 71 sample members did not report any of the tabulated violations: murder, torture, assault, death threats, abduction, eviction, arson, barricade/jambanja. In addition, if the 6 farmers whose tabulated violations are limited to death threats and nothing else are removed, we have 55 farmers out of our 71 sample who reported either murder, torture, assault, abduction, eviction, arson, barricade/jambanja or a combination of these. Coupled with the highly publicised attacks on other farmers, the district radio systems providing constant information on the violent situations happening on nearby farms, and the isolation and helplessness due to the police failure to protect life and property, it is not surprising that such high levels of trauma should be recorded.

⁸⁸ See Amani (2002), *Preliminary Report of a Survey on Internally Displaced Persons from Commercial Farms in Zimbabwe*, HARARE: ZIMBABWE.

⁸⁹ See Idasa (2005), *Between a Rock and a Hard Place. A Window on the Situation of Zimbabweans Living in Gauteng*. A Report by the Zimbabwe Torture Victims Project. September 2005. PRETORIA: IDASA.

3.1 Trauma in Adults

In addition to the findings of the clinical screening, there are the factual reports from the interviews of the trauma experienced by the interviewees. In their own words, this is more compelling than the bland statistics reported above.

The clerk of Farmer 45 describes the feelings of the workers when it became evident to them that the farmer was about to be kicked off, despite having a High Court order allowing him to continue farming.

1 week after the court Mr. X came and gave Farmer 45 2 days notice to leave the farm. That was like a blow to most farm workers. The weather was life upside down. That was hard to swallow. We had nothing to say but help packing the boss's goods and send to Harare. Workers were now chicks without hen. The cover shed had been taken away.

Farmer 14, from Mashonaland East, describes how his wife died from a heart attack during the land invasions.

My wife died definitely, I say, through the trauma of all this, before this... Before I got the... you know before moving, you know, we were having hassles... All the next door neighbours were getting hassled and they were chanting past our gates and that. The odd one would come in and shout and she was just a bundle of nerves you know. And then she had a heart attack in 2000 June, she died. (Farmer 14, Mashonaland East)

Farmer 31, from Mashonaland East, describes the breakdown her husband V suffered during the invasions.

V had a break down around that time, a medical problem. But in V's case first of all he had to go to court for disregarding section 8. You know we'd done all of that. So there were about 8 or 10 blokes in court in R. I went out with them at the time and you could see he was already beginning to shake and twitch and that, and I managed to get it turned, over-turned because we won our case and that. It was after that he spent a week in T Hospital? 2 weeks in T Hospital? Yah. It was that time, you know when they wanted to lock farmers up, so we'd spend the week on the farm and then come into town on the weekend to evade them. Yah it was all over that time so it was very stressful. You know everything just fell apart all at once. If I can put it that way. It was Dad and I did the moving off the farm. V, we didn't think it was good for him to go back.

Farmer 71, from Mashonaland East, describes an unusual aspect of the trauma.

Whenever I went home to the farm, I had to physically force myself, I was sick before going. Just awful experience and, come December when I finally packed up, I, I couldn't go again, I hadn't finished and I just couldn't get myself to go again, I just couldn't do it. I know for months, the ring of the telephone was just really a traumatic thing to experience, just the ring of the telephone and only just recently when somebody suggested to me that I change my ringtone that I've recovered from the phobia about the telephone, because it was always bad news coming from there, or it could have been. 90% of the time it was a bad call saying "this is what's happened, that's what's happened."

My son developed an involuntary shake on his foot which now seems to have resolved, but I'm pretty sure that was related to it as well. Everybody gets their own way of handling these things.

3.2 Trauma in Children

The events on the farms were not confined to the principals, the farmer or his wife, but, as was amply described above, these events were public and hence witnessed by a wide range of people. For farmers and farm workers, their families were as much at risk as they were.

