

Inclusion and Exclusion:
NGOs and Politics in Zimbabwe

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of D.Phil in the
Department of Politics and International Relations in the Division of Social Studies at the
University of Oxford.

Michaelmas 2001

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98 852 words

Abstract

The thesis explores the changing relations between the Zimbabwean state and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) after independence. It focuses on debates over the role of NGOs in democratization in developing countries, using Zimbabwe as an example. The thesis argues that the study of democratization is best accomplished through detailed empirical case studies, relying on historical narratives and participant-observation research. Such research reinforces our understanding of democratization as a complex and dynamic process.

The thesis proposes a framework for understanding state and society relations in Zimbabwe, emphasizing the ruling party's use of coercive and consent-generating mechanisms to establish hegemony over the new nation. It examines the changing relationship between NGOs and the state after independence, when the ruling party's efforts to include most groups within its nationalist coalition extend to NGOs. Case studies of NGO coalitions show how activist NGOs fail to mobilize others owing to the unwillingness of many NGOs to challenge the ruling party's control over policy-making.

The establishment of the National Constitutional Assembly by some NGOs, churches and trade unionists set the stage for an increasingly tense engagement between NGOs and the state after 1997. The constitutional debate opened up the public sphere in new ways. As the ruling party attempted to retain control over the political sphere and the constitutional debate, NGO politics became increasingly polarized. The emergence of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, and the prominence of NGO activists within its leadership, led to further conflict. After losing the February 2000 constitutional referendum, the regime sanctioned violent attacks on white farmers, businesspeople, and NGOs. While the ruling party attempted to shore up its support through nationalist rhetoric and financial incentives, groups perceived to oppose the state were excluded and vilified.

(286 words)

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Acknowledgements

My study at Oxford was funded by the Rhodes Trust, which also supported some of my research expenses in 1995 and 1996-7. My research trip in 1999 was supported by the Carr Fund of St Antony's College and the Graduate Studies Committee of the Social Studies Faculty at Oxford. My family also contributed greatly over the years, both financially and emotionally. Much of the thesis was written while I was at Queen Elizabeth House, who provided excellent facilities for writing and researching when I worked for them, and even when I didn't. Special thanks to Megan Vaughan for facilitating my extended stay in her office at Queen Elizabeth House.

My debts to friends in Zimbabwe go back over the past 10 years, when the members of ZUNA welcomed a group of Canadian students. We've all come a long way from the first football match we watched at the National Stadium in July 1991. ZUNA's story is not told here in detail, but it provided the backbone for much of my thinking about NGOs in Zimbabwe. Ronald Mubaiwa and Fisher Chiyanike both proved reliable guides to the world of Zimbabwean NGOs and good friends. I owe them a great deal. Michael Laban was committed to making me love Zimbabwe as much as he does. He succeeded. The O'Briens provided welcome breaks from research, good companionship, shelter, and many excellent shared meals and celebrations. Many NGO colleagues were helpful and supportive; some became good friends. In particular, I want to thank Jonah Gokova and Rachael Chitima at ESS, Regis Mtutu and Paul Themba Nyathi from the PVO campaign, and David Jamali, Simeon Mawanza, Reggie Matchaba-Hove, David Chimhini, and Munyaradzi Bhidi all of whom I originally met at ZimRights.

Many scholars of Zimbabwean politics encouraged me in this study. In Zimbabwe: Brian Raftopoulos, Niki Jazdowska, and the late Norbert Tengende. In the US: Erica Bornstein and Tina West. In the UK: Jocelyn Alexander, JoAnn McGregor and David Maxwell stand out among the wide and stimulating Britain-Zimbabwe Society membership.

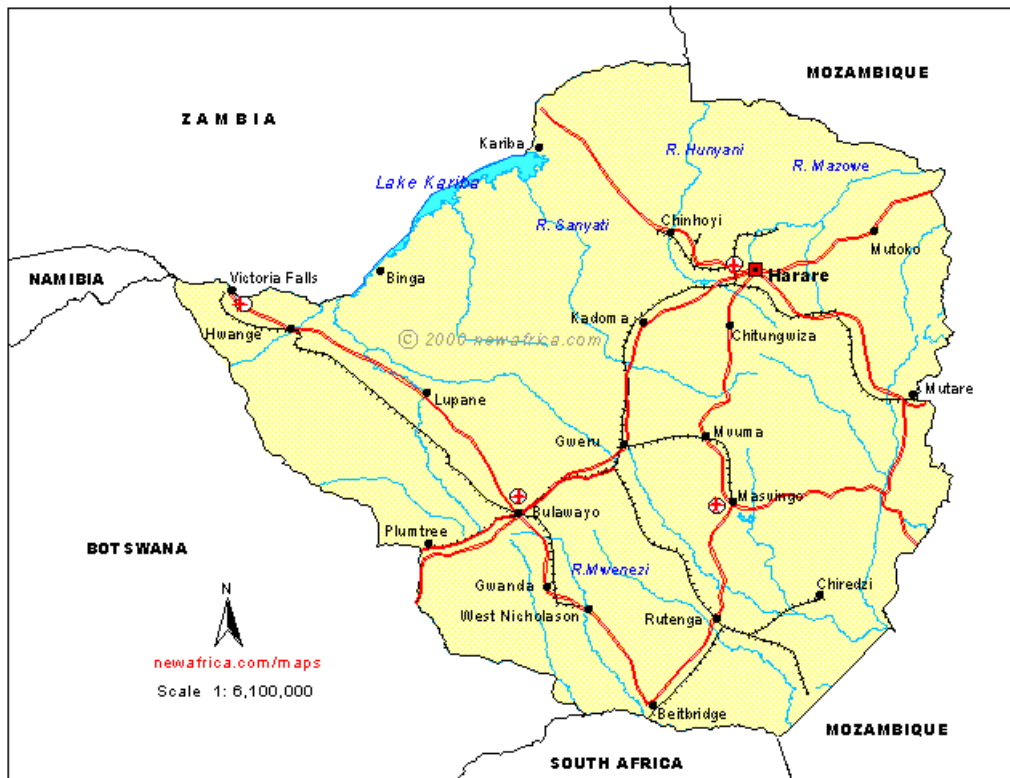
Substantial portions of material from chapters 6 and 7 appears as "Church NGOs and Democratization in Zimbabwe" *African Affairs* January 2002. An earlier version of Chapter 6 will be published in Björn Beckman, Anders Sjogren and Eva Hannsen eds. *Civil Society and Authoritarianism in the Third World* (Stockholm: PODSU, 2001). Nearly all of these chapters were presented at either the Southern Africa History and Politics seminar at QEH, the African Studies Seminar at St Antony's, or the Britain Zimbabwe Society research days, also held at St Antony's. The conveners and members of these seminars were consistently patient with my attempts to work through this material, and my questions directed at them.

Many of these arguments developed out of and were rehearsed in a series of lectures and classes attended and later given jointly with Gavin Williams, Abdul Raufu Mustapha and Stanley Trapido. They all extended and challenged my thinking about African Politics. Peter Pulzer supervised me between 1994 and 1996. Gavin Williams supervised my MPhil thesis in 1995-6 and the DPhil from 1997. They were both appropriately challenging, encouraging, patient and helpful. Gavin's commitment to the project, especially in the final year, made it possible. Bill Dorman read the entire thesis, argued with me over most of it, and was consistently supportive and inspiring.

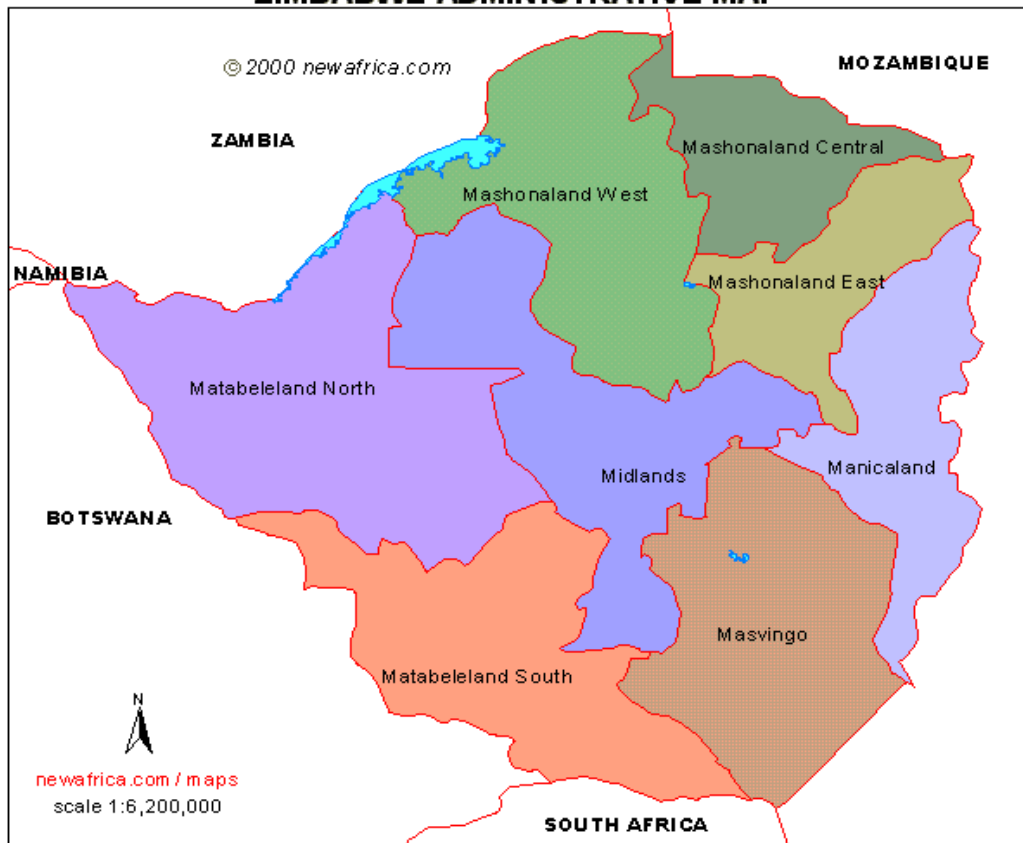
My genesis as a political scientist was fostered, stimulated and encouraged at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Among the many stimulating teachers and colleagues I had over the course of my five years there, Dr Gunther Hartmann stands out. This thesis is dedicated to his memory.

Maps of Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE OVERVIEW MAP



ZIMBABWE ADMINISTRATIVE MAP



Currency Conversion Rates

Year	ZWD	USD
1980	.6	1
1990	2.5	1
1992	5.1	1
1995	8.7	1
1997	12.1	1
1998	23.7	1
1999	38.3	1

World Bank. *African Development Indicators, 2001*. (Washington DC: World Bank, 2001).

Glossary of Selected Zimbabwe-specific Terms

chimurenga	the war of liberation
inyika	our land (name of a pro fast track land reform NGO)
gukurahundi	the word used to describe the Matabeleland Conflict, 1982-87
mujibas/chimbwidos	young men and women who assisted the Guerrillas but were not members of the liberation armies
mafela	The fallen one (name of NGO working with ex-combatants)
musasa	an indigenous tree (name of a women's NGO)
pungwe	all night (political) rally
vapostori	members of the Apostolic Faith Church
war collaborators	supporters of the liberation forces who were not members of the liberation armies

Acronyms

AAG	Affirmative Action Group
AAPS	African Association of Political Science
AHT	Air Harbour Technologies
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AWC	Association of Women's Clubs <i>previously African Women's Clubs</i>
BINGOS	Big International NGOs
CAZ	Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CC	Constitutional Commission
CCJP	Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace
CFU	Commercial Farmers Union
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings
CIDA	Canadian International Development Association
CIO	Central Intelligence Organization
CZI	Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries
DFID	Department for International Development (UK) <i>previously ODA</i>
DP	Democratic Party
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EDICESA	Ecumenical Documentation and Information Centre for Eastern and Southern Africa
EJN	Economic Justice Network
EMAT	Election Monitoring Advisory Team
ESAP II	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (1995-) <i>see also ZIMPREST</i>
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (1990-1995)
ESC	Electoral Supervisory Commission
ESS	Ecumenical Support Services
EU	European Union
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stifting
FORUM	Forum Party of Zimbabwe <i>also FPZ</i>
FPD	Front for Popular Democracy
FPZ	Forum Party of Zimbabwe <i>also FORUM</i>
GALZ	Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe
GONGOS	Government NGOs
GOZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HSCO	Harare Street Children's Organisation
HIVOS	Humanistic Institute for Co-operation with Developing Countries (Holland)
IBDC	Indigenous Businessmen's Development Centre
ICU	Industrial and Commercial Workers Union
IDS	Institute for Development Studies (University of Zimbabwe)
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGOs	International NGOs
IRI	International Republican Institute
JPR	Justice, Peace and Reconciliation
LAG	Lobbying and Advocacy Group
LOMA	Law and Order Maintenance Act
LRF	Legal Resources Foundation
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MHS	Matabele Home Society
MIC	Movement of Independent Candidates

MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
MMPZ	Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe
MP	Member of Parliament
MWENGO	Mwelekeo wa NGO
MZWP	Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project
NANGO	National Association of NGOs
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
NCC	NGO Coalition for Change
NCDPZ	National Council of Disabled Persons of Zimbabwe
NCSS	National Council of Social Services
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NEPC	National Economic Planning Commission
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NGO-LAG	NGO Lobbying and Advocacy Group
NODED	National Organisation for the Development of the Disadvantaged
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NWPC	National Working Peoples Convention
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance (UK) <i>later DFID</i>
ORAP	Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress
PVO	Private Voluntary Organisation
RBVA	Rhodesian Bantu Voters Association
RF	Rhodesian Front
RCC	Rhodesian Christian Council
RNA	Rhodesian Native Association
SAFOD	Southern Africa Federation for the Disabled
SAPES	Southern Africa Political and Economic Series Trust
SDF	Social Dimensions of Adjustment Fund <i>also</i> Social Development Fund
SFN	Society for the Needy
SHD	Self-Help Development Foundation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Assistance
SKIP	Street Kids in Production
SRANC	Southern Rhodesia African National Congress
SRBC	Southern Rhodesia Bantu Congress
SRC	Students' Representative Council (of the University of Zimbabwe)
SRMC	Southern Rhodesia Missionary Conference
SRNCC	Southern Rhodesia Native Christian Conference
SRNWA	Southern Rhodesia Native Welfare Act
UANC	United African National Congress
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UN	United Nations
UNAC	United Nations Association in Canada
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UP	United Parties
USAID	United States Aid for International Development
VIDCOs	Village Development Committees
VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Community Enterprise
WADCOs	Ward Development Committees
WAG	Women's Action Group
WCC	World Council of Churches
WILDAF	Women in Law and Development
ZACT	Zimbabwe Association of Community Theatre
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army <i>armed wing of ZANU</i>

ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union <i>after 1987 ZANU(PF)</i>
ZANU-Ndonga	Name given to fraction of ZANU led by Revd. Ndabaningi Sithole
ZANU (PF)	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front <i>before 1987 ZANU</i>
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZAPU 2000	Zimbabwe African People's Union 2000
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
ZCBC	Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference
ZCC	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trades Unions
ZIANA	Zimbabwe Inter-Africa News Agency
ZIBF	Zimbabwe International Book Fair
ZIDS	Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies <i>later IDS</i>
ZIMFEP	Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production
ZIMPREST	Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Structural Transformation
ZimPro	Zimbabwe Project
ZimRights	Zimbabwe Human Rights Association
ZINA	Zimbabwe Nurses Association
ZINASU	Zimbabwe National Students Union
ZIPRA.	Zimbabwe People's Liberation Army <i>armed wing of ZAPU</i>
ZLP	Zimbabwe Liberators' Platform
ZNA	Zimbabwe National Army
ZNLWVA	Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police
ZUD	Zimbabwe Union of Democrats
ZUJ	Zimbabwe Union of Journalists
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement
ZUNA	Zimbabwe United Nations Association
ZWLA	Zimbabwe Women's Lawyers Association
ZWRCN	Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network

Part I Studying Democratization in Africa

“At independence, we laid down our advocacy..and we have paid a heavy price”

*Paul Themba Nyathi, Zimbabwe Project,
18 September 1995*

“Donors come and donors go but the Ministry is always there.”

*Vimbai Zinyama, Indigenous Businesswomen's Organisation
30 October 1996*

“Comrade Minister, some of the NGOs are now turning political but we want to dance to your tune forever.”

*NGO representative in play performed by ZimRights drama troupe,
NGO Convention, 28 April 1997*

“Some of these [NGOs] come to you with a packaging which looks good but the contents would be satanic. Do not accept such type of assistance.”

*Ignatious Chombo, Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing
15 July 2001*

A central theme of studies of African politics in the 1990s has been the significant, if partial, change in many countries from authoritarian forms of rule towards more accountable forms of politics, in which ‘civil society organizations,’ like churches, trade unions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), have played an important part. The focus of this thesis is on Zimbabwean NGOs, and their contribution to promoting democratization in the 1990s. Zimbabwe differs from other African countries in that it retained an ostensibly democratic multi-party system after independence in 1980. At the same time, there are parallels to be found with those African countries in which states and societies continued to be dominated by single-parties into the 1990s, so that the study of this case contributes to the wider, African discussion of the place of NGOs in processes of democratization.

I show through case studies of NGO-state relations, how the Zimbabwean ruling party used the mechanisms of the state to set up a pattern of authoritarian rule in which societal groups sought to be included in the hegemonic framework of the ruling élites. While they may not always have accepted the government’s entire agenda, few want to be excluded from access to spoils, which are social and cultural, as well as material. A combination of selective coercion

and inclusion created a resilient authoritarian regime which endured with little challenge from 1980 to 1997. NGOs, by virtue of their historical origins and commitment to the government's 'progressive' developmental agenda, became deeply bound up in this hegemonic process. As NGOs themselves were able both to acquire resources and provide social standing, competition to control them intensified. The regime was able to manipulate personal and patronage politics within NGOs to further its own political agenda.

In many ways, NGOs in Zimbabwe have been unwilling democratizers. They are wary of detaching themselves from the state's social networks for the unproven benefits of exclusion. Even though external donors provide most of their material resources, the state's willingness to use coercive measures remains a significant sanction. In the late 1990s, activist NGOs attempted to engage the state in debates about policy-decisions, although they framed these interactions in depoliticized language and spoke through 'non-political' mouthpieces. It is only when the state adopted their agenda of constitutional reform, and attempted to retain control on political discourse, that the debate became radicalized and centred on the issue of representation and accountability. When voters in the February 2000 constitutional plebiscite affirmed the right of NGOs to speak for the people of Zimbabwe *vis-à-vis* the state and ruling party, the party's authority was dented. Fearing that this failure would transmute itself into political defeat in the June 2000 elections, the party used the state machinery to threaten and coerce all those who might ally themselves with the nascent opposition. While groups acknowledging the party's dominance continued to be courted with the benefits of inclusion, NGOs are increasingly excluded and targeted as outsiders. The revived exclusionary nationalist discourse challenged their right to speak and act on the political stage and questioned their commitment to the social and economic development of Zimbabweans.

This account of recent Zimbabwean politics relies upon participant-observation research and detailed empirical case studies. In this first section of the thesis, Chapter 1 introduces its methodological concerns. Chapter 2 links them to the question of

conceptualizing research questions, arguing for an empirically-grounded method of studying African politics, especially in times of rapid change. The two chapters together situate the thesis methodologically as a critique of the political science of Africa's experiences of democratization and an agenda for research which methodologically and conceptually examines the importance of consent and coercion in establishing relations between state and society in authoritarian regimes.

Chapter 1 Introduction and Methodology

1.1 A Dual Mandate?

This thesis investigates the changing relationship between state and society in independent Zimbabwe. It focusses on local NGOs and examines how they relate to the state and to each other. NGO-state relations provide a lens through which to examine and interpret state-society relations. We need to understand the wider politics in order to make sense of NGOs. This leads at times to an awkward attempt to balance the two mandates: a focus on NGOs sometimes obscures the bigger picture of Zimbabwean politics, while the recent excitements of party politics and political chaos sometimes threatens to overwhelm the more mundane concerns of NGOs. This specific study of Zimbabwean NGOs and politics is intended to contribute to the wider political science literature on African politics, and especially the literature on NGOs and ‘democratization’.

This thesis began in 1996 as an attempt to show that we had to understand the politics of Zimbabwe in order to make sense of the failure of NGOs to engage with policymakers. In my MPhil thesis, I argued that NGOs in Zimbabwe avoided ‘politics,’ preferring to keep their relations with the state non-adversarial.¹ Both NGOs and politics in Zimbabwe have changed since then, and so, therefore, has this study. It is now, to a significant extent, about the role played by NGOs in Zimbabwean politics. Yet the original premise stands, and is in some ways reinforced. To understand the nature of NGO-state relations, which have changed during the period of study, we need to understand both NGOs and politics. The thesis therefore moves between the micro-politics of individual NGOs, the middle-level politics of NGOs working together in coalitions, and the high politics of NGOs on the more political stage of electoral contestation.

¹ Sara Rich, “Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society in Africa: Zimbabwe’s experience with structural adjustment, 1990-1995.” Unpublished MPhil thesis, Oxford, 1996.

1.2 Methodological Approaches

Studies of NGOs in Africa are usually based on interview research focussing on a wide number of organizations within a particular sector.² Zimbabwean NGOs are amongst the most studied, but these studies still conform to this tendency.³ This method prevents detailed study of individual NGOs. It becomes less easy to interrogate certain aspects of NGO behaviour, such as internal decision-making. Neither the history of the NGO, how it interacts with the history of the country or region, nor the people within the NGO are examined, except as background detail. Thick description of how NGOs functioned was sidelined in the interest of labelling and categorizing them.

Methodology has to some extent been dictated by the research agenda of donors and international institutions. In the 1980s, official aid was increasingly channelled not to bilateral

² On Uganda see: Susan Dicklitch, *The Elusive Promise of NGOs in Africa* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998) and Christy Cannon Lorgen, "Non-Governmental Organisations in Transition in Uganda: A Study of the Health Sector" Unpublished D.Phil University of Oxford, 1998. On Tanzania see: Andrew S Kiondo, "Structural Adjustment and NGOs in Tanzania" in Peter Gibbon, ed. *Social Change and Economic Reform in Africa* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1993) and Aili Mari Tripp, "Local Organizations, Participation and the State in Urban Tanzania" in Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton, *Governance and Politics in Africa* (Lynne Rienner: Boulder, 1992). On East Africa more generally: Joseph Semboja and Ole Therkildsen eds. *Service Provision under Stress in East Africa: The State, NGOs and People's Organizations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda* (CDR: Copenhagen, 1995). On Egypt: Maha Abdelrahman, *State-Civil Society Relations: the Politics of Egyptian NGOs*, DPhil Thesis, Institute of Social Studies, the Hague, 2001 and Amani Kandil, "The Non-Profit Sector in Egypt" in Helmut K Anheier, and Lester M Salamon, eds. *The nonprofit sector in the developing world* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998).

³ The most comprehensive study of Zimbabwean NGOs is Sam Moyo, John Makumbe and Brian Raftopoulos, *NGOs, the State and Politics in Zimbabwe* (Harare: SAPES, 2000). Shorter, earlier studies include: Sam Moyo, *Non-governmental Organisations in Zimbabwe: Context, Role and Relationships* Working Paper December 1990; Sam Moyo, *NGO Advocacy in Zimbabwe: Systematising an Old Function or Inventing a New Role?* (Harare: ZERO, 1992); Ann Muir with additional material by Roger C Riddell, *Evaluating the Impact of NGOs in rural poverty alleviation*, ODI Working paper 52 (London: ODI, 1992); Diana Conyers, "Report of a study of existing NGO activity in Zimbabwe" November 1991 [study undertaken for ODA and the British High Commission in Zimbabwe]; Marleen Dekker, "NGOs in Zimbabwe: Developments and Changes since 1990" Livelihood and Environment Working Paper, August 1994; Andrew Green and Ann Matthias, *NGOs and health in developing countries* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997) see esp. Chapter 7: Zimbabwe: a country case study, 110-123.

partners, but through northern NGOs to local communities or local NGOs.⁴ Local NGOs were seen in the 1980s and 1990s as ‘apolitical’ development organizations. For example, an assessment of the “rapid growth” of interaction between NGOs and the European Community notes that:

...the Commission perceives NGOs as vehicles for targeting the poorest and most marginalised sections of the population, which tend to be neglected by official policies or have difficulties to access bilateral aid.⁵

As a result of this emphasis, most early studies of NGOs were undertaken for donors with particular sets of questions, such as how well NGOs ‘fit’ demands set before them, with respect to their efficiency, participation levels, and transparency although Tvedt argues that these values are actually rarely measured.⁶ Within this agenda, NGOs were understood to be engaged in technical development practices such as health provision, rural development or poverty-reduction.⁷ The interview methodology, with its emphasis on data collection, met the donor’s need to assess their expenditures. It failed to position NGOs within a more political or historical setting, and to explain how they relate to the state, donors, and each other.

This decontextualization became problematic as donors and researchers took on the idea that NGOs might also contribute to expanding good governance and democratization.

The landmark 1989 World Bank report, *Sub-Saharan Africa: from crisis to sustainable growth* called

⁴ Two good discussions of the rising importance of NGOs in development assistance are: Ian Smillie, “At sea in a sieve? Trends and issues in the relationship between Northern NGOs and Northern Governments” in Ian Smillie and Henny Helmich, with Tony German and Judith Randel, *Stakeholders: Government-NGO Partnerships for International Development* (London: OECD and Earthscan, 1999), 7-35 and Olav Stokke, “Foreign Aid: What Now?” in Olav Stokke, ed. *Foreign Aid Towards the Year 2000: Experiences and Challenges* (London: Frank Cass, 1996), esp. 99-100.

⁵ Christiane Loquai, Kathleen Van Hove and Jean Bossuyt, *The European Community’s approach towards poverty reduction in developing Countries*. ODI Working Paper 111, 49.

⁶ Terje Tvedt, *Angels of mercy or development diplomats?* (Oxford: James Currey, 1998), 128-165.

⁷ See for examples of studies of individual Zimbabwean NGOs, Sjef Theunis, *Non-Governmental Development Organizations of Developing Countries: And the South Smiles* (Dordrecht: Novib/Nijhoff, 1992), chapter 21: ORAP, 265-276; Kate Wellard and James G Copestake, eds. *NGOs and the State in Africa: Rethinking roles in sustainable agricultural development* (London: Routledge, 1993), Part I: Zimbabwe, 15-86.

for economic reforms to “go hand-in-hand with good governance.”⁸ As part of what came to be known as the ‘governance agenda,’ NGOs were expected to go beyond being service providers and become active participants in policy-making.⁹ NGOs and civil society were integrated into previously apolitical conceptions of human development.¹⁰ Development organizations were to be ‘turned into’ activist or advocacy organizations: “financing NGOs in Africa as potential agents of democracy should be at the top of donor agendas in the 1990s.”¹¹ While interview and survey-based research helps explore *what* NGOs are doing, it is less useful in explaining *why* or *how* they become (or don’t become) involved in democratization-related activities.¹² In response, some researchers developed detailed case studies of individual NGOs. This methodology has the benefit of positioning NGOs more clearly against the political backdrop of the country and the institutional history of the organization studied.

Three studies of Kenyan NGOs, all concerned with the relation between NGOs and the state, illustrate this particularly clearly. Alan Fowler’s study of Undugu, an organization working with homeless and poor residents of Nairobi, examines how the provision of welfare services enabled it to pursue more politically sensitive work.¹³ His case study, developed as part of a doctoral thesis, contrasts with his more programmatic published accounts.¹⁴ Fowler

⁸ World Bank, *Sub-Saharan Africa: from crisis to sustainable growth* (Washington: World Bank, 1989) see esp. xii, 6–61.

⁹ Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton eds, *Governance and Politics in Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), esp. chapters 1, 2 and 12.

¹⁰ UNDP. Human Development Report 1992 ((New York: OUP, 1992), 26-27.

¹¹ Alan Fowler, “The role of NGOs in Changing State-society relations: perspectives from Eastern and South Africa” *Development Policy Review* 9 (1991), 53-84.

¹² For example, Sam Moyo, *Non-governmental Organisations in Zimbabwe: Context, Role and Relationships* Working Paper December 1990; Sam Moyo, *NGO Advocacy in Zimbabwe: Systematising an Old Function or Inventing a New Role?* Harare: ZERO, 1992; Sam Moyo, “Towards and Understanding of Zimbabwean NGOs” Paper prepared for the NANGO/MWENGO Self-Understanding Workshop, November 1995; Alan Thomas, “Does Democracy Matter? Pointers from a comparison of Ngos influence on environmental policies in Zimbabwe and Botswana” Open University DPP Working paper 31; GECOU Working paper 4. June 1995.

¹³ Alan Fowler, “Non-governmental organisations and the promotion of democracy in Kenya” DPhil Thesis, Sussex, 1994.

¹⁴ Alan Fowler, “Civil Society, NGDOs and Social Development: Changing the rules of the Game” UNRISD Occasional Paper no. 1 January 2000; Alan Fowler, “Non-governmental Organizations As Agents of Democratization: An African Perspective” *Journal*

emphasizes the ability of Undugu to work with particular parts of the state apparatus:

...as long as Undugu's activities did not question or threaten the power status quo it work was politically beneficial and encouraged. ...despite the overall trend in state-society relations that was reducing scope for autonomous civic and developmental action, *situation-specific factors maintained political space for Undugu's work*.¹⁵

Stephen Ndegwa compared Undugu to the more oppositional Greenbelt Movement, arguing that the former was more institutionalized and therefore less available for mobilization behind political goals.¹⁶ In contrast, Wangari Maathai, the charismatic leader of the Greenbelt movement, is portrayed as using the NGO to promote her political aims against the KANU regime. Ndegwa's organizational analysis enables him to contrast the decision-making patterns – and histories – of the two NGOs to good effect, although his account of Undugu is less convincing than that of Fowler, whose thesis he does not consult.

Unlike Ndegwa and Fowler who are interested in 'democratization', Lisa Aubrey is concerned with how state and donor influence affects the capacity of an NGO to do 'development work'. However, her study of the women's NGO, Maendeleo ya Wanawake (MYWO), adds greatly to this account of NGO-state relations in Kenya. Through her study, it becomes clear that the Kenyan ruling party uses the colonial-era and nationalist-linked organization as a foil against both the more abrasive feminism of Maathai and the party's own women's league.¹⁷ Her detailed history of MYWO reveals the links between several generations of leaders of the NGO, and leaders of KANU, culminating in the affiliation of MYWO to KANU in 1989, and its 'cheerleading-role' on the government's behalf in the early 1990s. As Aubrey discovers, MYWO's lack of autonomy *vis-a-vis* the state can only be

of International Development 5 (1993), 325-339; Fowler, "The Role of NGOs in Changing State-Society Relations."

¹⁵ Fowler, "Non-governmental organisations and the promotion of democracy in Kenya", 292. Emphasis added.

¹⁶ Stephen Ndegwa, *The Two Faces of Civil Society: NGOs and Politics in Africa* (West Hartford: Kumarian, 1996).

