



## ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

Johannesburg  
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BRYANSTON 2021

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## RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 225 20<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024

### GREETINGS:

The Supermoon this week ushered in the first rain of the season on the Highveld – but also the ominous forecast "Gauteng to experience snow and freezing temperatures this weekend" (Maybe Hell is going to freeze over in Gauteng??)... The 84th Battle of Britain week has come and gone... BELA b\*gger up signed into law – with misgivings (is there no end to witlessness?... USA will not be at AAD 2024 due failure by Ministry of Defence to renew Treaty (My f\*k, Angie!)... Pravin Gorhan Memorial – Gordhan family thanks South Africa... Johannesburg City Hall has not seen such a circus since Spike Milligan's visit... Joburg Country Club fire destroys a Heritage landmark... Water woes assail Charlotte Maxeke Hospital... 8 million South Africans could soon be without water... Prepaid fraud: 40% of meters in some cities aren't vending power – and the Eskom S\*Bs want to charge us more?? Is anything not rotten in the State of SA?...

Death by Walkie-Talkie: Hezbollah's terrible pager blunder viral on Social Media... Ukrainian drone strike destroys 'indestructible' arms depot in Russia... Global fires and floods – record inundations in Poland and Nigeria... Starmer stuffs up the "Italian Job"... illegals pour into UK... Keir Starmer "the King of Cadgers" "on course for the biggest humiliation in political history"... Trump stokes suspicions about second assassination attempt... "Lebensraum" - Germany introduces new border controls, buys indentured Kenyan labourers... Iran turns to Hells Angels and other criminal gangs to target critics... Harvey Weinstein indicted on new charges... Arizona GOP billboards implore voters to 'EAT LESS KITTENS'... Pablo the 'gender-fluid' dachshund...

## BATTLE OF BRITAIN:



A Service of Thanksgiving and Rededication was held in Westminster Abbey on Sunday to mark the 84th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, one of the most crucial battles of World War II.

The service took place at Westminster Abbey, which has been the location for the commemoration since 1944. The battle continues to be commemorated over eighty years on to honour the hard work and determination of “the many” and the courage and sacrifice of “the few.” Before the service started, wreaths were laid at the RAF Memorial by serving personnel from New Zealand, Canada, Australia, South Africa and representatives from The Royal Air Force Association and the RAF Benevolent Fund. The service commenced with the congregation singing the National Anthem. “In this Abbey church, where our nation so often gathers to remember, to celebrate and to mourn, we give thanks for the dedication and daring of members of the Royal Air Force and Allied Air Forces during the Battle of Britain. Their sure courage halted the advance of a terrible tyranny. They held fast in days of greatest danger. For their resilience and their skill, we give thanks, for their pain and loss, we grieve. Once again, we commit ourselves to the duty of an honest remembrance.” *The Very Reverend Dr David Hoyle, Dean of Westminster. (RAF News)*



Historic aircraft took to the skies over the UK to commemorate the 84th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. It was the first decisive battle in history fought entirely in the air and lasted more than three

months. The day of remembrance recognises the most momentous point in the fighting, as the Luftwaffe, the German air force, launched its heaviest bombing raids on London. Several RAF accounts posted videos across social media of aircraft taking part in commemorative fly-past's to mark the event. RAF Cosford shared footage of a Spitfire, which began being zoomed in on the aircraft before panning out and showing it flying over a vast, quintessential British landscape, saying: "Battle of Britain Day" is when we remember The Few who defended our nation and fought against tyranny. We must never forget the sacrifice they made for our freedom."

Elsewhere, the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight shared a video on X which showed a Lancaster flying alongside the B-17 Flying Fortress 'Sally B' at the Battle of Britain Airshow at the Imperial War Museum Duxford. This included footage from the rear of the aircraft showing the B-17 in flight. Alongside the historic fly-past's, there was also a service held at Westminster Abbey in London. The morning of Thanksgiving and Rededication was attended by Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, as well as veterans and serving RAF personnel. Before the service, wreaths were laid at the RAF Memorial with serving personnel from the RAF present, as well as representatives from New Zealand, Canada, Australia and South Africa. An Act of Remembrance was also included, with the Battle of Britain Roll of Honour being borne from the Grave of the Unknown Warrior to the Sacarium. It was escorted by serving descendants of Battle of Britain airmen, RAF aircrew from former Battle of Britain squadrons and a contingent of RAF cadets. After the event, an Avro Lancaster bomber from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight carried out a fly-past. *(RAF News)*