Farmer 39, from Mashonaland West, describes the state of their son L

L – we didn't realise the state he was in. We tried to make light of it and said, "This is what the settlers have got to do," and all the rest of it, because we didn't want them growing up with a hatred, which I think we've succeeded in, because we had plans to stay here. We still have plans to stay here. But L, unfortunately, after we'd moved, our mothers died fairly rapidly. My husband's mother got a brain tumour and my mum's Alzheimer's was just like speeded up, mega. And they died within three months of each other – the grandmothers – and we didn't realise that L, my eldest, went into major depression. So he was seven. Seven when he started showing it. But it had a strange manifestation, we had it for nearly a year. One minute he said his arm was paralysed and then he said his leg was paralysed. He couldn't walk. He ended up in traction, I ended up going to doctor after doctor. And eventually I ended up with one of the doctors who said, "I hate to tell you, but nobody's recognised it – it's depression." So I said, "Okay, I don't believe in psychologists, but let's take him to one." And we took him to one, which cost us an absolute bloody fortune, but she did the job. He has now got over it. But he was actually bad. Nearly a year of all these strange symptoms and at one point he would cough and just continually cough for twenty-four hours a day and apparently it's a classic symptom of juvenile depression.

Farmer 8, from Mashonaland East, describes the trauma experienced by their one son, F.

F was not good. You know at school he got shingles, he was Form Three and it was really quite a bad time. He actually fell apart at C College and it was due to the farm. Not due to C College. He just wasn't interested in anything and he was so worried about us. It's amazing at that age – what? Fourteen, fifteen? And his main concern were his folks, you know? We didn't realise, because we never spoke about it, but it must have been hell of a taxing. Not only on him, on all the kids who were involved then and for them to go away to C College then must have been quite traumatic as well. We didn't realise it..

Farmer 3, from Mashonaland East, talks about the effect of the invasions on their two children.

They were definitely witnesses to when we were jambanjaed those two times. Unfortunately we were getting ready to take them to school when they blockaded the drive and stuff, so they were, they were a bit traumatised by that, my younger daughter at that time, my middle daughter now, she was...

We managed to get them through to school. This is when we cut the fence and went all around the crowd and they all came running down the road. It was a bit like the great escape because when we came to the main gate there was a guy who would run like crazy and he managed to shut the gate and we just went pchhhht straight through it. For me it was a bit like out of a movie. It was quite traumatic now and I mean it was, with two little kids at the time they were 5 and 3. And the one saying 'Dad, why are those people chasing you?' and 'Why are they shouting with sticks?' Ya they definitely do remember, my eldest daughter particularly, I mean at the time my husband was mentioning we had this bad egg who gave us trouble with War Veteran S's crowd in the house we moved into after leaving the farm in B and in fact they shut the gate and tried to lock us in and all that kind of stuff and my daughter said to me 'oh Mum, they're not going to take this house as well are they? They're not going

to chase us out of this house?' and it was then that it really struck me how she had been, you know how insecure she was.

4. Epilogue

To illustrate the lack of closure, and the continuing stress, for many of these farmers and farm workers, the following excerpt is given from one of the interviews, which concerns an incident in 2007.

I went there, um, a couple of weeks ago and the little boy, when he came home in the holidays here, he was crying and saying he couldn't sleep because his mother's grave wasn't built, so I said that we would go and put some cement on his mother's grave and fix his mother's grave and so, we'd hoped to do it during the holidays, but my driver's brother died, so it didn't happen and then a couple of weeks ago, I had a phone call from a journalist, a German journalist, who wanted to see a farm, so he listened to this story and I said alright. He said "Can I go to the farm?" [*laughs*] So I said alright, we'll go and put, we'll go and put some cement on this grave, so we went to put cement on the grave and we didn't know at this time when we got there the gates that G had used to block us from going there were closed, but I left my gardener, whose one of my farm, former farm workers to go and negotiate opening the gates so we could go and drop some cement off. And, uh, we drove off round the farm and we bumped into the one, D, quite friendly old fella and he said, no, no, no, it's time we, you know, we can make partnership now, stuff like that and between him and his brother, they cut down all the pine trees on the farm, we had a lot of mature pine trees which I'd always resisted cutting down because, I don't know, I thought I'd use them for my pension, or something. I didn't really like to go and strip the assets of the farm, I, uh, you'd get another story on this from my wife, I assure you! How stubborn I was about moving, I wouldn't move any equipment, I wouldn't strip any assets or anything because basically I just couldn't do it, it was, anyway. They've cut down all the trees and sold that timber and, the other M [*brother of well-known politician*], we arrived in his field and had a chat to the workers which was very amenable, they were beating, they were gathering with sickles and, and harvesting soya beans, the soya beans were a very scanty crop and threshing it on a tarpaulin, so the German took a photograph and as M [*laughs*] arrived, so I drove off to go and say hello to him and by the time I got to him his blood pressure had boiled and he was [in a] really, really bad place, I've never encountered anybody well, quite, I've always wondered what those guys had in their big guts [*laughter*] it was terrible. He, they took the car keys away from us and, er, he had about ten people that wanted to beat us up and M kept telling them to kill us and, it was really quite strange.