¹⁷ Lisa Aubrey, *The Politics of Development Cooperation: NGOs, Gender and partnership in Kenya* (London: Routledge, 1997), see especially 83-85.

understood in the context of this historical trajectory.

All three of these studies are based mainly on interview research, although they also make use of primary documents produced by the organizations, and include some observation of NGO activities. Of the three studies, Aubrey seems to have approached her research with the most formalized set of hypotheses, sub-hypotheses, models and survey instruments.¹⁸ In the course of her research, she discarded all her hypotheses and many of her intended survey questions. Not only did she have trouble finding people to interview, but she found that many of her questions are inappropriate:

..there were questions which I asked interviewees that were sometimes viewed as 'too political' ...questions about MYWO sometimes angered interviewees....questions about 'power' and 'feminism' caused tremendous confusion...¹⁹

As this devastatingly honest account of field research during a period of political change reveals, interview research is sometimes not the most appropriate method. In contrast to this 'outside looking in' approach to NGOs, I propose that NGOs need to be examined from the 'inside' – trying to understand through participant-observation why staff, members, and clients become involved with the NGO and how and why decisions are taken within that NGO. As Tvedt notes, there is no reason for researchers to think that NGOs function in any predictable ways simply because they are NGOs.²⁰ The purpose of research is therefore to dispel illusions and generalizations about NGO behaviour, which as we shall see in chapter 2, create problematic assumptions amongst donors and political scientists alike.

While the lack of participant-observation research had been noted by commentators few researchers have attempted to redress the situation.²¹ Those who have are often trained as

¹⁸ Aubrey, *Politics of Development Cooperation*, Appendix A.1 Hypotheses; Appendix A.II Sub-hypotheses; Appendix A.III Key variables and their definitions; Appendix B. Survey Instrument. 169-178.

¹⁹ Aubrey, *Politics of Development Cooperation*, 107.

²⁰ Tvedt, *Angels of Mercy?*, 156.

²¹ John Farrington and Anthony Bebbington, *Reluctant Partners? Non-Governmental Organisations, the state and Sustainable agricultural development* (London: Routledge, 1993), 57.

anthropologists, like Diana Joyce Fox and Erica Bornstein, whose research focusses on international NGOs.²² ‘Local’ NGOs have their own sets of issues, distinct from international NGOs, because they are caught up in local politics, which particularly affect their role in democratization. Other anthropological research has tended to use NGO or donor projects as the unit of analysis rather than the organizations themselves.²³ Unknown to me, at the same time as I was conducting research, and writing up, two studies of local NGOs in Tanzania were also being carried out – Jim Igoe’s anthropology thesis on ethnic NGOs and Greg Cameron’s article based on his work with pastoralist NGOs, both of which provide salutary critiques of romanticizations of NGOs.²⁴ Their viewpoints enable them to ask serious questions about the internal politics of NGOs, although neither investigates the relations of these NGOs to the state or issues of democratization.

Criticism of research into processes of democratization in Africa has been present from the start. In 1990, Mahmood Mamdani, criticized the tendency of Africanists based in the United States to romanticize processes of change. In particular, he attacked the propensity of scholars to generalize about ‘Africa’ rather than identifying specific and concrete social processes.²⁵ The speed and dramatic nature of the political changes in some countries led

²² Diana Joyce Fox, *An Ethnography of four non-governmental development organisations* (New York, Edwin Mellen Press, 1998); Erica Bornstein, “The Good Life: Religious NGOs and the Moral Politics of Economic Development in Zimbabwe.” Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Irvine. 2001.

²³ The classic study of NGO/donor projects is undoubtedly James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); More recent studies include Tim Kelsall, “Subjectivity, Collective Action, and the Governance Agenda in Tanzania” unpublished Ph.D. thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London 2000; David McDermott Hughes, “Rezoned for Business: How Eco-tourism Unlocked Black Farmland in Eastern Zimbabwe”, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, Vol.1 No.4, October 2001, 575–599; Steven Sampson, “The social life of projects: importing civil society to Albania” in Chris Hann and Elizabeth Dunn eds, *Civil Society: Challenging western models* (London: Routledge, 1996), 121-142.

²⁴ Greg Cameron, “Taking stock in Tanzania: Pastoralist NGOs and the Indigenous Question” paper presented to the Association for the Study of Anthropology, 2000; Jim Igoe, “Ethnicity, Civil Society, and the Tanzanian Pastoral NGO Movement” Unpublished PhD Thesis Boston University, 2000.

²⁵ Mahmood Mamdani, “A Glimpse at African Studies, Made in the USA” *CODESRIA Bulletin*, 2 (1990), 7-11.

researchers to emphasize change, rather than continuity. The simultaneity of political change also encouraged wide comparison emphasizing the similarities between transitions rather than differences.²⁶

Not all researchers were equally vulnerable to such criticisms. Carolyn Baylies and Morris Szeftel's analysis of the Zambian transition emphasized the elements of continuity between the new and old regimes, drawing on many years of research.²⁷ More recently, Chris Allen usefully linked the current transitions clearly to post-colonial regime forms by differentiating the multiple paths which democratization has taken in Africa. Allen's work makes it clear that we need to understand the specificity of the transitions: "there is too much variation in politics in Africa, even when reduced to the simplest historical sketches of individual states, for a single political structure or process to be adequate for the analysis of those histories."²⁸

Now, when continuities and the importance of understanding transitions as the result of specific historic paths have made themselves clear to most observers, these critiques seem fairly obvious, but they continue to have important methodological implications. The understanding of democratization as a re-configuration of state and society relations in a series of very different and complex post-colonial societies should affect our choice of research techniques. Whitehead notes in a significant re-assessment of the interaction between theory and empirical research on democratization: "the best and perhaps the only, way to grasp the dynamics of a long-term open-ended process is through narrative-construction."²⁹ If we

²⁶ Michael Bratton and Nicholas Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

²⁷ Carolyn Baylies and Morris Szeftel, "The Fall and Rise of Multi-Party Politics in Zambia" *Review of African Political Economy* 54 (1992), 75-91.

²⁸ Chris Allen, "Understanding African Politics" *Review of African Political Economy* 65 (1995), 302; see also, Chris Allen, Carolyn Baylies and Morris Szeftel, "Surviving Democracy?" *Review of African Political Economy* 54 (1992), 3-10.

²⁹ Laurence Whitehead, "On Theory and Experience in Democratization Studies" draft chapter forthcoming in Laurence Whitehead, *Democratization: Theory and Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 10.

conceptualize democratization “as a complex, dynamic, long-term and open-ended process...then the type of theory-building and hypothesis-testing that would be possible and appropriate...would be interpretative rather than demonstrative.”³⁰ This brings us back to a more Weberian social science, where the purpose of research is “interpretative understanding of social action...and causal explanation of its course and consequences.”³¹ More recently Charles Taylor has similarly made a powerful case for the importance of a hermeneutical approach to the sciences of man.³² As Williams *et al* note, drawing explicitly on the Weberian tradition, social scientists seek to “construct interpretative narratives of particular events.”³³ In response to these critiques, this thesis attempts to provide a detailed narrative account, with the aim of helping us better understand particular processes of democratization. In order to achieve this goal, it draws on empirical although not ‘empiricist’ methods of research, which are described in the sub-section below.

1.3 Methodological Practice

Despite the arguments made above for participant-observation, multiple modes of research techniques were used over the course of several distinct periods of research. In 1991 and 1994, I participated in two youth exchanges between the United Nations Association of Canada and the Zimbabwe United Nations Association, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), which gave me my first experience of NGO life in Zimbabwe. As an undergraduate, I then tried to write a thesis on the political and economic impact of newly implemented structural adjustment policies in Zimbabwe, but was unable to find any political impacts—no political parties and few NGOs tried to politicize the issue, despite the manifest

³⁰ Whitehead, “On Theory and Experience,” 1, 2.

³¹ Max Weber, *Economy and Society: an outline of interpretive sociology* ed. and trans. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, (New York, Bedminster, 1968), vol 1, 4.

³² Charles Taylor, “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man” in *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*, Vol 2 (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), 15-57.

³³ Gavin Williams, Brian Williams and Roy Williams, “Sociology and Historical Explanation” *African Sociological Review* 1 (1997), 79.

social impact.³⁴

After coming to Oxford, I began more formal research, this time trying to understand why NGOs were not politicizing ESAP, when so much of the writing on structural adjustment and civil society expected that they would. This research was primarily based on interviews with NGO staff in August and September of 1995 and became my MPhil thesis, submitted in 1996.³⁵ That research led me to ask why so many false assumptions were being made by researchers about NGOs. Believing that part of the problem was methodological, I chose to pursue participatory research for my DPhil thesis. Between October 1996 and September 1997, I worked with two NGOs—ZimRights and Ecumenical Support Services—with the intention of participating in their activities to try and understand how they functioned.

This participatory research positioned me within two of the smaller and newer, but most active, NGOs concerned with advocacy and activism. Working inside these NGOs meant that I got to work with and know many of the most significant leaders of the NGO community in Zimbabwe. They knew my work, relied on me for contributions and were therefore open about their decisions. In addition to internal projects for these NGOs, I worked most intensely on the NGO campaigns and coalitions which are discussed in Chapter 6. Providing administrative and logistical support for these campaigns, I was in a privileged position to observe and contribute to their strategizing and decision-making.

While this research was enormously productive in many ways, it also imposed some limits. Zimbabweans talk about politics – and indeed other issues – in somewhat cryptic ways, often using allusions to avoid specific references. Even those considered straight-forward often take a great deal of knowledge for granted – and I was often wary of revealing my ignorance, for fear that it would shut off the flow of reminiscences or comments. In the period after the

³⁴ Sara Rich, “The Political and Social Effects of Structural Adjustment in Zimbabwe” Unpublished BA (Honours) Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1994.

³⁵ Sara Rich, “Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society in Africa: Zimbabwe’s experience with structural adjustment, 1990-1995.” Unpublished MPhil thesis, Oxford, 1996.

February 2000 referendum, at the very end of my field-research, I found that peoples' willingness to talk about politics and make specific allegations had been transformed. The brutality and intolerance of the ruling party, and the confidence engendered by the referendum win, meant that people talked with more specificity and clarity than in the past. However, for most of my research period, it was difficult to ask questions, while remaining 'in character'. NGOs' members who knew me as a staff member and colleague, found my occasional trespasses into interview research puzzling and muddling. I had not tried to mislead people about my status, everyone knew I was a research student from overseas. However, the participatory research depended upon my being accepted as one of them, to the extent possible. This made me equally vulnerable to the 'don't ask difficult questions' culture that was particularly endemic at ZimRights. I therefore pursued the opportunity to return in 1999 and interview many of those with whom I had worked. This period of research also allowed me to examine the changes that had occurred in my absence.

In 2000, I again found myself working within a Zimbabwean NGO, as a member of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches/World Council of Churches Ecumenical Peace Observer Mission during the June parliamentary elections and is the final period of field research upon which I draw in the thesis.

I have also made extensive use of archival materials of various sorts. In 1995, I spent several weeks at the National Archives of Zimbabwe, but found that they contained relatively little material on the post-independence period. Then, and in subsequent research periods, I relied extensively on the network of NGO-based information centres, especially the Ecumenical Documentation and Information Centre for Eastern and Southern Africa (EDICESA), the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN), and the SAPES Trust Library. For access to newspapers, I relied upon the excellent ZIANA library of clippings files, as well as micro-fiche copies of the *Herald* held at Rhodes House Library, Oxford, and the British Newspaper Library at Colindale. Increasingly, Zimbabwe's newspapers are available on-line,

and I have made extensive use of these websites and archives. Many of the NGOs I worked with and studied also made invaluable materials from their files available to me.

As a result of these multiple sources, the thesis relies on ‘thick description’ based on participant-observation, interview research, and material gathered from primary and secondary written sources, but attempts to provide a narrative account which enhances our ability to understand Zimbabwean politics.

1.4 Outline

The thesis is divided into 4 parts. Part I, including this chapter, introduces my project and its theoretical and empirical concerns. Part II, which is based on primary and secondary materials, presents a discussion of state and society in Zimbabwe between 1980 and 1990 in Chapter 3 and between 1990 and 1997 in Chapter 4. It is not merely a chronology, but presents an argument about how state and society have inter-acted to create a particular form of rule. Part III examines the specific issue of relations between NGOs and the state between 1980 and 1997. Chapter 5 examines relations between NGOs and the state, as well as relations with an NGO, through a case study of one NGO. Chapter 6 examines NGO attempts to network and work together between 1995 and 1997. Part IV extends this discussion of NGO-state relations from 1997 until 2000, with two main case studies: the Constitutional debate in Chapter 7 and the June 2000 elections in Chapter 8. This organization reflects the dual mandate referred to above, and is an attempt to structure a somewhat fragmented text chronologically and topically. Each of these sections therefore begins with a brief introduction, which sets out its contents, and relates it to the wider literature. Part V, comprised solely of Chapter 9, links the Zimbabwean case to broader issues in the study of politics in Africa, and the developing world.

Chapter 2 Reconsidering Democratization, Civil Society and NGOs

Political science literature on Africa since the 1980s has focused almost exclusively on either state collapse¹ or democratization.² Whereas thinking about ‘state collapse’ has focused mainly on West Africa and the Congo, thinking about democratization has dominated political research in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa. The concept is central to discussion of the politics of Africa in the 1990s and the new millennium. Special issues of most African studies and developing country journals have examined trends toward multi-party elections and democratization.³ This is, of course, not a phenomena confined to Africa, but is world-wide. Key political science journals now exist which focus entirely on the process of democratization.⁴

Yet, it is not clear how this concept of ‘democratization’ has helped us to understand African politics. There are both methodological and conceptual problems with the way in which it is used to explain processes as varied as the de-racialization of South Africa, the post-civil war effort to rebuild Mozambique, and the different patterns of change to multi-party

¹ See for instance, Paul Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone* (Oxford: James Currey, 1996); Robert Kaplan, “The Coming Anarchy”, *Atlantic Monthly* February 1994, 44-76; William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998); William Zartman, ed. *Collapsed states: the disintegration and restoration of legitimate authority* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995); Richard Joseph ed. *State, conflict, and democracy in Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999); Jean-Francois Bayart, Stephen Ellis and Beatrice Hibou, *The Criminalization of the State in Africa* (Oxford: James Currey, 1999); Critical responses to this approach include: *Africa Development* XXII Nos 3&4 1997 and Thandika Mkandawire, “The terrible toll of post-colonial ‘rebel movements’ in Africa: Towards an explanation of the violence against the peasantry” unpublished draft paper 2001.

² See for instance, Juan Linz, Larry Diamond and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds., *Democracy in Developing Countries*, Vol. 2, *Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner 1988); B. Caron, A. Gboyega, E Osaghae, eds, *Democratic Transition in Africa* (CREDU: Ibadan, 1992); J. Wiseman (ed), *Democracy and Political Change in Sub-Saharan Africa* (London: Routledge, 1995); Michael Bratton and Nicholas Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Adebayo Olukoshi ed. *The Politics of Opposition in Africa* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1998); John Daniel, Roger Southall and Morris Szeftel, *Voting for Democracy: Watershed Elections in Africa* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999); Larry Diamond and Marc F Plattner, eds. *Democratization in Africa* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1999).

³ *Third World Quarterly*, Special Issue 10, 1 (1988) *Review of African Political Economy* Special Issue, 54 (1992); *Africa*, Special Issue 63, 3 (1993); *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* Special Issue 36, 2 (1998); *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* Special Issue 38, 3 (2000).

⁴ *Journal of Democracy* first issue 1990; *Democratization* first issue 1994.

politics in Kenya, Zambia and Malawi. Labelling the politics of the 1990s as a period of democratic transition raises questions about cases such as Zambia, where the ruling party lost power but was in turn replaced by a remarkably undemocratic regime. They help even less to explain those countries where no transitions to opposition parties occurred, such as Kenya or Zimbabwe. As Michael Schatzberg posits:

To view these political changes as ‘democratisation’ is both arbitrary and terribly premature. Such a label confuses a normatively desired end with a still bewildering and most uncertain process whose direction is far from unilinear and whose ultimate destination is still far from determined.⁵

Analyses of the politics in the 1990s which are de-contextualized from the politics of the previous decades are profoundly ahistorical. Long-term relations between state and society are rarely considered. As I propose below, we must examine the ways in which the authoritarian regimes reproduce and maintain themselves in power – often for many decades – in order to understand how and why they break down. Democratization in Africa in the 1990s has followed different paths depending on the form of authoritarian government being removed.⁶ It is crucial to examine both the construction of consensus and the apparatus of coercion in order fully to understand the relations of state and society under authoritarian regimes and in the period of transition.

In sections 2.1 and 2.2 I problematize the ways in which ‘democratization’ is used to explain African Politics. Despite obvious difficulties, this democratization literature has been adopted wholesale by the development and aid world, who have seized upon recommendations to strengthen ‘civil society’ in order to bring ‘democracy’. Their desire to achieve these aims is all too often translated somewhat simplistically into funding and support for NGOs, in the hope that the pluralization of the political sphere will encourage a more democratic order. In

⁵ Michael Schatzberg, “Power, legitimacy and ‘democratisation’ in Africa” *Africa*, 63, 4, (1993), 457.

⁶ Chris Allen, Carolyn Baylies and Morris Szeftel, “Surviving Democracy?” *Review of African Political Economy* 54 (1992), 3-10; Chris Allen, “Understanding African Politics” *Review of African Political Economy*, 65 (1995), 301-320.

sections 2.3 and 2.4 I examine the ways in which the development industry has adopted and used these political science concepts. In sections 2.5 and 2.6, I examine how the changing importance of NGOs to the development industry, coupled with internal organizational pressures, influence the NGOs and outline the structure and argument of the thesis.

2.1 Democratization ‘revisited’

In historical studies of colonial and settler Africa, some of the most useful and lasting insights have come from scholars who take seriously questions of power and ideology – looking at how coercion and consensus were used to build colonial hegemonies that linked state and society.⁷ These insights help us to understand how society and state interacted, in ways that allow us to usefully understand the processes of resistance and rebellion that led, eventually, to decolonization and independence. Yet, despite the rhetorical references to the ‘second liberation’ of the African continent, studies of democratization in the post-1989 period have failed to adopt such nuanced approaches. Instead, democratization has been seen as a teleological, univocal process of oppressed peoples rising up against the might of the state.

Engels and Marks criticize historians of the colonial state for having:

always stressed its coercive capacity, rather than the ways in which its political strategies were directed at creating consent...the emphasis has thus been on what has been regarded as the inevitable resistance and protest of the oppressed....⁸

Political scientists have been equally guilty of over-emphasizing coercion and down-playing consent in their examination of *de jure* and *de facto* one-party states in Africa. These states’ remarkable endurance has been assumed to derive from their (demonstrated) coercive capacities, and little attention has been paid to their attempts at creating consent. One exception to this is Schatzberg’s study of the Zairean state which emphasizes that:

⁷ See for example, Dagmar Engels and Shula Marks eds, *Contesting Colonial Hegemony: State and Society in Africa and India* (London: BAP, 1994); Les Switzer, *Power and Resistance in an African Society*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993).

⁸ Engels and Marks, *Contesting Colonial Hegemony*, 2.

No state can govern through coercion alone; there are usually ideological mechanisms to induce people to internalise the state's normative and behavioural rules. Sometimes explicitly articulated ideologies accomplish this....but myth, metaphor, and the symbolic dimension of politics also contribute.⁹

Nationalist politicians were particularly poised to dominate the post-colonial political scene ideologically and symbolically, because, as Kaviraj reminds us:

Nationalism, making colonialism responsible for everything wrong with colonial society, was making an insidious preparation for its own title to dominate all domains with unquestioned legitimacy.... it spoke for everyone.¹⁰

Nationalist governments in Africa, faced in the 1950s and 1960s with governing newly independent societies, developed corporatist strategies to absorb and contain the demands of the people within what Mamdani calls "state nationalism."¹¹ Most organizations had already been brought underneath the nationalist umbrella, as we are reminded by Wallerstein.¹² Those organizations such as unions which had remained formally outside the nationalist network were brought inside through structural reforms, while others such as churches and NGOs retained formal independence but were symbolically and rhetorically united with the government.

These one party states were indeed parties *unifiés* rather than parties *uniques*.¹³ As Stanley Trapido has emphasized, nationalist politics is fundamentally the politics of coalition-building *ie* incorporative or inclusive rather than exclusive, although the composition of the

⁹ Michael Schatzberg, *The Dialectic of Oppression in Zaire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 5.

¹⁰ Sudipta Kaviraj, "In Search of Civil Society" paper presented to the SOAS Politics Seminar, London, 20 October 1999.

¹¹ Mahmood Mamdani, "State and Civil Society in Contemporary Africa: Reconceptualizing the Birth of State Nationalism and the Defeat of Popular Movements." *Africa Development* XV (1990), 49.

¹² Immanuel Wallerstein, "Voluntary Organisations" in J S Coleman and Carl Rosberg, *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa* 2nd printing (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 318-338.

¹³ Juan Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 2000), 229, citing William J. Foltz, *From French West Africa to the Mali Federation* (New Haven: Yale, 1965), 143, citing Leopold Senghor.

coalition may change over time.¹⁴ This nationalist coalition building manifests itself as *limited* pluralism in a pattern typical of authoritarian states, where demobilization is a strategy for balancing conflicting interests within the coalition:

Effective mobilisation, particularly through a single party and its mass organisations, would be perceived as a threat by the other components of the limited pluralism, typically, the army, the bureaucracy, the churches or interest groups.¹⁵

Nationalism depended upon the “delegitimation of all contemporary democratic struggles as detracting from national unity.”¹⁶ This post-independence demobilization and subsequent societal quiescence is the key to understanding the success and durability of the authoritarian regimes of East and Central Africa, as well as their problematic transitions to democracy. Those few societal forces which were not included or incorporated within the nationalist project – especially opposition political parties – were delegitimized and excluded from participating within the political sphere.¹⁷

In contrast, state-society relations have been portrayed within the ‘democratization’ literature as overwhelmingly dichotomous. In particular, institutions like churches, NGOs and unions, have been identified (rightly in some cases) as sites of opposition to authoritarian regimes. They are then portrayed as the only resistance to authoritarianism, and romanticized accordingly.¹⁸ Despite the contribution of some of these organizations to opening up or

¹⁴ Stanley Trapido, “African and Afrikaner Nationalism” Unpublished draft paper. June 2001.

¹⁵ Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, 166.

¹⁶ Mamdani, “State and Civil Society in Contemporary Africa”, 55.

¹⁷ Zolberg’s analysis of Sékou Touré’s thinking about unity makes for particularly worth-while reading in this context. Aristide Zolberg, *Creating Political Order: The Party States of West Africa* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966), esp. 44-47; Ruth Iyob’s study of the Eritrean national struggle emphasizes the use made by the Ethiopian regime of ‘unity’ to discredit the Eritrean nationalist project: Ruth Iyob, *The Eritrean Struggle for Independence* (Cambridge: CUP, 1995), esp. 47-58.

¹⁸ Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa* Translated by Mary Harper, Christopher and Elizabeth Harrison (London: Longman, 1993) 209; Mahmood Mamdani, “A Glimpse at African Studies, Made in USA” *CODESRIA Bulletin* 2 (1990), 8-9 and “A Critique of the State and Society Paradigm in Africanist Studies” in Mahmood Mamdani and Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba

liberalizing state-society relations, neither churches, unions, nor NGOs are inherently pro-democratic forces. Many of them were historically and contemporaneously part of the state's inclusionary politics. An analysis of the ways in which these groups were integrated into the nationalist coalition helps us to better understand the ambiguity of their interaction with the state in the later years of independence.

2.2 Power, Culture and Hegemony

In order to capture the dynamics of these processes of inclusion and exclusion, we need a theoretical framework that allows us to understand the inter-actions of state and society and to consider how power is exercised within the post-colonial state. This means that we must take seriously the role of culture and ideology in creating hegemony.

Recently, Gramscian concepts have been drawn upon by scholars of African politics to advance arguments about strategies of accommodation and alliance within state and society.¹⁹ However, there is more to Gramscian *egemonia* than just networks of support and access to material goods: "...his constant preoccupation was to avoid an undialectical separation of the 'ethical-political aspect of politics or theory of hegemony and consent' from the 'aspect of force and economics.'"²⁰ Regimes must be understood as reproducing their rule through the use of both the coercive forces at their disposal but also through the organization of consent. Regime transition, or democratization, occurs when legitimacy is eroded, and neither consent nor coercion can be mobilized effectively to maintain a ruling regime in power.

eds. *African Studies in Social Movements and Democracy* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1995); Björn Beckman, "The Liberation of Civil Society: Neo-Liberal ideology and Political Theory" *Review of African Political Economy*, 58 (1993), 20-33; Chris Hann and Elizabeth Dunn, eds. *Civil Society: challenging western models* (London: Routledge, 1996); Emmanuel Akwetey, *Trade Unions and Democratization* (Stockholm: University of Stockholm, 1994), 108.

¹⁹ For instance, Jean Francois Bayart, *The State in Africa*; Jeff Haynes, *Religion and Politics in Africa* (London: ZED, 1996); Patrick Chabal, *Power in Africa* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1992).

²⁰ Quintin Hoare, "State and Civil Society: Introduction" in Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, eds. and trans. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 207.

Power has proven a difficult concept for political scientists to operationalize and study. Robert Dahl's well known attempt to examine power in a New England community, emphasized the observable and measurable aspects of power by studying political decision-making.²¹ Dahl's approach was criticized for ignoring the, less easy to measure, exercise of power in keeping certain issues off the agenda of decision-makers.²² Steven Lukes' *Power: A Radical View* extended these critiques, proposing a conception of power, which includes not just decisions made, or not-made, by individuals but also the impact of social forces and historical patterns.²³ This clearly corresponds to Gramsci's conception of hegemony. John Gaventa, a student of Lukes, proposed that this conception of power "...may be developed into a tentative model for more usefully understanding the generation of quiescence as well as the process by which challenge may emerge."²⁴ Gaventa's study of the oppression of coal-miners in the Appalachians by local élites and international investors neatly operationalizes and examines the interaction of social forces and individual decisions across a long historical trajectory.

This seems to be one of the key issues which is lacking from most current studies of democratization in Africa – that the process of challenging authority, whether we call it rebellion, revolution, liberation or democratization, must be understood in the context from which it is derived. It is only by understanding the nature of the authoritarian system that we are able to understand the challenge – or lack of challenge – to it.

²¹ Robert A Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* (New Haven: Yale, 1961).

²² Peter Bachrach and Morton S Baratz, "The Two faces of Power" *American Political Science Review* 56 (1962), 947-52; Peter Bachrach and Morton S Baratz, "Decisions and Non-decisions" *American Political Science Review* 57 (1963), 641-51; Matthew Crenson, *The Un-Politics of Air Pollution: A Study of Non-decisionmaking in the Cities*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1971).

²³ Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1974) see especially, 21-25.

²⁴ John Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1982), 5.

We need to make sense of the “legitimizing frame that provides the citizenry with a reason to be quiescent.”²⁵ Hegemony or rule by consent originates in legitimating myths of the state which become powerful contributors to regime stability where they appeal to a nationalist/popular “common sense.”²⁶ Resistance and rebellion occur when that mutual understanding breaks down. In James Scott’s well-known case of Malaysian landlords and tenant farmers, the moral economy breaks down under the impact of mechanization of farm labour.²⁷ As the landlords attempt to redefine the terms of leases and labour-provision, tenants resist through holding landlords accountable to previously hegemonic norms of religious and moral behaviour. The crisis of nationalism in African politics reflects the breakdown or crisis of the nationalist social contract which had underpinned the post-independence regime durability.

The problem, as James Scott points out, is that Gramsci’s notion of hegemony is often understood as an élite theory of civil society, in which subordinate classes are unable to see that they are being exploited.²⁸ Against this reading of Gramsci, Scott argues that “..the very process of attempting to legitimate a social order by idealizing it *always* provides its subjects with the means, the symbolic tools, the very ideas for a critique that operates entirely within the hegemony.”²⁹ Gramsci’s emphasis on the need for a revolutionary party to challenge this project from without downplays the strategies developed by the subaltern players from within the dominant framework. It is not simply that the dominated suffer from false consciousness or fail to understand the power relations, but that they respond using the means immediately

²⁵ William A Gamson, “Political discourse and collective action” *International Social Movement Research* 1 (1988), 219.

²⁶ Antonio Gramsci, “The Modern Prince” in Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, eds. and trans. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 182.

²⁷ James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak* (New Haven: Yale, 1985).

²⁸ James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak* (New Haven: Yale, 1985) and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (New Haven: Yale, 1990).

²⁹ Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, 338.

available to them, from within a moral economy or ideological framework which they share with their oppressors.

Scott emphasizes that, whereas Gramsci saw hegemony as operating at the level of thought, it has far more impact on *action* than on *thought*. Subaltern groups may know themselves to be exploited, but fail to act upon it. Coercion does play an important role in maintaining regime strength: people may refrain from taking action for fear of personal safety or job security and because they fear the repercussions on their family and friends. Or resistance may be cloaked by the adoption of the terms of reference in the hegemonic discourse such that they “...cannot be accused of sedition, inasmuch as they clothe themselves in the public professions of the élite.”³⁰ At the same time, the claims they make on their élite are recognizable, because they are framed within the terms of the discourse that is extant. Peasants know how to make claims on their landlords, because they inhabit the same moral universe, albeit from different standpoints.

Roseberry, similarly, argues that hegemony must be understood as a process, in which subaltern and élite social groups interact dynamically:

...while Gramsci does not see subordinate populations as the deluded and passive captives of the state, neither does he see their activities and organisations as autonomous expressions of a subaltern politics and culture....they exist within and are shaped by the field of force.³¹

Discourse, symbol, and claims to represent the nation are therefore contested within and between the subaltern and élite groupings:

...words, images, symbols, forms, institutions and movements used by subordinate populations to talk about, understand, confront, accommodate themselves to or resist their domination are shaped by the process of domination itself.³²

³⁰ Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 105.

³¹ William Roseberry, “Hegemony and the Language of Contention” in Gilbert M Joseph and Daniel Nugent, *Everyday Forms of State Formation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 360.

³² Roseberry, “Hegemony and the Language of Contention,” 361.

Scott's term for this is "reciprocal manipulation" of discourse.³³ Like the peasants and labourers studied by Scott, NGOs, churches and other societal groups use the élite discourses of development and nationalism in order to frame challenges against the *status quo* using their own terms of reference. The construction and maintenance of hegemony depends on "...not a shared ideology but a common material and meaningful framework for living through, talking about and acting upon social orders characterised by domination."³⁴ As Gould suggests, drawing on both Scott and Roseberry, "political culture can be understood as an active site of contestation in an unfolding hegemonic process."³⁵ Democratization, then, is not a break in political tradition, but a continuing unfolding and elaboration of contested claims to represent the people. In countries like Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia, the political debates of the 1980s and 1990s were framed around the nationalist social contract formed in the 1950s and 1960s. Potent claims and counter-claims continue to be made about the nationalists' role in bringing liberation on the one hand, and their failure to bring the material and social benefits of liberation on the other.³⁶

This approach to understanding regime creation as a dynamic of asserting and contesting hegemony seems particularly useful because we want to examine how understandings change and are modified and how power shifts from one group to another in a period of regime transition. In subsequent chapters, I shall examine the material and cultural ways in which the Mugabe regime attempted to transform nation-building into an exclusive and elitist process.

