

ZIMBABWE BRIEFING

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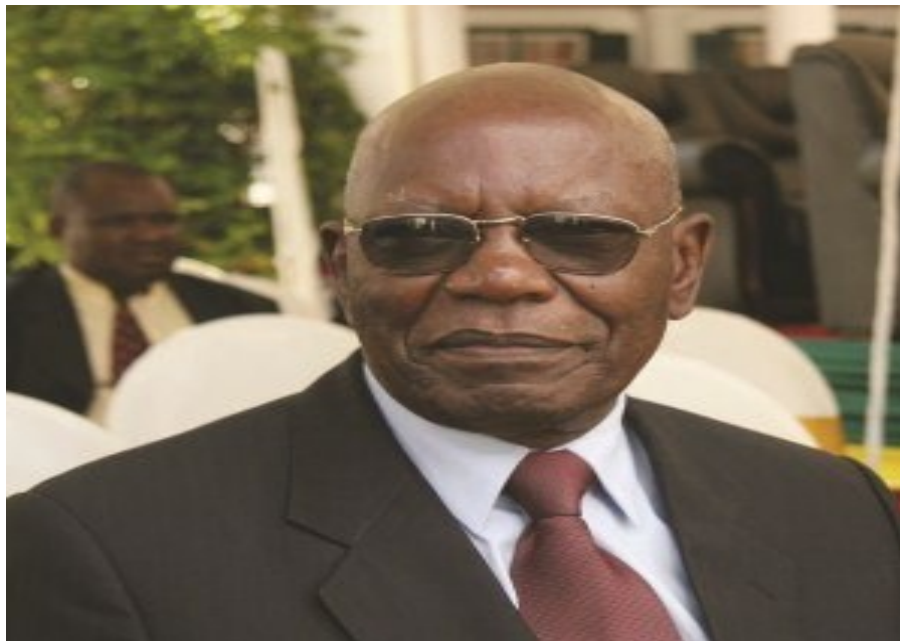


Zanu PF Squanders Chance for Key Leadership Renewal

THERE is something telling about resolutions made by Zanu PF politburo and central committee to disband District Coordinating Committees (DCCs) last month. Before being dissolved, DCCs linked provincial structures with the district structures. The DCC polls were keenly contested within the party, as they were linked to the succession race. Zanu PF has passed up several opportunities to fully address the issue of succession of party leader President Robert Mugabe. It is quite unfortunate that instead of addressing the core crisis, that of leadership renewal, the party has often resorted to sanctioning those who make their presidential ambitions public.

In disbanding the DCC structures, Mugabe has again put the lid on succession politics within the party and engendered an environment of fear, especially for Defence minister Emmerson Mnangagwa's faction that was on the ascendancy after winning in most provinces against candidates aligned to rival, Vice-President Joice Mujuru. The message is thus clear: as long as Mugabe is alive, the succession debate should never be placed on Zanu PF agenda. Contrary to assertions by the party that DCCs are not wanted as they were divisive as proven by the controversy that haunted the elections, Mugabe himself, who has been at the helm of the party for far too long, is also a major stumbling block.

This DCC furore leaves Zanu PF with a false sense of security in the short-term, but the bottom line is the party is failing, or rather reluctant to renew its leadership, and that is a recipe for disaster as Mugabe is aging. With the disbandment of the DCCs, the party structures will become voiceless. Zanu PF has adopted a top-down command structure as opposed to the ideal situation of a bottom-up approach. Leadership-related questions will not be tolerated. A case in point is when Major-General Douglas Nyikayaramba said Retired Brigadier Ambrose Mutinhiri would succeed Muga-



Zanu PF Secretary for Administration and Politburo member, Didymus Mutasa

be at a memorial service for General Constantine Chiwenga's brother. Zanu PF political commissar Webster Shamu was quick to shoot down Nyikayaramba's sentiments insisting that "the joke was not funny and should never be repeated". This is sad given that even Sha-

pended. Instead of the party's leadership holding a serious meeting on why its senior members were nicodemously discussing succession issues, Mugabe came out guns blazing. Within a few weeks of the Tsholotsho meeting, the six chairpersons had been suspend-

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mu himself may actually want someone "young" to lead the party. He expressed this view almost a decade ago, which saw him being pushed into political oblivion for a while.

