

AUGUST 2002



by Chaz Maviyane-Davies

MAPPING EVIL

Where sometimes words fail us, images have always been captivating. They are a reflection of our lives and are part of the political landscape. They exert an influence over societies, attitudes and opinions while informing, educating and decorating. They bear witness to the injustices of our times and warn us against complacency. Ultimately they add to our life experience.

Words are the wonderful containers of the letters we assemble in them to denote joy, understanding, meaning and action. Unfortunately as the media disperse zillions of words everyday like plagues of insects, they infest our every neuron, and more often than not, paralyze us into apathy and inaction by tolerating evil as a by-product of global jostling.

Watching the crisis in Zimbabwe unfolding with devastating consequences it is clear that we live on one planet with many worlds, and the truth in the words from this world are often digested like junk food. Filling us up with content but not the nutrients of context to energise our capacity to act.

The provACTIVE nature of images is often underestimated in the communication struggles we wage. Where words elude us, sometimes the creative distillation of ideas through imagery can provide the friction to ignite reaction and incinerate apathy.

I believe that there are so many vital issues about Zimbabwe that if illuminated through other processes of absorbing information would help hold a magnifying glass to the rot that affects us all in the end.

The simplest of these issues is seeing the truth.

We need to see the poisonous state of affairs in a way that weighs on our minds with the full weight of the looming disaster tipping the scales of human justice. This is a moral and ethical imperative.

Here, creativity, through information graphics, is the key that can interpret into a readily grasped visual form, the minefield of political truth that is Zimbabwe today.

Mapping Evil is the working name of a project that I would like to undertake whose nature is to map facts. Like brushes strokes exploring the machinations of greed, power and deceit, these lateral paintings will make manifest the nature of human folly through visual dialogue.

Conceptually, by maneuvering through a juxtaposed geography of facts, we become an eyewitness to the values inherent in these maps of arrogance, despair, fear and stupidity, ultimately leaving a visually translatable imprint of what is at stake.

Mapping Evil through well-designed graphs/diagrams/charts/maps is a way to provide the comparative stimulus (needed in our situation) to retain information and use the visual resonance deployed to underline the hypocritical ruse of political dinosaurs gone mad.

Imagine these few examples as starting points:

- Comparative maps of land confiscated and maps of land 'given' to ZANU PF hierarchy.
- Productive capacity of the land before and after the evictions.
- Displaced farm workers.
- Actual allocation of land to rural populace.
- Map of lands confiscated which were bought after 1980 whose deed holders have a certificate from the government declaring that it was not interested in those properties.
- Comparison maps of how Aid money was used to purchase land what became of that land.
- Maps of how and where food aid is being distributed and to whom.
- Maps comparing actual voter populations and the numbers of people who were said to have voted there.
- Maps depicting no-go areas for the opposition in the run-up to the elections.
- Map of Youth 'intimidation' militia camps.
- Map showing where the opposition press were stopped from selling newspapers.
- Map of the areas where the population was forced to buy 'Party' cards in order to live so called 'normal' lives.
- Chronological series of maps of Army deployment before and during the elections.
- Comparison maps of amounts of money spent on the war in the DRC to development projects in Zimbabwe.
- Violence maps against opposition members to general public.
- Maps of farms and national assets sold to Libya in order to preserve support for the ZANU PF regime.
- Maps showing location of businesses forced to close down.
- Maps of deforestation and wildlife decimation.
- Mapping inflation and its effects.

Mapping Evil is an ambitious project requiring a lot of input and ideas from those in the field with the numbers, statistics and charts on the tragedy that has beset our beloved country. Its focus is to denounce and make visible the travesty of justice and human rights by an intolerant government ready to destroy a nation for the sake of power.

In this sense I appeal for your support and help with ideas and data/information that will enable and enhance this concept and bring it to fruition. This project depends on this support, for without the relevant content, it will be very difficult for me to realize this important communication.

Accurate information is vital for this project to be meaningful so anyone willing to help should please keep this in mind when sending materials. I will also be quoting all the sources and dates as we are dealing with matters that are in constant flux.

While there are no strict deadlines, I would like to complete this project by March 2003 (one year after the election theft) to be distributed soon after. This means I could use any information materials as soon as possible with a deadline of the end of the year.

As the materials are forthcoming I will collate, study and organize the information to determine the best and most effective way to approach and implement the project. I will then respond where needed, to share and develop the concepts.

Mapping Evil will probably begin on the internet. This format is fast and easily disseminated and can be used in a variety of ways to spread the truth about our deteriorating situation.

If funds become available I will try my utmost to get **Mapping Evil** published for wider distribution. I am also open to any suggestions on this aspect of the project.

The madness has to be seen for what it is. If **Mapping Evil** can make the slightest difference, then these maps/diagrams need to be out there to direct the truth enabling us to act for change.

My thanks and gratitude in advance for your support. I can be contacted at the email addresses below.

In faith and action,

Chaz Maviyane-Davies

Email: maviyane@attbi.com

Alternative email: maviyane@hotmail.com

The website: www.maviyane.co.zw