³³ Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, 309.

³⁴ Roseberry, "Hegemony and the Language of Contention," 361.

³⁵ Jeremy Gould, "Political Culture: Reflections on Method and Discursive Politics" an unpublished paper prepared for the Workshop on Interrogating the 'New' Political Culture in Southern Africa, 13-15 June, 2001.

³⁶ For a thorough examination of the impact of such claims see Alexander, McGregor, and Ranger, *Violence and Memory*, especially 6-8.

The regime uses the institutions of the state to structure and legitimate its political dominance. The state apparatus propagates the ruling party's ideology, provides it with the means for the exercise of coercion, and gives it the material resources to distribute to society. These bases of state power – culture, force, and interests – are inter-related and inter-dependent. Ideological claims, derived from the liberation struggle, are both refracted and reinforced through the discourse of development. The interests of society and the state coincide in advancing both personal and corporate goals, under rubrics such as 'development,' 'africanization,' 'nation-building'. The use of coercive force against society is justified and legitimated through recourse to these ideologies.

In order to understand this style of politics, it is useful to look at how brokers – especially those like NGOs, which become important in the 1990s, but also political parties, unionists and church-leaders – negotiate these discourses. We shall see how NGO élites use the language of the dominant groups and work within their power structures, while sometimes challenging particular policy decisions. Yet, at the same time, the state and its dominant discourse of development is rarely seen as something alien or 'out there' because these élites move within and are absorbed into much the same intellectual, cultural, and social milieu as the politicians and civil servants with whom they interact.³⁷ This is why the dyadic understandings of state-society relations, which posit an inevitable antagonism between them fail to explain transitional politics successfully.

³⁷ A study of how peasants, or poor urban residents understood the politics of independent Zimbabwe might emphasize more of a disjuncture between élite and subaltern understandings, as have anthropologists Angelique Haugerud and Harri Englund's studies of the multi-party transitions in Kenya and Malawi respectively. Angelique Haugerud, *The culture of politics in modern Kenya* (Cambridge: CUP, 1995); Harri Englund, "Between God and Kamuzu: the transition to multi-party politics in central Malawi" in Richard Werbner and Terence Ranger, eds. *Postcolonial Identities in Africa* (London: Zed, 1996) and "The dead hand of human rights: contrasting Christianities in post-transition Malawi" *Journal of Modern African Studies* (2000), 579-603.

2.3 Democratization = Civil Society = NGOs?

In the preceding sections, I sketched out an approach to comprehending the ‘democratization’ processes in East and Central Africa. The dominant thinking about democratization in Africa – and especially that which has contributed to policy and aid decisions by western donors – has focused around what Gordon White called a “developmental panacea” – the issue of “strengthening civil society.”³⁸ Civil society is cited as the “missing key to sustained political reform”³⁹ and is often operationalized as non-governmental organizations. Thomas Carothers’ useful account of American promotion of democracy abroad notes that:

the current keen interest in this... almost forgotten concept was stimulated by the dissident movements in Eastern Europe in the 1980s [which] fostered the appealing idea of civil society as a domain that is nonviolent but powerful, nonpartisan yet prodemocratic, and that emerges from the essence of particular societies, yet is nonetheless universal.⁴⁰

Civil society is understood as formally organized groups, ideally with democratic structures and pro-democratic norms.⁴¹ For aid bureaucrats, supporting civil society was a low-cost alternative to unsuccessful and expensive attempts to reform state institutions.⁴² The practical difficulties of funding grass-roots organizations means that most donor-support goes to “...professionalized NGOs dedicated to advocacy or civic education.”⁴³ These groups are visible and accessible. With university educated staff, it is relatively easy for them to interact

³⁸ Gordon White, “Civil society, democratization and development” in Robin Luckham and Gordon White, *Democratization in the south: the jagged wave* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

³⁹ John W Harbeson, “Civil Society and Political Renaissance in Africa” in John W Harbeson, Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazan eds. *Civil Society and the State in Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 1-2.

⁴⁰ Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve* (Washington, DC: Carnegie, 1999), 207.

⁴¹ Nelson Kasfir, “The conventional notion of civil society: a critique” *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 36, 2 (1998), 6-7 .

⁴² Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad*, 157-206.

⁴³ Thomas Carothers and Marina Ottaway, “The Burgeoning World of Civil Society Aid” in Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers eds. *Funding Virtue: civil society and democracy promotion* (Washington, DC: Carnegie, 2000), 11; See also, Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad*, 210-211.

with donors and provide the desired skills of accounting and report-writing.

Normatively and programmatically, civil society is advocated by the development community and donors who propose that funding civil society (*i.e.* support to non-state sectors) is both an end in itself and a means to an end of democratic governance. A recent critical examination of donor funding states:

In the eyes of many donors and recipients, and even of many democratic theorists, the idea that civil society is always a positive force for democracy, indeed even the most important one, is unassailable. An active – ‘vibrant’ is the adjective of choice – civil society is both the force that can hold governments accountable and the base upon which a truly democratic culture can be built. There follows from this assumption the related idea that promoting civil society development is key to democracy-building.⁴⁴

The Ford Foundation, for example, has a unit dedicated to “Governance and Civil Society” whose goal is “to strengthen the civic and political participation of people and groups in charting the future of their societies.”⁴⁵ The official American development agency, USAID, funds “civil society organizations” as one of its four democracy sectors because:

The hallmark of a free society is the ability of individuals to associate with like-minded individuals, express their views publicly, openly debate public policy, and petition their government. ‘Civil society’ is an increasingly accepted term which best describes the non-governmental, not-for-profit, independent nature of this segment of society.⁴⁶

Similarly, Sweden’s International Development Agency explicitly states that Sweden funds NGOs because of:

...its aim of contributing to democratic development of society. A large number of organisations which, between them, represent various interests and parties is viewed as a guarantee of democracy.⁴⁷

Activists in the developing and developed world echo this usage and there has been a

⁴⁴ Carothers and Ottaway, “The Burgeoning World” 4.

⁴⁵ <http://www.fordfound.org>

⁴⁶ <http://www.usaid.gov>

⁴⁷ <http://www.sida.se>

remarkable consensus within development and aid circles across sectors and ideologies:

Neo-populist development theorists and practitioners extol the virtues of grass-roots non-governmental organizations....Economic liberals [emphasize] how these policies contribute to the emergence of business interests to counter-balance and discipline way-ward states. Treasury-based cost-cutters see devolution of government finance to voluntary organisations as an ideologically palatable way of reducing state expenditure. Conservative thinkers see it as a way of preserving traditional social solidarities...Radical socialists zero in on the potential role of social organizations...in transforming society.⁴⁸

Academics have been critical of this enthusiasm, for three main analytical reasons. First, the dominant conception of civil society has been criticized for its western-derivation and assumptions.⁴⁹ In contrast, Chris Hann and Bjorn Beckman both challenge the superiority of western academics who “when students under some repressive regime take up the call for ‘civil society’ and make this central to their struggles for democratization ‘...advise the youth that their models of democracy and civil society are flawed, due to their Western bias.’”⁵⁰ As Beckman confesses, “...my earlier ‘rejectionist’ position, while being theoretically sound and politically appropriate...is of limited use to those, who for respectable reasons...have opted for civil society for their own platform for fighting authoritarianism.”⁵¹

Second, despite the tendency towards over simplistic dichotomous formulations in which state and society are counter-posed and presumed to be in conflict with one another it is increasingly clear from empirical studies that state and civil society in post-colonial Africa are mutually interpenetrated.⁵² Studies of western state-society relations similarly suggest that the

⁴⁸ White, “Civil society, democratization and development” 180-181.

⁴⁹ See for example, Kasfir, “The Conventional Notion of Civil Society”, 7; Mahmood Mamdani, “A Glimpse at African Studies, Made in USA” *CODESRIA Bulletin* 2 (1990), 8-9

⁵⁰ Chris Hann, “Introduction: political society and civil anthropology” in Chris Hann and Elizabeth Dunn eds. *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models* (London: Routledge 1996), 19.

⁵¹ Bjorn Beckman, “Alliance Politics and Public Spheres: the case of civil ociety reconsidered” paper delivered to the conference on Civil Society, Authoritarianism, and Globalization, Stockholm Sweden, 18-20 September 1998, 5.

⁵² Emmanuel Akwetey, *Trade Unions and Democratization* (Stockholm: University of Stockholm, 1994).

state-society dichotomy is over-stated.⁵³

Common usages of ‘civil society’ also misrepresent how some, although not all, philosophers have derived and used the term ‘civil society’. Charles Taylor, in an influential article, charted two streams of thought in philosophical usages of ‘civil society’ proposing that one stream, derived from Montesquieu’s writings emphasizes civil society and the state as mutually supportive, while the other, derived from Locke, sees society as prior to and therefore ‘outside’ the state.⁵⁴ Taylor proposes that western civil society draws from both these traditions, and is “...not so much a sphere outside political power; rather it penetrates deeply into this power, fragments and decentralises it. Its components are truly ‘amphibious.’”⁵⁵ This is a much more Habermasian conception of civil society, in which public opinion is a fundamental base for governmental legitimacy. Yet, it is not so far either from Gramsci’s notion of civil society as a ‘bulwark’ of the state or supporting and protective shield around the state.⁵⁶ This conception of civil society seems a much more suitable way to depict the state-society relation in much of Africa, which is best described as mutually interpenetrated and interdependent.

The third concern raised by academics is the linkage, generally unquestioned by donors, between associational life and respect for the views of the majority and the rule of law implicit in the notion of civility. Much of ‘civil society’ is in fact fundamentally uncivil.⁵⁷ One response to this on the part of policymakers has been to ‘define out’ certain segments of the population. Operationalizing such policies in development programme funding may lead to the exclusion

⁵³ For example, Hann and Dunn, *Civil Society: challenging western models*.

⁵⁴ Charles Taylor, “Modes of Civil Society” *Public Culture* (1990), esp. pp. 104-105.

⁵⁵ Taylor, “Modes of Civil Society”, 117.

⁵⁶ Antonio Gramsci, “State and Civil Society” in Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, eds. and trans. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 238.

⁵⁷ Three key interventions in this debate are: Rene Lemarchand, “Uncivil States and Civil Societies: how Illusion became reality” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 30, 2 (1992), 177-191; Robert Fatton Jr, “Africa in the age of democratization: the civic limitations of civil society” *African Studies Review* 38, 2 (1995), 67-99; and Asef Bayat, “Un-civil society: the politics of the ‘informal people’” *Third World Quarterly* 18, 1 (1997), 53-72.

of unions, corporate interests, and fundamentalist or anti-democratic groups. This further contributes to the tendency to prioritize NGOs, which conform more clearly to the familiar forms of the western charity sector. A further point needs to be made. While NGOs may not be *uncivil*, they may still not necessarily contribute to ‘democratization’. NGOs’ own agenda and interests may or may not contribute to democratization. These and other reasons, discussed in the following section, lead us to conclude that they do not provide an eternal development panacea.

2.3.1 Capacity Critiques: Fowler and Dicklitch

NGOs have been criticized for lacking the capacity to ‘bring democratization’, carry out advocacy activities, or ‘build civil society’ and tend instead towards ‘gapfilling’ supplementing the state’s agenda. On one level, this merely recognizes that most NGOs in developing countries are dedicated to the provision of development goods, often in co-operation with government ministries. The policy prescription offered by Dicklitch in the conclusion to her study of Ugandan NGOs, is to encourage them to go beyond this sort of gap-filling, to “...take a more pro-active, empowerment role towards democracy and development in Africa.”⁵⁸ Fowler, similarly, proposes that funding for NGOs must be arranged to move them away from gap-filling: “strengthening civil society must therefore be a deliberately designed and targeted activity of aid.”⁵⁹ As a result, development NGOs are increasingly funded to ‘network’ and ‘develop civil society’ in addition to their more mundane development tasks.

Capacity critiques propose that while NGOs don’t do advocacy very well, they can be funded to do so. Donors assume that the problem is how to programme, fund, organize or otherwise catalyze democratic or participatory structures. The ready-made assumption is that

⁵⁸ Susan Dicklitch *The Elusive Promise of NGOs in Africa : lessons from Uganda* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 176.

⁵⁹ Alan Fowler, “The Role of NGOs in Changing State-Society Relations: Perspectives from Eastern and Southern Africa” *Development Policy Review* 9 (1991), 78.

NGOs want to engage in advocacy work, but merely lack the resources to do so. Questions of attitude or viability are rarely raised. While criticizing the weakness of Ugandan NGOs, Dicklitch touches briefly upon the lack of a “spirit of voluntarism...necessary for the sustenance of a strong voluntary sector” which she attributes to the “economy of survival that necessitates that individuals have more than one job.”⁶⁰ The implications for this lack of voluntarism for the agenda of ‘civil society’ are not considered.

Fowler, in a broader, comparative study, proposes that states use a variety of techniques to weaken NGOs and civil society—through legislation, administrative co-option, and political appropriation. At the same time, he details several ways in which donors can weaken NGOs—by increasing bureaucracy and reducing autonomy. Therefore he concludes that aid must be channeled and directed at strengthening NGOs so that development can be demonstrated to be: “people-oriented and democratic.”⁶¹

In order to understand why NGOs are assumed to contribute to a process of ‘democratization’ we need to examine both what donors think NGOs are, and their relationship with the state, as well as how this plays out in practice. In particular, we need to examine the changes that have resulted from the increased resources made available to the NGO sector.

2.4 Exit, Voice and Material Engagement

In the 1980s and 1990s, donor funds directed to NGOs increased, even as states were being pressured to reduce their commitments to social expenditure and public sector employment. The disenchantment with the state on both left and right degenerated into a study of “the retreat of the African state.”⁶² NGOs became more important sources of revenue and employment as the state sector declined. As we shall see, the relations between state and society

⁶⁰ Dicklitch, *The Elusive Promise of NGOs*, 172.

⁶¹ Fowler “The Role of NGOs in Changing State-Society Relations,” 64-78.

⁶² Michael Bratton, “The Politics of Government-NGO Relations in Africa” *World Development* 17 (1989), 407.

became more intense under these pressures.

Like welfare organizations, churches, and informal markets, NGOs were ‘discovered’ by academics and donors disenchanted with the state.⁶³ In a rush of enthusiasm, the origins of these non-state organizations or what influences accounted for their formation, their policy goals, their activities were little studied. As Kassimir notes in relation to churches, civil society approaches “decid[ed] in advance that civil organisations are principally independent variables and assign[ed] them a role rather than analysing it.”⁶⁴ This holds also for NGOs. Clark, for instance, talks of NGOs “overcoming their inhibitions and seeking closer collaboration with their governments.”⁶⁵ NGOs which get too close to their own states are ‘co-opted’— no longer ‘real’ NGOs nor part of civil society but ‘defined out’ because they do not fit pre-defined notions.⁶⁶ In proposing that we must distinguish between ‘true’ and ‘false’ NGOs, Clark demands that organizations fit the definitions of donors and researchers, rather than *vice-versa*.⁶⁷

State-society relationships are fluid and fragmentary rather than monolithic and fixed. In a study of students and labour in Zimbabwe, Sachikonye concludes that social movements tend to be “dormant and amenable to co-optation at certain conjunctures” while “engaging in spirited contests on both parochial concerns and national issues” at other times.⁶⁸ But what is interesting is why and how these tendencies change. He proposes that “dormancy” may

⁶³ See for example, Victor Azarya, “Civil Society and Disengagement in Africa” in John W Harbeson, Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazan eds. *Civil Society and the State in Africa*. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 83-100.

⁶⁴ Ronald Kassimir, “The Social Power of Religious Organisation and Civil Society: the Catholic Church in Uganda” in *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* vol 36 no. 2 (1998), 57.

⁶⁵ John Clark, “The State, Popular Participation, and the Voluntary Sector” in Hulme and Edwards, *NGOs, States and Donors*, 47.

⁶⁶ Björn Beckman “Explaining democratization: notes on the concept of civil society” in Elisabeth Özdalga and Sune Persson eds. *Civil Society, Democracy, and the Muslim World* ([Istanbul] : Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 1997).

⁶⁷ John Clark, *Democratising Development: the role of voluntary organisations* (London: Earthscan, 1991).

⁶⁸ Lloyd Sachikonye, “State and social movements in Zimbabwe” in Lloyd Sachikonye, ed. *Democracy, Civil Society and the State: Social Movements in Southern Africa* (Harare: SAPES, 1995), 157.

occur when a social movement has a fluid institutional base, ideological vacuity, or there is no local issue to rally around. Presumably, these three factors make organizations and movements more amenable to co-option or to “negotiating some favourable pact or social contract with the state.”⁶⁹ Yet how this occurs is less clear—why should NGOs be “ideologically vacuous” at one time, but not at another? Sachikonye raises more questions than he answers. These questions are overlooked by many studies: Who works for NGOs? Why? What ideological or moral convictions do they have? While asking many questions about the motives of donors and host states, few ask questions about the NGOs themselves.

The NGO literature seems to assume that NGOs spring into being fully-formed and without political ties or links, unless they are run by civil servants, MPs or Presidential wives in which case they are pathologized as Government-NGOs (GONGOs). Yet, in reality, NGO-state relations are better understood as a continuum. NGOs may have cabinet ministers as board members; staff members may be related to government officials; the President or first-lady may be a patron. NGOs which challenge the state at the local level may have excellent relations at the centre, or *vice-versa*. Linkages exist between all NGOs and power-brokers which change over time, and differing relations may exist with different levels of the state.

These linkages are often enhanced by material but also by cultural and social connections between élites, as NGO staff often come from or seek to join the same relatively small bourgeoisie. NGOs may use their personal connections with politicians and civil servants to increase their profile and enhance their ability to accomplish their goals. School ties, church adherence, and time spent in exile, in the liberation movements, or in prison may all link NGO staff and politicians. They may also receive or be keen to receive funding from the state.⁷⁰ Vivian and Maseko's study of development NGOs in rural Zimbabwe questioned the

⁶⁹ Sachikonye, “State and social movements in Zimbabwe,” 157.

⁷⁰ Jessica Vivian and Gladys Maseko, *NGOs, Participation and Rural Development* Discussion Paper 49 (Geneva: UNRISD, 1994), 34.

assumption that NGOs tend to be in conflict with the state but it did not address the question of how and why NGO-state relations take this form.⁷¹ While we shall see that this changes in Zimbabwe throughout the 1990s: many NGOs continue to insist that their policy aims are better met by quiet diplomacy. NGOs may maximize gains within their contexts, “rather than in trying to alter that environment or engage in debate to initiate change.”⁷²

2.4.1 Problematizing Voluntarism and Professionalization

As part of the widescale rejection of the state, both the ‘Afro-pessimist’ and the more positive ‘cornucopian’ schools of donors and policy analysts have seized upon the voluntary sector as the solution to ‘development’ problems.⁷³ The NGO sector is presumed to be based on the Tocquevillean principles of voluntary action and charitable assistance. However, the majority of NGOs do not operate on voluntary principles. Indeed, ‘voluntary association’ as the term was originally used to describe African colonial-era institutions was based on a distinction between traditional ascriptive associations and new, often urban, organizations which included churches, savings groups, burial societies, and sports clubs. As Wallerstein notes, they are “‘voluntary’ in that no one’s membership was fore-ordained at birth, or automatic.”⁷⁴

Donors and policy-makers are rarely explicit about how exactly the ‘voluntary sector’ promotes democracy. Michael Bratton has elucidated these points in some detail. At the risk of making an ‘Aunt Sally’ of his argument, I will take his contribution to the influential Carter Centre report on Governance to illustrate ideas that often remain implicit in donor discourses.

On an institutional level, it is assumed that encouraging NGOs to do advocacy and policy-related work strengthens ‘civil society’ by providing “alternative structures to the

⁷¹ Vivian and Maseko, *NGOs, Participation and Rural Development*, 33.

⁷² Ann Muir with additional material by Roger C Riddell, *Evaluating the Impact of NGOs in rural poverty alleviation* ODI Working paper 52 (London: ODI, 1992), 19.

⁷³ Ian Smillie, *The Alms Bazaar: altruism under fire - nonprofit organisations and international development* (London: IT Publications, 1995), 20.

⁷⁴ Wallerstein, “Voluntary Associations,” 322.

monopolies of the state.....voluntary organizations can empower like-minded members to articulate a collective interest and take collective action.”⁷⁵ A more ‘indirect’ route to democracy-enhancement presumes that the interactions of the voluntary sector lead to the natural development of a vocal society, in what Carothers has called “the benevolent Tocquevillean vision underlying US assistance to civil society....”⁷⁶ To quote Bratton again, “voluntary organizations can promote a democratic political culture....they offer a training ground for democratic practices of governance.”⁷⁷ These ideas were further reinforced by the publicity surrounding the 1993 publication of Robert Putnam’s *Making Democracy Work* which advocated the importance of ‘civic’ associations for the consolidation of democracy.⁷⁸

Civil society theory, as implemented by donors, is predicated on the assumption that voluntary organizations have the capacity and desire to both *mobilize* and *socialize* their members and the wider society.⁷⁹ Voluntary organizations are reified in this construction because their voluntary nature is the key to socialization, while their membership is presumed to be available for mobilization. Donors and others endeavouring to strengthen civil society have increasingly used this justification for channeling funds into the NGO sector.

But is it really this straight-forward? Are NGOs necessarily based on voluntary action? The increased funding, in particular, further complicates these assumptions. With access to large amounts of donor funding NGOs become ‘professionalized,’ functioning instead as implementing agencies:

With increased funding has come increased demands for accountability, professionalism, and demonstrated impact of activities. As a result, many

⁷⁵ Michael Bratton, “Enabling the voluntary sector in Africa: the policy context” in Carter Centre, *African Governance in the 1990s* (Atlanta, Carter Centre, 1990) 104.

⁷⁶ Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad*, 222.

⁷⁷ Bratton, “Voluntary sector” 104.

⁷⁸ Robert Putnam with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Nanetti. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); See for instance, “Pro bono publico - Civics lessons” *Economist* 6 February 1993.

⁷⁹ Ronald Kassimir, “The Social Power of Religious Organisation and Civil Society: the Catholic Church in Uganda” in *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 36, 2 (1998), 56.

NGOs have begun to transform themselves, reducing the voluntary part of their activities in favour of staff being trained as professionals and having explicit professional qualifications.⁸⁰

The implications of this shift from voluntary to professional staff can be profound, but has not yet been taken account of by donor agencies and mainstream researchers. An ODA report which engages specifically with the issue of the impact of external funding and professionalization on local NGOs considers only half of the problem. The researchers recognize that NGOs are particularly vulnerable to internal crisis and personnel turn-over after their first tranche of major funding. In this case, professionalization is a trend in which older, volunteer members are replaced by younger, professional staff.⁸¹ However, professionalization also occurs when members *become* the professionalized staff, a particularly volatile combination where both the government and private sectors are less attractive career options. In either case, it is clear that whether or not NGOs are ‘naturally’ voluntary, the increased funding throughout the 1990s has made this claim less and less relevant.

2.5 Pragmatic Decision-making

We now turn to the implications of these multiple misunderstandings of how NGOs function and how they relate to the state. NGOs derive diverse benefits from their newly increased roles. While sceptics point to the material benefits of NGO careers – and these are not insubstantial – we should not ignore the ‘immaterial’ yet substantive benefits which churches and mosques have long recognized when they have gained converts through the provision of health or education services.⁸² NGOs, like any organization, take pride in their growth and

⁸⁰ Henrik Secher Marcussen, “NGOs, the State and Civil Society” *Review of African Political Economy* 69 (1996), 415.

⁸¹ ODA, “The Impact of External funding on the capacity of Local NGOs.” Final Report Number R5968 N.D, *see especially* 40-52. See also the less detailed article based on this research, Mick Moore and Sheelagh Stewart, “Corporate Governance for NGOs” in *Development in Practice*, 8, 3(1998).

⁸² Helmut K. Anheier and Lester M. Salamon, *Defining the nonprofit sector: a cross-national analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 366-367.

high-profiles locally and internationally and senior positions in NGOs may bring with them considerable public recognition. There is also a potential down-side to the 'profitability' of the non-profit sector. Entrepreneurs may also form NGOs to provide employment, prestige and connections to the well-resourced development sector, rather than for any commitment to abstract ideals advocated by donors.

Although the 'beneficiaries' of NGOs are often defined simply as those whom the programmes are designed to benefit, the term should probably include the entire network that relies upon NGO funding, such as employees and consultants.⁸³ In some cases, this wider group is seen as merely part of societal patronage networks. Leaders of NGOs are thought to seek to enhance their own prestige, rent-seeking potential, and client base.⁸⁴ Such analyses pathologize these NGOs for abandoning the voluntarist, altruistic goals of 'real' NGOs. It seems more important to think critically about the political implications of such motivations on the part of NGO staff, leaders and hangers-on. How do the incentives to work for and gain office in NGOs, the increased stakes in doing so, and the personal motivations of office-holders influence the way in which NGOs and interest organizations interact with the state?

In Zimbabwe, it is widely accepted that NGOs use non-confrontational tactics, variously defined as entryism and inclusion, to influence various levels of state and party apparatus.⁸⁵ Where the state remains relatively administratively competent, typically, all the 'sticks' — closure, deregistration, investigation and co-ordination — and 'carrots' — tax exemption, access to policy-makers and public funding — are seen as emanating from the state,

⁸³ Sheelagh Stewart, 'Happily ever after in the market-place: NGOs and uncivil society' *Review of African Political Economy* 71 (1997), 24.

⁸⁴ Michael Bratton, 'Micro-democracy? The merger of farmer unions in Zimbabwe' *African Studies Review* 37, 1 (1994), 12.

⁸⁵ Sam Moyo, *NGO Advocacy in Zimbabwe: Systematising an Old Function or Inventing a New Role?* (Harare: ZERO, 1992); Stephen Burgess, 'NGOs and the State in Africa: Competition and Conflict Avoidance in rural Zimbabwe' Paper presented to the African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Toronto, Ont. Canada, 3-6 November 1994, 20.

while the NGOs have little, if any bargaining power.⁸⁶ NGOs may therefore seek access to the state to influence its policies as well as to avoid conflict or secure protection.⁸⁷ As Fowler noted in his well-grounded study of Kenyan NGOs, “it appears that more can be achieved by appearing to support, respect, and improve prevailing systems, rather than openly agitating against them.”⁸⁸ NGOs often initiate these interactions with states – and are not always ‘co-opted’ by the state. As development organizations, NGOs exercise strategic pragmatism in order to ensure that their clients continue to benefit from the ‘goods’ they bring. Fowler’s thesis extends this point and emphasizes that “providing welfare services can be an important factor allowing other, more politically sensitive, work to take place.”⁸⁹ The Undugu Society in Kenya, which both provides services to street-children and advocates for policy reform, “pursues an emancipatory agenda through a managed mix of macro and micro activities designed to reinforce each other so exploiting the limited development space that exists and the opportunities which arise within it.”⁹⁰ NGOs, therefore, may refrain from political activity in order not to risk their primary goal but, at the same time, their role as development organizations also enables them to press for certain policy changes.

2.6 Authoritarianism ‘Revisited’

In 1998, I argued that three inter-connected factors influenced and constrained the operations of NGOs in Zimbabwe:

First, NGOs exist within the political hegemony of state and ruling party, ZANU(PF), which depends on a context of ‘legitimacy’ created by the

⁸⁶ David Hulme and Michael Edwards eds, *NGOs, States and Donors: too close for comfort?* (London: Macmillan and Save the Children, 1997), 13.

⁸⁷ Beckman “Explaining democratization: notes on the concept of civil society” 5.

⁸⁸ Alan F Fowler, “Non-governmental organisations and the promotion of democracy in Kenya” (DPhil Thesis, Sussex, 1994), 293.

⁸⁹ Fowler, “Non-governmental organisations and the promotion of democracy in Kenya,” 288.

⁹⁰ Fowler, “Non-governmental organisations and the promotion of democracy in Kenya,” 291

liberation war and entrenched by post-war development, the lack of opposition parties, and the Mugabe government's willingness to coerce and co-opt would be dissidents. Second, NGOs operate under material and organizational constraints—that they are as much centres of employment as sites of activism—which encourage them to develop good working relationships with the state and constrains them from contentious challenges to its authority. Third, and resulting from these first two points, NGOs exercise strategic pragmatism, framing what few challenges they make to the political order in a depoliticizing discourse in order to make themselves acceptable to their colleagues and the state. In short, NGOs are often constrained from taking on the roles imputed to them by the civil society theorists, by virtue of having a stake in the....system.⁹¹

In 2000, Brian Raftopoulos indicated that while this was a:

useful summary of the role of NGOs....there are indications that, in the changed conditions of the late 1990s, sections of the NGO community have begun to depart from this strategy and move into a more confrontational mode, in the context of a broader social movement.⁹²

It is the process of charting this change in state-society relations that requires us to return to the issues broached in section 2.2. In order to comprehensively explain the post 1997 shift in the relationship between NGOs and the state in Zimbabwe, we must take account of shifting power relations, declining hegemony and the re-alignment of state and society. While NGOs in Zimbabwe come to have less of a stake in the declining system, their relations with the state remain ambiguous.

Attempts to understand democratization must be rooted in both an understanding of the material and social processes through which the authoritarian state itself was constructed and maintained, and an analysis of the internal organizational politics of the civil society organizations under consideration. We need first to examine the bases of the regime's power over society, which is not simply coercive, but connects ideology, coercion and material interests to include society within the regime's hegemonic framework. As sections 2.7 and 2.8

⁹¹ Sara Rich Dorman, "NGOs and State in Zimbabwe: Implications for civil-society theory" forthcoming in Bjorn Beckman, Anders Sjogren and Eva Hannsen eds. *Civil Society, Authoritarianism and Globalisation*.

⁹² Brian Raftopoulos, "The State, NGOs and Democratization" in Sam Moyo, John Makumbe and Brian Raftopoulos, *NGOs, the State and Politics in Zimbabwe* (Harare: SAPES, 2000), 23.

have shown, organizations like NGOs are particularly bound-up in the institutions of government and the state. They also have their own internal dynamics that pressurize them to pursue the organization's interests in growth and expansion. They respond, therefore, to the pressures of the regime when their interests coincide. This further reproduces and strengthens the state's discursive hegemony. In order to understand the complexity of processes of democratization we need to take into account both the multiple sources of state control and the institutional dynamics of organizations like NGOs.