## **VAMPIRE MARKED IN HONOUR OF RAF RESERVISTS:**



Members of a Northern Ireland RAF Reserve Squadron have been honoured with a unique aircraft paint scheme ahead of the Northern Ireland International Airshow. 502 (Ulster) Squadron personnel were on the tarmac at Aldergrove Flying Station as a de Havilland Vampire, freshly marked in their historic squadron livery, arrived ahead of two planned weekend displays on the north coast. The Squadron's volunteer reservists flew the early fast jet variant from the County Antrim station in the 1950s, when the Squadron's 12 jets were a common sight over the shores of Lough Neagh. The distinctive 'flash' on the Vampire's nose and fuselage hasn't been seen on an aircraft since 1957. The spare-time reservists were shown around the aircraft by its pilot, Royal Norwegian Air Force Brigadier-General Martin 'Tin Tin' Tesli. The Vampire is flown by the Norwegian Air Force Historical Squadron and was marked to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, in 2024, and 502 Squadron's centenary in 2025. 502 (Ulster) Squadron was the first Reserve squadron



of the RAF to be formed. in May 1925. The Second World War saw it specialise in Maritime Patrol, when it became the first unit to make a successful attack on a U-boat with Air-to-Surface radar... *(RAF News)*

## **BATTLE OF BRITAIN VS. MODERN-DAY QRA:**

**Enemy Threats:** In the Battle of Britain, the enemy was a foreign air force, the German Luftwaffe. Today, the RAF faces diverse and evolving threats, including potential hostile aircraft and unknown drones. This illustrates the RAF's modern versatility and its commitment to adapt to changing security challenges.

**Technology Advancements:** During the Battle of Britain, aircraft technology was limited compared to today's advanced fighter jets. The modern RAF employs cutting-edge technology and surveillance systems to detect, intercept, and respond to potential threats swiftly



## **National Unity:**

The Battle of Britain brought the nation together, with civilians supporting the RAF effort through the darkest days of the war. Similarly, the RAF's QRA operations reflect the enduring spirit of unity and resilience in the face of threats to national security.

**Training and Readiness:** While RAF pilots in the Battle of Britain showcased remarkable skill and bravery, today's RAF personnel undergo rigorous training and maintain constant readiness, ensuring they are always prepared to respond to any potential threat. *(RAF News)*

## **AFZ AIR CRASH: FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS...**

Eurocopter EC-225LP Super Puma Mk.2+.R/n. Z-LCT operated by the AFZ (Air Force of Zimbabwe) crashed while attempting to take off at Masvingo Airport, Zimbabwe. The helicopter belonging to the Zimbabwean Presidential flight had earlier in the day transported the President to the airport for him to inaugurate the launch of Munhumutapa Day to coincide with his 82nd Birthday.



After the celebrations the helicopter was to transport him and his party back to Harare. After completing their checks and starting up the helicopter was to maneuver from its park stand to the other side of the airport, but on lifting off it suffered a "technical fault", those witnesses on the ground state that it had suffered a tail rotor drive failure. The crew immediately put the now spinning helicopter back down on the ground but were unable to counteract the massive torque from the rotor blades and it then suffered a dynamic rollover which effectively destroyed the machine. The crew managed to shut it down with no further dramas, only one crew member of the three was reported to have suffered only minor injuries. A reserve helicopter was brought in to transport the President. An inquiry has now been launched by Military Officials into the cause of the failure. The incident has also sparked speculation about the President's safety. Mnangagwa has been the target of several assassination attempts in the past, and his security detail is always on high alert. (No doubt Mnangagwa will get the message...) *(My Zimbabwe)*

## EXERCISE PANZERJÄGER:



British infantry and German paratroopers have met up in Wiltshire to exchange skills, discuss tactics and try each others' weapons. Exercise Panzerjäger (Tank Destroyer) sees the troops train on Salisbury Plain over three weeks to develop their anti-tank skills, while also testing each others' small arms. "they have a good fire rate and muzzle velocity - good equipment," said Oberleutnant (Lieutenant) Lucas of 31 Fallschirmjäger Regiment, when talking about the British Army's venerable GPMG (General Purpose Machine Gun) He also got to fire the SA80 L85 A3, the latest iteration of the British Army's assault rifle. "I thought the firing rate was great, I struggled a little bit with the handling of the SA80 because of its chamber [magazine housing] being behind the pistol grip," Lt

Lucas said of the weapon's bullpup configuration. "We have seen and proved here there are many similarities. And the British side has also great machine guns."