The disbandment of DCCs confirms that Mugabe has become Zanu PF himself. This is well illustrated by the Tsholotsho debacle of 2004. Some senior Zanu PF politicians allegedly used the cover of a prize-giving ceremony at Dinyane School in Tsholotsho to discuss a succession plan that would have shaken up the presidium. Six of the party's 10 provincial chairpersons were in favour of the succession plan, but were later sus-

ed and some of the people involved were strongly warned for trying to stage a "palace coup". This structural decay was confirmed in the manner senior party members confided in the US government that they wanted the party leadership renewed, according to WikiLeaks.

Many senior members of the party expressed reservations about Mugabe carrying on as leader, and also cited his advanced age and deteriorating health. Again the party did not convene a serious meeting to deliberate the succession issue that had been confided in the US government — one of Zanu PF's "enemies" following so-

called targeted sanctions. Instead, Mugabe has used the WikiLeaks disclosures to strengthen his hand by creating an environment that is divisive, through ignoring this brazen act of "betrayal" as a way of creating uncertainty over the fate of the culprits. In the first round of the 2008 presidential elections, the party structures showed Mugabe their vote of no confidence in his leadership, taking the polls as a window of opportunity to resolve the outstanding issue of succession. Zanu PF MPs and councillors campaigned for themselves and urged their supporters to make a "wise decision" over the presidency, hence the "bhora musango" (anyone but Mugabe) strategy when it came to the presidential poll. Hence, Mugabe lost the first round of voting to MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai. Instead of serious introspection, Mugabe keeps reminding the party leadership in politburo and central committee meetings that they erred by not campaigning for him, as if to say without him the party is history.

No doubt the disbanding of the DCCs is yet another blunder by Zanu PF as far as the succession question is concerned as it targets symptoms rather than causes of the disease. What is clear, although no-one in Zanu PF will say it loudly or publicly, is that party members are certain that Mugabe's reign is drawing to a close and sooner rather than later the succession issue would be resolved. By then it could be too late as Zanu PF will realise the folly of tying its survival to an individual and dissolving structures to serve that person. This is an important lesson to other parties in the country: the sooner they start resolving issues of leadership renewal, the better for their political parties' survival.

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Is Zanu PF Divided Over Constitution?

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With the submission of the draft constitution to political principals recently, it would appear that, finally, there is forward movement towards the conclusion of the process. However, there bickering over Zimbabwe's supreme law is persisting, but now, not so much among political parties, but, it appears, heated debate is mainly within Zanu PF. On Saturday, 28 July, the MDC [T] National Executive Committee met to receive a report and consider the draft constitution and concluded that they were satisfied that the draft 'essentially captures the views of the people of Zimbabwe and represents an incremental gain in the democratisation process.' They then resolved to support the draft Constitution.

The previous day the Zanu PF politburo had met to deliberate on the draft constitution but meeting ended without a position on the draft. However, one of the Zanu PF negotiators and justice minister Patrick Chinamasa stated that the Zanu PF politburo had endorsed 97% of the draft with a few contested areas including the national objectives and foundations; the appointment of provincial governors; allowing the president to deploy defence forces outside the country without



Professor Jonathan Moyo, Member of Parliament for Tsholotsho [Zanu PF]

consulting parliament; the removal of the constitutional court from the draft; opposition to the restructuring of the Attor-

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ney General's office to create an independent National Prosecution Authority; and opposition to a section dealing with the nomination of presidential candidates and their running mates. Minister Chinamasa concluded by saying, "the Politburo and Zanu-PF are committed to seeing this process through. A lot of resources have been expended; we cannot afford to see the process come to naught."

Interestingly, yesterday (31 July), Zanu PF politburo member professor Jonathan Moyo came out guns blazing in his address at an IDASA meeting in Pretoria where he outrightly dismissed the

draft constitution as not being a draft constitution, but a political pamphlet. He lamented that the constitution is now conclud-

ing in negotiations characterised by compromise – and for him the word compromise is 'shorthand for major selling out.' While noting that Zanu PF was yet to come up with a position on the draft, he said his personal view was that the draft was a plagiarized document not reflective of the views of Zimbabweans.