The politics of inclusion as practiced by the Mugabe regime in independent Zimbabwe is characterized by societal quiescence and demobilization. The construction of consent integrates social groups into the ruling, nationalist, coalition. This potentially disparate coalition is based on alliances which depend to differing extents on coinciding interests, ideological commitment, and the threat of the use of force. The rhetoric of inclusion closes out alternative social and political space, rendering projects outside the ruling party's sphere nearly unthinkable and profoundly unimplementable. But this inclusionary politics depends upon the regime making material and social resources available to alliance members. When these resources are reduced, either because of competing ideologies or fiscal exhaustion, the coalition's stability is threatened and coercion is called upon to a greater extent. Exclusionary politics reflect a diminishing in the ideological or cultural elements of power, as well as the material. This leaves coercive force on its own, in a much weaker position than when justified by rhetoric or resource distribution. The mobilization and privileging of certain members of the coalition weakens the regime's hold over others. It also opens spaces for alternative accounts of nationalism or other ideologies to flourish. Exclusion is no longer unthinkable because the ever-increasing ranks of the excluded develop their own justificatory rhetoric and resources. Competition for control of the state is based on competing ideologies and interests, which manifest themselves in electoral and physical conflict. Without a conception of politics that recognizes the multiple bases of political power in and over society, theories will over- or

under-emphasize particular factors, creating parsimonious, yet unsatisfactory models of relations between state and society.

Zimbabwean politics is characterized by continuity as well as change. As chapters 3 and 4 will show, in the 1980s, the Mugabe regime retained power through successfully creating consent. While coercion was used, to brutally repress political opponents, it was merely one element of a variety of legislative and policy tools that comprised a broader nation-building project. NGOs, like churches, unions, and other societal groups were caught up in and contributed to the construction of hegemony. The internal politics of these organizations were affected both by this external environment and the shifting international sphere, as discussed in chapter 5.

In the 1990s, as policy goals are reversed and the nationalist social contract unravels, NGOs emerge slowly as potential challengers. This story is not straight-forward or unambiguous, as the case studies in Chapter 6 reveal. The cultural power of the regime is resilient. Yet, after 1997 NGOs and other social groups form an alternative coalition which fundamentally challenges the ruling party's authority in the referendum of February 2000, as discussed in Chapter 7. Chapter 8 concludes with an examination of the move towards a more exclusionary and intolerant conception of nationalism after the referendum.

Part II The Politics of Inclusion, 1980-1997

As many noted at the time of the Lancaster House transition, the Mugabe regime took power in a country well endowed with resources, communications, and road networks. It was also riven by civil strife and a potential legacy of race divisions, what Raftopoulos has called “...serious ambiguities in the discourses and practices of race and nationalism currently operational in Zimbabwean society.”¹

As several studies have shown, the very nature of the ‘revolution’ that brought the Mugabe regime into power was “profoundly ambiguous,” bringing further contradictions in its wake.² Perhaps this made it inevitable that the relationship between rulers and ruled in independent Zimbabwe would be problematic. Thus, although this section of the thesis focusses on state and society in the 1980s and 1990s, it is important first to examine and consider the legacy of the liberation war upon which the politics of independent Zimbabwe was built. This will be done through a consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of the extensive secondary literature on Zimbabwe’s liberation war and the early years of the independent state.

Questions of ideology and mobilization have been examined in some depth to explain both the course of the liberation struggle and the structure of power in independent Zimbabwe. In a much rehearsed set of academic arguments, debate has raged over the extent to which guerilla leaders utilized existing grievances within peasant communities to mobilize them, and the extent to which coercion was used to draw out material support. Ranger, in his influential *Peasant Consciousness*, proposed a model of nationalism in which peasants were mobilized by

¹ Brian Raftopoulos, “Zimbabwe: Race and Nationalism in a Post-colonial State” in Preben Kaarsholm and Ian Hultin, eds. *Inventions and Boundaries* Roskilde University Occasional Papers (1994), 75.

² Ian Phimister, “The combined and contradictory inheritance of the struggle against colonialism” in Colin Stoneman, ed. *Zimbabwe’s prospects: issues of race, class, state and capital in Southern Africa* (London: MacMillan, 1988), 8.

local complaints concerning land use and agricultural production.³ In response to this, Kriger proposed that guerillas also resorted to the use of coercive force against peasants in order to gain their acquiescence.⁴ In intersecting discussions, Lan emphasized the role of spirit mediums in mediating between guerillas and peasants,⁵ while Maxwell calls for further differentiation between different mediums and different guerrilla units, emphasizing the importance of *locality* in determining reactions.⁶ The newest addition to this debate, Alexander, McGregor and Ranger's study of northern Matabeleland, further emphasizes that that the liberation war had very different impacts in different regions. These differences in the context of guerrilla-peasant relations depended on their earlier historical experiences, as well as their proximity to security forces and accessibility to guerillas and among different groupings within local areas divided by age, gender, and access to land.⁷

Within the liberation movement itself, recent work has shown there to have been equal if not greater struggles and differentiation: between generations of guerillas, between those at the front and the leadership, and between ideological factions, leading to suggestions that the revolution 'lost its way' long before encountering the pragmatic difficulties of ruling the nation. Indeed, ambiguities and divisions between radicals and reformers in ZANU, as well as between liberals and 'nationalists' within the Rhodesian state and within the peasant communities — all

³ Terence Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerilla War in Zimbabwe* (London: James Currey, 1985).

⁴ Norma J Kriger, *Zimbabwe's Guerilla War: Peasant Voices* (Cambridge, CUP, 1992).

⁵ David Lan, *Guns and Rain: Guerilla and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe* (London: James Currey, 1985).

⁶ David Maxwell, *Christians and Chiefs in Zimbabwe*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999) 139-140.

⁷ Jocelyn Alexander, "Things fall apart, the Centre can hold" in Ngwabi Bhebe and Terence Ranger eds. *Society in Zimbabwe's Liberation War* (Harare: UZ, 1995) 176-179; Jocelyn Alexander, JoAnn McGregor and Terence Ranger, *Violence and Memory* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000).

contribute to explaining the lack of a ready-made integrative hegemonic discourse, on which the new state could easily draw.⁸

The impact of these ‘struggles within the struggle’ has dominated much of the literature that attempts to ‘explain’ the early years of the Mugabe regime. Astrow argues that the petty bourgeois nature of the leadership and its class interests prevented the creation of a revolutionary state. The nationalist movement was never, in Astrow’s analysis, an anti-capitalist movement; it was rather a classic nationalist movement focussed on removing the discriminatory structures of settler society.⁹ In this reading, struggles within the struggle, were not tribal (as often alleged) but instead generational.¹⁰ Moore gives rather more credit to ideological divisions within the nationalist camp, in particular the suppression of the more radically marxist March 11 movement in ZAPU and the Zimbabwe People’s Army in ZANU, by the more conservative leaderships which adopted their rhetoric and maintained dominance.¹¹

Some of these divisions were further explicated in post-independence policy-making as reflecting ‘technocratic’ approaches in contrast to ‘populist’ and by implication, socialist, appeals to the masses.¹² Mandaza, however, is particularly dismissive of this dichotomy between technocratic and populist forces within the government, preferring to stress the

⁸ Christine Sylvester, “Simultaneous Revolutions: the Zimbabwe Case” *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 16, 3 (1990).

⁹ André Astrow, *Zimbabwe : a revolution that lost its way?* (London: Zed, 1983), 135-144; Stoneman and Cliffe point out the tautology inherent in Astrow’s argument — the nationalist movement *was* a nationalist movement and therefore unable to also be a Marxist movement: Colin Stoneman and Lionel Cliffe, *Zimbabwe: Politics, Economics and Society* (London: Pinter, 1989), 2.

¹⁰ Astrow, *Zimbabwe : a revolution that lost its way?* 82-90.

¹¹ David Moore, “The Zimbabwe People’s Army: Strategic Innovation or more of the same?” in Ngwabi Bhebe and Terence Ranger eds. *Soldiers in Zimbabwe’s Liberation War* (Harare: UZ, 1995), 73-86; David Moore, “The Ideological Formation of the Zimbabwean Ruling Class” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 17, 3 (1991), 488-495; David Moore, “The Contradictory Construction of Hegemony in Zimbabwe” (unpublished PhD thesis, York University, 1990).

¹² Ronald T Libby, “Development Strategies and Political Divisions within the Zimbabwean State” in Michael G Schatzberg ed, *The Political Economy of Zimbabwe* (1984), 144-163.

internal ‘class fractions’ of the leadership and international pressures as determining policy.¹³

He emphasizes the international factors – the negotiated settlement of Lancaster House, international capital and geo-political considerations – that constrained decision-making in independent Zimbabwe, rather than the internal legacies of either the settler-state or the liberation war.

Bond argues that Zimbabwe’s economic policy since 1980 has been predominantly capitalist, covered up with socialist rhetoric.¹⁴ Since the end of the cold war, much of the ideological ‘gloss’ of ZANU has slipped—with the party ‘debating socialism’, introducing economic liberalization, and encouraging the development of indigenous capitalists.¹⁵ The conspicuous accumulation of many ministers and party officials—including Mugabe, despite the widely held perception of his ascetic disposition—and increasing accusations of corruption within the state, have further damaged any pretensions to ‘socialist’ development.¹⁶ In a similar vein, Hevina Dashwood’s recent study proposes that economic policy changes reflect the embourgeoisement of the ruling class in Zimbabwe.¹⁷

¹³ Ibbo Mandaza, “The State and Politics in the Post-White Settler Colonial Situation” in Ibbo Mandaza ed. *Zimbabwe: the Political Economy of Transition, 1980-1986* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1986), 55.

¹⁴ Patrick Bond, *Uneven Zimbabwe* (Trenton, NJ: AWP, 1998) esp. chapter 6.

¹⁵ On ZANU and socialism see for example, “ZANU(PF) to decide soon on new party ideology, says Mahachi” *Herald* 29 January 1991, 3; “ZANU(PF) leaders debate need to update socialism” *Herald* 23 March 1991, 1; “Chidzero speaks on new thrust: investors assured of commitment to market economy” *Financial Gazette* 28 March 1991, 1; “Mutasa makes U-turn on socialism” *Financial Gazette* 28 March 1991, 1; R G Mugabe, “President calls for full debate on socialism”, *Financial Gazette* 28 March 1991, 4; “Socialism not for now: Chidzero” *Sunday Mail* 28 April 1991, 1.; on indigenization see for example, “Towards the IBDC Congress” *Herald* 12 June 1991, 5-8; “Big Business and IBDC urged to work together” *Herald* 13 June 1991, 1; on ESAP see for example, “\$42bn economic reform plan out” *Herald* 15 February 1991, 1.

¹⁶ Grace Kwinjeh, “Corruption eating Zimbabwe’s heart” *PANA* 1 December 1997; Duduzile Nkomo & AFP, “Mugabe admits to graft in own cabinet” *Mail and Guardian* 21 July 1999; Susan Njanji, “Corruption: the evil unveiled in Zimbabwe” *Mail and Guardian* 26 July 1999.

¹⁷ Hevina Dashwood, *Zimbabwe: the Political Economy of Transition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

Other studies of Zimbabwe's post-independence politics have tended instead to focus on the institutional and the structural impacts on decision-making and policy-making. In explicit reaction to earlier preoccupations with ideological rhetoric, Jonathan Moyo assessed the state's accomplishments in education, health, agriculture, land reform and the economy, concluding that the "stability of the social system during the first decade of transition...has largely depended on a careful and sometimes precarious balance of the lower and high strata."¹⁸

Herbst, like Moyo, focussed primarily on the state's 'distributive' role in education, health, agriculture and the economy. Both these analyses of the Zimbabwean state ignore the state's use of power to shore up its support. Both Moyo and Herbst seem to perceive a state that attempts to meet the needs of constituents – a state driven more by societal pressures than by developing hegemony or asserting control over various constituencies. Moyo's critique of what we might broadly call the ideological school is rightly balanced by his focus on "the actual situation." However, this approach presumes an administrative state, assessed solely on the basis of its material accomplishments, and ignores the role of the party or fractions within the party in assuming and retaining power.

Redressing the balance towards ideological questions, Werbner, writing from an anthropological perspective, has emphasized the long-term impact of the liberation war, suggesting that, "wartime suffering and sacrifice dominate the notion of national origin."¹⁹ Raftopoulos identifies the discursive use of an "ideology of sacrifice"²⁰ as well as the state's effective appropriation of the discourse of nationalism. This section will further these attempts to balance and integrate the study of the discourses and practices of the Zimbabwean state. It will look at the different discourses used by the state and also study its choice of policies. It will

¹⁸ Jonathan Moyo, "State Politics and Social Domination" *Journal of Modern African Studies* (1992), 329.

¹⁹ Richard Werbner, "Smoke from the Barrel of a Gun: Postwars of the dead, memory and reinscription in Zimbabwe", in Richard Werbner ed. *Memory and the Postcolony*, (London : Zed Books, 1998) 77.

²⁰ Raftopoulos, "Race and Nationalism", 87.

focus particularly on how this construction of hegemony by the state has affected counter-hegemonic struggles.

The predominance of studies of the formal institutions of governance – and especially their legislative and executive arms – has weakened analysis of Zimbabwe’s post-colonial politics by emphasizing the coercive nature of the state. Using mechanisms of consent-building and incorporation has proved a more reliable tool of the post-independence regime, although they have not been averse to the use of violence to crush and incorporate opponents. The cases of ZAPU in the 1980s and the independent candidates and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in the late 1990s reveal that the ruling party is quite willing to make use of the state’s monopoly of force. Yet these instances do not explain the relative quiescence during much of the 1980s and 1990s. Przeworski has argued that transitions do not occur except when there are organized alternatives to the existing ruling group, which seems quite commonsensical, and which does help explain the durability of the Mugabe regime.²¹ Yet, the Zimbabwe case requires us to ask, why were there no organized alternatives? What was it that prevented their emergence?

A key question then, is how groups, which according to most accounts, had been mobilized to a fever pitch during the independence war, were demobilized. It is crucial that we first examine the process of state-formation in Zimbabwe, and the meshing of both ideological, material, and legislative means that the state used to build its hegemony in the 1980s, to withstand challenges from students and workers in the late 1980s, and to retain an albeit crumbling hold on power into the 1990s.

Chapter 3 will first examine the secondary material on legacy of the nationalist struggle on the Mugabe government. Secondly, it will examine primarily government documents,

²¹ Adam Przeworski, “Some Problems in the Study of Transition to Democracy.” in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 51-53.

newspaper accounts and official speeches, to identify the discursive basis of the regime. Then it will consider the more concrete policy decisions, especially the introduction of laws, which have contributed to demobilizing potential opponents of the regime. This will entail examining the institutions used to shore up the post-colonial regime — the media, judiciary, party and security forces — and the social movements and groups which they target — students, churches, NGOs, unions. The 1980s can best be understood as a period in which the regime was constructed – building on the success of ZANU in bringing a fairly peaceful transition, and the avoidance of excessive white flight. At the same time, the government used force to subdue Matabeleland and absorb its main rival – ZAPU. Despite the party's reconfiguration as ZANU(PF) in 1987, the one-party state was never legalized. 1990 is chosen as the conclusion of this period not just because it divides two decades neatly, but also because of the significance of the one-party state debate.

Chapter 4 will examine the 1990s, as Zimbabwe, like the rest of Africa, confronted the post-cold war world. In the 1990s we see the weakening of ZANU(PF) hegemony, but only the incremental emergence of an alternative regime. The politics of the late 1990s, perhaps best understood as a crisis of nationalism, will be examined in more detail in chapters 7 and 8, where we will be in a position to examine the re-mobilization of these social groups as the nationalist coalition dissolves, despite desperate attempts to breathe life back into the mythology and networks of the liberation struggle.

Chapter 3 Constructing Hegemony: Discourse and Action, 1980-1990

Following the over-whelming victory in the 1980 election, the Mugabe government set about welding together the disparate elements of the nationalist movement, in an attempt to develop their hegemony over the new nation. In order to understand this period, we must examine the “complementary, contradictory, reciprocal, and symbiotic aspects of the complex relationship between nationalism, democracy and development.”¹

The joint nation and party-building which will be examined in section 3.1 was defined in terms of three inter-locking concepts: reconciliation and unity; development; and nationalist rhetoric and symbolism. The party was aided in this programme by its external and internal legitimacy/credibility provided by its electoral mandate, which supplied it with willing accomplices, even amongst those sectors that had not supported its aims during the war. At the same time, the regime’s new legislative and security powers based upon the oppressive laws of the Rhodesian state, allowed it to regulate widely providing a political-military framework through which to dominate and demobilize society, which is the subject of section 3.2. As the late Norbert Tengende argued in a little-known but valuable thesis, “Nation-building....became an instrument of domination and control...marked by the marginalization of popular participation.”²

3.1 Nation-building

As we shall see, nation-building projects involved many arms of the state including the national media and the education system in attempting to inculcate the values described above. For example, the curriculum proposed for the new nation was said to be designed to emphasize

¹ Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, “Nationalism, democracy and development” in Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, eds. *Nationalism, democracy and development* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1.

² Norbert Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for Democracy: State-Civil Society relations in Zimbabwe” (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Roskilde 1994), 153.

“national unity, patriotism, civics and local history”³ even if curriculum reform was the weakest aspect of the government’s programme in education.⁴

The policy of reconciliation and unity was aimed at both whites and those blacks who had not supported ZANU during the liberation struggle. On the eve of independence Mugabe “...enjoin[ed] the whole of [the] nation to march in perfect unison.”⁵ This gesture was widely seen as a pragmatic acceptance of existing forces in the country and the region, as well as the current international climate,⁶ although Victor de Waal described the success of this policy as being based on “conscious moral principle.”⁷ Obviously, unity was crucial in a state riven not just by unequal development but by explicit policies of divide and rule practiced by the Smith regime and its British colonial predecessors.⁸ Yet this policy was also used to excuse authoritarian policies, abuse the monopoly of force, and justify limitations on human rights and freedoms. Even within ZANU, the unity agenda was challenged because those “who had contributed to guerilla support were in no mood to be reconciled with those who had fled their rural homes in the war and now wished to return.”⁹

In practice nation-building was narrowly conceptualized “from a party political perspective.”¹⁰ And so, a major part of policy was to dominate the available political space, squeezing out competing voices which could lay claim to the nationalist discourse or otherwise

³ “Political subjects to be placed on new curriculum” *Herald* 13 November 1981, 6.

⁴ Fay Chung, “Education: revolution or reform” in Colin Stoneman ed., *Zimbabwe’s Prospects* (London: MacMillan, 1988), 118-132.

⁵ “Address to the nation by the Prime Minister: The wrongs of the past must stand forgiven and forgotten” *Herald* 18 April 1980, 4.

⁶ Brian Raftopoulos, “Beyond the House of Hunger: Democratic Struggle in Zimbabwe,” *Review of African Political Economy* 54, 64.

⁷ Victor de Waal, *The Politics of Reconciliation* (London: Hurst, 1990), 7.

⁸ Ibbo Mandaza, “The State in Post-white settler colonial situation” in Ibbo Mandaza, ed. *The Political Economy of Transition* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1986), 54.

⁹ Norma Kriger, *Zimbabwe’s Guerilla War* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), 231.

¹⁰ Lloyd Sachikonye, “The National-state project and conflict in Zimbabwe” in Liisa Laakso and Adebayo Olukoshi eds, *Challenges to the nation-state in Africa* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1996), 142.

appeal to the voting population. Most crucially, attempts to sideline ZAPU in the early eighties had:

far reaching implications for certain newly-emergent yet basic political realities: for nation-building, for state-made ethnic polarisation, for the concentration of power within the state and indeed for the very critique of what state power could or should be.¹¹

3.1.1 Reconciliation and Deracialization

Deracialization was in some ways the simplest implementation of the ‘reconciliation and unity’ package. The civil service and the lower levels of industry and commerce—secretarial and shop-floor assistants, for example—were rapidly ‘indigenized’ especially because these lower-class whites were the most likely to have left before or at independence. Industry, banking, and other sectors of the economy remained white controlled at the top levels with the implicit connivance of the state, aiming to avoid the ‘white-flight’ which had typified Mozambique’s decolonization. Because of this, it is in economic-policymaking that the continued influence of whites remains most visible. Indeed, students of interest group behaviour in Zimbabwe argued that in the 1980s the strongest interest groups in Zimbabwe were those identified as ‘white’ such as commercial farmers and industrialists.¹² This is due in part to their organizational and research strengths, as well as their strategic economic importance. The ‘ministerial’ or ‘executive’ dominance in decision-making is said to have increased the strength of white interest groups, who have become “...much stronger outside Parliament than ever the [Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe (CAZ), a successor to the RF] would have been inside.”¹³

¹¹ Werbner, “Smoke from the Barrel of a Gun,” 79.

¹² Tor Skålnes, *The politics of economic reform in Zimbabwe : continuity and change in development* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995); Carolyn Jenkins, “The Politics of Economic Policy-making in Zimbabwe” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 35, 4 (1997); Jeffrey Herbst, *State Politics in Zimbabwe* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1991).

¹³ Carolyn Jenkins, “The Politics of Economic Policy-making in Zimbabwe” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 35, 4 (1997), 588.

While a few whites sat as ZANU MPs or Ministers, most retreated from formal politics and concentrated on their businesses and social lives.¹⁴

The constitutional requirements of Lancaster House also prevented the government from acquiring land, other than through willing-seller agreements. The resultant stability of tenure did much to reassure farmers and investors of the regime's willingness to support white endeavours. But, as we shall see in the next chapter, pent-up land hunger became a potent mobilizing force for and against the Mugabe regime throughout the 1990s.

3.1.2 Party Unity

Unity was not just about relations between blacks and whites, but also crucially about relations between ZANU and ZAPU, as well as the UANC which, under Bishop Muzorewa, had accepted the 'internal settlement' and controlled the short-lived Zimbabwe-Rhodesia in 1979-80.

Michael Schatzberg argues that the emphasis on unity and the one-party state, which is indeed seen in many of the post-colonial authoritarian regimes, reflects an African conception of power: "...power here cannot easily be divided or shared."¹⁵ However, we can more usefully trace the evolution of this concept to the historical experience of the nationalist politicians. Considering the divided nature of the liberation movements – exacerbated by Rhodesian attempts to 'divide and rule' – it is not surprising that the issue of unity had dominated the politics of the liberation struggle.¹⁶ It was often perceived as a condition set by the Organization of African Unity and the Front Line States¹⁷ leading to the attempted formations

¹⁴ See for instance, Weiss, *Zimbabwe and the New Elites*.

¹⁵ Schatzberg, "Power, Legitimacy and Democratization", 449.

¹⁶ See for example, Nathan Shamuyarira, "An overview of the struggle for unity and independence" in Canaan Banana ed. *Turmoil and Tenacity, Zimbabwe 1890-1990* (Harare: College, 1989), 13-24.

¹⁷ David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe* (London: Faber and Faber, 1981), 31; Carol Thompson, *Challenge to imperialism : the frontline states in the liberation of Zimbabwe* (Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1985), 44-55; Masipula Sithole, *Zimbabwe:*

of umbrella organizations amongst the liberation movements, but Ranger suggests that unity was also an internal demand:

...the first Congress movement in the late 1930s and 1940s was a more or less powerless federal grouping of much more potent and virtually autonomous association; the rhetoric of unity failed to overcome effective pluralism. But this was regularly lamented in the black press as a grave failure; the idea of a sphere outside the political process in which issues of religious belief, domesticity, education, gender, sport, work etc etc were resolved came more and more under attack. By the late 1950s with the emergence of mass nationalism it had come to be accepted that the nationalist movement must now dominate all these other spheres.¹⁸

In the post-independence period, the claimed unity of the nationalist struggle itself became mythologized: “in unity we fought for independence and in unity we must now strive to consolidate it” President Banda claimed in early 1981.¹⁹ This theme of unity was then elaborated in terms of party unity, which claimed to be an ideological demand for a form of rule appropriate to African society, but was also a demand for control by ZANU(PF). The relationship between citizens, party and state was described by one deputy minister as being like the Holy Trinity: “the people are God the Father; the Government is God the Son; and ZANU(PF) is the Holy Spirit.”²⁰ The proposed – although never accomplished – implementation of a one-party state further extended this thinking: “We are one state, with one society and one nation, one party, and one leader.”²¹ As ZANU’s publicity secretary claimed in late 1981:

ZANU(PF) is aiming at a situation where there is no separation between party and state....we are convinced...that before the middle or end of next year, we will have so re-organized the party that it will be impossible for any other party to operate on the ground.²²

Struggles within the Struggle 2nd edition (Harare: Rujeko, 1999), 191-208.

¹⁸ Terence Ranger “Legitimacy, Civil Society and the State in Africa” 1st Alexander Visiting Professor Lecture presented at the University of Western Australia, 2 December 1992, 23.

¹⁹ “We must be vigilant and united, says President” *Herald* 3 January 1981, 1.

²⁰ “Unity is prosperity, says Minister” *Herald* 18 October 1982, 1.

²¹ “No one party state, yet, Mugabe pledges” *Herald* 5 August 1982, 1.

²² “Unity of Party and state our objective – Zvobgo” *Herald* 2 November 1981, 1.

The use of violent force to control and remove threats to unity were justified through reference to destabilization attempts by South Africa.²³ Security organs, which included the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), the army, and various police units were also deployed against civilians who might be seen to be “anti-unity, anti-government and disloyal to the state.”²⁴ As Christine Sylvester reminds us, each manifestation of the claim to ‘unity’ by the ruling party “...can be deconstructed to bring disunities into the spotlight.”²⁵

The violent conflict in Matabeleland between 1981 and 1987 was part of ZANU(PF)’s determination to assert its dominance over the whole country. This derived both from the divisions of the liberation war and also from the under-resourced and under-organized demobilization of ZIPRA and ZANLA. Exacerbated by the ‘negotiated’ nature of the settlement, the demobilization exercise was conflict-prone from the start, with guerillas and leaders conflicting over access to stockpiles of arms, and conflict breaking out around designated Assembly Points.²⁶ While the government media contributed to claims that there was an ‘organized pattern’ to outbreaks of violence, Jocelyn Alexander argues that it was violence within the newly created Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) that led many ex-ZIPRA combatants to desert – these were the men subsequently labeled dissidents.²⁷ While there seems to be no base to the government’s claim that dissidents adhered to a political agenda, the

²³ Joseph Hanlon, “Destabilisation and the battle to reduce dependence” in Colin Stoneman ed., *Zimbabwe’s Prospects* (London: MacMillan, 1988); Michael Evans, “The security threat from South Africa” in Stoneman ed., *Zimbabwe’s Prospects*.

²⁴ Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy”, 254; for useful discussion of the genesis and differences between these organizations see Lawyers Committee on Human Rights, *Zimbabwe: Wages of War* (New York: Lawyers Committee, 1986) chapter 3; ZimRights, *Choosing the Path to Peace and development: Coming to Terms with Human Rights Violations of the 1982-1987 Conflict in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces* (Harare: ZimRights, 1999) section 3.2.

²⁵ Christine Sylvester, “Unities and disunities in Zimbabwe’s 1990 election” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 28, 3 (1990), 376.

²⁶ The dynamics and ramifications of this process are best described in: Jocelyn Alexander, “Dissident perspectives on Zimbabwe’s Post-Independence War”, *Africa* 68 (2) 1998.

²⁷ Alexander, “Dissident perspectives”.

regime's claims were "...congenial with its *own distinctive interests* in consolidating state power and entrenching ZANU hegemony in the political system."²⁸ The government's rhetoric against the so-called dissidents is redolent of unity as both a historical good and as necessary for future development. Mugabe said:

If you show divisionist attitudes the enemy will come among us and will destroy us. Our forefathers fought together during the first Chimurenga war and it is our duty to be united as well...Dissidents still have shallow mentality (sic), because they are encouraging tribalism in the country. Zimbabwe was not liberated for any one tribe and it is pertinent that she remains united.²⁹

Following this conflict, the detention and trial of high-level ZAPU members for treason, and Nkomo's long period in exile, ZAPU was dismantled as an independent party, and incorporated into ZANU in 1987. The agreement known as the Unity Accord created a 'new' party named ZANU(PF). The 'PF' stood for the Patriotic Front, under whose banner ZANU and ZAPU had negotiated the Lancaster House accord. Despite the rhetoric of partnership and unity, the terms of the agreement, symbolized by the loss of ZAPU's name, reflected ZANU triumphalism.

After the Accord, elections and party politics continued to be completely dominated by this rhetoric of unity.³⁰ In part, this was doubtless an attempt to delegitimize the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) formed by the former ZANU MP Edgar Tekere in 1989, as an explicit attack on proposal to create a one-party state.³¹ ZUM also capitalized upon the language of unity, operating, as Sylvester puts it, "in and against the ambiguities of the situation."³² Little

²⁸ Ronald Weitzer, "Continuities in the Politics of State Security in Zimbabwe" in Michael Schatzberg, ed. *The Political Economy of Zimbabwe* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 543 (italics in the original).

²⁹ "Division will destroy us, says Mugabe" *Herald* 18 October 1982.

³⁰ For example, after the launch of ZUM, "[Editorial] Let us make sure we remain a united nation" *Herald* 22 December 1989, 10; "Democracy boosted by unity - President" *Herald* 1 January 1990, 1.

³¹ Ncube's discussion of these claims and counter-claims is instructive. Welshman Ncube, "The Post-unity Period: Development, Benefits and Problems", in Banana ed, *Turmoil and Tenacity*, 320-24.

³² Sylvester, "Unities and Disunities", 386.

really changed, as we will see below, ZANU(PF)'s election manifesto in 1990 opened with "the imperative of national unity" and this point was reiterated throughout their advertising campaign.³³

The other minor parties were also affected by these policies. Bishop Muzorewa, who remained head of the UANC, was detained for 10 months in 1983-84 on charges which included conspiring with his "intimate friends in the leadership of the South African government"³⁴ to "making derogatory remarks about the government of Zimbabwe"³⁵ to funding "former ZIPRA dissidents" and conspiring with Israel, Zaire, and Uganda.³⁶ Ndabaningi Sithole, the leader of ZANU-Ndonga, which retained support in the Ndau areas of Manicaland, remained out of the country in self-imposed exile for most of the 1980s. After his return in the 1990s, he too was jailed on dubious charges as we shall see in section 4.2.2.

3.1.3 Symbolic Nationalism

The state has also undertaken a more gradual – and predominantly symbolic – nation-building programme. Typified by the omni-present 'official portrait' of the president, this development has tended to reflect 'presidentialism' rather than nationalism, especially after the establishment of the executive presidency, which Robert Mugabe contested and won in 1988. In a moment of grand political theatre, Patrick Kombayi escorted the members of the Gweru City Council from their council meeting to remove a picture of Ian Smith from an office wall and replace it

³³ See for instance, ZANU (PF) election manifesto reprinted in the *Herald* 5 March 1990, 2-3; also, adverts throughout March 1990, including "ZANU(PF) Harare Province Unity gave us victory" advertising Nelson Mandela's attendance at an election rally, *Herald* 3 March 1990, 8; Another Harare province rally advert concluded in large print: "Let us all remain united! Let us all prepare ourselves for the new decade of unity, peace and development by voting ZANU(PF)....Vote ZANU(PF) for Unity, Peace and Development!" *Herald* 24 March 1990, 3.

