

NEWSLETTER FROM CATHY BUCKLE IN ZIMBABWE



Oh South Africa

16 July 2021

Dear Family and Friends

My letter today is for our friends and neighbours across the border. Oh South Africa, we are heartbroken for you. Your pain is our pain. We have watched events of this week in absolute horror, overcome with helplessness.

Looting in plain sight of inactive police, in broad daylight, brazenly, in front of the cameras of horrified journalists. People dragging bin bags and trolleys full of things they have stolen; people carrying huge boxes on their heads, dragging TV's behind them like dogs on leads, using forklifts to carry stolen fridges, stoves, freezers, beds, bicycles; cars and trucks lined up outside shops and warehouses while they are being looted, waiting to carry the stolen goods. People scooping everything off shelves in pharmacies, sweeping life saving medicine off shelf after shelf into buckets, bin bags and plastic crates. Men, women and children staggering out of shops carrying mounds of clothes, shoes, luggage. And then, as if the orgy of stealing wasn't enough, shops, warehouses and buildings deliberately set on fire by the looters. Why, Why, Why? So many questions.

For twenty years South Africa has been our home from home. The place we could go to for solace, comfort, healing, sanity, food, work and so much more. Now we know how you have felt watching us for the past two decades.

When we were tortured, bloodied, broken, bruised and traumatized at the hands of our government's supporters you took us in. You opened your churches to shelter us when we were on the run from persecution by our own government. You gave us jobs in your homes, restaurants, factories, warehouses and businesses. You sent us cards, letters and emails of support reminding us that we were not alone.

When our supermarkets were filled with empty shelves you sent us food parcels: from little envelopes with instant soup and noodles to boxes with flour and yeast so we could make bread, dry goods so we could keep food on the table and endless shoe boxes filled with medicines, toiletries and treats. You watched in despair as our farms were invaded and scores of people swarmed onto our properties, waving pangas and sticks, taking what was not theirs, throwing us out of our own homes. You watched thugs breaking down doors and burning workers out of their homes. You watched in disbelief as our own government changed the laws to allow them to "compulsorily acquire" our farms and the homes, buildings, equipment and infrastructure on them and you held out your hands in love and support of us.

You watched us all lose our pensions and life savings over and over again, and still watch now as all our US dollars were converted into worthless Zimbabwe Bond dollars and we struggle to survive from one day to the next. For years you have watched us endure long periods when we've had to queue for food, store water in baths and buckets, spend days in fuel queues, cope with massive power cuts. You have been there for us, physically, emotionally and spiritually, again and again in the past two decades and today all I have is my voice to offer in return. Our hearts are with you South Africa.

There is no charge for this Letter From Zimbabwe but if you would like to donate please visit my website and if you would like to know how we have survived two decades of turmoil in Zimbabwe, my book "Surviving Zimbabwe" tells it all with hints, tips, memories and anecdotes.

Until next time, thanks for reading this Letter From Zimbabwe now in its 21st year, and my books about life in Zimbabwe, a country in waiting.

Love Cathy

16th July 2021.

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