S: Was that this year? 2007?

B: Yep, a couple of weeks ago. And, um, he was really out of control, but he wasn't prepared to do anything himself and none of the other people there were out of control, so it was just this one guy who was absolutely,

S: Ranting and raving.

B: Ranting and raving and, um, they hauled the German fellow out the car and they tried to take his passport away, he wouldn't give them his passport. They took the details of his passport, they took his number, his name. He had a digital camera and they wanted the camera, so he took the disk out and eventually gave them the disk and they threatened all sorts. Anyway, we then beat a hasty retreat out of there. We went back to the main farm compound and dropped the cement, we went to the, we had a nice cemetery, cemetery there, we always made a job of burying people with dignity and, any rate, so I indicated the grave we were about to fix and then there were only about four farm workers around and, uh, one of them, who'd been on the farm when I first went to the farm and had worked for the previous guy and he and his extended family were still living on the farm. They never went for plots, they'd

just stay on the farm and a couple of other old retainers who kept saying "when are you coming back" and stuff like that. They were very cheerful and very happy to see me and, but they had a problem and I soon discovered they had a problem, they had a woman in the foreman's house and she was in delayed labour, she couldn't, she'd been stuck trying to give birth, said could I take her to the clinic? I'd intended to go back through the small scale and visit those guys and see what was happening there and so we didn't do that, we went to U, dropped this lady off at the clinic and didn't have enough fuel to go back via M which is where she should have gone, but we left her there with money for an ambulance and, um, got to town. We bought a ticket for my terrified journalist, put him on the bus, he was absolutely beside himself. Shitting himself, that's the only way to... beads of sweat. Phoned the airport on the way to see if he could get a flight out, the flight to Jo'burg was booked and the flight to, um, Zambia had just gone, so we went to the road port and bought a ticket to the, on the Pioneer bus to Zambia that night. And he got out on the bus that night. Sent me an email from Zambia the next day, said after an horrific 17 hour journey he was safely in Lusaka. He was terrified. He had been all round the country in very sensitive places and the day before coming to us he'd been (...laughter distorts his words here) his camera. And we'd warned him, you must not bring any bloody (...) things, but anyway. So we had a, I actually left the farm feeling quite, I went to the farm feeling quite excited, I'm going to bury, finally bury this damned thing, I'm going to put cement on the cemetery, that, she was a girl who was a significant, sort of part of our life and the presence on the farm and she'd been very vociferous when G came that she'd been a retainer, just looked after, cause she couldn't ever work, really, and was he going to look after them like she'd been looked after? And, yeah, she really cussed him, I mean it was, but, anyway she died there and he would have nothing to do with her or anything. So, we left money for the grave and I thought, this is it, this is great, we're taking a woman, she's going to have a baby – new life – everything's going to be okay. And we got to town and found she'd left her bags in the back of the truck and the next morning we got a phone call from her father to say what can we do about the bags? So I sent my man back to U with the bags and got news that evening that the baby had been stillborn, it was half rotten and she's in Jairos Jiri half paralysed, so...

S: Oh, how sad.

B: It was really sad and really painful to me in the sense that I can't ditch this thing, that it kind of speaks what the Land Reform is – death of the past and stillborn present. And I really don't see that any good can come from the present situation. It's got to get resolved properly to sort it out. So, I found that sort of motivates me, that. Yeah, I think that's about my story.

5. Appendix 1

Sample and Methodology

The present report is based on an ongoing research project to document human rights abuses on the farms during the Zimbabwean 'Land Reform' exercise. This project began with the completion of a questionnaire on the experiences of commercial farmers and farm workers, the 'Damages Questionnaire [DQ]'. The initial quantitative report described the experiences of a sample of 189 farmers, but farmers have continued to respond to this survey, and to date there have been just below 400 respondents, almost ten percent of the commercial farmers operating at the start of the land invasions.