³⁴ "Muzorewa arrested" *Herald* 2 November 1983, 1; "Why Muzorewa being detained - Premier" *Herald* 4 November 1983.

³⁵ "New grounds for the detention of Muzorewa" *Herald* 5 November 1983, 1.

³⁶ "Bishop's Zaire link exposed" *Herald* 19 November 1983, 1.

with one of Mugabe.³⁷ In at least one case, a Dutch national's defacing of the official portrait was punished by his extended detention without charge, followed by deportation.³⁸ However, the father of the nation motif was not pushed to the extent seen in Zaire, Kenya or Malawi.³⁹ Similarly, the attribution of divine qualities or status to Mugabe has not extended as far as in Malawi,⁴⁰ although the occasional reference appears in public discourse, such as when novice MP Tony Gara told Parliament that "this country and its people should thank God almighty for giving us His only other son, by the name of Robert Gabriel Mugabe."⁴¹

Nationalist and liberation war iconography has also come to have a prominent place in Zimbabwe, from the change of the country's name to that of towns and streets between 1982 and 1990. Just as the streets of Salisbury had elevated the heroes of the pioneer column, their new names are mostly those of dead ZANU heroes of the liberation war. No living Zimbabweans have been so honoured, with the notable exception of Mugabe, whose name was given to roads throughout the country in 1990.⁴² Memorials to whites killed during the liberation war were removed.⁴³

The state also abolished Rhodesian holidays and created the new Zimbabwean Independence Day, as well as Heroes' Day (and in 1998 Unity Day to celebrate the 1987 signing of the Unity Accord). The mass celebration of these public holidays, in Rufaro Stadium or the newer National Stadium, became controversial and increasingly unpopular with the younger generation. Welshman Ncube dates the decline in turn-out to such events from 1988, and

³⁷ "One picture worth a thousand years" *Herald* 3 November 1981, 1.

³⁸ "Graffiti man faces deportation" *Herald* 18 December 1981, 1.

³⁹ See for a useful discussion of this metaphor, Michael Schatzberg, "Power, legitimacy and 'democratisation' in Africa" *Africa*, 63(4), 1993.

⁴⁰ Stanslaus Muyebe and Alexander Muyebe, *The religious factor within the body of political symbolism in Malawi, 1964-1994*, (Florida: Universal Publishers, 1999).

⁴¹ "Maiden Speech for new MP" *Herald* 1 June 1990, 2.

⁴² "Cities, towns' streets renamed" *Herald* 7 March 1990, 1, 3; "New names to give Zimbabwe true identity" *Herald* 23 April 1985, 1; "Names changed: Colonial legacy wiped out in 32 centres" *Herald*, 21 April 1982, 1; "Getting to the root of Zimbabwe's place-names" *Herald* 3 May 1982, 4.

⁴³ "War memorial to be smashed" *Herald* 18 November 1981, 1.

suspects that the unity accord made these celebrations less politically salient.⁴⁴ Increasingly, workers traveled to their rural homes, or remained in the high-density areas, instead of turning out for the formal celebratory speeches.

Heroes' Acre monuments were designated at the national, provincial and district level, as places to commemorate the dead of the liberation war. The National Heroes' Acre in Harare is an imposing monument built by the North Koreans. Despite its nationalist credentials it is designed to honour the few, not the many – as selected 'national' heroes are buried there. It is also—for 'security reasons'—not accessible without a special permit issued by the Ministry of Information, and one is escorted around the premises by military personnel. This makes it a formal site, more often visited by tourists than by Zimbabweans from the surrounding townships.

More controversial has been the politics of choosing heroes, determining who should be buried in the National Heroes' Acre. This, in Norma Kriger's words "exposed the gap between the political rhetoric of equity, participation, and unity on the one hand, and the realities of an enormous disparity between...leaders and masses."⁴⁵ Politicized decision-making came into question as early as 1982, during the construction of the National Heroes' Acre, when ZAPU MPs asked for clarification in Parliament of the criteria for selection.⁴⁶ In practice, heroes have been chosen by the ZANU(PF) politburo, not by the nation or its Parliament.⁴⁷ Provincial and District Heroes' Acres are under-resourced, and often little more than dusty burial sites. Werbner contrasts the top-down hierarchical establishment of national, provincial and district heroes' acres with "popular-counter memorialism" in Matabeleland. Ex-ZIPRA soldiers erected shrines to fallen comrades in unofficial sites in rural areas, "sacralizing

⁴⁴ Welshman Ncube, "The post-unity period: developments, benefits and problems" in Banana, *Turmoil and Tenacity*, 312.

⁴⁵ Kriger, *Zimbabwe's Guerilla War*, 140.

⁴⁶ "Who is a hero – ZAPU?" *Herald* 16 September 1982, 7.

⁴⁷ "Who is a hero" *Zimbabwe Mirror* 23 July 1999.

their own traces of national sacrifice on the landscape of Zimbabwe....[denying] the regime the legitimacy of unquestioned national symbolism.”⁴⁸

Attempts to nationalize museums and monuments have also been less than successful, falling into conflicts over whether archaeology should serve local interests, the interests of the wider nation, or be aimed at revenue-creating international tourism.⁴⁹ While nationalist historians and politicians attempted to claim the Great Zimbabwe ruins as a secular landmark – especially potent as the derivation of the new name of the state – local chiefs and spirit mediums continue to contest their authority.⁵⁰ Similarly, at the prototype ‘Culture House’ in Murehwa, which was intended to include local people in the preservation of local culture, conflict arose between the intentions of the policy-makers, the local community and a Christian administrator who banned the practices of spirit mediums and traditional healers.⁵¹ Although many Zimbabweans have a general knowledge of and pride in their heritage, museum policies have been less than inclusive and remain predominantly oriented towards the tourist trade.

3.1.4 Development

Development was a motivating force of government ideology – encapsulating all that had been denied by the Rhodesian regime. At the same time, however, people were able to measure the changes in their day-to-day lives and assess for themselves how well the new regime was meeting their expectations. In her useful discussion of how developmentalism sustains authoritarian rule through legitimization and demobilization, Crystal emphasizes the ways in

⁴⁸ Werbner, “Smoke from the Barrel of a Gun,” 91

⁴⁹ Karen M Lee, “The Historical Development of Zimbabwe’s Museums and Monuments” (Unpublished Mphil Thesis, University of St Andrews, 1995), 75-91; Peter J. Ucko, “Museums and sites: cultures of the past within education – Zimbabwe, some ten years on” in Peter G Stone and Brian L Molyneux eds. *The Presented Past: Heritage, Museums, and Education* (London: Routledge in association with English Heritage, 1994), 237-282.

⁵⁰ Joost Fontein, “Ancestors, the State and International Discourse on Great Zimbabwe: A Study of Conflicting perspectives on heritage” paper presented at the Britain-Zimbabwe Society Research Day “New perspectives on Zimbabwe” 12 June 1999, Oxford.

⁵¹ Ucko, “Museums and sites,” 246-256.

which developmentalism is an ideology of “indefinitely deferred gratification” against which states cannot be held accountable.⁵² Yet, the Zimbabwean state’s emphasis on its achievements *vis-à-vis* the Rhodesian state did enable comparison. Development, therefore needs to be understood as both a material good and a rhetorical form, an ideal with which to motivate, but it can also be a material gauge against which the government’s record can be judged. However, Crystal is correct to emphasize the ways in which an ideology of developmentalism foster the belief that “the state must play the central role in promoting economic growth and that, to that end, individuals and social organisations must relinquish power to it, allowing it the routine, if temporary use of force against enemies.”⁵³ The rapid improvement in socio-economic status for many Zimbabweans in the 1980s did legitimate the government’s tactics and strategies.

Aimed primarily, but by no means exclusively, at the rural population, the government implemented a policy of ‘national development’ focusing on reconstruction after the war years and the deracialization of service provision.⁵⁴ In particular, emphasis was put on deracializing education and health service provision, implementing a minimum wage and extending agricultural buying points in former tribal trustlands. Between 1979 and 1989, the numbers of students in primary and secondary education expanded by 332%.⁵⁵ Fay Chung considered this the “biggest achievement of majority government.”⁵⁶ Better access to health clinics, and the deracialization of hospitals also lowered infant mortality rates. Child mortality which had been at 100-150/1000 in 1980, by 1989 had fallen to 46/1000 births. Expanded immunization

⁵² Jill Crystal, “Authoritarianism and its Adversaries in the Arab World” *World Politics* 46 (1994), 288, also 280-281.

⁵³ Crystal, “Authoritarianism and its adversaries,” 280.

⁵⁴ See for instance Robert G Mugabe, “Welcoming address by the Right Honourable Prime Minister” in *Let’s Build Zimbabwe together: ZIMCORD. Report on Conference Proceedings, Zimbabwe Conference on Reconstruction and Development* Salisbury, 23-27 March 1981.

⁵⁵ Diana Auret, *A Decade of Development* (Gweru: Mambo/CCJP, 1990), 17.

⁵⁶ Fay Chung, “Education: revolution or reform” in Stoneman ed., *Zimbabwe’s Prospects*, 121.

covered 80% of the population and decreased the incidences of communicable diseases.⁵⁷

Although the greatest increase in spending on healthcare occurred between 1980 and 1982, expenditure levels were maintained throughout the decade.⁵⁸

Questions have been raised about the neutrality of the ‘developmental’ state both in terms of regional equity and in terms of social groups. Certain areas of the country — namely Matabeleland, the Zambezi valley and Chipinge — are generally thought to have received less in the way of post-independence reconstruction and improved services. Bulawayo, as a city, has declined in prominence *vis-à-vis* Harare. Matabeleland and Chipinge consistently elected opposition MPs through the 1980s, while the Zambezi valley is the home of the minority Tonga ethnic group. At the same time, other regions, notably the President’s home area of Zvimba began to be seen as receiving excess largesse. Nonetheless, data collected in the late 1990s does not entirely reflect these beliefs. There continues to be widespread poverty in both the apparently wealthier commercial farming areas of Mashonaland and the peripheral districts in Manicaland and Matabeleland.⁵⁹

But these perceived inequities were not confined to regional or ethnic groups, but reflected access to power as well. For example, access to land began increasingly to be determined by social class – or closeness to the government – rather than by need. While land resettlement was always key to overall developmental goals, it became a prime example of how institutional and social constraints prevented a post 1979 re-distribution of wealth. In the early 1980s 52 000 families were resettled on about a quarter of what had been commercial sector land (much of it land which had been abandoned during the war). The scheme stalled after this,

⁵⁷ Jean Lennox, *Paying for Health* (UK: Oxfam, 1994), 6.

⁵⁸ Dashwood, *Zimbabwe: the Political Economy of Transformation*, 43-46.

⁵⁹ UNDP, Poverty Reduction Forum, Institute of Development Studies, *Zimbabwe Human Development Report 1998*.

constrained by the relative unavailability of land for sale and high land prices, as well as pressure from donors and the World Bank after 1983 to reduce expenditure.⁶⁰

Assessments of the resettlement programme have by no means all been negative. Kinsey's research suggests that resettlement schemes did meet the goals of decreasing poverty and increasing social welfare.⁶¹ An ODA assessment of the household resettlement schemes in 1988, was broadly positive, but the co-operative schemes were unpopular and unsuccessful.⁶²

By the late 1980s, the resettlement programme was becoming tainted as it gradually became known that 'chefs', including cabinet ministers, had acquired commercial farms, while population pressure in communal areas continued to build.⁶³ Among those who have been resettled, insufficient technical support was provided. Bureaucratic control also made the schemes less than popular with families, as farmers were not given security of tenure, their access to land in communal areas was removed, and the head of household was not allowed to pursue wage labour, but had to farm full-time. As Alexander noted, "settlers were expected to sever all social and cultural ties with their past lives."⁶⁴ The government's overambitious target of 162 000 households probably contributed to this perception that land reform was a failure.⁶⁵

The perception that 'chefs' were benefitting at the expense of the 'povo' began to circulate by the mid-eighties, with the Paweni scandal which involved the falsification of claims made by transport firms contracted to distribute drought relief. A cabinet minister, Kumbirai

⁶⁰ Robin Palmer, "Land reform in Zimbabwe, 1980-1990" *African Affairs* 89, 355 (1990), 169-171.

⁶¹ Bill Kinsey, "Land reform, growth and equity: emerging evidence from Zimbabwe's resettlement programme" *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 25 (1999), 173-196; J. G. M. Hoogeveen and B. H. Kinsey, "Land Reform, Growth and Equity: Emerging Evidence from Zimbabwe's Resettlement Programme – A Sequel" *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 27, (2001), 126-136.

⁶² ODA., Land resettlement in Zimbabwe: a preliminary evaluation. Evaluation report EV 434. September 1988.

⁶³ Palmer, "Land reform in Zimbabwe" 175.

⁶⁴ Jocelyn Alexander, "State, Peasantry and Resettlement in Zimbabwe" *Review of African Political Economy* 61, 334.

⁶⁵ Palmer, "Land reform in Zimbabwe", 173-174.

Kangai, was implicated in this scandal, but not formally convicted nor forced to resign.⁶⁶ The next major corruption scandal in 1988, implicated several senior ministers. ‘Willowgate’ as it came to be known, involved the re-selling of cars and trucks assembled in Zimbabwe at the Willowvale plant, to which they had preferential access, at much higher prices than they had paid. This scandal led several ministers to resign, and one to commit suicide.⁶⁷ As we shall see, it also stimulated the first public protests by workers and students which criticized government policy.

In the 1980s, the government did invest seriously in social welfare and agricultural sectors and reached some of its developmental goals, especially in the rural areas. Jenkins is probably correct to suggest that we must understand the focus on rural areas as a political or strategic decision, rather than an ideological one — the government is attempting to “secure rural votes” in order to “guarantee control of the state.”⁶⁸ While expectations of improved living standards were relatively easily met in the 1980s, as the economy weakened in the 1990s and further scandals emerged, the regime’s commitment to the developmental state became less convincing.

3.2 Societal Demobilization

Yet while this laudable nation-building took place, the regime was also conducting campaigns against those groups which might potentially compose an opposition, often using the legislative and administrative tools of the Rhodesian state.⁶⁹ The rhetoric of unity was used as a theme with which to drive societal demobilization. Unity, implicitly, unity with the government, was

⁶⁶ “Paweni likely to face trial by end of July” *Herald* 8 June 1984, 1; “PM calls for overhaul of tender system” *Herald* 12 June 1984, 1, 5; “Paweni corruption hearing begins” *Herald* 24 July 1984, 1, 3; “Paweni bribed me: mystery man” *Herald* 26 July 1984, 1, 15; see also, Andrew Meldrum, “Food relief fraud in Zimbabwe” *Guardian* (UK), 5 June 1984.

⁶⁷ See discussions in Herbst, *State Politics in Zimbabwe*, 135; Skålnes, *Politics of Economic Reform* 79.

⁶⁸ Jenkins, “The Politics of Economic Policy-making in Zimbabwe” 592.

⁶⁹ Weitzer “Continuities in the Politics of State Security in Zimbabwe”.

demanding of apparently non-political social groupings such as schools, churches, businessmen, and unions and the sexes in a series of ministerial speeches in the early 1980s. Secondary school-masters were admonished to “create unity between their students regardless of colour” by the Minister of Education.⁷⁰ The Minister of Community Development and Women’s Affairs, urged “unity of sexes for progress.”⁷¹ A breakthrough was heralded in the “battle for unity of all businessmen.”⁷² Workers and their unions were told repeatedly to “unite or be disowned.”⁷³ At the same time, leaders within these groups themselves claimed legitimacy on the basis of unity. The ZCTU claimed that “unity among rival unions in each industry” was its main task.⁷⁴ A prominent commercial farmer said in a newspaper report entitled “unity vital”:

We cannot stand apart as a separate community. If there is no future for the country as a whole, there is no future for us. If we are to prosper, we must do it alongside other Zimbabweans.⁷⁵

While the demobilization of the victorious nationalist movement might at first glance seem surprising, the very nature of the nationalist movement, which subsumed individual tendencies, itself seems to have enabled the process.⁷⁶ Two caveats must be made to the study of demobilization. Firstly, many organizations willingly distanced themselves from overt political involvement, other than through ZANU and dedicated themselves to development work. After independence, many organizations which had supported the liberation movement were keen to work with the state to build a new country.

⁷⁰ “Create Unity, Mutumbuka urges 5000 head-masters” *Herald* 13 November 1981, 3.

⁷¹ “Nhongo urges unity of sexes for progress” *Herald* 27 January 1982, 3.

⁷² “Breakthrough in battle to unite all businessmen” *Herald* 28 January, 1982, 1.

⁷³ “Workers told to unite” *Herald* 27 January 1982, 2; “Unite or be disowned, warns top ZCTU man” *Herald* 29 January 1982, 11; “Workers unity is vital” *Herald* 3 May 1982, 4.

⁷⁴ “Clothing unions’ merger ‘is valid’” *Herald* 3 February 1982, 4.

⁷⁵ “Unity vital – Townsend” *Herald* 6 November 1981, 15. Townsend was chair of the Mashonaland Farmers Association, and was speaking in support of the establishment of a National Commercial Farmers Union.

⁷⁶ Ranger “Legitimacy, civil society and the state in Africa” 23.

Secondly, many state actions against potential or fragmentary social movements must be understood as at least partially *ad-hoc*.⁷⁷ The regime rarely seems to plan its strategies of control, at least in so far as the actions of its agents frequently seemed to be quashed by the courts. On the other hand, Weitzer argued that in the 1980s the regime could be seen to be using the mechanisms of the state carefully and deliberately, for the most part, in constructing and maintaining its hegemony.⁷⁸ However, since Weitzer wrote, incremental battles have been won against the state, in which government policies were rejected by Parliament or, more frequently, condemned as unconstitutional by the courts. The government's policies are increasingly implemented piecemeal, rather than consistently. Further, Weitzer suggested that no forces existed during the post-colonial period with "both an interest and a capacity to set about reshaping the nation's arsenal of repressive powers and structures."⁷⁹ However, as we shall see, in the late 1980s and 1990s forces did arise which managed to strategically challenge elements of the governments' plans, revealing them to be poorly grounded in the constitutional framework.

3.2.1 Ex-combatants

The first major challenge for the new state was the integration of the three fighting forces into the new Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) and the re-integration of demobilized ex-combatants back into society. As suggested in section 3.1, this process was rapidly politicized and broke down into violence that lasted until the government's amnesty in 1987. The subsequent unification of ZANU and ZAPU set the stage for the de facto one-party rule which characterized the political system after between 1987 and 2000.

⁷⁷ Sachikonye, "The Nation-State Project and Conflict in Zimbabwe" 140.

⁷⁸ Weitzer, "Continuities in the Politics of State Security in Zimbabwe" 556.

⁷⁹ Weitzer, "Continuities in the Politics of State Security in Zimbabwe" 557.

Ex-combatants who did demobilize and sought training or the means to invest in farming, also faced steep hurdles. Demobilization payments were often exhausted in supporting re-housing and education for family members.⁸⁰ NGOs like the Zimbabwe Project, Danhiko, and the Mafela Trust emerged to work specifically with ex-combatants in supporting producer co-operatives and training. Although formal data is lacking, oral reports seem to indicate that most ex-combatants gained little to recompense their sacrifices post-independence. Many, indeed, felt rejected or abandoned by both their party leadership and by society in general.⁸¹ Norma Kriger's study of war veterans reveals how they consistently made claims for "preferential access to state resources" based on their "allegedly superior contribution to the liberation struggle."⁸² They wanted not only "symbolic recognition" but also "commensurate material benefits" which were not forthcoming.⁸³ Although the party used veterans in 'labour committees' to negotiate with private sector employers, this practice diminished after the state gained control of labour relations through the creation of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trades Unions (ZCTU). After the early 1980s, veterans became less useful to the state and received fewer benefits.⁸⁴ After the unity accord, and perhaps in an attempt to prevent their joining Tekere's ZUM, veterans were permitted to create the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA), firmly under the control of the party and the patronage of the President.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Teresa Barnes, "The Heroes' Struggle: Life after the Liberation War for four ex-combatants in Zimbabwe" in Bhebe and Ranger, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War*, 128-129.

⁸¹ See for example, Barnes, "The Heroes' Struggle," also Jeremy Brickhill, "Making Peace with the Past: War Victims and the Work of the Mafela Trust" in Terence Ranger and Ngwabi Bhebe, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War* (Harare: UZ, 1995) especially notes 11 and 12.

⁸² Norma Kriger, "Les vétérans et le parti au pouvoir: une coopération conflictuelle dans la longue durée" *Politique Africaine* 81 (2001), 81. Quotations from the author's original English version of text.

⁸³ Norma Kriger, "The War Victims Compensation Act" *Journal of African Conflict and Development* 1 (2000). Author's MS. n.p.

⁸⁴ Kriger, "Les vétérans et le parti au pouvoir," 91.

⁸⁵ Kriger, "Les vétérans et le parti au pouvoir," 82.

3.2.2 Party Politics

ZANU-PF used legislation, state-funding, violence and election rigging to create and then maintain its dominance within both local and national elections. Christine Sylvester, for instance, in her study of election discourse in the 1985 election, emphasizes the way in which the party continued to mouth socialist rhetoric, while actual campaign speeches emphasized instead the dominance of the party:

Less than 11% of the pro-ZANU(PF) comments...propagated Marxist myths of class empowerment. Instead, nearly 33% advocated that oligarchic power should be vested in ZANU(PF), because it is the only vehicle for achieving national unity, for rooting out colonialism, and for establishing a government which is not composed of personalist leaders....⁸⁶

Although local-level politics has been little studied, it is clear that they were, at least as politicized, if not more so, than at the national level. In local elections after the war, low-level ZANU(PF) officials prevented non-members from being appointed to temporary district commissions and from contesting the first district elections. In Mutoko, Kriger reports that the commission was forced to stop holding meetings because "...it had been appointed by a white district commissioner and it was not a monolithic ZANU(PF) commission," while in Wedza it was demanded that non ZANU(PF) commissioners be removed.⁸⁷ Alexander notes that in Chimanimani new policies were introduced "through the party structures."⁸⁸ Current confusion about distinctions between party and government developed out of processes such as these in rural areas where not only were the institutions of 'councils' discredited by their associations with the former Rhodesian regime, but where the incoming regime was indistinguishable from the party. This confusion could only have been exacerbated by the

⁸⁶ Christine Sylvester, "Zimbabwe's 1985 Elections: a Search for National Mythology" *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 24, 1 (1986), 246.

⁸⁷ Kriger. *Zimbabwe's Guerilla War*, 217-218.

⁸⁸ Jocelyn Alexander, "The State, Agrarian Policy and Rural Politics in Zimbabwe: Case Studies of Insiza and Chimanimani Districts, 1940-1990" Unpublished DPhil Thesis, Oxford, 1993, 181.

appointment of ex-combatants, especially those who were political commissars within ZANU as “Local Government Promotion Officers.”⁸⁹

Rural local government reforms were brought in through Prime Minister’s directives in 1984 and 1985, which created Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) and Ward Development Committees (WADCOs), which were intended to provide for democratic participation in decision-making. District councils, and VIDCOs and WADCOs, after 1985, were used predominantly to implement directives and inform lower-level officials of policy decisions. Alexander emphasizes that these local institutions had neither the resources nor the expertise to develop policy.⁹⁰ And as Makumbe discovered a decade or so later, this under-resourcing led to disenchantment and disillusionment amongst those intended to participate in the process.⁹¹ Although party membership was required for participation in such institutions, the party itself “...had been ‘demobilized’.”⁹²

Makumbe’s focus group research suggests that, especially in rural areas, respondents were aware of the need to organize within the party, but also that even where they attempt to mobilize, and identify needs, most decisions were taken without considering their input. As he argues, the ‘winner’ of local government reform has been “the ruling ZANU/PF party, central government...and selected or favoured regions in the country.”⁹³ Nevertheless, we shall see in the following chapter that some of the most significant early challenges to the ZANU(PF) regime occurred in local councils.

On the national level, ZANU(PF) consistently controlled parliament during the 1980s, but opposition parties were significant. In addition to the 20 seats reserved for whites— none of which were contested by ZANU – at independence, ZANU(Ndonga) held 1 seat and ZAPU

⁸⁹ John Makumbe, *Democracy and Development in Zimbabwe: Constraints of Decentralisation* (Harare: SAPES, 1998) 22.

⁹⁰ Alexander, “The State, Agrarian Policy and Rural Politics in Zimbabwe” 183.

⁹¹ Makumbe, *Democracy and Development* esp. chapter 6.

⁹² Alexander, “The State, Agrarian Policy and Rural Politics in Zimbabwe” 184.

⁹³ Makumbe, *Democracy and Development* 76.

had 15. While the transitional elections were alleged to have irregularities and intimidation from guerrillas and UANC auxiliaries,⁹⁴ they were generally thought to reflect the majority opinion. Both major parties benefitted from pre-independence legacies – ZAPU benefitted from the continuity of older party structures in Matabeleland, while ZANU gained seats primarily within their former operational areas of Mashonaland.⁹⁵

Yet despite these obvious legacies it is impossible to ignore the coercive mechanisms used by the various wings of ZANU to enhance its hegemony during elections. The 1985 election was notable both for the on-going violence in Matabeleland, and for the relative peacefulness of the polling days. Violence erupted after the election, with ZANU supporters in urban areas harassing, beating up and evicting members of minority parties from their houses.⁹⁶

The 1987 Unity Accord which incorporated ZAPU into ZANU “eliminated the thorniest source of opposition to [ZANU].”⁹⁷ After the 1990 election, the number of non-ZANU seats dwindled to 2.⁹⁸ Although elements within ZANU(PF) pressed for the creation of a one-party state after the unity accord, the 1990 election marked an explicit threat to this plan, when the governing party was unexpectedly challenged from the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), led by former ZANU stalwart Edgar Tekere. Violence, outside Matabeleland, was more prevalent in this election. Patrick Kombayi, another prominent ex-ZANU member, contesting the Gweru Central constituency for ZUM was shot and other supporters were beaten. In a sign that this violence was condoned at the highest levels, Mugabe

⁹⁴ See for instance, Tony Rich, “Legacies of the past? The results of the 1980 election in Midlands province, Zimbabwe” *Africa* 52 (1982), esp. 50-52.

⁹⁵ Colin Stoneman and Lionel Cliffe, *Zimbabwe: Politics, Economics and Society* (London: Pinter, 1989), 79.

⁹⁶ Masipula Sithole, “The General elections 1979-1985” in Ibbo Mandaza ed, *The Political Economy of Transition, 1980-1986* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1986), 92.

⁹⁷ Tandeka Nkiwane, “Opposition Politics in Zimbabwe: the Struggle within the Struggle” in Abdebayo Olukoshi, *The Politics of Opposition in Africa* (Uppsala, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1998), 92

⁹⁸ Nkiwane, “Opposition Politics in Zimbabwe” 93.

pardoned the two men convicted of this assault. The ruling party's continuing rhetoric of unity has already been discussed in section 3.1.2, but this election also saw the re-emergence of a more exclusionary discourse, targeting ZUM for accepting donations from the Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe (CAZ).⁹⁹ Mugabe accused ZUM of being a puppet organization of former Rhodesian Front leader Ian Smith¹⁰⁰ and alleged that Tekere was plotting a coup that included the assassination of all the ZANU(PF) leadership.¹⁰¹ The implication of these allegations was that ZUM supported Zimbabwe's external enemies, as it was also contended that ZUM was being backed by South African interests, and had connections with the Mozambican RENAMO.¹⁰² The predominantly white Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) and the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) were quick to distance themselves from ZUM.¹⁰³

Serious questions were raised about the accuracy of the voter's roll, which was out of date, and the 'gerrymandering' of constituency boundaries to benefit ZANU(PF) in at least one case.¹⁰⁴ ZUM won only two seats in the parliamentary election but 20% of the overall vote and 30% of the urban vote.¹⁰⁵

Following the Unity Accord and the impending end of the Lancaster House constitution, ZANU (PF) moved towards realizing its long-term goal of creating a one party state. In the wake of the Willowgate scandal and concerns about the power wielded by the new Executive Presidency, this was immediately seized upon and criticized by students, academics

⁹⁹ "Farmers, traders deny backing ZUM" *Herald* 9 March 1990, 1; "ZUM Sees nothing wrong in getting aid from anyone" *Herald* 12 March 1990, 1.

¹⁰⁰ "General Election a real test for unity – President" *Herald* 17 March 1990, 1, 5.

¹⁰¹ "Tekere plotting coup" *Herald* 19 March 1990, 1.

¹⁰² "Farmers, traders deny backing ZUM" *Herald* 9 March 1990, 1; "Farm leaders and business back president and party" *Herald* 16 March 1990, 1, 7.

¹⁰³ "Farm leaders and business back president and party" *Herald* 16 March 1990, 1, 7.

¹⁰⁴ Jonathan Moyo, *Voting for Democracy: Electoral Politics in Zimbabwe* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1992), 77-78.

¹⁰⁵ Christine Sylvester, "Unities and disunities in Zimbabwe's 1990 election" *Journal of Modern African Studies* 28, 3 (1990), 376.

and the churches, who found common ground for the first time on this issue.¹⁰⁶ Debate on this issue took place not just within the meetings of political scientists, or the pages of independent magazines, but penetrated even into the official media.¹⁰⁷ While ZANU(PF) seemed to continue to favour a one-party system, in September 1990, the party's Central Committee took the quite unexpected decision not to legislate for a one party state.¹⁰⁸

3.2.3 Peasants

Peasants who might have been expected to be a militant, mobilized force as a result of their involvement in the liberation war, have instead been reduced to apparently passive supporters of ZANU(PF). Peasant farmers have benefitted as their levels of production of marketable crops improved, from policies that provided access to credit, marketing boards and extension services. Generally high producer prices benefitted those with a marketable surplus and access to buyers.

Village committees, which were established in semi-liberated areas before the war and in others afterwards, are often portrayed as being systems of participatory local democracy with the potential to both liberate the peasants from the 'traditional' rule of chiefs and headmen and to provide local governance for the nation.¹⁰⁹ As suggested in 3.2.2 the rhetoric of decentralization and participation did not, in practice, enable peasant priorities to be achieved. Maxwell and Alexander both document peasants initially confronting the new state and demanding resources but gradually recognizing the intransigence of the bureaucracy.¹¹⁰ Kriger

¹⁰⁶ See for instance the collection of essays in Ibbo Mandaza and Lloyd Sachikonye eds, *The One Party state and Democracy: the Zimbabwe Debate* (Harare: SAPES, 1991).

¹⁰⁷ See for instance, Charles Samupindi, "One party system has failed in Africa" *Herald* 26 June 1990, 4; Charles Samupindi, "The one party state and some economic effects" *Herald* 27 June 1990, 8.

¹⁰⁸ "No one-party state by law – President" *Herald* 28 September 1990, 1; "No move on one-party issue" *Herald* 3 October 1990, 1.

¹⁰⁹ Lan, *Guns and Rain*, 226-7; Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness*, 291-2; 296.