## **JOHANNESBURG COUNTRY CLUB - FIRE:**



The Johannesburg Country Club, in Auckland Park, caught fire on Tuesday afternoon. Multiple videos showed buildings ablaze as smoke billowed into the air while people ran away from the fire. Traffic in and around the country club was not affected. Johannesburg Emergency Management Services (EMS) spokesperson Robert Malaudzi said emergency services received a structural fire call at around 4.20pm. "On arrival at Country Club Johannesburg, firefighter crews found the building gutted with flames," he said. "Three fire engines, a water tanker and an air truck were dispatched to the scene, and fortunately, everyone managed to evacuate when the fire started. The fire has been contained in the kitchen, dining hall, and reception area. At the moment, the cause of fire is still a subject of investigations." Malaudzi said no injuries were reported. (*Citizen*)

## **MEMBERS WRITE:**

We advertised the Sailor Malan Memorial Lecture in a recent Ramblings, which duly took place this last weekend. Dr John Ledger sent in an extract from an email from his friend Marilyn Thomas who attended: "I went to the Royal Cape Yacht Club on Saturday to hear our Mayor Geordhan Hill-Lewis give a Memorial lecture about Sailor Malan. What a fabulous speaker he is and he had researched his topic impeccably. Dr Yvonne Malan, Sailor's niece, promoted the lecture through the General Botha Association as Sailor was a trainee naval cadet at 13 years old. Vilified later by the 1948 Nationalist Government, Sailor was denied any recognition for his wartime achievements. (*Ed - To the extent that then serving members of the UDF were forbidden to attend his funeral in uniform*). Yvonne has requested that the City of Cape Town honour him posthumously, which the mayor acknowledged. A formal proposal will be appraised next month in time for the 2025 award. What a fascinating insight into an amazing airman. I'm sure that, were it possible, your RAF club would welcome this talk. Both the British and American military advisors attended the gathering." (*Watch this space...*)

## **"A SMALL TRIBUTE TO MY INSTRUCTORS"**

Those of us who were privileged to do "Basics" in the Air Force, Army or Police will identify with this:

"It was impossible to predetermine who the instructors would be who were detailed with the conduct of these 'shine parades.' The only discernible common denominator was that none was below the rank of Sergeant; Sergeant Keith Bartlett boasted that sole distinction and they were all from the Regimental Wing of the School of Infantry; where such matters as 'smart and soldier-like' was the permanent 'flavour of the day.' To the man they were recognisable by the swagger in their step and the way they held themselves – at all times. Sergeant Major Tom Van Rensburg, Colour Sergeants Louis Thackwray and Sandy Miller – you could tell them a mile off. The swagger had nothing to do with arrogance per se`. No, it was the sheer pride that they took in their immaculate turnout which they rightly believed should be displayed at its best; if it took an air of arrogance to round off that aura of splendour, that's what they did. As his military mind started to slowly mature he grew to understand the absolute necessity for this almost eccentric genre of quite unique characters. Their immaculate representation of military pride also echoed in the halls of the training institutions of the Police and Air Force, whose instructors they trained. Their role was a vital part in the complexity of the intricate military juggernaut; and they were, in every way, a symbol of everything that it stood for." *Extract from "Into the Vortex" by Tom Fulton, late RAR (Rhodesian African Rifles)*

## **EX-ESKOM BOSS KOKO TARGETS R5 BN ABB SETTLEMENT DEAL:**



The story: Former Eskom boss Matshela Koko is seeking to challenge a settlement deal between the Investigating Directorate and ABB, a multinational company, which has provided crucial evidence used to bring charges against him and others.

What we know: The Investigating Directorate is opposing the application, saying the settlement is in the public interest, backed up by the repayment of just over R5 billion by ABB. What's more: The case challenges the discretion of prosecutors to make decisions on whether to pursue charges, or to make a deal with corporations or individuals who admit to corruption. (*News24*)

## **CHEERS FOR NOW:**

The Battle of Britain Ladies Lunch at Wanderers last Friday went well after a shaky start as the Vista Room had not been properly prepared. Protea Marriott has apologized for that lapse. At 13h00 sharp the traditional "Missing Man" formation was immaculately flown by Arnie Meneghelli and Scully Levin of the Flying Lions. Colonel Conor O'Hara OBE, the Defence Adviser at the British High Commission



gave a very good talk on his own 32-year career with the Royal Marines. Amongst other skills, he is an accomplished linguist, with a working proficiency in several languages.