Directly responding to comments by his colleague in Zanu PF that there was agreement to 97% of the draft, professor Moyo said the constitution is not a percentage issue and that, if it was a body 97% good, perhaps the outstanding 3% is brain and heart; so the body cannot function. He

said opposition to a new constitution ahead of elections is driven by a view that the constitution is a strategy to win elections by the MDC formations who view it as a transitional document to be revisited after elections. On that basis, he said, Zanu PF would not support the MDC to get power. He concluded by saying Zimbabwe does not have a constitutional crisis and does not need a new constitution to hold elections, which he said must be held as soon as possible this year. This apparent and very public Zanu PF division over the constitution may be reflective of major faultlines emerging within the party given the various factions that may be jostling for power in their sunset politics. But it could also be an elaborate strategy by Zanu PF to feign confusion and opposition to the draft constitution which they know is largely reflective of their views in order to give an impression of compromising at a later stage. Justice minister Chinamasa is probably closer to the truth when he says Zanu PF is happy with 97% of the draft constitution, but professor Jonathan Moyo, being the spin doctor he is, probably wants to confuse the public about where Zanu PF stands.

Dewa Mavhinga, Regional Coordinator, Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition

UPCOMING EVENTS

6-9 August, 8th Southern Africa Civil Society Forum, Maputo

15-16 August, SADC Council of Ministers Meeting

17-18 August, SADC Summit, Maputo

Inbrief Around Zimbabwe

ZANU PF and the Draft Constitution

The ZANU PF Politburo is set to meet today to finalise analyzing the draft constitution. Media has been awash with reports that certain clauses in the draft constitution have widened the rift between ZANU PF factions with the bone of contention being the new draft constitution’s running mates clause. The clause requires a party candidate to nominate two running mates which become his deputies once elected into office.

Speaking in Pretoria at a meeting organized by the Institute of Democracy in Africa yesterday Professor Jonathan Moyo acknowledged that ZANU PF has factions like most parties. Responding to why ZANU PF seems to be dismissive of the draft constitution considering that ZANU PF had representatives in COPAC during the draft process, Moyo stated that the ZANU PF negotiators in COPAC were just mere agents of ZANU PF and their work is subject to scrutiny by the principals who are not bound by what the agents agree to put in the document. Moyo dismissed the draft as a flawed document.

MDC-T Endorses Draft Constitution



MDC– T Gokwe Kabuyuni Member of Parliament, Hon Costin Muguti

The MDC-T endorsed the draft constitution which according to Midlands North Provincial Chairman, Hon Costin Muguti is truly people-driven because it enshrines and guarantees the right to freedom, democracy, transparency and good governance in Zimbabwe. This means the MDC-T will be going for a yes vote in the coming referendum. Both formations of the MDC have endorsed the draft constitution.

After approval by the parties the draft will go to a stakeholder’s conference, though this has no power to change anything and after that it will go through parliament and finally a referendum. According to Justice and Legal Affairs Minister Patrick Chinamasa the country will hold the coming referendum using the Referendums Act that was promulgated in 2000. The Minister said unlike in general elections, one does not require to be a registered voter to vote in a referendum. What is needed only is for one to go to a polling station and produce identification particulars in the form of national identity card, a passport or a driver’s licence.

Harare’s Health Woes Persist

Harare and Chitungwiza registered a fresh outbreak of typhoid in the past weeks. About 162 cases have been recorded so far in a new wave of outbreak of the water borne disease. The outbreak has been exacerbated by the poor sewerage system and unsafe water being accessed by residents. To add to this the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare Director for Epidemiology and Disease Control, Dr Portia Manangazira confirmed that more than 140,000 people have been affected by the H3N2 influenza (flu) bug which has claimed the life of one person so far.

The H3N2 is a subtype of virus that causes flu and persons suffer-

ing from the disease are likely to experience chills, fever, sore throat, muscle pains, severe headache, coughing, weakness, fatigue and general discomfort.