¹¹⁰ Maxwell, *Christians and Chiefs*, 211; Alexander, "The State, Agrarian Policy and Rural Politics in Zimbabwe," 181.

suggests that the village committees permitted a ‘conservative’ revolution of elders who recouped power temporarily lost to guerillas and the young (*mujibas* and *chimbwidos*) during the war.¹¹¹

3.2.4 Intelligentsia and Students

Immediately post-independence many of the intelligentsia, including former supporters of the UANC, were absorbed into the civil service.¹¹² The state became a prime facilitator of upward mobility, with “...academics and intellectuals who otherwise might be leading social critics...being appointed as ambassadors and directors of parastatals.”¹¹³ Such a relationship did not engender “fully critical and engaging debates surrounding the emerging character of the state and ruling party.”¹¹⁴

In 1982, the Zimbabwe Institute for Development Studies (ZIDS) was launched by Ibbo Mandaza, the then Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Manpower, Planning and Development, to provide training and education for civil servants. The Institute was designed to “...unite all the ministries to serve not only the short-term goals of the government but also the long-term ambitions of the people.”¹¹⁵ At its inauguration the board of directors included nine cabinet ministers. Writing from within ZIDS six years later, Raftopoulos suggests that the state’s ambivalence towards researchers led the latter to be “hesitant and at times even subservientUncomfortable information is not always conducive to job security, promotion

¹¹¹ Kriger, *Zimbabwe’s Guerilla War*, 214.

¹¹² Brian Raftopoulos, *Problems of Research in A Post-colonial State: the Case of Zimbabwe* (Harare: ZIDS, 1988), 7.

¹¹³ Lloyd Sachikonye, quoted in Richard Saunders “Associations and Civil Society in Zimbabwe” Paper Presented to the Conference on the Historical Dimensions of Democracy and Human Rights in Zimbabwe, September 1996. 18.

¹¹⁴ Saunders, “Association and Civil Society,” 2.

¹¹⁵ “New group to spearhead social change” *Herald* 11 March 1982, 4; see also, “ZIDS – the ‘herald of socialism’ *Herald* 3 April 1982, 7 and “Stormy ZIDS Bill passage” *Herald* 15 February 1984, 5.

prospect, and organizational consensus.”¹¹⁶ The ambiguous role of intellectuals in the post-colonial state was also reflected in the writing of intellectuals outside the formal remit of the state. The relationship was burdened by the history of conflicts between the younger intellectuals and ‘old guard nationalists’ during the liberation war. Others were seen as having only been peripherally involved in the war, which could be equally damning.¹¹⁷ In general, researchers tended to support the government’s socialist inclination, and were relatively uncritical. As David Moore noted in a review of significant post-independence political studies, “...the major lack in this ‘political economy’ is a study of politics.”¹¹⁸

Despite this, in the mid-1980s, with the creation of an active African Association of Political Science (AAPS) Zimbabwe chapter and the development of the Southern Africa Political and Economic Series (SAPES) Trust ‘think-tank,’ public debates began to be pursued within a generally left-leaning academic sphere. These became significant fora for the one-party state debate, when intellectuals, journalists and activists came together in a relatively united front to combat the ruling party’s agenda. Nevertheless, in 1990, Morgan Tsvangirai criticized “...so-called progressive intellectuals who have the habit of lecturing workers and peasants through journals published from their mansions in low density suburbs.”¹¹⁹

After independence, the renamed University of Zimbabwe was “re-oriented” and “harnessed to the national development objectives of the newly elected government.”¹²⁰ Angela Cheater points out that when the university was originally established, its founders sought a Royal Charter to protect the institution in the context of colonial racism, from political control: “after independence...however, many people, (including some within the university)

¹¹⁶ Raftopoulos, *Problems of Research*, 21.

¹¹⁷ Raftopoulos, *Problems of Research* 23.

¹¹⁸ David Moore, “The Zimbabwean ‘organic intellectuals’ in Transition” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 15 (1988), 104.

¹¹⁹ Quoted in Richard Saunders “Life in Space – the new politics of Zimbabwe” *Southern Africa Review of Books*, January/February 1993, 19.

¹²⁰ Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy” 194-195.

believed that the threat of government intervention had passed.”¹²¹ She documents how the 1982 University of Zimbabwe Act increased government control, in ways unforeseen at the time. In particular, the State President, then a ceremonial officer, was made Chancellor of the university, and given extensive powers. The shift from a ceremonial to an executive presidency in 1987 gave this action a new significance.¹²²

Tengende’s fascinating study of students at the University reveals a much closer relationship between students and the state/ruling party nexus in the early 1980s than has hitherto been described. He notes that although some students did not want to be associated with the ZANU(PF) Youth Brigade, which they perceived as uneducated, the Students’ Representative Council (SRC) leadership was linked into ZANU(PF) networks. Indeed, until 1986, the candidates for SRC President were formally vetted by the party structures on campus.¹²³ He notes that in 1981:

...about 100 students even went out to demonstrate in support of the government’s fight against dissidents and demanded to be armed to go and join the fight...the students shouted slogans against the leader of ZAPU, Dr Joshua Nkomo and encouraged the government to embark on a national service programme ‘to prepare them to defend the country.’¹²⁴

Like their lecturers, students also saw the public service as their best career option, and until 1985 most graduates were assured jobs: “the SRC afforded the opportunity to establish ‘radical credentials’ which could secure a job in government.”¹²⁵ After the 1985 election, the SRC leadership wrote to Prime Minister Mugabe saying “we would like to assure you that we are fully behind you and that we are in step with you in our march towards the set and desired goal of socialism.”¹²⁶

¹²¹ Angela Cheater, “The University of Zimbabwe: University, National University, State University or Party University” *African Affairs* 90 (1991), 189-90.

¹²² Cheater, “The University of Zimbabwe”, 190-191.

¹²³ Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy” 234.

¹²⁴ Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy” 234.

¹²⁵ Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy” 235.

¹²⁶ As cited in Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy” 210.

Yet, between the mid-80s and 1990, the student movement became the most visible sign of protest in Zimbabwe – images of students leading protest marches and having running battles with the riot police and tear gas were common long before any other groups found such behaviour acceptable. Student activism seems to have been sparked in 1987 by the election of a new SRC and their subsequent concern with issues of student welfare, such as accommodation, transport and finance. Attempts to negotiate with the university administration became problematic and the riot police aggressively dispersed student demonstrators.

Another new SRC, elected in 1988, moved student demands further into the political sphere, with the September 1988 anti-corruption protests linked to the Willowgate scandal, which led to further conflict between students and police, when the police refused to give permission for the students to march into town. In reaction to this and subsequent unrest, the government withdrew the loans and grants of all 15 SRC members in January 1989. In September 1989, attempts to organize a ‘commemoration’ of the previous year’s demonstrations led to the arrest of SRC members and students. The ZCTU Secretary-general, Morgan Tsvangirai’s support for the detained students in the form of a press-release led to his own arrest for issuing subversive material.¹²⁷ These anti-corruption protests merged into the one-party state debate, with students taking a prominent position in opposition to the proposed constitutional change, and aligning themselves with labour and civic groups such as the CCJP. The students voted overwhelmingly against the one-party state on the basis of both events in Eastern Europe and lessons from one-party states elsewhere in Africa at SRC convened

¹²⁷ “ZCTU man detained” *Herald* 7 October 1989, 5.

meetings.¹²⁸ The government's response was to close the university and send the students home.¹²⁹

Patrick Bond is probably correct to suggest that a major reason the regime continued its socialist rhetoric through the 1980s, was to disarm this potent critique from the left, comprised of students and workers.¹³⁰ And, as Tengende notes, the mobilization of the ZANU (PF) youth league to demonstrate against the university students was doubtless designed to prevent any potential alliance between the two socially divided groups.¹³¹

3.2.5 Labour

Workers were in an unusual position in the early years after independence in that many of them were seen as not having supported the nationalist struggle which now formed the government.¹³² Despite the early urban base of the nationalist movements, Rhodesian labour legislation was constructed to prevent union linkages with nationalist parties.¹³³ To make matters worse, in 1980-81 it is estimated that there were 150 strikes in all sectors in Zimbabwe and over 300 000 production days lost.¹³⁴ Workers were castigated by the new regime for not having used strikes as political mechanisms against the Rhodesian era – and these new strikes were portrayed as illegitimate tools of a 'labour aristocracy' which refused to wait patiently with peasants and veterans for the fruits of liberation.

¹²⁸ Arthur Mutambara, "The One Party State, Socialism and Democratic Struggles in Zimbabwe: A Student Perspective" in Ibbo Mandaza and Lloyd Sachikonye, *The One-Party State and Democracy* (Harare; SAPES, 1991), 140-41.

¹²⁹ "Closure of UZ long overdue" *Herald* 6 October 1989, 6; "University council backs closure of campus" *Herald* 7 October 1989, 1.

¹³⁰ Bond, *Uneven Zimbabwe*, 153.

¹³¹ Tengende, "Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy" 321.

¹³² See Shadur on links between unions and the UANC and ZANU (Ndonga) which he calls ZANU (Sithole): Mark Shadur, *Labour Relations in A Developing Country: A Case Study of Zimbabwe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1994), 99.

¹³³ Brian Wood "Trade Union Organisation and the Working Class" in Stoneman ed. *Zimbabwe's Prospects*, 286.

¹³⁴ Wood, "Trade Union Organisation and the Working Class" 291.

ZANU seems to have taken advantage of this weakness, in attempting to incorporate the labour movement more firmly within its sphere. The government seized control of the fragmented trade unions, creating the Zimbabwe Congress of Trades Union (ZCTU) and stacking it with ZANU(PF) affiliated members and staff.¹³⁵ Accusations of supporting opposition parties were used to silence opponents: “most of the problems of rivalry which the ZCTU is facing are caused by supporters of minority parties bent on introducing their politics of disunity into the ZCTU.”¹³⁶ Where more than one union existed within an industry, unions were pressurized to unite and then join the new ZCTU.¹³⁷

As Larmer indicates, the ZCTU and ZANU(PF) relationship was so close for much of this period that they shared offices.¹³⁸ Tengende argues that through the introduction of the minimum-wage policy, which reduced income disparity and mitigated worker militancy – and gave the ZCTU little negotiating power – the government turned the party into a supra-union and established the workers as a client group.¹³⁹

Gradually between 1980 and 1985, the ZCTU began to distance itself somewhat from the party, criticising government policies for being anti-worker. The Labour Relations Act of

¹³⁵ Shadur and Schiphorst both emphasize how long-standing but non-ZANU unionists were sidelined and replaced by those with less formal unionist credentials: Mark Shadur, *Labour relations in a developing country: a case study of Zimbabwe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1994), 99 -107; Freek Schiphorst, *Strength and Weakness: the Rise of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions and the Development of Labour Relations, 1980-1995*. (Leiden, PhD Thesis, 2001), 61.

¹³⁶ Abisha Kupfuma, ZCTU Secretary-General, cited in Schiphorst, *Strength and Weakness*, 67.

¹³⁷ “Workers told to unite” *Herald* 27 January 1982, 2; “Unite or be disowned, warns top ZCTU man” *Herald* 29 January 1982, 11; “Workers unity is vital” *Herald* 3 May 1982, 4; “Clothing unions’ merger ‘is valid’” *Herald* 3 February 1982, 4.

¹³⁸ Miles Larmer, “The political role of the trades union movement in Zambia and Zimbabwe after independence” paper presented to Southern Africa History and Politics Seminar, Oxford, 22 January 2001.

¹³⁹ Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for Democracy,” 257.

1986, in particular, was condemned for giving the Minister of Labour “draconian powers.”¹⁴⁰ By 1987, it could be said that the ZCTU was functioning as a labour relations “watchdog.”¹⁴¹

Until this point, the management of the ZCTU had continued to be disorganized and susceptible to allegations of corruption.¹⁴² With the election of Morgan Tsvangirai in 1988, Schiphorst asserts that the ZCTU was:

no longer an organization that was lead by one man...strategies, tactics and direction that the ZCTU adopted...were all the result of deliberations and decisions of the general council...this made the ZCTU a stronger organization.¹⁴³

In August 1988, the ZCTU retracted its previous calls for representation within ZANU(PF), claiming to be politically neutral *vis-à-vis* existing parties, and in April 1990 took a formal position in favour of the multi-party system.¹⁴⁴ May Day 1990 demonstrated this change in the ZCTU approach, as workers demonstrated against the one-party state and in support of the right to strike.¹⁴⁵ In September, the ZCTU also withdrew its long-standing request for corporate representation within parliament.¹⁴⁶

3.2..6 Churches

Relations between the post-independence state and church denominations depended to some extent on the stances which they had adopted during the liberation war.¹⁴⁷ However, with few

¹⁴⁰ Schiphorst, *Strength and Weakness*, 81-86.

¹⁴¹ Richard Saunders, “Trade Union Struggles for Autonomy and Democracy in Zimbabwe” Unpublished MS.

¹⁴² Schiphorst’s evidence suggests that some of the corruption scandals must have been stage-managed by ZANU(PF).

¹⁴³ Schiphorst, *Strength and Weakness*, 124.

¹⁴⁴ Albert Musarurwa, “The labour movement and the one-party state” in Ibbo Mandaza and Lloyd Sachikonye eds, *The One Party state and Democracy: the Zimbabwe Debate* (Harare: SAPES, 1991), 152-153.

¹⁴⁵ Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for Democracy,” 354.

¹⁴⁶ “ZCTU drops plans to be in parliament” *Herald* 3 September 1990.

¹⁴⁷ Carl Hallencreutz and Ambrose Moyo eds. *Church and State in Zimbabwe* (Gweru: Mambo, 1988); Matthew Schoffeleers makes much the same point regarding Malawi in his excellent, *In Search of Truth and Justice: confrontations between Church and State in Malawi, 1960-1994* (Blantyre: CLAIM, 1999).

exceptions the church hierarchies linked themselves to the state's developmentalist ambitions, in both discourse and practice.¹⁴⁸

Indeed, many of these organizations, with their origins in the struggle for independence, were only too keen to accommodate themselves with the state. At the same time, those churches implicated in support for the UANC internal settlement, such as the Methodists, were attempting to (re)gain favour with the government. The President, Revd Canaan Banana (a Methodist) and the Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe (a Catholic) strongly encouraged them to do so. In addresses made to the heads of denominations, the President and Prime Minister both called for unity between the churches and state, with the churches co-operating in 'developing' the newly independent Zimbabwe.¹⁴⁹ The Catholic Church was widely reported to support the government's policies.¹⁵⁰ In a letter to the *Herald* written in her personal capacity, AKH Weinrich, a sociologist and Catholic sister, appealed, "to all church leaders to give their full support to, and participate actively in, all the efforts made by the Government to raise the dignity of the human person."¹⁵¹ President Banana, in a much publicized press conference in 1982, said that while some churches had "joined with the government in promoting unity in the nation, there were still a few who were asking for the resuscitation of the political past."¹⁵² After this warning for churches not to "continue associating with the enemy" the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist churches all "affirmed their support for the Government's policy of reconciliation" and said that "...their

¹⁴⁸ David Maxwell, "The Church and Democratisation in Africa: the case of Zimbabwe" in Gifford, ed. *The Christian Churches and the Democratization of Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 109.

¹⁴⁹ "Help us create socialism, PM tells Church" *Herald* 1 May 1982, 1; Interestingly, however, this position was not held by all members of the government. Simba Mubako, then the Minister of Justice, suggested that: "...any close alliance with any political ideology could lead the church into over-looking injustices perpetuated under that system...too close a relationship with the government brought the church into disrepute" "Church must fight injustice- Mubako" *Herald* 9 August 1982, 1.

¹⁵⁰ "State policy gets bishops' blessing" *Herald* 29 November 1982, 1.

¹⁵¹ "Church leaders must respond to Government" *Herald*, 26 January, 1981, 8.

¹⁵² "Don't preach subversion, clergy told" *Herald* 27 January 1982, 1.

churches stood firmly behind the Government's intentions to rebuild the country and pledged their continuing support for non-racialism."¹⁵³

The Catholic Bishops, perhaps in response to these appeals for unity, re-asserted control over the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) in 1981, through constitutional changes that limited the commission's autonomy from the Bishops' Conference. In particular, the reforms required the CCJP to obtain the permission of two Bishops for all public statements.¹⁵⁴ In addition, the Bishops were opposed to the continuing directorship of John Stewart, the Acting Director, probably because he was potentially outspoken and not easy to control.¹⁵⁵

The churches' perceived antagonism to socialism was potentially an issue of contention. Prime Minister Mugabe explicitly exhorted the churches to "help create socialism"... "the Church should find no objection to socialist philosophy because Christian teaching could not be reconciled to the 'avaricious' nature of capitalism."¹⁵⁶ Similarly, the Minister of Lands said that "the church should change its old role as a colonial, capitalist institution" and should instead "help build a socialist Zimbabwe."¹⁵⁷ Deputy Prime Minister Muzenda called on preachers to use the pulpit to "counter the untruths, prejudices, crude stories and myths about Zimbabwean socialism."¹⁵⁸ Although rhetoric during the liberation war had suggested that some churches were anti-socialist, after independence the Catholic church rebuffed this notion. Roman Catholic Archbishop Chakaipa called for church organizations to "promote the government's socialist policies."¹⁵⁹ Anglican Bishop Hatendi, on the other hand, was more

¹⁵³ "We support the state, say churches" *Herald* 29 January 1982, 11.

¹⁵⁴ Per Nordlund, *Organising the Political Agora: Domination and Democratisation in Zambia and Zimbabwe* (PhD thesis Uppsala, 1996). 143.

¹⁵⁵ Auret, *Reaching for Justice* 137-138; personal communication John Stewart, 15 August 2001.

¹⁵⁶ "Help us create socialism, PM tells Church" *Herald* 1 May 1982, 1.

¹⁵⁷ "Churches urged to spread socialism" *Herald* 2 March 1982, 4.

¹⁵⁸ "Stop lies from the pulpit – Muzenda" *Herald* 10 March 1982, 7.

¹⁵⁹ "Church urged to help build socialism" *Herald* 4 August 1982, 11.

equivocal, “we are not being asked to preach socialism, as the Government interprets it, from the pulpit. I am bitterly opposed to scientific socialism....which is atheistic.”¹⁶⁰ However, elsewhere, he indicated his support for a Christian Socialist Movement in Zimbabwe.¹⁶¹

The state took a particular interest in the ZCC, as the largest ecumenical grouping. In November 1981, President Banda criticized the ZCC in the national press for taking a “wait and see” attitude towards the government.¹⁶² He claimed to have heard this criticism from the WCC, which was withholding funding because of the “unco-operative attitude of the Christian Council towards the Government’s policy of reconciliation and reconstruction.”¹⁶³ The involvement of Bishop Muzorewa – who had been President of the short-lived Zimbabwe-Rhodesia – with the ZCC, and the Secretary-General’s association with Ndabaningi Sithole’s ZANU (Ndonga), apparently led the state to see the ZCC as a political irritant. These developments led the ZCC to replace its general secretary, in the hope of restoring relations with both the state and the WCC.

The independent churches were castigated and sidelined for being anti-development. The Apostolic Faith and Jehovah’s Witness communities known for their reluctance to immunize children and accept other western medication, were portrayed as sites of disorder and disease, and forced to accept ‘bio-medicine’.¹⁶⁴ Gradually, they too were integrated into the developmental state.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ “Church battling to fulfil social role–Hatendi” *Herald* 23 August 1982, 9.

¹⁶¹ Peter Hatendi, “Celebrations which point towards unity” *Herald* 21 April 1982, 4.

¹⁶² “Church probes charge by president” *Herald* 10 November 1981, 3; “[Editorial] Visionary dilemma” *Herald* 10 November 1981, 6; “[letter to the editor] WCC Charges must get serious consideration” *Herald* 16 November 1981, 8; Carl Hallencreutz, “Ecumenical Challenges in Independent Zimbabwe” in Hallencreutz and Moyo, *Church and State*, 267.

¹⁶³ “Church probes charge by president” *Herald* 10 November 1981, 3.

¹⁶⁴ See for example, “200 sect children immunised” *Herald* 17 September 1985, 5; Donald Mackay and Plaxedes Motsi, “Some contemporary trends in Independent Churches in Zimbabwe: the cases of ZCC and AACJM” in Hallencreutz and Moyo, *Church and State*, 369-370; also, David Maxwell, “The church and democratization in Africa: the case of Zimbabwe” in Paul Gifford Ed. *The Christian Churches and the Democratisation of Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 124.

¹⁶⁵ “Development of Korsten village on the cards” *Herald*, 15 March 1990, 1

Probably the most significant post-independence division between church and state came as the state sent troops into Matabeleland, allegedly to quell ‘dissident’ activity instigated by ZAPU, which retained political strength in the area, and South Africa. The activities of the security forces against the civilian population of Matabeleland, led to numerous reports of human rights abuses being made to the CCJP. Their attempts to document and publicize the abuses being perpetrated by the security forces were rebuffed and denied by the state.¹⁶⁶ At the peak of the conflict, the CCJP Director, Nick Ndebele and the Chairman, Mike Auret, were arrested, although they were eventually freed by direct intervention of Prime Minister Mugabe.¹⁶⁷

In the late 1980s, the church, like the students and labour movements, was involved in the one-party state debate. The ZCC organized a day of fasting against the one party-state.¹⁶⁸ The Catholic Bishops issued a pastoral letter which argued against constitutional changes which might curtail peaceful ways of changing the government, while the CCJP spoke explicitly against “the formation of a *de jure* one party state in Zimbabwe”.¹⁶⁹ The CCJP was later to claim that the one party state debate was one place where they had concretely affected government policy.¹⁷⁰

3.2.7 Media

Richard Saunders’ study of the media in the 1980s captures how the media moved from being a “civic appendage of the ruling white fraction” into an equally dominated and controlled arm

¹⁶⁶ See for example, “Why the outcry over curfew, premier asks Church” *Herald* 18 April 1984, 1; “[editorial] Church and State” *Herald* 19 April 1984, 6; “Stop the gossip, President tells Church” *Herald* 8 May 1984, 1; “Church accused of double standards” *Herald* 20 February 1986, 1.

¹⁶⁷ Auret, *Reaching for Justice*, 215-217; Interviews Nick Ndebele, former CCJP Director, 27 September 1999; Mike Auret Former CCJP Chair and Director, 14 September 1995 and 28 September 1999.

¹⁶⁸ Interview, Murombedzi Kuchera, ZCC Secretary-General, 11 September 1995.

¹⁶⁹ Auret, *Reaching for Justice* 225

¹⁷⁰ Interview, Mike Auret Former CCJP Chair and Director, 14 September 1995.

of ZANU.¹⁷¹ Both the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Information and the media it controlled were repoliticized, as vacant posts were filled by party members and former ‘bush-broadcasters’ – veterans of the Voice of Zimbabwe which broadcast from Maputo during the liberation war.¹⁷²

The creation of the Mass Media Trust to mediate between government and print media in the newly independent state, was intended to nationalize the media, which had previously been dominated by white Rhodesian and South African financial interests, “...it was held that future relations between the “people’s government; and the national press should be....co-ordinated in the interests of development and unity.”¹⁷³ But “by the turn of Zimbabwe’s first decade, the popular perception was that the trust (and particularly its main public face, Zimpapers) had been effectively ‘annexed’ by ZANU, another casualty of the ruling party’s invasion of nominally ‘autonomous public institutions.’”¹⁷⁴ This was accomplished through behind-the-scenes ministerial contact with editors and publishers, and more public firings – or promotion – of a series of editors who challenged government policy.¹⁷⁵

In addition to the state-controlled radio, TV, and newspapers, however, independent print media did exist, and indeed, flourished in the 1980s. The *Financial Gazette*, a tabloid-sized business weekly, underwent substantial growth, as well as shifts in ownership and readership. At independence, the *Financial Gazette* had a print run of 4000 copies while at the end of decade it had increased to 20 000.¹⁷⁶ Readership shifted from an estimated 20% black readership at independence to 80-85% in 1990.¹⁷⁷ The *Financial Gazette* provided a key forum for the one-

¹⁷¹ Richard Saunders, “Information in the Interregnum: The Press, State and Civil Society in Struggles for Hegemony, Zimbabwe 1980-1990” (Unpublished PhD thesis, Carleton University, 1992) 112.

¹⁷² Saunders, “Information in the Interregnum,” 109.

¹⁷³ Saunders, “Information in the Interregnum,” 248-9.

¹⁷⁴ Saunders, “Information in the Interregnum,” 161-2.

¹⁷⁵ Saunders, “Information in the Interregnum,” 250-253.

¹⁷⁶ Saunders, “Information in the Interregnum,” 351

¹⁷⁷ Saunders, “Information in the Interregnum,” 353.

party state debate. In 1989, Geoff Nyarota, who had been removed from the editorship of the Bulawayo *Chronicle* for revealing the Willowgate scandal, was appointed editor.¹⁷⁸ When the state attempted to discredit the *Financial Gazette*, accusing it of maintaining ‘Rhodesian’ links, its publisher, Modus, was bought out by black businessmen.¹⁷⁹

The monthly magazines — *Moto*, *Parade* — and their more didactic partners — *SAPEM*, *Read On*, and *Social Change* — also contributed to the ‘opening up’ of the media because they reached a primarily black readership, but only *Parade* could boast a wide circulation.

3.3 Conclusion

The politics of inclusion typified ZANU’s approach to nation and party-building in the 1980s. The regime was able to capitalize ideologically on its successes in the liberation war and substantial victory in the independence elections to build a network of alliances with its former supporters and enemies. This coalition was broader than that which had fought the liberation war – incorporating such disparate elements as white farmers, former Rhodesian politicians, and western donors. The demands of these groups were carefully balanced against those of the historic nationalist coalition, which was demobilized or selectively integrated into the state apparatus.

Coercion was not absent from this process. Significant challengers to ZANU’s authority like ZAPU were summarily crushed and incorporated. The external South African threat, coupled with the strength of the Rhodesian security state, made for the continuation of a strong militaristic tendency. Less important political individuals and groups were harassed and

¹⁷⁸ Saunders, “Information in the Interregnum,” 357-8; on the role of Geoff Nyarota and the *Chronicle* in exposing Willowgate, see Saunders, “Information in the Interregnum” 418, 420.

¹⁷⁹ “Gazette in takeover by businessmen” *Herald* 29 September 1989, 1; Saunders, “Information in the Interregnum,” 357-8.

marginalized from power. Yet coercion was simply one strand of the power-relationship, which relied on and contributed to the party's control of institutions and ideological hegemony. The regime's control over the media, army, and other state institutions gave it impunity over the massacre of civilians in Matabeleland.

Nation-building metaphors and policies contributed to societal demobilization as groups took the government at its word and contributed to the development of the new nation.

Rhetoric of participation and decentralization concealed the continuation of Rhodesian-era top-down decision-making patterns. Tangible and real progress on extension of services to rural areas and the deracialization of education, healthcare and the civil service, were seen as evidence of the regime's commitment to development. The few groups with access to funds independently of the state, like churches and unions, were firmly and thoroughly incorporated into the new regime.

In the period after the Unity Accord, public debate did emerge which challenged the government's commitment to socialist development. The revelation of corruption amongst the ranks of ministers was particularly damaging. Groups formally outside the party – academics, lawyers, and students – debated the value of the party's demand for a *de jure* one-party state. Yet, in a *coup-de-grace*, the regime internalized even this debate, and resolved it within the party, taking away the incipient opposition's strongest card and retaining control of political debate.

Chapter 4 The Regime Endures, 1990-1997

1990 provides an interesting point at which to stop and assess the status of the Mugabe regime. Having apparently ‘lost’ the one party-state debate, and weathered its first corruption scandal, the regime was also faced with both economic crises and the political costs of implementing a structural adjustment programme.

The economic crisis in 1990 was probably most obvious in terms of shortages of foreign exchange and concomitant shortages of paper and cement from 1987, and increasing pressure on the transport system. While such burdens may have disproportionately affected the urban élite, the impact of cement shortages, for instance, was felt both in rural areas which were attempting to build dams and in the home construction industry in poor urban areas. The transportation crisis was particularly disruptive for urban workers, many of whom spent up to six hours a day commuting.¹ The easy ride the government had had in the 1980s, as it benefitted politically from the visible increases in public welfare, was beginning to slow down. In response to these crises and to external pressure, in 1990, ZANU(PF) reversed its stand on socialism and the government implemented a structural adjustment programme known as ESAP, (Economic Structural Adjustment Programme). Corruption scandals, which had so shocked the nation in 1987, became commonplace, and contributed substantially to a more critical perception of President Mugabe, whose personal reputation had remained relatively unscathed throughout the 1980s. The increase in availability – and aggressiveness – of the independent media also made knowledge of scandals widespread, at least in urban areas.

So, in section 4.1 we will chart the process whereby economic weaknesses impeded the effectiveness of the mantra of ‘unity, development and nationalism’ that had hitherto had remarkable success. And, indeed, as the earlier co-optive mechanisms become less effective, we

¹ Naison D Mutizwa-Mangiza, “Urban Informal Transport Policy: the Case of Emergency Taxis in Harare” in Lovemore Zinyama, Daniel Tevera, and Sioux Cumming, *Harare: the Growth and Problems of the City* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1993), 97-108.

shall see in 4.2 the increase in the use and availability of coercive mechanisms (through new legislation, a new security apparatus and militarization of existing bodies). In section 4.3 we look at how ‘nation-building’ techniques recognizable from Chapter 3 gradually become more extreme and exclusive.

4.1 The ‘Development Agenda’

From 1990, the development agenda which was so central to the government’s political platform was constrained by the implementation of ESAP, the declining economic conditions, and the impact of AIDS. Although great changes were made in the 1980s, post-ESAP and AIDS both the education and health systems have been in crisis and many of the gains made negated. In some ways, adjustment redistributed economic burdens, helping urban commuters through much of the 1990s through the deregulation of the transport sector which massively improved availability of transport (a crucial dimension considering the continued colonial spatial patterns of most urban areas).² However, increased fares throughout the 1990s soon came to dominate household budgets.

The implementation of structural adjustment led to declining performance in education and health indicators. In particular, the introduction of user-fees in education and health, led to lower take-up levels.³ The breakdown of the rural infrastructure was particularly noted in shortages of nurses and doctors to run community hospitals. Educational facilities were equally under stress, with teacher shortages, as well as a shortage of schools in rural areas. In the mid to late 1990s, the phenomenon of ‘bush-boarders’ began to gain attention as older students squatted in the bush near teaching facilities.⁴

² Naison D Mutizwa-Mangiza, “Urban Informal Transport Policy: the Case of Emergency Taxis in Harare”, 97-108.

³ A. S. Mlambo, *The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme: The Case of Zimbabwe, 1990-1995*. (Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1997).

⁴ “Five thousand students in Mashonaland West stay in ‘bush-boarding’ facilities’ *Herald* 14 July 1999, 6.