Using the names on the survey database, a project has been operating since February 2007 to interview DQ respondents and obtain qualitative data on the farm invasions. This qualitative data is to complement the quantitative data obtained from the DQ.

Two interview teams, operating out of Harare, have been contacting farmers who completed the DQ and requesting full-length interviews with them about their experiences during the land invasions. In addition, farmers are asked for any supporting documentation which may help in the corroboration of allegations of human rights abuses. Once these interviews had been conducted they were then transcribed verbatim and stored digitally.

When the compilation of the present report was begun, 98 interviews had been conducted and 60 had been transcribed. This Report is thus based on the 60 transcripts and other documentary evidence obtained from all 98 farmers, whether or not their transcripts were complete. Of the 98 farmers interviewed, 27 had neither documentation nor an available transcript. This report thus considers the experiences of 71 farmers, roughly a 1.5% sample of the 4 500 farmers commonly accepted as constituting the upper limit of the population of commercial white farmers at the start of the land invasions.

It should be noted that the target population of this survey is relatively small. Although no precautions were taken to ensure that the sample was randomized, the survey did not attempt to focus on farmers considered to have experienced human rights abuses more severe than the mean. The study did not, for example, seek out farmers involved in high profile media cases, or family members of murdered farmers. All the respondents of the DQ who were resident in Harare were phoned and an interview requested. In a small number of cases farmers were interviewed who are normally resident outside of Harare or Zimbabwe but who were visiting Harare briefly for other reasons. All requests for interviews were made without any prior knowledge of the level of human rights violations reported by the farmer. The sample for this survey is thus not biased with regard to the level of human rights violations reported and documented in this Report.

Those approached could choose whether or not to complete the DQ and whether they would participate in agreeing to full scale interviews. To this extent there was a degree of self-selection involved in the process. However, it should be noted that only 7 out of the Harare residents contacted for an interview as the teams went through the list declined to take part.

As interviews are only currently being carried out in Harare, it is clear that some degree of geographical bias exists in the data. The majority of the respondents come from the provinces of Mashonaland East and West, with a significant minority in Mashonaland Central. These three

provinces *are* generally perceived to have experienced a greater number of violations than other provinces.⁹⁰

On the other hand, it is also a very plausible hypothesis that the large number of farmers who left Zimbabwe to live elsewhere did so as a direct result of the massive trauma experienced on their farms. Thus, it is possible that the farmers currently living outside the country would report more severe human rights violations than the principally Harare-based farmers included in this Report. At this stage of the on-going research, it is not possible to state with any certainty the confidence with which inferences can be made from our sample. Instead of making hypothetical extrapolations from our data, which may be accurate or inaccurate, we have referred at the end of each section on a particular violation to the findings of the report on the Damages Questionnaire which has been summarised above.

This being said, it is important to bear in mind that the people interviewed here are not just statistics. The point of this Report, after all, is to provide qualitative data, to give a voice to the numerous victims and survivors of this chaotic period in recent Zimbabwean history. Whether or not statistically meaningful inferences can be drawn from this sample, it is clear that the people who have been interviewed have, in most cases, been subjected to organised violence and have experienced massive trauma and loss.

The only data that has been used in compiling this Report are the transcripts of the interviews conducted and the personal documents which the interviewees provided. It has not included material from the huge amount of data available, for example, in the daily Commercial Farmers Union [CFU] 'Situation Reports', or in the growing collection of other documents the project has at its disposal. The information extracted from the interviews conducted for this survey, however, provides a graphic picture of the human dimension of the land invasions.

⁹⁰ See Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2000), *Who is Responsible? A Preliminary Analysis of Pre-election Violence in Zimbabwe*, (Harare 2000) Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2001), *Who was Responsible? A Consolidated Analysis of Pre-election Violence in Zimbabwe*, (Harare, 2001).

6. Appendix 2

Land Reform and its Impact on the Zimbabwe Economy

By John Robertson

Differences between standards of living or other measures of success are often glaringly obvious between different communities living within the same country. Thousands of issues can influence who will be rich and who will be poor, but among the more important are levels of education and the behaviour patterns that are regulated by cultural imperatives. Whatever the origins of differences through the ages, prosperous minorities have always been resented by the rest, but in Zimbabwe before independence this resentment was compounded by the facts that the more prosperous minority was from non-indigenous racial groups.