Bulawayo Facing Serious Water Shortages



Residents of Bulawayo accessing water from a protected well in Magwegwe

Bulawayo City authorities declared a water emergency which saw the city implementing water rationing starting on Friday last week. The rationing will see residents of Bulawayo experiencing 24hour water cuts for 2 days a week a move necessitated by the fact that the city’s main dams and reservoirs are close to empty after going for two seasons without sufficient rainfalls.

Bulawayo gets its water from Insiza, Inyankuni, Lower Ncema and Umzingwane dams. Water shortages like these are a serious call for concern given the fresh outbreaks of typhoid reported in Harare and Chitungwiza.

A project to solve Bulawayo perennial water shortages called the National Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project (NMZWP) has been on the cards since 1912 and has failed to materialize due to financial constraints. The Chinese promised to avail funding for the project by means of a loan worth \$1,2 billion needed to carry out the National Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project (NMZWP).

According to the Minister of Water Resources, Management and Development, Samuel Sipepa Nkomo completion of the project may take up to three years.

The Project will be undertaken in 3 phases, the first would entail the completion of the Gwayi-Shangani Dam, which would receive water from the Zambezi River, while the second would be the construction of a pipeline from the Gwayi-Shangani Dam to a reservoir in Bulawayo’s Cowdray Park suburb. The third and final phase will be the construction of a 245km pipeline from the Zambezi River to the Gwayi-Shangani Dam.

Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition on Advocacy Mission to Tanzania

Zimbabwe civil society leaders under the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition banner are in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on a week-long advocacy mission ahead of the SADC Summit to be held in Maputo, Mozambique, on the 17 and 18 August.

Tanzania is a member of the SADC Organ Troika on Defence, Politics and Security Cooperation and has nominated Ambassador David Katye as SADC representative to work with JOMIC in monitoring Zimbabwe’s progress towards elections. The other SADC representative was nominated by Zambia.

Numbers Do Not Necessarily Indicate Progress: A Rejoinder to Ms Polygreen’s Article in the New York Times.

The hullabaloo over the statistics around Tobacco figures reached its crescendo with the New York Times article by Ms Polygreen squeaming headlines of Mugabe’s Fast Track Land Reform Process beginning to bear fruits. The argument in this article is that the pain suffered by Zimbabweans was necessary in smashing the existing property relations in Zimbabwe. Further to this, the article uses races as tool of analogy to drive points home on the shifting power relations between black and white. Many half baked and unscientific truths are used to buttress the argument that out of the chaos finally some order has emerged. Statistics are conveniently quoted without going into their finer details and blanket statements made. In this case, numbers are equated to progress without critically engaging them. This alleged shifted is supported by arguments based on Ian Scoones’ studies and African Institute of Agrarian Studies.

The figures are enticing and tempting; from 2000 White tobacco farmers to 60 000 Black tobacco farmers sharing \$400,000,000.00 and further broken down to \$6000.00 per farmer. A story of a great Africa revolution whose progress is read in a numbers game that seeks to distort Zimbabwe’s economic history simply to satiate the appetite of exhausted nationalists. To borrow from Benjamin Disraeli one is tempted to conclude that, ***‘there are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics’***. Mark Twain further stressed this point when he says ‘figures often beguile me; particularly when I have the arranging of them myself’. These quotations may help us in gaining insight on the arguments round the purported fruits of the fast-track land reform in Zimbabwe. Figures are quoted and bastardised with impunity without attaching any shred of evidence to them. We are made to believe that there is progress, without any definition of this progress. Indeed the numbers are a reality, but they do not necessarily indicate progress.

There a lot of factual inaccuracies around the interpretation of the statistics. More so, the question is progress at what cost, and who pays? The New

York Times journalism falls into the trap of being keyboard happy without understanding the dynamics around the issues of land in Zimbabwe. This elisionistic interpretation of history was irresponsibly invoked by Mahmud Mamdani’s essay Lessons on Zimbabwe published in 2008 by the London Review Books. Furthermore, Moyo and Yeros 2008 make similar assertions of a radicalized state and revolution brewing from below. The logic of the argument is simple, ‘chaos breeds order’ and there was no other way outside the Jambanja (violence).