The Zimbabwe government recognized the seriousness of the AIDS crisis early on, and was one of the first countries to screen donated blood in 1985. From 1986, the Ministry of Health had an AIDS advisory committee. The Ministry initiated a major AIDS awareness campaign in 1987, which was extended into the 1990s.⁵ However, HIV prevalence in women attending ante-natal clinics in Harare increased from 10% in 1989, to 36% in 1994.⁶ By 1999, an estimated 1.5 million Zimbabweans were believed to be infected, 1.4 million of whom were adults aged between 15 and 49 years, representing an estimated 25% of the most economically active age cohort.⁷ High infection rates among teachers, doctors and nurses further affected the provision of healthcare and education, while the prevalence of the disease among the general population over-strained the healthcare system. It is estimated that in 2005, AIDS treatment costs will absorb over 60% of the Ministry of Health's budget.⁸ The consequences for food security in rural households are also worrying, with an AIDS death in the family causing a 61% decrease in maize production, and 49% reduction in vegetable production.⁹ Life got increasingly more difficult for most Zimbabweans, as average incomes declined and the cost of living increased.

However, the changes in Zimbabwe's development policy which are evident after 1990, are not solely the result of external constraints. Shifting domestic political constituencies and agendas also influenced these changes. As Dashwood suggests, not only were peasants and the working class increasingly marginalized in policy discourses, but 'progressive' voices within ZANU (PF) have been quieted.¹⁰ She attributes this to the changing configuration of class forces within ZANU(PF), which have led to a changing set of priorities within government:

⁵ Helen Jackson, *AIDS action Now: information, prevention and support in Zimbabwe* (Harare: AIDS Counselling Trust, 1988), 114-116; "Council to combat Aids" *Herald* 7 October 1989, 5.

⁶ UNAIDS/WHO, *Zimbabwe Epidemiological Fact Sheet* (UNAIDS/WHO, 2000), 3.

⁷ UNAIDS/WHO, *Zimbabwe Epidemiological Fact Sheet*, 3.

⁸ UNAIDS, *The Socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS in Africa* (UNAIDS, 2000).

⁹ CFU, *Aids Prevention for Rural Areas*, 1999; UNAIDS, *Socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS in Africa*.

¹⁰ Dashwood, *Zimbabwe: the Political Economy of Transformation*, 107.

The embourgeoisement of the ruling élite explains the failure to combine [market-based reforms] with measures that would protect the welfare of the poor.¹¹

While in general the government has continued to respond to rural crises, such as droughts, with food aid Dashwood suggests that this approach represents an ad-hoc, reactive response to crises, rather than a coherent welfarist strategy.¹²

Urban services continued to decline throughout the decade. Although this becomes most marked after 1997, the roots of the crisis are to be found in the preceding years.¹³ The rising costs of construction meant that the number of housing units constructed declined each year between 1980 and 1985.¹⁴ By 1991, it was estimated that there was a deficit of 70 000 dwellings in Harare. This figure is probably derived from the housing waiting list, which by 1994 had increased to 92, 251 households.¹⁵ Most of these families were probably ‘lodging’—sharing houses with house-owners or occupying shacks in their backyards, although 110 000 people were thought to be living in squatter settlements in and around Harare in 1994.¹⁶ Even small rural ‘growth-points’ faced housing shortages.¹⁷ For the country as a whole it was suggested that up to 1.5 million people were without adequate housing in 1994.¹⁸

At the same time as the government was failing to provide services, further allegations – and evidence – of large scale corruption surfaced, especially in the allocation of tenders to

¹¹ Dashwood, *Zimbabwe: the Political Economy of Transformation*, 4.

¹² Dashwood, *Zimbabwe: the Political Economy of Transformation*, 110.

¹³ For a discussion of the problems of earlier housing policies, see: “Presentation by Minister J L Nkomo” and “Discussion with the Minister” in the special issue on Housing and Shelter, *Social Change and Development* 47 (May 1999), 3-6.

¹⁴ Colleen Butcher, “Urban Low-income Housing: a Case Study of the Epworth Settlement Upgrading Programme” in Zinyama, Tevera, and Cumming, *Harare*, 66.

¹⁵ Graham Tipple “Transformations in Zimbabwe” unpublished ms 1999, 2.

¹⁶ *Sunday Mail*, 23 October 1994, cited in Diana Auret, *Urban housing: a national crisis?* (Gweru: Mambo/CCJP, 1995) 1.

¹⁷ “Backyard shacks spring up in Mutoko, Murehwa” *Herald* 13 June 1990, 2.

¹⁸ Minister Chikowore in address to parliament, *Herald* 4 August 1994, cited in Auret, *Urban housing*, 1.

ZANU-connected businesspeople.¹⁹ Cabinet overturned a tender board decision and awarded the contract for the building of a new Harare airport to the highest rather than lowest bidder.²⁰ A Cabinet secretary also intervened during the introduction of cell-phone networks, overturning another tender board decision, although the High Court later nullified the decision.²¹

Two other scandals particularly challenged government claims as both ‘liberators’ and bringers of ‘development’. The first was the so-called VIP housing scheme which involved illegal – and massive – loans to senior government officials, from a fund designated for low-income housing.²² Second, senior government and party officials were similarly implicated in looting funds intended for the assistance of veterans who had been injured or disabled during the liberation war. In 1996, Independent MP, and former war veteran, Margaret Dongo revealed in parliament that the War Victims Compensation Fund had been looted by senior party and government officials. A Commission chaired by Justice Chidyausiku was mandated to investigate, and its report confirmed that ‘prominent persons’ had created a ‘fast-track’ scheme for compensation, that claims had been falsified and that officials responsible for the fund had received substantial kick-backs for the processing of claims. In particular, the commission noted the Dr Chenjerai ‘Hitler’ Hunzwi, the president of the War Veterans

¹⁹ “If Strive was Leo?” *Independent* 14 February 1997; on indigenization more broadly see also, Brian Raftopoulos, and Sam Moyo “The Politics of Indigenisation in Zimbabwe” *East African Social Science Review* XI, 2 (1995), 17-32 and Scott Taylor, “Race, Class and Neopatrimonialism in Zimbabwe” in Richard Joseph ed, *State, Conflict and Democracy in Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999).

²⁰ “Hazy images shroud proposed Harare terminal” *Independent* 7 March 1997; “Airport forex negotiations underway” *Independent* 20 September 1996; Iden Wetherell, “Zimbabwe airport furore” *Mail & Guardian* 30 May 1997.

²¹ “Telecel project goes ahead despite tender suspension” *Independent* 4 April 1997; Lewis Machipisa, “Cellular man Strive gets his day in court” *Mail & Guardian* 23 September 1997.

²² Vincent Kahiya, “Ministers cash in on housing fraud” *Independent* 25 April 1997, 1, 2; “VIPS in ‘luxury homes’ scandal” *Horizon* July 1997, 14-15.

Association, had falsified claims of examination, submitted false claims on behalf of his family, and attempted to disguise his signature so as to hide his involvement.²³

Perhaps the most politically sensitive result of the decreased expenditure and weakened economy, was the increase in protests, strikes, and stay-aways that spread gradually to most sectors of Zimbabwe's previously quiescent work-force throughout the 1990s. When bread prices doubled in 1993 followed by the removal of maize subsidies, consumers fought back with the first food riots in independent Zimbabwe. In March riots erupted when maize meal importation was disrupted and shortages were encountered. Armed riot police accompanied trucks distributing supplies of maize meal. And in September, bread riots broke out in Harare and Bulawayo.²⁴ Consumers then boycotted bread and maize. In one bakery, sales dropped overnight from 6000 dozen loaves to 200 dozen when the price of a loaf of bread increased from Z\$1.63 to Z\$2.20. Similarly, when the wholesale price of maize was raised 55 percent, consumers began buying their meal in the rural areas and grinding it at hammer-mills, in the home industries centres and backyards of high-density urban areas.²⁵ Later, rent demonstrations erupted in Zvishavane and other regional centres.²⁶ The civil service strike, in August and September 1996, spearheaded by nurses and doctors, appeared to be resolved by civil service employees being awarded a 20% raise.²⁷ Nurses and junior doctors in Harare

²³ GOZ, Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Administration of the War Victims Compensation Act (Chapter 11.16), May 1998; "Magistrate remands Hunzvi in Custody" *Herald* 28 November 1998; "Hunzvi's relatives appear in court" *Herald* 1 December 1998; "Hunzvi bail application ruling set for Monday" *Herald* 12 December 1998; "High Court dismisses Hunzvi's bail application" *Herald* 15 December 1998; "Hunzvi's last ditch bail bid dismissed" *Herald* 19 December 1998; "Hunzvi refused bail for the fourth time" *Herald* 31 December 1998; Tonderai Katswara "Court grants Hunzvi \$50 000 bail, set other conditions" *Herald* 16 January 1999; Dumisani Ndlela, "Amnesty for war fund looters?" *Independent* 19 March 1999; "Hunzvi's trial postponed indefinitely" *Daily News*, 20 July 1999, 5.

²⁴ Andrew Rusinga, "Government under pressure to review economic reforms." *Africa Information Afrique*, 20 October 1993.

²⁵ Watson Daika, "Consumers suffering without food subsidies." *Africa Information Afrique*, 18 August 1993.

²⁶ "1993: Year of the Capitalist" *Horizon* December 1993, 21.

²⁷ "State orders a 'blackout on strike'" *MISA* 28 August 1996; "Civil servants strike to continue" *Independent*, 30 August 1996; "Civil Servant strike costs \$120 million" *Independent* 30

resumed the strike in October, in protest against delays in contractual negotiations to confirm the increment.²⁸ The dismissal of the striking workers and prosecution of the strike leaders caused the strike to spread to Bulawayo and other regional hospitals.²⁹ In November the ZCTU called for a two-day stay-away or general strike in protest at suppression of demonstration in support of the medical profession, although it was not widely heeded.³⁰ The strike eventually petered out, with most personnel being reinstated, although 58 doctors and nurses, who were not re-hired were still claiming unlawful dismissal 5 years later.³¹

In July 1997, a series of apparently un-related strikes occurred with bank employees, railway workers, petrol attendants, telecommunications workers, and security guards all striking concurrently over demands for wage increments, citing the increasing cost of living.³²

It was in this already tense atmosphere that the government's decision in October 1997 to award lump-sum 'payouts' to war veterans, to be paid through a proposed 5% levy on salaries was rejected by both parliament and ZANU(PF).³³ Although the proposed 'war veteran's levy' was not implemented, the ZCTU called for a two-day general strike in protest at sales tax increase on electricity and a twenty percent increase in the price of fuel, which erupted into violence as riot police attempted to prevent workers from entering the city.³⁴

August 1996; John Vekris, "Chronicle of two strikes" *Social Change and Development* February 1997, 3-7, 29.

²⁸ "Government slated for its handling of strike" *Independent* 15 November 1996; Vekris, "Chronicle of two strikes" 3-7, 29.

²⁹ "Strikes spread countrywide" *Independent* 8 November 1996; Vekris, "Chronicle of two strikes" 3-7, 29.

³⁰ "General Strike in Zimbabwe" *ICFTU*, 12 November 1996; Vekris, "Chronicle of two strikes" 3-7, 29.

³¹ "Hospitals turn away patients." *Independent* 10 January 1997; Vekris, "Chronicle of two strikes" 29; "Nurses demand reinstatement" *Standard* 31 October 1999; "Dismissed nurses, doctors demand five years pay" *Financial Gazette* 20 April 2001.

³² "More strikes ahead?" *Standard* 13 July 1997, 1.

³³ Iden Wetherell, "Mugabe and the sudden rebellion" *Mail & Guardian* 12 December 1997; Lewis Machipisa, "Zim's MPs flex muscles over higher taxes" *Mail & Guardian* 3 December 1997;

³⁴ "ZCTU bills strike the most successful ever" *Financial Gazette* 11 December 1997; Never Gadaga, "Rage at police attacks in Zimbabwe" *Mail & Guardian* 11 December 1997; Chris McGreal, "Zimbabwe's 'unholy alliance': black workers, white farmers" *Mail & Guardian*,

4.2 Tools of Defense and Offence

As might be expected considering this upsurge in civil unrest, the 1990s were marked by the introduction of a series of laws designed to control specific sectors of society. But at the same time, these laws were increasingly contested by the social groups. Ironically the unity accord *had* lead to an opening in political space. Activists who had felt unable to speak in the early and mid-1980s because they would have been labeled ‘opponents’ , felt more able to be critical of the state by the early 1990s.³⁵

This section will examine the relationship between the media, opposition parties, churches, unions, and the judiciary, as they interact with the ruling party and government.

4.2.1 Media

The state maintained its dominance in TV and radio through a series of probably unconstitutional actions. The print media, on the other hand, have been profoundly transformed in the 1990s.

State control remained visible on TV and in the state-controlled newspapers, where presidential or ministerial activities regularly held the spotlight. Newsreaders continued to check with the Minister of Information before broadcasting items that might reflect badly on the government.³⁶ Although pre-publication censorship rarely occurred within the

17 December 1997.

³⁵ For example, interviews with, Cont Mhlanga, Amakhosi Theatre Productions, 26 September 1995; Mike Auret, CCJP, 14 September 1995; similar observations recorded by Tengende “Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy” 294-295; See also, Welshman Ncube, “The Post-unity Period: Development, Benefits and Problems”, in Banana, *Turmoil and Tenacity*, 309.

³⁶ Personal communication from Kenneth Mkiza, ZBC Newsreader.

official press, “...the government hardly ever had to use all the resources at its disposal...[e]ditors were conscious that the government could have them demoted, fired or transferred.”³⁷ Bornwell Chakaodza, editor of the *Herald* discovered this to his cost when he was fired for attempting, he claimed, to “..return the paper to a position of credibility and objectivity” after the June 2000 election.³⁸

Radio 3, which broadcasts in English and plays western music, was perceived as less subject to control, but the ousting of disc jockey, Gerry Jackson, after she broke a news blackout during the December 1997 strike revealed that insubordination was not tolerated there either.³⁹

In the early 1990s, *Parade* and *Horizon*, which had been key independent sources of information “shifted their editorial content away from critical political features towards light entertainment and sports. Politics and investigative journalism it appears, no longer sell magazines in a congested, restricted market.”⁴⁰ However, other technologies continued to make alternative viewpoints available. Satellite TV boomed with the increasing accessibility of satellite dishes, which, while they are obviously owned only by the élite, are often watched by employees at places of business, hotels and in private homes.

In the early 1990s a brief attempt by the publishers of the *Financial Gazette* to create a second weekly, the *Sunday Gazette*, and a daily entitled the *Daily Gazette* failed. However, since the start of the *Zimbabwe Independent* in 1995, and the *Zimbabwe Standard* in 1997, both originated by the former publishers of *Financial Gazette*, there has been a quite vital and vibrant alternative press. All three of these weeklies have suffered from being perceived as ‘white’ papers because

³⁷ Tendayi Kumbula, “Press freedom in Zimbabwe” in Festus Eribo and William Jong-Ebot eds. *Press Freedom and Communications in Africa* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1997), 179.

³⁸ “Former Herald Editor speaks out” *Standard* 15 October 2000.

³⁹ “ZBC fires DJ for rapping police action” *Financial Gazette*, 18 December 1997.

⁴⁰ Richard Saunders, “The Press and Popular Organization in Zimbabwe”, unpublished paper, 15.

they were originally owned and published by local white-owned companies, and because they are all quite expensive compared to the *Herald*.⁴¹

Independent journalists are also very aware of the constraints imposed by the state. Mark Chavunduka, of the *Standard*, detailed the legislation which creates a ‘legal minefield’ for independent journalists: the Official Secrets Act, Parliamentary Privilege Act, the Prisons Act, and the Law and Order Maintenance Act. In addition, he noted that “requests for comments or clarification [from Ministers] are more often than not refused; after a story is published, often it is rebutted in the official press.”⁴²

4.2.2 Elections and Opposition Parties

After the brief burst of excitement that followed ZUM’s contestation of the 1990 election, the early to mid 1990s presented little change on the electoral front. ZUM itself fragmented, and a splinter regrouped as the Democratic Party.⁴³ Other fragments of ZUM moved into the Forum Party in 1993, which was expected to provide a strong challenge to ZANU(PF) in the 1995 elections, but which was also weakened due to factional divisions. Forum did pursue legal challenges to some municipal elections, with mixed success – winning nullifications in Masvingo, Bulawayo and Harare, but not in Gweru.⁴⁴ The United Parties (UP) – which combined Muzorewa’s UANC with Forum, ZUM, and ZANU-Ndonga – as an electoral front made little impact in the 1995 and 1996 elections. Late in the campaign, the UP called for a

⁴¹ According to African Rights, in 1999, after the Chavunduka and Choto affair, Clive Murphy sold his stake in the *Independent* and *Standard* to Trevor Ncube. African Rights, *Zimbabwe: In the Party’s Interest*, Discussion paper 8 June 1999, 20.

⁴² Mark Chavunduka, Royal Commonwealth Society Meeting, London, 16 April 1999.

⁴³ “Magoche factions launches democratic party, *Sunday Mail*, 29 September 1991, 1; “ZUM announces new executive” *Herald* 30 October 1991, 5; “Who is who in ZUM” *Sunday Mail*, 10 November 1991, 1.

⁴⁴ Forum Party of Zimbabwe & ORS V. Minister of Local Government, Judgement No. S-129-97 ZLR 1997 (2); “Supreme Court dismisses appeal by Forum Party, *Herald* 15 August 1997; Tandeka Nkiwane, “Opposition Politics in Zimbabwe: the struggle within the struggle” in Adebayo Olukoshi ed, *The Politics of Opposition in Africa* (Uppsala, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1998), 103.

boycott on the basis that the regulations created an unfair contest.⁴⁵ In response, they contested the validity of the Electoral Act and the Political Parties (Finance) Act in the Supreme Court, winning a partial, but not unsubstantial, victory in 1997 – when the Political Parties (Finance) Act was declared unconstitutional.⁴⁶

Margaret Dongo and her Independent Candidates group won prominence through the twin measures of court challenges and campaigning primarily in restricted areas — municipal wards and mayoralty contests. Like the UP and Forum, the independent candidates used the judicial system to great effect. Dongo, an ex-combatant, ex-CIO agent, and the sitting MP for Harare South was not re-selected as the ZANU (PF) candidate in 1995. Along with a small group of other de-selected candidates she decided to run as a ‘ZANU (PF) Independents’. When Dongo lost the election she contested the result which was overturned in court and she convincingly won the re-run election, setting a precedent by challenging ZANU(PF) hegemony.⁴⁷ By developing an informal grouping of opposition candidates in 1996 to challenge ZANU(PF) in the upcoming municipal elections, Dongo began a crucial process of consistently and thoroughly fighting elections — not just complaining about unfair playing fields.⁴⁸ The candidates who ran under the banner of Independent Candidates — later the Zimbabwe Union of Democrats (ZUD) — rapidly became expert both at exposing fraudulent registrations and encouraging their supporters to register to vote.

Priscilla Misihairabwi, an NGO activist who sought to contest the urban council elections as an Independent Candidate, compiled such a convincing dossier of fraudulent voter

⁴⁵ Interview, Isaac Manyemba, Information Secretary, UP, 16 June 1997.

⁴⁶ Research notes, Supreme Court, 30 July 1997; *United Party v. The Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs*, ZLR 1997 (2) 254; Judgement no. SC 139-97 30 July and 5 September 1997; “Fifteen-seat threshold for public funding ‘unconstitutional’” *Herald* 6 September 1997, 1, 3.

⁴⁷ *Dongo v. Mwashita & ORS* 13 & 27 July and 10 & 30 August 1995 Judgement No. HH-106-95, ZLR 1995 (2) 228 (H); Interview Margaret Dongo, ZUD, 17 June 1997.

⁴⁸ Interview, Margaret Dongo, ZUD, 17 June 1997; Interview Kempton Makamure, ZUD, 16 June 1997.

registrations in Harare's Avenues district (including vacant lots with hundreds of registered voters) that ZANU(PF) sought to force her out — with the Registrar-General, Tobaiwa Mudede, declaring her candidacy invalid. Misihairabwi took her case all the way to the Supreme Court, which ratified her right to contest the election.⁴⁹ Similarly, Fidelis Mhashu, a former ZANU(PF) municipal councillor who contested the Chitungwiza mayoral election as an independent candidate after failing to get selected as the official ZANU(PF) candidate, convinced the High Court that the Chitungwiza electoral roll — comprised of lists of homeowners — “was so defective that it cannot be said that the electoral process was itself not flawed.”⁵⁰ Neither of these two battles were ultimately successful, because the elections were not re-run, yet they revealed the depths to which ZANU(PF) would go in order to maintain control of the electoral process. However, two members of the Independent Candidates did win municipal council seats in the high-density suburbs of Mbare and Sunningdale.

The arrest and trial of Ndabaningi Sithole, leader of ZANU(Ndonga), in 1995 for treason was widely interpreted as politically motivated.⁵¹ Convicted and sentenced to one year in jail, Sithole denied allegations that he plotted to assassinate President Mugabe and organized military training outside the country for his recruits.⁵² The designation for acquisition of Sithole's Churu farm also appeared to be influenced by political pressure.⁵³

⁴⁹ Research notes, Supreme Court of Zimbabwe 21 July 1997; Interview, Priscilla Misihairambwi, 18 June 1997; “Court rules Misihairabwi had right to contest poll” *Herald* 8 August 1997, 1, 17.

⁵⁰ Fidelis George Mhashu v. Tichakunda Chiroodza & Chitungwiza Town Council & Andrew Jiri & ZANU (PF) & Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development. High Court Judgement HH 43- 97; Interview Fidelis George Mhashu, 17 June 1997.

⁵¹ “Sithole Refused Trial Date in Plot to Kill Mugabe” *Sapa-AFP* 1 June 1996.

⁵² “Sithole says he is innocent of treason charges.” *Independent* 27 June 1997, 1.

⁵³ See for instance, Sam Moyo, *The Land Question in Zimbabwe* (Harare: SAPES, 1995), 257; “Churu farm: the land blues continue” *SAPES* 7, 1 (October 1993), 9-11.

4.2.3 The Elections Machinery

The elections machinery includes the Registrar-General Tobaiwa Mudede and the Elections Directorate, as well as the Election Supervisory Commission (ESC). The Registrar-General and the Directorate supervise the delimitation committee and the voter registration process, while the ESC is intended to observe and report on the process.

The voter registration exercise in 1990 was a dubious procedure and, just before the elections, the Registrar-General announced that all Zimbabwean citizens would be allowed to vote upon presentation of proof of citizenship and residence.⁵⁴ Although his office produced a voter's roll, it was only made available late in the nomination period, impeding candidates' attempts to find registered voters who could nominate them. The 1995 election, while probably less violent than either 1985 or 1990, revealed more irregularities in the polling process. Margaret Dongo's court challenge over the election fought in Harare South revealed that in addition to irregularities in the voter's roll, the government also stuffed the ballot boxes, such that there were over 1 000 more ballots counted than had been issued to voters.⁵⁵

In both 1990 and 1995, questions were raised about the impartiality of the delimitation commission. In 1990 last minute 'corrections' were issued which moved the high density area of Mkoba from Gweru Central to the predominantly rural Gweru South, giving Muzenda an edge over Kombayi. As Moyo pointed out, "the general public was left with the impression that President Mugabe had used the commission to protect his Vice-President, Simon Muzenda, who appeared to be heading for certain defeat."⁵⁶ Similarly, Harare North (contested in 1995 and 2000 elections by Trudy Stevenson, first for FORUM and then for MDC), while mainly a low-density suburb included Hatcliffe number 1, a high density area, and Hatcliffe extension,

⁵⁴ Moyo, *Voting for Democracy*, 149.

⁵⁵ John Makumbe and Daniel Compagnon, *Behind the Smokescreen: The Politics of Zimbabwe's 1995 General Elections* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 2000), 220.

⁵⁶ Moyo, *Voting for Democracy*, 147

a holding camp for squatters. Bulawayo South, a mainly low-density constituency also had the high density suburb of Nketa added to it in 1995.

The Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC), which might have been expected to oversee this process, was widely considered underfinanced and staffed.⁵⁷ Criticisms have also been made about the President's control of appointments to the ESC.⁵⁸ Makumbe and Compagnon speak particularly bitterly about the ESC's failure to support Margaret Dongo's complaints in 1995.⁵⁹ Irregularities led to the election being widely condemned as 'free but unfair'.⁶⁰ The 1999 local elections, in which the ESC did not receive a copy of the electoral register until after business hours on the eve of the election, led Anglican Bishop Peter Hatendi who chaired the ESC to call it a "toothless bulldog."⁶¹ He called for the establishment of an independent commission and resigned in February 2000 when this was not forthcoming. In the 1996 municipal elections ZANU(PF) attacks on the independent candidates included the assault on Fidelis Mhashu, who was attacked and beaten by ZANU(PF) supporters who had been holding a rally attended by four MPs, including Cabinet Minister Witness Mangwende. Despite his being badly beaten, the police, who were present at the time of the attack, did not lay any charges.⁶² Priscilla Misihairabwi's attempts to stand for election in Avenues ward of Harare were also subject to explicit political meddling, as it was shown that Registrar-General Mudede had taken action only after consulting ZANU(PF). Judge Korsah, who presided over Misihairabwi's appeal to the Supreme Court implicitly acknowledged party political interference, saying, "The facts are screaming out from the page; why did the judge below [in the High

⁵⁷ "Commission now better equipped to supervise poll" *Herald* 27 March 1995.

⁵⁸ "ESC Sworn in" *Herald*, 7 July 1994; "Political parties lambast poll team" *Daily Gazette*, 8 July 1994.

⁵⁹ Makumbe and Compagnon, *Behind the Smokescreen*, 285.

⁶⁰ Maxie Matavaire, "Elections free, not fair" *Sunday Gazette*, 23 April 1995, Ramson Muzondo, "1995 elections unfair" *Sunday Gazette*, 13 August 1995, "Election was unfair: ZCC" *Herald*, 21 August 1995, and "State Press snaps at watchdog's 'unfair poll' verdict." *Horizon*, July 1995, 9.

⁶¹ "Poll conduct taxes man of the cloth's patience" *Financial Gazette* 30 September 1999.

⁶² Interview, Fidelis Mhashu, 17 June 1997.

Court] not declare it? What is the motive for his resistance?”⁶³ The unspoken fact, as all in the courtroom were aware, was that the High Court judge was a ZANU(PF) appointee.

These election challenges were significant because until that time there had been no substantiated allegations that ZANU(PF) was rigging elections, although intimidation was frequently alleged. While monitoring organizations noted structural irregularities, such as the ruling parties’ access to funds, vehicles, and the media, they rarely suggested that voting had been manipulated in or at the polls. However, the independent candidates repeatedly showed how the manipulation of electoral rolls was accomplished by the ruling party using the official electoral machinery. As we shall see in Part 4, this intensified during the 2000 election.

4.2.4 Parliament

Parliament, while overshadowed by the policy-making role of the Party and the Executive, is still a forum for contestation, primarily because it provides an arena for MPs to publicize issues. In the 1990s, such issues as the treatment of war veterans, led to much debate.⁶⁴

In 1991, parliamentarians made their opposition to the Executive known on such disparate issues as the reintroduction of school fees and the establishment of a sports commission. In the latter case MPs prevented the minister responsible from being able to “steam roller” the Bill through parliament for the first time in independent Zimbabwe and later, when the Bill was properly introduced vigorously challenged the minister on issues of ministerial impartiality.⁶⁵ In 1992, Parliamentarians twice blocked a vote on salaries for

⁶³ Research notes, Supreme Court, 21 July 1997.

⁶⁴ See for example the debate on Excombatant teachers in *Parliamentary Debates* 8 and 9 May 1991 and the extensive coverage in the *Herald*: “Spotlight on pay for ex-combatant teachers” *Herald* 8 May 1991, 5; “MPs urge fair deal for teachers” *Herald*, 10 May 1991, 1; “MPs now debate with supporting documentary evidence” *Herald* 12 May 1991, 7.

⁶⁵ “School fees: the MPs may say no, chef” *Financial Gazette*, 22 March 1991, W9; “MPs block Passage of Sports Bill” *Herald* 25 April 1991, 1; “Kwidini runs into barrage of queries on Sports Bill” *Herald* 26 April 1991, 1; *Parliamentary Debates* 7 May 1991, 9 May 1991; “MPs now debate with supporting documentary evidence” *Herald*, 12 May 1991, 7.

provincial governors, calling instead for the position to be abolished. However, they were eventually bullied into supporting the budgetary allocations on the premiss that the governorships were constitutionally guaranteed positions. The debate was less about loyalty to the Constitution than loyalty to the Executive. The President was recorded as saying “True, let them (MPs) make all the noise. Don't forget we are ruling. Otherwise they will be saying government has no power.”⁶⁶ The motion was eventually passed unanimously.⁶⁷ In 1997, MPs challenged government over particularly sensitive cases, including the tender and loans for the building of a new Harare airport.⁶⁸ Later that year, as the government attempted to amend 19 Acts through the passage of one Bill, MPs questioned the method and decisions of the Executive.⁶⁹ In response to this MPs were chastised in Parliament by the Minister of Justice who suggested that any difficulties should be worked out in caucus — not in parliament. Moses Mvenge, MP for Mutare Central interpreted this as MPs being treated like children, arguing that membership in ZANU(PF) did not mean that MPs had to support every government policy.⁷⁰ In 1997, the issue of corruption within the administration of the War Victims Compensation Fund also led MPs — for the first time since independence — to support and pass a private members bill sponsored by Margaret Dongo, the lone independent MP.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Jimu Simbwi, “To Cde President with Love” *Moto*, no. 120, January 1993, 5.

⁶⁷ “MPs again refuse to pass governors pay” *Herald* 3 October 1992, 5; “MPs vote for governors salaries” *Herald* 8 October 1992, 1, 9.

⁶⁸ See for example, “Era of openness at full tide” *Standard* 11 May 1997, 6; “Mps defy government over Airport deal” *Financial Gazette* 22 May 1997, 1, 2; Barnabas Thondhlana, “Government to get tough with MPs over controversial airport funding” *Independent* 23 May 1997, 3; Francis Murape, “Mugabe’s Winter of Discontent” *Mail and Guardian* 13 June 1997, 10; Barnabas Thondhlana “Government defies parliament over airport” *Standard* 27 July 1997, 1.

⁶⁹ “Another attempt to short-circuit parliament” *Standard* 27 July 1997, 6; “Yet another stand-off in Parliament?” *Standard* 10 August 1997, 9.

⁷⁰ Barnabas Thondhlana, “MPs call for better communication with government” *Independent* 5 September 1997, 11.

⁷¹ “Backbenchers break ranks and vote with ‘indis’” *Horizon* July 1997, 6.

