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Robert Mugabe, socialist curse of humanity, is gone

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Zimbabwe's preening socialist strongman, Robert Mugabe, a man who left his once-prosperous country a hellhole, is gone, and his end didn't come soon enough. He went out as as one of the world's worst curses against humanity.

Here's the [New York Times announcement](#):

Robert Mugabe, the first prime minister and later president of independent Zimbabwe, who traded the mantle of liberator for the armor of a tyrant and presided over the decline of one of Africa's most prosperous lands, died on Friday. He was 95.

The death was announced by his successor, President Emmerson Mnangagwa.

"It is with the utmost sadness that I announce the passing on of Zimbabwe's founding father and former President, Cde Robert Mugabe," [he wrote](#) on Twitter on Friday, using the abbreviation for comrade. "Mugabe was an icon of liberation, a pan-Africanist who dedicated his life to the emancipation and empowerment of his people. His contribution to the history of our nation and continent will never be forgotten."

What a shame he died in his bed. In more serious times, he would have gone out like Mussolini.

But just the fact that he was able to hang on for as long as he did draws attention worth looking at.

A truly good summary of his life and times appears in the London Telegraph's [obituary of the man this morning](#):

[Robert Mugabe, the former president of Zimbabwe who has died aged 95](#), began his 37 years in power as a Nobel Peace Prize nominee credited with creating Africa's most successful multiracial state.

By the time he was ousted in November 2017 his repressive determination to remain in charge had driven the country into ruin and ensured his place as an international pariah, while the determination of his widely despised second wife, Grace, to succeed him had threatened to plunge the country into civil war and led to a military intervention.

Mugabe had risen to prominence as a Marxist guerrilla leader of the rebellion against white minority rule in Rhodesia. Then, in 1980, he was elected the newly independent state of Zimbabwe's first prime minister.

But once settled in office, having overcome opposition from white farmers and opposition black politicians, he presided over the despoliation of the country whose existence he had helped to bring about.

How did he amass power the way he did? Two themes in the Telegraph obit seem to explain why he got away with as much as he did.

One was his background - third-world socialism, racial grievance-mongering, and liberation theology taught by Jesuits, same as Fidel Castro of Cuba had, touting that 'preferential option for the poor.' Using this as his rationale, Mugabe had a free license to disrespect the rule of law inherent in property rights, and then plunder the country, all in the name of 'helping the poor,' justifying his vile acts with virtue-signaling, seemingly with God's imprimatur. Did the poor get rich from his land expropriations? Not in the least. Actually, they got poorer than ever, and millions fled as refugees. He turned his once-successful country into a miserable failure.

Here's a summary of that accomplishment I wrote about for Investor's Business Daily in 2016:

Before the Marxist Mugabe ruined Zimbabwe, it was a net food exporter, considered the breadbasket of Africa. Wheat, corn and sugar cane were routinely shipped across the continent and beyond.

Mugabe has been president since 1980, but his reign of terror began in 2000, when he started plundering private farmland in his "land reform" program.

Consequently, the annual corn harvest withered from more than 1.5 million tons in 2000 to 600,000 tons in 2010. Wheat production also fell sharply, from 309,000 tons in 2000 to 27,000 tons in 2003 to roughly 18,000 tons in 2010. The 2015 harvests were hardly better for either crop.

Meanwhile, next door in Botswana, a nation with a similar climate and natural resources, food production has increased by 29% since 2004 while declining 9% during the same time in Zimbabwe.

Naturally, Zimbabwe's economy has suffered as well. By 2009, inflation had reached 500 billion percent thanks to Mugabe's Marxist policies, and the economy contracted 10% between 1998 and 2008. Mugabe's regime also created a brain drain, as 3 million fled, including "tens of thousands of doctors and lawyers," says Marian Tupy of the Cato Institute.

What a hellhole. And sure enough, the formula was widely emulated -- it was repeated next continent over in Hugo Chavez's Venezuela. Same old socialism. Same old liberation theology. Same old racial grievance-mongering. It was also used to justify the plunder of that country, too. Not surprisingly, the pair of dictators were also the best of buddies, accomplishing exactly the same thing. Mugabe has since become a role model for South Africa, a nation that began quite promisingly with the 1990 end of Apartheid, but now, like Zimbabwe, is rapidly hurtling itself toward hellhole status too as the socialists in power there begin expropriating white-owned farmland there without compensation. What a sick record to emulate.

The second thing that stands out is how enabled Mugabe was by Western liberal opinion. The fine salons of New York and London touted him as a hero, a national liberation man, a combatant of colonialism. They romanticized him. They believed everything he said and they justified his outrages, which only got worse and worse the more they cheered. Mugabe played

them like a fiddle, explaining everything to them in terms of 'social justice.' He lied through his teeth from the beginning, but oh, how they kowtowed to him and covered up for him, always giving him the benefit of the doubt because he was 'oppressed' and 'fighting oppression.' The blind eye of the West was his best friend.

Net result: Zimbabwe became an absolute hellhole and one day will have to be rebuilt from the ground up. Like Venezuela, Zimbabwe is becoming something of a Chinese protectorate now, which is a rather sorry state of 'independence.' It's only kept afloat by other dictators' money and its nationals continue to choose becoming migrants over living at home.

He's gone now but the virus of his horrible socialist ideas and grievance politics lives on, still embedded within the liberal imagination, still promoting his baseline ideas in recognizable woke variations today. It shows that Mugabe, like a monster, is not completely dead. But what's left of him is as deadly as the ebola virus, still spreading and still taking down everything in its path.