Next month, October, we will have a talk on climate issues, renewable energy and threats to biodiversity, by Dr John Ledger who is eminently well qualified to address these issues. Please make your bookings at, and be sure we have your male guests names, if any, [bookings@rafoc.org](mailto:bookings@rafoc.org) and Cost remains at R300 pp which should be paid EFT into our bank account.

Please also be reminded that this year marks the 80th anniversary of the Alpine 44 Flights, so hope you will be able to join us at SAAF Memorial Bays Hill on Sunday 13 October 2024 at 10h00 - Please be seated by 09h50.

## TAILPICE:

“Pensioner crawls home up hill on hands and knees after bus route axed” (*Telegraph*)

What’s in a Name? The wife checked her husband’s phone and found these names:

‘The tender one’;

‘The amazing one’;

‘Lady of my dreams’;

She got angry and called the first number to find out that was his mother.

Then she called the second number to which his sister replied.

When she dialed the third number her own phone rang.

She cried until her eyes got swollen because she had doubted her innocent husband, so she gave him her whole month’s salary to make up for it.

Husband took the money and bought a gift for his girlfriend whose name was saved as ‘Uncle Mike the mechanic’.





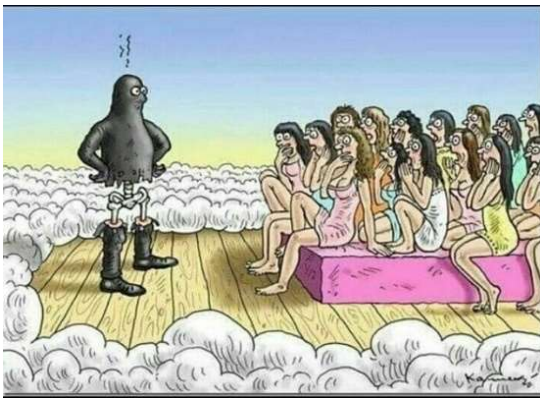
# Hezbollah's new Head of Communications.



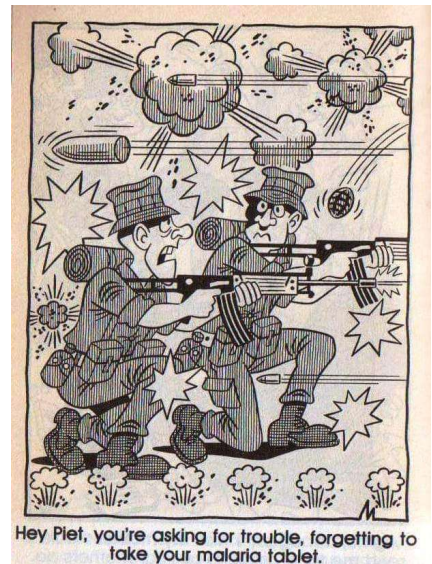
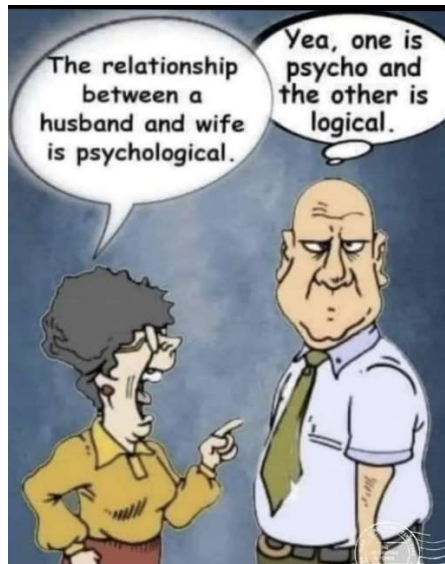
**EXPLOSIVE DETAILS:** According to Sky News Arabic, Mossad placed 20 grams of PETN explosives into each device. PETN is sensitive to heat and friction, and Israel detonated it by raising the temperature of the battery to explode it.

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Sorry, Ladies, the Pager was in my pocket





Me: How much is the rent for this gorgeous apartment?

"Sir, this is a liquor store."



LAST OF THE RHODESIANS  
Graham Denholm · 1h · 🌐

**Viagra is now available in a teabag. it doesn't improve your sexual performance....but it stops your biscuit going soft.**



## KARIBA CATCHMENT ISSUES:

South Africa is not alone in Water worries...

Victoria falls

September 2024



[09/19, 08:47] +27 82 584 6503: Yep it's perfectly normal for this time of year Bryan who has been operating canoe trips 1, 2 and 3 days' trips was just telling. When BBC made a similar report a number of years ago it affected all the tour operates in Zim and Zambia sides of the river. With so much fake news going on in the world never assume please check the facts first.