Efforts were made after independence to extract political leverage from these differences with the claimed objective of correcting historical imbalances and restructuring society along more egalitarian lines. In the early stages of the process, government limited its direct interventions mainly to redirecting scarce foreign exchange from the mainly white-run manufacturing sector to selected black beneficiaries, who the politicians hoped would soon form a growing black-operated business sector.

If farms were offered for sale, government claimed the right of first refusal, and the properties it bought were either merged with neighbouring communal lands or allocated to senior party officials. Beyond such moves, the wealth redistribution process was confined to more steeply progressive tax rates, limits on the proportions of profits that could be declared as dividends and significant differentials between the rates of pay increases permitted to lower and higher-paid employees.

But by 1997, the benefits of foreign currency allocations had run out and the ruling party's failure to fulfil frequent election promises had led to increasing impatience. As pressure mounted, the ruling party empowered itself to take possession of land owned by white farmers and to allocate this land to black farmers. Backed by the needed constitutional amendments, the government claimed ownership of farming areas that had been settled and developed by people from abroad. It dismissed all attempts to make either the party or the state accountable for injustices suffered by the owners of property that was often confiscated with extreme violence.

But the evictions and confiscations did more than claim land. They forced the closure of the more than four thousand large-scale farming companies that constituted the country's largest business sector. Zimbabwe's economy quickly fell victim to a devastating sequence of events that followed upon the rapid falls in export revenues, the loss of employment, production and vital supplies and the country's rapidly declining credit worthiness.

These effects quickly resulted in profound damage to every other business sector and soon resulted in tax revenue losses for government, causing declines in the deliveries of health, education and other social services. Before long, damage was being sustained by the power, water, telecommunications, road, rail and airways infrastructures, severely affecting service deliveries and adding to the costs of doing business. These difficulties were soon eroding Zimbabwe's production volumes and export competitiveness, and worsening the foreign exchange scarcity.

According to the ruling party's political objectives, the exercise was carried out to bring under the ruling party's control, and selectively dismantle, the land ownership concept that was introduced after colonisation. The ruling party's contention was that the system itself was objectionable, so it had to be broken down and the state's protection had to be denied to its former beneficiaries. This questionable logic was applied equally to the beneficiaries' employees, the farm-workers who made up the country's largest labour force.

However, the ruling party failed to appreciate that this very concept of individual ownership of land, with the support of functioning markets for registered properties and formal, legally supported procedures for ownership changes, formed the foundation upon which all modern, successful economies have been built and supported the entire investment and development process.

While a purely emotional argument of justification can be built around the actions taken, no argument can be made for the wilful destruction of productive capacity caused by the same actions. Nobody can deny that the indigenous population deserved more consideration than it received during and after the colonisation process, but this could be argued with far more supporting evidence by very nearly every one of the thousands of other communities that have been colonised throughout history.

However, any debate on the subject from the perspective of the profound changes that made Zimbabwe the second-most developed country in Africa quickly exposes the short-sightedness of the policies adopted. With the backing from the workings of contract law, property rights and the flows of investment funds needed to make use of world-wide technical developments during the colonial administration years, Zimbabwe was transformed from a thinly populated scattering of tribal villages run by feudal chiefs into a modern, industrialising economy.

Some of the changes did arise through the introduction of better disease controls and some through the adoption of higher-yielding crops, but most of the changes became possible because of the extremely rapid rates of advancement of all branches of science and technology, of engineering and financial administration that were taking place in the industrialised world. Most of these advancements readily took root in countries that respected property rights, but far less readily – if at all – in countries with centrally planned economies.

Where these developments were successfully adapted to local needs, previously undreamt-of things became possible, specially if the countries offered attractive investment conditions. Very soon, the development process started on properties could be bought and sold and could therefore be used as collateral for the bank loans needed to fund the developments. The owners' security of tenure made long-term planning possible and that further stimulated imaginative investment in much the same way that it was driving the pace of development in the world's most developed countries. Most importantly, the pace and direction of the developments were being driven by world-wide technological progress. Accordingly, they should never have been seen simply as features of colonialism.

Unfortunately, the large areas of the country that remained under communal ownership also remained outside the market and therefore beyond the reach of the banks. There, traditional farmers continued to use customary cultivation methods, but while earlier colonial governments thought they were adequately meeting the needs of the rural communities, the much more rapid population growth taking place was bringing the rigidities of traditional land husbandry practices into conflict with the growing population's needs.

