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**"A People that elect corrupt politicians, imposters, thieves and traitors are **not victims... but accomplices.**"**

GEORGE ORWELL

CURRENT EVENTS

## **Two Brave Boys From Bulawayo.**

🕒 FEB 25, 2024    📍 [Patrick O'Dea](#), [Russel Pridgeon](#)



***Hannes Wessels,***

I am not sure if it is just me and my dystopian view of the modern world in general, but I have become a chronic pessimist. This mood has characterised my assessment of the plight of my friends Russell Pridgeon and Patrick O'Dea, mutual friends from their days growing up in Bulawayo in then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), who have been persecuted and prosecuted in Australia for going to the aid of a mother and her two children, who it is alleged, were being sexually abused.

This awful saga commences over ten years ago when Professor Freda Briggs, recipient of the 'Order of Australia,' awarded for her work protecting abused children, approached Dr. Pridgeon in his professional capacity and asked for his advice and assistance in a case relating to two young girls. At the same time, she handed over a report detailing their

injuries compiled by some thirteen people, all professionals in the analyses and treatment of traumatised minors. Russell was shocked by what he read but at that point in time, there was nothing more asked of him.

The following year, on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014, the mother, exasperated by the consistent failure of the courts to listen to her pleas, uplifted the children and fled with them. On the run, alone and afraid, the mother called Russell for help. Russell reacted to the distress call immediately, drove through the night to find the distraught trio, and helped them with food and lodging. Once they were settled Russell returned home.

Meanwhile Patrick was in touch with Russell during this ordeal and knowing he had more time than his friend who had a medical practice to run, he offered to help. The offer was accepted, and Patrick set off on a three-day drive to meet the runaways, comfort them and then transport them back to Grafton in New South Wales.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of April Russell went to meet them and stayed there for six days to help them get comfortable. In the following years he was in contact with the mother and provided financial and emotional support. Patrick made several further visits taking food and presents for the children.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2018, the mother was arrested by the Australian Federal Police and the children returned to the custody of the father. On the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018, upon hearing that the mother had been arrested, Russell wrote the first of a series of five letters to the Queensland ministers of child safety and police as well as the Federal Attorney General identifying himself as a person who assisted the mother and her children when they were on the run from the authorities and begged them to rescue the children who were once again exposed to abuse. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2018 Russell wrote a letter to the presiding magistrate to support the mother's bail application.

While a single phone call to either of them was all that was needed if further investigations were required, on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018 Russell and Patrick were arrested at their homes by no less than 28 armed policemen and women.

The press were prompted by the police, and the event was televised countrywide in a multimedia frenzy. The message sent to the world, with headlines referring to 'Child Kidnapping Ring,' was that Russell was the evil mastermind and financier of an international child trafficking operation involving up to 200 children. He was accused of transferring millions in profits from this criminal enterprise to off-shore accounts and being responsible for shipping minors to destinations all over the world.

After four days imprisonment in the Brisbane Watchhouse he and Patrick were released on tough bail conditions including electronic ankle bracelets, regular reporting conditions, and restrictions on who they were allowed to be in contact with. Russell was stripped of his medical license and his livelihood.

The years since their arraignment have seen both reduced to penury due to loss of income and enormous legal bills paid to mostly ineffectual lawyers. One brave solicitor who came to the fore presenting a robust defence of the two men was promptly disbarred for bringing the legal fraternity into disrepute. The signal was thus sent to lawyers around the country that this case was too hot to handle and best not to get involved.

Patrick seated, Russell standing.

Russell and Patrick therefore stood alone, and almost defenceless against the might of the Australian law enforcement and judicial system. Over the years Russell wrote literally hundreds of letters, to members of parliament, state governors, welfare officers, police chiefs, and attorneys general, searching for an empathetic response; just anyone prepared to hear their side of the story. His pleas, without a solitary exception, fell on unanimously deaf ears; the Australian 'Deep State' was in vengeful mood.

It was clear to them, all the two had to do was relent, admit some sort of guilt, cop a plea for a reduced sentence and be done with it; this was the route followed by the vast majority of people when confronted by the might of the State. Their defiance outraged their persecutors and the pressures mounted. Most believed, me included, their situation was hopeless.

What their adversaries had not taken into account was that these two men were made of stronger stuff, they were committed, principled and very brave; they were both quite prepared to spend the rest of their lives in prison than admit to having committed a criminal offence they were innocent of.

What was also not taken into account was the fact that their plight had been noticed by two remarkable men; Pastor Paul Burton, and Mr. Graeme Bell, who came quietly, but resolutely to their side and offered support for no remuneration whatsoever. With Paul administering, and Graeme, a legal genius, (despite being unqualified) in support, they joined forces to confront the monster and in Russell's case they have emerged victorious.

On Thursday the 8th February 2024, with the help of Mr. Robert Size appearing on behalf of Russell and Patrick, the most extensive, and most expensive police investigation in the history of Australia, hit a brick wall. The court was stunned into silence when Mr Justin Hannebery (KC) leading the prosecution team, announced a Motion of Discontinuance of the two remaining charges against Russell rendering him a free man. (Additional charges against Patrick remain.)

On hearing the discharge order from Justice Lourey, Russell dropped to his knees, to give thanks to the Lord, prompting a hysterical reaction from the judge who screamed 'get out, get out, get out!' and shrieked until the defendants had left the court. When Mr. Size rose, he too was raucously ordered out the court.

"The judge's behaviour was extraordinary," says Russell. "An almost demonic rage; having her prey snatched out of her slaving jaws."

Russell is free now, but Patrick has further charges, relating mainly to alleged misuse of social media, to face. He remains unrepentant, refuses to plea bargain, and is preparing for prison. He will hear the steel doors clang shut with a clear conscience he insists; maybe those responsible for putting him there will not be able to say the same.

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**The World That Was »**

By **Hannes Wessels**

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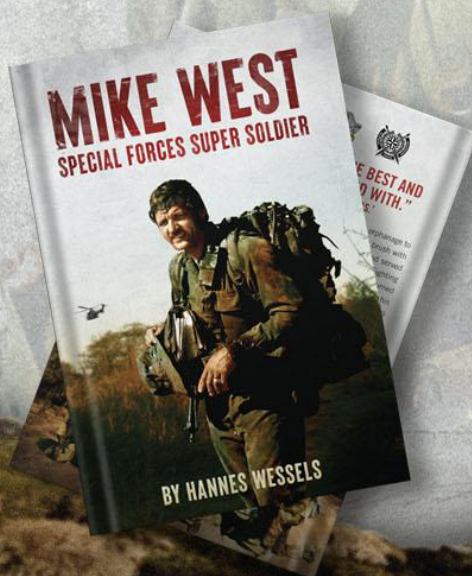
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