[09/19, 09:13] That report did affect the tourist trade on both sides of the Zambezi. Tourism dropped dramatically. Bud Cockroft (RIP) said Vic Falls suffered very severely. (Comment from colleagues) Kariba is a dam which is failing to meet it's designed parameters for hydro power generation as originally envisaged by my grandfather when he first did the calculations for the dam and surveyed the locations for the dam wall.

Jimmy Savory, as he was known, was later the head of the Irrigation Department for the Southern Rhodesian government. However during WW11 he was hired by Jeffares and Co. to do the "backbone traverse" which was basically 130 miles upstream from Kariba gorge near Binga. He and a crew of workers made all their own roads and basically had to explore the entire area and as he says in his book it became obvious, "and showed for the first time that an immense lake would be created with an excessively high wall" he goes on to state that during the 4 months he spent doing this job he, "traversed, check levelled and chained some 164 miles of county. It had become clear that a dam built at Kariba would create an immense lake, and in fact when Kariba was built later on, the lake created the largest artificial body of water in the world."

He goes on to say, "nothing much happened with the Kariba dam scheme until about 1953-4". At the time, "there was a considerable body of opinion in the Northern territory in favour of a scheme on the Kafue river and it was being pushed vigorously. Gradually a real battle between the two schemes developed" He goes on to say - and this is very important, "We were of course in favour of the Kariba scheme, and fortunately we were in a very strong position because our department, i.e., the Irrigation Department of the Southern Rhodesia Government, had for many years taken all available recordings both on the Zambezi river and the Kafue river." He goes on to say, "So every time the Kafue protagonists came up with their scheme we had all the information on availability of water, etc., and could shoot it down."

Based on these observations my grandfather along with 3 other engineers had crunched the numbers and when he told Prime Minister, Mr. Garfield Todd, the results Mr. Todd then took the matter up with the Federal Prime Minister and that is why Kariba was built.

Now during the 10 years between when grandpa figured out how big Kariba would be and the conversation with the Prime Minister he had been keeping very accurate figures and measuring the water. So let me describe what the lands in the catchment looked like in those days.

Firstly, they were wild and populated by small groups of villagers mainly along the river systems. Gardens were grown with the water from the rivers, fish were caught and drums were beaten at night to keep elephants out the gardens and lions away from villages. The policy of burning grass in the dry season had not started to be implemented yet. That started in 1954.

The catchment had huge populations of buffalo and elephant and all the rest of the game species. The ground was always covered with grass and leaves. Always, there just was never any bare soil except for at salt licks. Every photo in my grandfather's album the camps are always on land with trampled grass on the ground.

So based on the 10 years of actual water flow in the rivers the decision was made to build the lake. No one could ever imagine how the land management would change over the next 70 years. No one could imagine just how different the rivers would flow.

OK, now let us jump forward several decades.

In 1995 – 6 I was hired by MANO Consulting to do research in Western Province on the impact of boreholes on rural women. We traveled all over the catchment. I had 3 young research students from UNZA with me. While we were traveling to the boreholes each time we were 10 km from a borehole I would say, "OK guys 10 km to go" the students could not understand how I always knew. Finally, I explained that we had been traveling through thick forest and suddenly we ran out of trees. I explained that the furthest from water someone will walk to gather firewood is 10 km out and 10 km home, also the furthest cattle and goats will graze away from the kraal is 10 km out and 10 km home. So after 17 years of boreholes being put all over Western Province to create clean drinking water for people who used to migrate out from the Zambezi and then back to the Zambezi as their ambos dried up these people how lived all the time at the boreholes and the land could no longer support them. The trees and the grass were gone in perfect 10 km radius deserts around each borehole. The people had had more children, so basically there were more mouths to feed on less resources, a sad state of affairs.

Then in 2001 - 2 I returned to the area and did forest straight line transects and did over 6400 km of straight line transects to measure the larger trees still left. What I found was truly shocking. Well known watering holes which used to be deep enough for buffalo and elephant to wallow in were now completely silted up and dry. The annual burning had decimated the huge wildlife populations which once roamed the area. There were gaps of meters between grass plants with 99% bare soil. There was no mulch under the trees and worst of all in the entire survey not 1 single newly germinated mukwa or rosewood tree was found to have germinated, not 1. So the entire forest is dying out.