As the money needed to adopt better farming methods in these areas remained beyond the reach of

people with no collateral and as the ecological damage to the areas worsened, the contrast between the fertility of the soils on communal and commercial farms became increasingly obvious. Politically, after power had shifted from the colonial administration to the black majority, land redistribution appeared to be the obvious solution. But this was the wrong policy choice for several important reasons.

For a start, the highly capital and knowledge-intensive systems of agriculture that had been made possible by commercial farming developments had turned the sector into the backbone of Zimbabwe's economy and the thousands of companies owned by Zimbabwe's commercial farmers had become the source of most of Zimbabwe's national income. This was because they had become the country's largest employers, the suppliers of the largest range of inputs to the

manufacturing and retail sectors, the generators of most of Zimbabwe's export revenues and the country's biggest user of transport, construction, civil engineering, financial, legal and commercial services. Directly or indirectly, they also gave rise to the bulk of government's tax revenues. Perhaps if they had seen the sector in this light, the ruling party would have reconsidered its decision to close down commercial agriculture. However, it took the plunge, and the damaging effects of its decision could soon be seen across the country. From then, their continuing defence of their action became increasingly inappropriate.

Government also felt it had to suppress debate on the subject of how the state's crucially important moral standards had to be abandoned to enable the authorities to inflict severe penalties on any who opposed their policy choices. The ruling party's claim was that no morality was shown by colonisers who started migrating to the country more than a century ago, so neither the descendants of the colonisers, nor any others who benefited from methods adopted by the colonisers had any right to resist government's plans.

And because the land had given rise to their wealth, neither should the non-indigenous people be allowed to contest government's claimed right to take ownership of their movable assets as well. Tragically, even as the ruling party's claimed rights to confiscate productive assets was destroying incomes, jobs, export revenues and taxes, it found reason to apply this logic to other spheres of its activities. Before long it had imposed the same destructive influences onto every economic and social sector by forcing exporters to accept unrealistic exchange rates, by forcing the closure of informal sector businesses and by imposing rigid price controls on basic goods and then on all goods. Each of these policies can be described as ways of legalising theft.

With the mounting crises in the banking sector, it intervened by regulating the sizes and procedures involved in cheque transactions and electronic transfers and even by setting limits to holdings of cash. With no regard for the morality of any expedient, government even extended its claimed right to expropriate property to the confiscation of savings, which it did by setting interest rates at small fractions of the rates of inflation.

It also imposed excessively high statutory reserve ratios on the banking sector and enforced prescribed asset ratios on pension funds to extract from them pensioners' funds, also at deeply negative real rates of interest. In its efforts to capture funds, it also claimed the right to sweep all financial surpluses from the banks every day and to demand that banks support issues of longer-dated bonds that also yield severely negative rates of return.

In its latest move, the ruling party has granted itself the power to demand that 51% of the shares in every company that is not already locally owned should be ceded to indigenous Zimbabweans. This is mainly to permit the ruling party to appoint the boards of directors of the companies. Through these, it intends to express party policy to each company's employees. Again, this amounts to a "legalised" method of dispossessing people of their property.

In most cases, government's decisions to use extortionate methods to support its fund-raising activities or to extend its ability to control economic events became necessary because of the repercussions of its land reform programme. But despite the clear linkages between agricultural losses and the downturn experienced by every other economic sector, government continued to deny this cause-and-effect relationship.

It bears repeating that the companies making up the commercial agricultural sector constituted Zimbabwe's biggest industry, but the fact that it was an industry at all was not obvious until it was closed down. The commercial farmers' export revenues also generated most of the foreign exchange needed by government to maintain essential services, such as electricity supplies, railway transport, education and health.

For example, to keep the power stations going, government needed to maintain the state-operated colliery as well as the railway services, but the loss of foreign earnings meant that neither of them could be properly supported.

The managements of these bodies were also prevented from achieving the needed profitability by government regulations that governed railway tariffs and the prices of electricity and coal. Government interference meant that none of the organisations was allowed to make enough money even to cover operating costs, let alone fund maintenance charges or plans for expansions.

Similar funding problems applied just as seriously to all the other parastatal services, such as roads, telecommunications, airways and fuel supplies, to the social services, mainly education and health, and to municipal services such as urban water supplies, housing and the usual requirements of growing urban populations.

