



## **DEATH NOTICE - COMMERCIAL FARMERS' UNION, ZIMBABWE**

### **JEREMY CALLOW, FORMER ATTORNEY IN ZIMBABWE**

22 April 2020

It is with sadness that we learned of the passing of Jeremy Callow on the 8th April 2020 in the UK as a result of the Corona virus. Jeremy rendered significant legal assistance and support to many farmers as they went through the challenges of dispossession in the early years of fast track land reform. He and his family moved to the UK in 2005. The CFU wishes to convey sincere condolences to his family and friends at this difficult time. May his dear soul rest in peace.

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### **JEREMY JOHN CALLOW (1949-2020)**

A tribute by Adrian de Bourbon SC

My friend Jeremy Callow died of the coronavirus on 8 April 2020. Words fail me to explain how much I will miss his companionship and generosity of spirit. Jeremy always had a great sense of humour. He was an avid sports fan and we spent many happy hours watching and discussing different types of sport. Jeremy was well read and very interested in what was happening in the world, particularly in Zimbabwe. He never completely lost his African roots. He was truly a remarkable and engaging person.

Jeremy was born on 17 November 1949 in Gwanda, then Southern Rhodesia, where his father was stationed in the police. He attended various junior schools in Matabeleland before going to Prince Edward School in Salisbury in 1962. In his last year there, 1967, he was a prefect and a regular member of the school 1<sup>st</sup> XV rugby team. In later years, Jeremy coached rugby voluntarily at Prince Edward and other schools which he so enjoyed.

After school he joined the Ministry of Justice as a clerk based in Fort Victoria, during which time he did his national service. In 1971 he was appointed as the clerk to Mr Justice Eric Jarvis in the High Court in Salisbury, which is where I first met him. He served Judge Jarvis for over two years and developed not only a high regard for the Judge, but a fondness for him and his family. The Judge and his wife reciprocated, treating Jeremy as part of the family.

In 1973 Jeremy married Fiona. They have three daughters, Ashleigh, Julia and Celeste, and more recently two grandchildren who were all very important in Jeremy's life.

In 1974 Jeremy became a public prosecutor in the Magistrates' Courts in Salisbury. His career progressed and in 1976 he was appointed as a magistrate in Sinoia. Promoted to senior magistrate he moved to Marandellas in April 1978 where he served until he left the public service in October 1980.

In Marandellas he joined Round Table and served the community through that body there and later in Salisbury. He was President of the Association of Round Tables in Central Africa from 1985 to 1986. Having passed civil service law exams, he read for a law degree from the University of Rhodesia, and was admitted as an attorney. He joined the well-known law firm of Stumbles & Rowe in Harare as an associate, later being made a partner of that firm.

As an attorney Jeremy had a large and varied practice. He usually acted as an instructing attorney to an advocate, but on occasions appeared himself in court, including on one occasion undertaking an income tax appeal.

But Jeremy became best known for his unstinting support and representation of people who were being subjected to mistreatment at the hands of the Government. In 1999 he represented three Americans charged with being spies. It was Jeremy who announced to the press that his client had been tortured by the authorities in Zimbabwe. He later instructed Chris Andersen SC to defend them in their trial at the High Court.

When the seizure of the white farms commenced in 2000, Jeremy was at the very heart of the group of lawyers who made themselves available to represent the farmers. He represented many from the Karoi area as well as other districts of Zimbabwe. He was fearless in seeking to uphold the law and obtained a number of judgments in favour of the farmers supporting their rights to their farms. The Government totally ignored most of those orders. This caused Jeremy great distress, but he kept going as long as he could. He did everything possible to help the farmers who had been dispossessed of their farms, going far beyond legal representation to give counselling whenever necessary. He made many trips to the farming areas and appeared often in the Magistrates Courts to seek orders to protect the farmers. He became such a thorn in the side of the Government that he received at least one death threat. But this did not put him off from assisting farmers with their legal rights.

In 2004 he and his family made the decision that they had to leave Zimbabwe. Jeremy told the press: "I love Zimbabwe, love the people, but can't take it any more". The family left Zimbabwe in 2005.

Jeremy and the family moved to Bournemouth, England, where he worked as a clerk in the Magistrate's Court. In 2007 they moved to London when Jeremy was appointed as a fee-paid judge of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal, a position he held at the time of his death.

In England, Jeremy kept in touch with his friends from Zimbabwe and organised a number of functions for visiting lawyers from Zimbabwe. He never lost his love of the country and thoroughly enjoyed a visit there with Fiona in 2018.

Without exception those who knew Jeremy have paid tribute to him, praising his many personal characteristics and especially his willingness to help others. He has been praised, rightly so, as a devoted family man. A former senior judge in Zimbabwe said of Jeremy that he was "always intelligent, decent, discerning, fair to both sides - a lawyer who valued the Rule of Law".

Jeremy is survived by his wife, Fiona, and his three children and two grandchildren, all of whom live in England. He will be sorely missed by his family and by all of us who knew him. God rest his soul.

ADRIAN DE BOURBON SC