Furthermore my camp was on the banks of the Zambezi near Mazeba Bay and whilst fishing one day an very polite old gentleman came across the river and we had a long chat. He told me he used to be the Superintendent of Schools in Livingstone and that when in this position he was the one who stopped the town of Livingstone having it's name changed. I cannot remember his name. Anyway while speaking to him he said something which really shocked me. He stated that when he was a boy the river in the gorge below the Ngonye Falls near Sioma had always stayed high for 6 months after the rains ended but that now only 1 month after the rains ended the river returned to the low position.

This got me thinking and connecting the dots as to why Kariba in no longer filling up.

So here is my explanation.

Research from the University of Namibia clearly shows that bare soils have 84% evaporation of precipitation whilst covered soils only have 10% evaporation of precipitation. This original study has been repeated in numerous trials.

So even if the rainfall has stayed exactly the same between 1944 and today let us do the mathematics.

Let us take the rainfall at Mongu, Zambia at 939 mm per year. That is 939 litres per square meter of land. But for illustration purposes to make a point I am going to use this same figure over the entire catchment. 815,000 square kilometers or 815,000,000,000 meters squared. So we multiply the amount of precipitation which falls by the area of land and we know the total amount of rain which



makes it to the ground, in this case  $815,000,000,000 \times 939 = 765,285,000,000,000$  litres of water each year.

HOWEVER in 1944 the amount of rain that then soaked into the ground and stayed there was  $765,285,000,000,000$  less 10% =  $688,756,500,000,000$  litres this due to the totally covered soils which were maintained by vast herds of animals and saw little to no fire.

TODAY the same rainfall  $765,285,000,000,000$  that falls in the catchment now instead has the 84% evaporation which did not exist in 1944 – 54 when my grandfather took his measurements of the actual flow into the rivers. So the new figure is now  $765,285,000,000,000$  less 84% =  $122,445,600,000$  litres of water available from the exact same rainfall now available to flow down the rivers and into the dam. To make this more clear  $688,756,500,000,000 - 122,445,600,000 = 688,634,054,400,000$  litres LESS of water now flowing into Lake Kariba today than did when the measurements and calculations were originally performed. Basically we now get 5 times less water into the lake than we are supposed to do. This would explain why the old schools Superintendent noticed the water level in the river dropping 5 months earlier than it used to drop.

Translate this into we could get 5 more lakes for free if we worked with ALL people living in the entire catchment and taught them the importance of stopping fires 100% and learning to graze their cattle to mimic the herds of wildlife which used to exist, by planning the grazing holistically whilst making decisions to increase our forests again.

Current thought models are to tax the people of Zambia forever into the future to pay for a new lake at Batoka this makes zero sense at all. The root cause of the problem as to why Kariba doesn't have enough water to generate power like it used to has not been addressed so it will not go away. Why not instead use a fraction of the money to build an unneeded dam. The new dam will just end up being a silt trap dam as the bare soils and erosion get worse and worse over time. Look at the massive sand dams in Yemen if you don't believe me. When Yemen turned to desert their dams filled with sand and are still there in the desert to learn from. We need to teach our people how to manage their lands to regenerate them to be able to feed our growing populations and turn the circles of desert back into vibrant grass and forest ecosystems which support all life, human, livestock and wildlife and the plants and fungus we all depend on.

How a very few people will benefit from the building of a new dam but millions of people will benefit from a program to fill the current dam, by creating policy and programs to encourage national uptake of regenerative agriculture in the entire catchment basin.

I suspect all politicians will be scared of what I have written and none will have the courage to make this the most important political aspect for the nation, however a true leader will understand just how vital what I am sharing is and will get his nation behind him to make the changes necessary to improve both rural and urban lives. By changing how we manage the catchment we will not need to build more dams and we will not need to have power cuts as Kariba could have water flowing into it strongly for 5 months longer than is the current status. We will see who is brave enough to adopt this into the national dialogue. The people in the Copperbelt, Harare and Johannesburg are actually dependent on the people in Southern, Western and Mataberland Provinces who they currently look at as their backwards rural cousins, and yet these cousins through their collective actions hold the solutions to all their urban sophisticated cousins in their hands. The choice is clear the city cousins have to support their rural cousins with education, grants and outreach to change how they manage the catchments.

Rodger Savory (The next generation of the Savory family, Well known to Rhodesians) Director, Savory Grassland Management Pty. Ltd. Australia.

*Tag on LinkedIn "Veteran at Land of Milk and Honey California. and Sun Country Ltd Zambia"*