In the past ten years, Zimbabwe has seen every one of these performing badly and every one of them is now in urgent need of massive capital injections to get them right. But money alone would be of little use if the country could not quickly rebuild the skills base needed to put the money to good use.

These observations will hopefully begin to illustrate the extent of the restoration and repair challenges that await the attention of the new government. The successful party does not have the option of dismissing the attendant challenges because these same challenges have undermined government's ability to function and will further undermine its effectiveness and authority for as long as the problems are left unresolved.

Events of the last few years have clearly shown that no international bodies feel any obligation to offer aid or balance of payment support to make up for Zimbabwe's self-inflicted damage, but evidence suggests that once a change of direction has been achieved, assistance of many kinds will be made available.

The change of direction is a precondition, however. No lender is prepared to lend to borrowers who have compromised their ability to repay and no development or aid organisation is prepared to offer support to governments that are responsible for, and still engaged in, conduct damaging to the interests of their own people. The ruling party's description of these responses as "sanctions" is a dishonest attempt to deflect blame from its true source – themselves and their efforts to redistribute wealth and influence into their own hands and into those of their more submissive supporters.

The measures adopted to permit the ruling party to behave in this way are among the many indicators of needed course-changes that will be expected of a new political administration if the current ruling party is defeated. And as the country's prospects of attracting new investment will depend heavily on all investment-discouraging legislation being repealed, the moves needed to scrap these laws will have to be among the new parliament's first orders of business, particularly now that Zimbabwe's need of investment funds and financial support is so great.

Government started a process that caused the destruction of most of the country's own savings when it found it could not hold its budget deficits in check and chose to pay lenders deeply negative real rates of interest on the needed budget deficit financing. These rates were imposed from the beginning of 2001, together with other tougher business conditions, and all of these were enforced to permit government to acquire for its own use much bigger shares of the country's diminishing resources.

All of these generated and guaranteed more inflation, as illustrated in the adjacent graph. But to government, the effects of negative interest rates and rising inflation combined to allow the mounting domestic debts to be simply inflated out of existence.

But the corollary to that was the loss of the country's domestic savings. While the US dollar equivalent of Zimbabwe's money supply M3 was about US\$3,25 billion at the beginning of 1997,

converting the M3 figure at the parallel market exchange rate at the end of 2007 resulted in a total money supply valuation equivalent to only about US\$140 million.

As a result of having so thoroughly accomplished the destruction of Zimbabwe's savings stock, any investment-led recovery phase will depend heavily on investment fund inflows from abroad. However, if the money supply M3 figure is divided by the official exchange rate of Z\$30 000 to one US dollar, the roughly Z\$660 trillions of Zimbabwe dollars in M3 would convert to US\$22 billion, or six times as much as the amount of eleven years ago.

By claiming this result to be a true reflection of the capital value of Zimbabwe's savings, government further distanced itself from reality and from any prospect of being taken seriously in international banking circles. Its credibility was further damaged by having to accept that annual falls in Zimbabwe's Gross Domestic Product for ten years in a row had carried Zimbabwe's economy down to about half the size it was in 1997.

This one illustration of the absurdities under which the country has been trying to function illustrates the scale of the challenges facing Zimbabwe and how extensive the policy changes will have to be. Far from accepting government's current claim that it has rewritten the rules of economics, Zimbabwe has to go all the way back to square one, to the fact spelled out in every economics student's first lesson, which is that investment is not possible without savings.

Now, as a result of government's conduct, Zimbabwe has almost no savings left. So for an investment-led recovery to happen, the country will have to make use of the savings of others. Or it will have to persuade investors to come themselves and to apply their own savings to the needed investment that will contribute to the country's recovery. Establishing the conditions needed to attract this level of investor support should now become an objective of the highest priority.

Dramatic increases in food prices on world markets and the possibility that Zimbabwe will have nothing like the amount of money it would need to import maize or wheat suggest that never before has Zimbabwe been in greater need of expertise on the land. However, the government of Zimbabwe has forced the most experienced and most productive farmers off the land.

With changes in conditions, many could be persuaded to return and with the restitution of property rights and access to the necessary funding and other inputs, they could most quickly restore the country to food self-sufficiency.

The conditions that will be needed to instil confidence and restore their commitment to the country's future should now be receiving urgent consideration.