

Manuel does Zim no justice

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Justice Malala's realistic — and courageous — appraisal of the Zimbabwe debacle and the astonishing reaction of the SADC heads of state in offering applause for a recognised tyrant, “Stop the lies about Zimbabwe” (August 27), produced some weird verbiage from Finance Minister Trevor Manuel, “Less talk about food and more analysis, Mr Malala” (Letters, August 29), who attempted to cloud the issue by introducing the subject of “collective memory”.

PROPPED UP: A reader points out that South Africa did not overcome apartheid on its own: as we had help, so should Zimbabwe not be expected to go it alone

I doubt if too many readers of a daily newspaper have much idea of what that means and I certainly don't think it would distract ordinary Zimbabweans from his reported statement: “We must encourage Zimbabweans to solve their own problems.”

How does Manuel — a politician for whom I have always had respect — suggest they do that under a regime that today has as much control over the people and political factors as Hitler's national socialists in the late 30s?

As one of the leaders against apartheid, Manuel knows very well that South Africans did not solve it on their own — they had massive help from the international community and moral support from neighbouring governments within the SADC.

Why does Manuel not attempt to discredit the picture of tyranny and human rights abuse painted by Justice Malala — instead of offering the unworthy and denigrating remark “too busy with the hard labour of restaurant reviews”. — William Harris, Sunday Times