This interpretation of Zimbabwe’s political economy fails to account for the fact that, the resort to violence by ZANU PF was primarily geared towards the conquest and retention of lost political ground. ZANU PF created a bourgeoisie state that only sought to replace the pigmentation of the state from black to white, whilst still maintaining the same colonial institutions. This explains why 32 years after independence we are still battling with questions of gross inequality. The Utete and Bhuka reports expose gross cases of multiple farm ownerships by the ZANU PF elite and with most of this land being reduced to picnic and braai resorts as remarked by Gideon Gono in one of his monetary policy addresses. The RBZ led farm mechanization programme and the huge debt it has created for the nation is another legacy of Mugabe’s land reform programme.

The question is where did the machinery go, and why are those farmers not producing. Interestingly, Ms Polygreen’s article admits that, “The new farmers are receiving virtually no assistance from the government, which for years poured money into larger farms given to politically connected elites”. So if these farmers are receiving nothing; the question is what happened to those farmers who were receiving the support? Where are their figures? Where do they fit in the matrix of these figures and new found Eldorado? Farmers are selectively quoted to parrot a well choreographed act and claims are made that inexperienced farmers form small pieces of land are eking as much as \$10,000.00

a fairly huge some amount of money in Zimbabwe, while an experienced farmer is failing from 200 hectares to produce and eke a living. The numbers, figures and their logic do not add in this case. 200 hectares of planted Tobacco is no small piece of land in terms of yields. More so, we are made to believe that the figure 60 000 is comprised of totally new farmers without paying regard to the farmers from the old resettlement and communal areas. A visit to Chinhenga village in Makoni District a communal area, one will be greeted by small tobacco drying halls. This is a new phenomenon that was not characteristic of this village 5 years ago.

The actually demographics in the figure 60 000 are therefore not clear. The use of the arithmetic mean in coming up with the figure of \$6000 per farmer is very misleading because it does not show the differences between small scale farmers and large scale farmers in terms of who got what. Numbers are conveniently juggled to reinforce unverified information. Even the reference to Ms Rudo Boka, whose family has been a huge beneficiary of ZANU PF patronage politics is meant to give authority to the quoted figures. However the major question is if indeed Ms Boka’s company did heavily invest as she claims what is the quantity of the investment and who were the beneficiaries?

It seems there is a tendency to create the history of the triumph without going into the nitty-gritty of things. What it seems in this case may be not what it is. Ali Mazrui cautioned against quickly celebrating easy victories, and it seems the narratives on Zimbabwe’s land reform discourse are falling into the same trap. We need more facts beyond the mere juggling statistics to suit narratives that seek to massage the egos and pride of failed politicians. There is a lot of land that is still lying idle and not being used by many of the beneficiaries of the fast track land reform. The land question is far from over and up to today remains unresolved. There is need to look at the debate beyond the excitement of one bubble of Tobacco farming. Zimbabwe’s agricultural system was not only

about Tobacco farming but highly diversified. Destruction of big agro-concerns such as Kondozi estate should remind us that other sectors such as horticulture were destroyed and nothing has been done to revive this sector. Where are the new farmers in the horticulture industry? Where are the new farmers in the animal husbandry section? Tobacco farming is not the alpha and omega of Zimbabwe’s agricultural system.

An argument is also made that the results in increased tobacco sales justifies the pain. But the question that lingers is according to whom is this pain justified? In 2005, while I was working in Manicaland province, I dealt with a rape case of a 13 year old gale whose father was working as one of the managers at Charleswood Estate owned by Roy Bennet (MDC-T Senator). This little girl, together with a group of women was raped by a gang of thugs simply because the father was branded a sellout. The rapist would set dogs on the girl and women to make them comply with their sexual demands. I recall vividly this case being one of the many that I dealt with in Manicaland province. The major question that remains un-answered is what did this minor and the other women do to deserve being raped. Do the increased tobacco figures justify the rape? Many Zimbabweans were raped, maimed, killed displaced, had livelihoods destroyed (this was the pain), and the question still remains could land have not been distributed without raping minors. Do we need to rape to create successful black farmers? Is that the progress?

Numbers do not necessarily indicate progress. Beyond every figure there is a story. This is what we have to bear in mind and begin to critically engage with the numbers before being overtaken by the euphoria of being able to count. There is a serious risky of distorting history and sanitizing heinous crimes in the name of revolution.

By Tamuka Chirimambowa