As Ncube notes, “..quite often the ruling party’s Parliamentarians are sufficiently objective to oppose particular legislative proposals during debate and yet when the Government insists on enactment of the objectionable provisions....the parliamentarians vote in favour of the provisions they would have spoken against.”⁷² This was certainly the case in the ratification of the tender for the new international airport terminal, which involved loans said to be worth ZWD 1.2 billion to Air Harbour Technologies (AHT), a company represented locally by Leo Mugabe (the President’s nephew), although the tender board had ranked AHT fourth because it had neither the financial resources nor the technological know-how of other tenderers. Cabinet overturned the Tender Board’s recommendation, causing the withdrawal of ZWD 1 billion in foreign donor support. After making it clear that they, and the public, were unhappy with this tendering, MPs were faced with a three line whip, which would have forced their resignations from the party if they had defied it.⁷³ However, outspoken MPs frequently harangued their colleagues for allowing themselves to be ‘steamrolled’ rather than turning up for debates prepared to scrutinize legislation.⁷⁴

4.2.5 Unions

Following the ZCTU’s increasing independence at the end of the 1980s, the government attempted to weaken the unions in the 1990s. In direct contradiction to its earlier emphasis on ‘unity’ between workers, attempts were made to re-fragment the movement. Tengende illustrates how efforts were made, starting in 1991, to weaken the railways union, by creating an unlawful ‘splinter union’.⁷⁵ Both Tengende and Nordlund suggest that this was part of a

⁷² Welshman Ncube, “Controlling Public Power: the role of the constitution and the legislature” *Legal Forum* 9 August 1997, 20.

⁷³ “MPs shed culture of fear” *Horizon*, July 1997, 6-8.

⁷⁴ “Gara scolds mum MPs” *Financial Gazette* 22 March 1991, W3; Barnabas Thondhlana, “MPs call for better communication with government” *Zimbabwe Independent* 5 September 1997, 11.

⁷⁵ Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy” 184.

larger process, preparing the way for the removal of the one-industry-one-union policy, in which the ZCTU was portrayed as rejecting pluralism and freedom of association.⁷⁶

And, indeed, in 1992, the government introduced legislation to amend the Labour Relations Act which revoked the policy of 'one industry-one-union' and thereby weakened the ZCTU. As with the University Amendment Act (1990) and the PVO Act (1995), the Bill was presented to Parliament before the ZCTU knew the draft was in existence.⁷⁷ Somewhat reluctantly, the ZCTU leadership organized a protest march on June 13th, which went ahead despite the lack of police permission, as required under the Rhodesian Era Law and Order Maintenance Act (LOMA).⁷⁸ Police presence was heavy, and the arrest of six protesters in Harare led to the 1994 striking down of the LOMA as unconstitutional, an unintentional outcome of the march, but one which was to have a profound impact on the ability of protesters to assemble in future.⁷⁹ Despite the ZCTU's opposition, the labour regulations were rapidly implemented.

This was the final hostile encounter between labour and the state for some time. As the ZCTU's members encountered the increasing difficulties of structural adjustment the labour movement "...adopted a different tone...a conciliatory approach...It now presented itself as an advisor to Government."⁸⁰ Gradually, the ZCTU moved towards working in a conciliatory manner on structural adjustment policy, social security and tripartite bargaining.⁸¹ After the

⁷⁶ Tengende, "Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy" 437-8; Nordlund, *Organising the Political Agora*, 184.

⁷⁷ Nordlund, *Organising the Political Agora* 184.

⁷⁸ Nordlund, *Organising the Political Agora* 190.

⁷⁹ *In re Munuhumeso & Ors* 1994 (1), ZLR 49 (S); Nordlund identifies this as '...the most substantial advancement of democratic rights in Zimbabwe since independence' *Organising the Political Agora*, 200.

⁸⁰ Schiphorst, *Strength and Weakness*, 121-2.

⁸¹ See for a discussion of this shift, Paris Yeros, "Labour Struggles for Alternative Economics in Zimbabwe: Trade union nationalism and Internationalism in a Global Era" (Unpublished MS, 2000).

previous confrontation between unions and state, by 1995 there was a relatively less conflictual relationship, based more on give-and-take bargaining.⁸²

However, between 1996 and 2000, there was a series of disruptive strikes in both the public and the private sector, and of politically mandated stay-aways. In particular, the ZCTU can be seen to have changed its strategy in response to a more militant public support for workers, and began calling for national strikes or stay-aways in response to particular policy decisions – starting with the call for workers to stay-out in support of striking doctors and nurses in 1996, and the increasingly effective protests at the war veterans levy in 1997, and food and fuel tax increases in 1998 (as discussed in Section 4.1).

But these successes have not been without retribution. In December 1997 after the protest against the war veteran's levy, Morgan Tsvangirai was attacked and beaten. The day after the national strike in March 1998, the ZCTU's Bulawayo regional office was set on fire.⁸³ The government's labelling of the ZCTU as an "...opposition party...playing politics" after the series of strikes in 1998, was also a clear warning that they were raising the stakes in a battle for control.⁸⁴ Throughout 1997 and 1998, the government attempted to make the calling of strikes over political issues illegal.⁸⁵

4.2.6 Judiciary

In the 1980s, the courts provided a strong check against joint executive and legislative challenges to the constitution.⁸⁶ However the judicial checks and balances were effective only

⁸² Nordlund, *Organising the Political Agora* 200-201; Schiphorst, *Strength and Weakness*, 125-128.

⁸³ "Fire gutted offices" *Sapa- AFP*, 5 March 1998.

⁸⁴ "Tens of thousands defy Mugabe in Zimbabwe anti-government strike" *Sapa-AFP*, 3 March 1998; Andrew Meldrum, "Zimbabwe Strikers ignore Mugabe Threat" *Guardian(UK)* 4 March 1998, 12

⁸⁵ "Basildon Peta, "Demo ban unconstitutional" *Independent* 1 August 1997; "ZCTU defies ban" *Independent* 11 December 1998.

⁸⁶ For an early discussion of some key cases, see Richard Sklar "Reds And Rights: Zimbabwe's Experiment " in Dov Ronen, ed. *Democracy and Pluralism in Africa* (Boulder: Lynne

at its topmost levels. Magistrates are not only poorly paid and overworked, but also subject to pressures from the executive. As Adrian de Bourbon commented in a comparison of the independence of magistrates in Zimbabwe and provincial court judges in Newfoundland: "...it was considered that the remuneration of its provincial judges made them financially independent: I doubt if this is the position in Zimbabwe."⁸⁷ The lack of independence of magistrates was particularly visible after the January 1998 riots. African Rights alleges that the miscarriages of justice after the food riots suggests that magistrates were not just overwhelmed by the numbers of detainees, but that they "were acting under orders." As Tendai Biti said:

We know for a fact that when these guys [alleged rioters and looters] were brought up the magistrates were instructed to deny them bail. It is difficult for someone who is so underpaid to be impartial. They are very vulnerable...the judiciary has to look up to the executive.⁸⁸

As section 4.2.2. showed, court judgements were an important component in the success of the independent candidates. In 1997, the courts also ruled the PVO Act and the Political Parties (Finance) Act, to be unconstitutional.⁸⁹ Despite the profound impact of the decisions which went against the government and in some cases also ZANU(PF), the Supreme Court is also noted for 'deciding not to decide' or rendering a more limited judgement than might be considered necessary in order to "uphold the constitution."⁹⁰ It has not, on the whole, been a crusading bench.

Rienner, 1986); On parliamentary resistance to judicial autonomy see, "Supreme Court judges hit back at Mutasa over Smith ruling" *Herald* 10 November 1989, 1 and "Cabinet backs court in Smith's pay row" *Herald* 22 November 1989, 1; On the executive's use of legislative power to reverse judicial decisions see *inter alia* Welshman Ncube, "Controlling public power: the role of the constitution and the legislature" *Legal Forum*, 9, 3 1997, esp. 18-20.

⁸⁷ Adrian de Bourbon, "Are magistrates independent?" *Legal Forum* 1 December 1989, 7.

⁸⁸ African Rights, *Zimbabwe: In the Party's Interest*, Discussion paper 8 June 1999, 10.

⁸⁹ On the PVO Act, see section 6.3.2; On the Political Parties Finance Act see section 4.2.2.

⁹⁰ Geoff Feltoe, "Deciding not to decide: case note on the case of *Holland & Ors v the Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare*, S-15-97", *Legal Forum*, 43-45.

4.2.7 Students

Students, it has been seen, were key players in the late 1980s political movement against the one-party state. In October 1990, the government rushed the University Amendment Act through Parliament in a week. The Act increased the role of the Minister of Education in the administration of the University, strengthened the Vice-Chancellor's powers and reduced the academic freedom of staff and students.⁹¹ This led to two years of often violent protest on the part of the students. The state's main levers of control over the students were expulsion and the withdrawal of grants.⁹² Conditions of study also became more difficult for students. With the price increases that accompanied economic liberalization, student grants had less buying power, and their families were less able to help them out financially. The university was also affected by a 'brain-drain' as it was no longer so attractive to either local or ex-patriate staff.⁹³ Students were increasingly taught in large classes, without access to sufficient teaching resources. To some extent then, protests about student welfare issues, were also critical of government economic policy: "students linked their own demands with broader national political and economic issues."⁹⁴

Student protests rapidly became known for their violence – on the part of both the students and the riot police. Tengende attributes the student violence to the recruitment by the SRC of a 'minority sub-culture' of hooligans, which was institutionalized by the SRC in 1991-2 to create a 'military wing' which led demos.⁹⁵ These partly originated in class and gender divisions on campus. Female students felt threatened by the so-called 'University Bachelor's Association' which dominated the SRC.⁹⁶ Moreover, as students 'squandered' their right to

⁹¹ Ngoni Chanakira, "Academic Freedom in Higher Institutions of Learning in Zimbabwe" *SAPEM* April 1991, pp 30-31; Cheater, "The University of Zimbabwe", 200-203.

⁹² Sachikonye, "State and social movements" 151.

⁹³ Tengende, "Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy" 500.

⁹⁴ Tengende, "Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy" 508.

⁹⁵ Tengende, "Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy" 402.

⁹⁶ See Tengende, "Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy" 219-221, for an excellent discussion of the class and gender dynamics among students.

demonstrate in the city centre, by failing to maintain discipline, they rapidly became seen as centring on ‘parochial’ concerns rather than facilitating linkages with other social groups.⁹⁷ Through the later 1990s, frequent student protests – usually about their own living conditions – were followed by tear gas attacks by riot police, periodic closure of the University, and the expulsions of successive generations of SRC leaders.⁹⁸

4.2.8 Churches

While the state was not shy of demanding the obedience and participation of the churches in the development process, it stopped short of legislating explicit controls on them.⁹⁹ In the 1990s, the Anglican and Catholic hierarchies remained relatively entwined with the ZANU state. In the mid-1990s, the Anglicans, along with the Pentecostal movement, linked themselves fervently to Mugabe’s crusade against homosexuals in Zimbabwe.¹⁰⁰ Gifford has also suggested that the refusal of Peter Hatendi, the Anglican Bishop of Harare, to retire restricted the church’s ability to criticize President Mugabe’s similar reluctance to hand-over the reins of power.¹⁰¹

The Catholic church has also retained its close links with the Mugabe family — two of the President’s sisters worked at Silveira House, the Catholic development institution, and in 1996 Bishop Mutume married President Mugabe to his young secretary, despite widespread

⁹⁷ Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy” 517.

⁹⁸ Eg discussions with Shelton Mupumbwa, SRC member, 1996-7; Ronald Mubaiwa, student 1996-9.

⁹⁹ Although in 1997 the Registrar-General claimed that a law to ‘reduce the number of churches’ was being drafted (cited in Oskar Wermter, “Police to enforce ten commandments?: a look at Church and State in Zimbabwe” *Moto* February 1998, 8). Students, labour and NGOs were the subject of ‘pre-emptive’ legislation throughout the 1990s in the form of the UZ Act (1990), the Labour Relations Act (1992), and the PVO Act (1995).

¹⁰⁰ “Churches, laymen from Zimbabwe and South Africa speak out” *Sunday Mail* 20 August 1995, 1, 4; “Demo against homos in city” *Sunday Mail* 17 September 1995, 1.

¹⁰¹ Gifford, *African Christianity* 345; Jan Raath, “Church tries to evict Harare’s black bishop” *Times* (UK) 20 May 1995.

public condemnation.¹⁰² In 1997, the CCJP/LRF report on the Matabeleland atrocities was published in South Africa. Although this report was compiled under the auspices of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Bishops refused to make the report public in Zimbabwe without the acquiescence of President Mugabe.¹⁰³ The power struggle between the CCJP staff and members – most of whom wanted to be more publically outspoken – and the Bishops – who were inclined to take up issues with the President privately – weakened the organization, and led to the resignation of the much respected National Director, Mike Auret.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, as Chapters 5 and 6 reveal, the church-NGOs associated with the mainstream Protestant and Catholic churches became important players in policy advocacy and voter-education.

The Pentecostal and Apostolic churches, which had been somewhat sidelined during the 1980s, became more significant players in the political sphere in the 1990s. Although Maxwell has suggested that the Pentecostal churches have sought to distance themselves from the state, at least within some age-groups and subaltern groups, he also suggests that the hierarchies of the evangelical churches may be courting the President's approval (and vice-versa), rather than seeking to distance themselves from secular authority.¹⁰⁵ These groups were targeted for inclusion in the ZANU(PF) political project as elections became more and more contested. During the 1995 election, Mugabe, a Catholic, was noted imitating the distinctive Pentecostal form of prayer at a prayer breakfast.¹⁰⁶ A year later, during the Chitungwiza mayoral election, when the ruling party was unsure of its ability to beat the independent candidate,

¹⁰² "Wedding costs taxpayers \$3 million" *Independent* 28 August 1996.

¹⁰³ Interviews, Mike Auret, 14 September 1995, 28 September 1999; "Auret snubbed bishops over strife report" *Sunday Mail*, 1 August 1999; "Catholic Commission accused of politicking" *Sunday Mail*, 6 July 1997; CCJP/LRF. *Breaking the Silence: Building True Peace. A Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980-1988*. (Harare: CCJP&LRF, February 1997).

¹⁰⁴ Dumisani Muleya, "Auret resigns from CCJP" *Independent* 2 July 1999.

¹⁰⁵ David Maxwell, "Catch the Cockerel Before Dawn: Pentecostalism and Politics in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe" *Africa* 70, 2 (2000).

¹⁰⁶ Maxwell, "Catch the cockerel".

Mhashu, the party called on the support of the normally apolitical *Vapostori* or apostolic faith congregations. At the close of the voter registration exercise a church leader claimed that at least 3000 members had registered, in hopes that ZANU(PF) would provide them with land on which to worship.¹⁰⁷ At a meeting with 2000 members of the *Vapostori*, Zionist and Pentecostal churches in Chitungwiza, ZANU(PF) leaders used both religious rhetoric “Mugabe could not take you across the river (Jordan), so he gave you a Moses called Jiri [the mayoral candidate] to take you across the river” and pragmatism, “..if Mhashu were elected mayor he would not be able to present the grievances of Chitungwiza’ residents to the government effectively because he would be like ‘paraffin in the sea’ which could not mix well with water. In his absence, no councillor would represent him because all the councillors are ZANU(PF).”¹⁰⁸

4.3 Reactive Nation-building: the backlash to ‘reconciliation and unity’?

Nation-building efforts, as described in the previous chapter continued throughout the 1990s, but were both rejected by many and judged inadequate by other groups.

4.3.1 National Symbols

National symbols – from the presidency to national holidays and national monuments – came under increasing criticism in the 1990s. There was criticism of presidentialism and the apparent distance of President Mugabe from the people, with questions asked about the need for the heavily armed outriders of his motorcade and his heavily guarded and fortified residence.¹⁰⁹ In addition, the apparent changes in his lifestyle after his marriage to Grace Marufu, and their tendency to travel abroad came in for criticism and lampooning, as the

¹⁰⁷ Dumisani Ndlela, “ZANU (PF) seeks spiritual help” *Horizon* July 1997, 11, 42.

¹⁰⁸ Ndlela, “ZANU (PF) seeks spiritual help” 11, 42.

¹⁰⁹ “Bob Mugabe’s wailers silenced” *Standard* 25 March 2001

President, allegedly the most traveled head of state in Africa, was dubbed ‘Vasco da Gama’.¹¹⁰

In 1998, the government added another new holiday, by creating Unity Day to celebrate the 1987 signing of the Unity Accord. Turn out to public celebrations of the politically significant public holidays – Heroes’ Day, Independence Day and Unity Day – had decreased dramatically throughout the decade.¹¹¹ As one young Zimbabwean recently told the press, “That’s the day I watch my favourite sport, soccer, without paying a cent. Apart from that, I don’t know what the day would mean.”¹¹² Officials continued to use these official functions to rehearse official rhetoric. At the first Unity Day celebrations in 1998, party officials were clearly warned against regionalizing or tribalizing ZANU(PF) and told that development would only come through unity:

Without unity there is no peace, without peace there is no development...Indeed, this unity we are celebrating now is the key to the future development of this country.¹¹³

4.3.2 Race, Reconciliation and Affirmative Action

The long term impact of the policy of reconciliation described in chapter 3 has also been problematic, as demands have been made for more of the economy – much of which remained white-dominated – to be shifted into the hands of black investors and producers.

These interests organized into powerful interest groups in the form of the Indigenous Businessmen’s Development Centre (IBDC) in 1990 and the Affirmative Action Group (AAG) in 1994, and other associated groupings demanding access to capital, markets and technology.

¹¹⁰ Jan Raath, “Mugabe lost in love while Zimbabwe smoulders” *Mail & Guardian* 2 November 1996; “New globetrotting record” *Standard* 15 October 2000; “Mugabe’s foreign trips gobble \$10 billion” *Independent* 21 January 2000; Editorial cartoon, *Independent*, 7 November 1997; Basildon Peta, “Grace Mugabe charts Boeing 737 for SA trip” *Independent* 8 August 1997, 1.

¹¹¹ “Political tension hovers over Heroes’ Day” *Financial Gazette* 7 August 1997; “Fears rise about youths disrupting Zimbabwe Day” *PANA*, 15 April 1998; “Pressure groups attack govt over Unity Day” *Independent* 24 December 1998; Daniel Manyandure, “The Flame has Died” *Standard* 18 April 1999; “Is the Unity accord still alive?” *Standard* 17 December 2000.

¹¹² Daniel Manyandure, “Independence: the flame has died” *Standard*, 18 April 1999.

¹¹³ “Leaders told to rise above village politics” *Herald* 24 December 1998.

While these groups have lobbied the state, they are tolerated because of the overlap between them and ZANU(PF) in both membership and interests. Tor Skålnes interpreted the formation of black business organizations (in implicit opposition to the white dominated business groups) as reflecting the failure of the government policy of “one sector, one organization.”¹¹⁴ However, a more accurate interpretation is that the formation of these groups was a continuation of the ZANU (PF) policy of establishing splinter unions (see 4.2.6). As Raftopoulos says, the indigenous business organizations can be “...regarded as wings of [ZANU(PF)].” He suggests that the strategy of these groups was to “subordinate themselves to the ruling party, seek political patronage and to pursue their objectives as an integral part of ruling party politics.”¹¹⁵

ZANU(PF) originally shunned the promotion of indigenous business in part because it was problematic for the purportedly socialist party-state nexus, but also because a black bourgeoisie might present an alternative power structure in ‘civil society’. However, the economic reform programme, and pressure from international organizations and donors gave greater legitimacy to demands for indigenization. As well, in the 1990 elections ZUM “demonstrated the ability of an alternative party to mobilise frustrated and ambitious members of the Black Middle class.”¹¹⁶ So, gradually, the government has moved away from a stance in which whites were left alone to pursue their business interests, into one in which the advancement of black business has become integral to advancing the interests of ZANU(PF). The establishment of groups like the IBDC and the AAG is not a failure of government policy, but instead represents a significant shift in its policy.

¹¹⁴ Skålnes, *Politics of Economic Reform*, 101.

¹¹⁵ Brian Raftopoulos, “The State, NGOs and Democratisation”, Unpublished paper, n.d. n.p.

¹¹⁶ Brian Raftopoulos and Sam Moyo, “The Politics of Indigenisation in Zimbabwe” *East African Social Science Review* 11, 2 (1995), 23-24.

From 1994 onwards, the Mugabe regime itself picked up on themes of racial discord apparently whenever an attempt to distract attention from economic problems and land shortages was needed. Faced with food riots, labour strikes over economic policy, and general discontent Mugabe and various Ministers have accused whites of fomenting unrest and economic instability.¹¹⁷ Because of the nature of the liberation struggle, discourses of race, development and opportunity frequently overlap. Joshua Nkomo's clash with Bulawayo city council in 1993 over indigenization is often quoted both because he explicitly invoked the 'struggle metaphors' and criticized white and Asian businesses, "...he harangued councillors in Ndebele, though some were white, saying that he had spent 11 years in jail, claiming that it was illogical for Zimbabweans to have to pay for development in their own country."¹¹⁸

Race has also been an effective tool against NGOs and political parties, who are accused of being funded by international whites and supported by local whites. Increasing tendencies from 1997 to label whites and foreigners, but also city-dwellers as 'foreign' were clearly an attempt to limit the legitimacy of such groups – with their foreign funding and predominantly urban support – to speak on national issues.¹¹⁹

The 1990 ZANU(PF) election manifesto had set out "The Imperative of National Unity" and this rhetoric continued through the next decade.¹²⁰ In 1995 and 1999, faced with internal party divisions, the President called almost desperately for the cessation of intra-party divisions which threatened the party's stability.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ For example, "National Strike cripples economy for second day" *Sapa-AFP*, 4 March 1998; Andrew Meldrum, "Zimbabwe Strikers ignore Mugabe threat" *Guardian* (UK), 4 March 1998, 12.

¹¹⁸ For example, Weiss, *Zimbabwe and the New Elites*, 183; Raftopoulos, "Race and Nationalism in a post-colonial state", 87.

¹¹⁹ Brian Raftopoulos, "Nationalism, Violence and Politics: an outline of an overview of Zimbabwean Politics" Speaking at the Britain-Zimbabwe Society Research Day, Oxford, 3 June 2000.

¹²⁰ Sylvester, "Unities and disunities" 388.

¹²¹ "ZANU(PF) suspends independents: 'Let's unite and organise to win'" *Herald* 18 March 1995, 1, 5; "Problems can be solved through unity" *Herald* 21 July 1999..

During the 1995 election, Kumbirai Kangai warned the people of Chipinge, whose MP was ZANU(Ndonga) leader, Ndabaningi Sithole, “..that there will be no development in their area if they continue to vote for opposition parties.” Kangai said, “People in Chipinge should unite. If you do not unite...there will be no development.”¹²² Other Manicaland constituencies were also given such warnings.¹²³ Similarly, in Matabeleland, also perceived as a source of dissent, the provincial governor warned local councillors that without unity there would be no development in their region.¹²⁴ This tone is also found in Mugabe’s threat that “we may go back and remove the clothes of reconciliation”¹²⁵ and the ominous warning of Colonel Dube, of the Zimbabwe Defence Industries that: “peace is vital for development and the main ingredient for peace is unity.”¹²⁶ More concretely, election monitors reported that access to drought relief and seed packs was linked to voting ZANU(PF) by party officials and traditional leaders during the 1995 election.¹²⁷

This overworked idea of ‘unity’ nonetheless continues to resonate beyond ZANU(PF) claims to dominance. Even the opposition parties, who might be expected to resist and resent this discourse of unity, use it themselves. The United Parties’ (so called because they brought together the remnants of FORUM, UANC etc) slogan was “Unity is Power” and their Manifesto declared their intention to form a “united, stable and strong” opposition, with the capacity to be a basis for an alternative government.¹²⁸ Similarly, the Zimbabwe Union of

¹²² “Kangai warns people of Chipinge...Vote ZANU(PF) or there will be no development.” *Herald*, 25 March 1995, 5.

¹²³ ZCC, *ZCC Annual report 1994-1995*. 5 July 1995, 60.

¹²⁴ “Resign or lose posts, ZAPU councillors told” *Herald* 18 September 1985, 3, as cited in Alexander, “The State, Agrarian Policy and Rural Politics in Zimbabwe” 294.

¹²⁵ “Reconciliation policy may be revisited: President” *Sunday Mail* 28 February 1999; This remark seems particularly ominous when compared with Mugabe’s pre-Gukurahundi remarks that Zimbabwe must “revise its policy of national reconciliation”. Joseph Hanlon, “Mugabe warns of a purge of opponents” *Guardian (UK)* 24 December 1981.

¹²⁶ “Party to ensure that Unity day celebrations take place countrywide” *Herald* 23 December 1998; “Provinces name changes: too little, too late” *Standard* 9 November 1997; “President calls on Party leaders to end factionalism” *Sunday Mail* 13 December 1998.

¹²⁷ ZCC, *ZCC Annual report 1994-1995*. 5 July 1995, 60-64.

¹²⁸ United Parties, *Manifesto* n.d.n.p., 2.

Democrats, led by Margaret Dongo, took the famous balancing rocks as a party symbol because they symbolize “unity, stability and political balance.”¹²⁹

4.3.3 Land

Twenty years after independence, land remained a potent motivating force and as such, remained an important political ‘trump’ card for the ruling party. During the 1990 election promises of land were revived — by the party — not by land hungry peasants; as Alexander notes, “the government’s promises of resettlement depended to a great degree on its perception of its political vulnerability.”¹³⁰

The Lancaster House constitutional restraints on land reform had ended in 1990. As expected, the government then brought in a constitutional amendment that enabled expropriation of land, followed by the 1992 Land Acquisition Act. Yet, this process was not straightforward, but instead was typified by bureaucratic bungling. Out of the seventy farms designated in 1993, thirty-three were later excluded. Then in 1997, the government proposed a list of 1471 farms to acquire. In March 1998, in the face of widespread donor criticism, it agreed that the list was problematic and said that “..no productive land would be nationalised, that white farmers would be fully compensated, and that reforms would be carried out within the government’s limited money and administrative capacity.”¹³¹ Inaccuracies on the list and its failure to accord with previous criteria led analysts to suggest that it had to have been politically motivated.¹³²

¹²⁹ Stephen Ndlovu and Stanley Gama, “Dongo launches political party” *Sunday Mail* 20 December 1998.

¹³⁰ Alexander, “State, peasantry and resettlement”, 338.

¹³¹ “Mugabe backs down to western demands for legal land reform” *SAPA* 3 March 1998.

¹³² Robin Palmer, “Mugabe’s land grab in regional perspective” paper presented to the Conference on Land Reform in Zimbabwe – the Way Forward, SOAS, London, 11 March 1998.

Although some squatting continued throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the issue only became visible in the media and public discourse again in 1998 as squatters again began to occupy land in Zimbabwe on a large-scale.¹³³ Such squatting was alleged to have been at the instigation of ZANU(PF) officials. Indeed, Didymus Mutasa, incited supporters to ‘demonstrate’ at commercial farms deemed appropriate for resettlement.¹³⁴ However, as African Rights points out, there were also several cases of squatters targeting senior party officials who own farms themselves.¹³⁵

With the intensification of the land issue, the discourse changed from reconciliation back towards racial inequalities, with Mugabe calling farmers “a greedy bunch of racist usurpers.”¹³⁶ These images came to the fore again in the 2000 election, as white farmers were defined in ZANU(PF) election propaganda as traitors to the nation.

4.3.4 ‘War Veterans’

The Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) was formed in 1990, in response to the existence of impoverished war veterans “whose plight was not only an embarrassment to the government, but who had also become...potential recruits to ZUM.”¹³⁷

Indeed, while this group was affiliated to the ruling party, and led by party loyalists, it had the potential to radically critique the government’s post-colonial achievements. In 1996, when Margaret Dongo revealed in Parliament that the War Victims Compensation Fund had been looted by senior party and government officials, the Chidyausiku Commission was set up and

¹³³ Mercedes Sayagues, “Zimbabwe peasants seize four farms”, *Mail & Guardian*, 26 June 1998.

¹³⁴ “Mutasa incites farm takeovers” *Standard* 18 April 1999.

¹³⁵ African Rights, “In the Party’s Interest?”, Discussion paper 8, 41-42

¹³⁶ Andrew Rusinga, “Land redistribution threatens reconciliation”, *ALA* 15 October, 1993.

¹³⁷ Tengende, “Workers, Students and the Struggles for democracy” 446; see also, “War veteran’s constitution” *Herald* 1 May 1989, 3.

mandated to investigate. The commission suspended payments to veterans, leading to a series of riots and protests in June-August 1997.¹³⁸

The continued saliency of the liberation war to national mythology was particularly evident. Few issues, if any, compel the same level of passion and eloquence during parliamentary debates. Indeed the war veterans were the only sector able to protest and demonstrate with impunity and to which the state has made concessions. In 1997, war veterans not only held regular protests without being tear-gassed and dispersed or charged, but occupied and looted the ZANU(PF) party headquarters, took over a courtroom—chasing out judges and court officials, disrupted Heroes' Day celebrations across the country and demanded and received meetings with senior party officials and President Mugabe.¹³⁹ Ministers holding meetings in Harare were forced to flee, in Bulawayo, veterans threatened to beat up Home Affairs Minister Dumiso Dabengwa, and in Lupane John Nkomo, Minister of Local Government Rural and Urban Development was also forced to flee the fury of ex-fighters, while elsewhere ministers were faced with verbal abuse and shouted down.¹⁴⁰ At a time when church prayer meetings were being tear-gassed with little or no cause, both the temerity of the war veterans and the impunity which the state accorded them spoke volumes about their place in the national power structures.¹⁴¹ The government rapidly conceded to their demands. Yet, taxpayers and Parliament were appalled that these concessions – in the form of increased pensions – were agreed without recourse to Parliament, and the government was forced to back away from plans to implement a levy on tax-payers to finance the veterans' pensions.¹⁴²

¹³⁸ "Meetings with war vets turn nasty" *Herald* 21 July 1997, 1, 8, 11; "Ex-combatants loot ZANU(PF) headquarters" *Herald* 14 August 1997, 1, 9.

¹³⁹ "Meetings with war vets turn nasty" *Herald* 21 July 1997, 1, 8, 11; "Ex-combatants loot ZANU(PF) headquarters" *Herald* 14 August 1997, 1, 9; "War veterans threaten to seize white-owned land" *Independent* 29 August 1997, 12.

¹⁴⁰ "Meetings with war vets turn nasty", *Herald* 21 July 1997, 1,8,11; "Angry Zimbabwean War Veterans Chase Ministers" *PANA* 20 July 1997.

¹⁴¹ Although, there are indications that at least one leader of the riots was detained and charged. "War vet leader Released from Police Custody" *PANA* 4 January 1998.

¹⁴² "Discontent emerging over Zimbabwe's veteran's levy" *PANA* 30 November 1997.

However, the granting of both a lump sum pay out and monthly pensions, strongly re-integrated the war veterans into the party and state security apparatus, as we shall see in more detail in Chapter 8.¹⁴³

4.4 Conclusion

In the 1990s, the ideas and practices on which the regime based its legitimacy were challenged both by the failures of economic policy and the evidence of enrichment and privileges that accumulated around the *chefs* and their families. With the introduction of economic liberalization, the politics of inclusion reached out to more firmly incorporate the black business and middle classes, affirming their capitalist ventures. War veterans were granted permission to form an interest group, in an attempt to keep them under party control, but they emerge as a potent political force in 1997. The rhetoric of land resurfaced before the 1995 elections and again in 1997, but there was little actual land redistribution.

Coercion manifested itself through a multiplicity of laws implemented to further control and regulate potentially restive social movements: labour, students, academics, and NGOs. The infrequent protests and rallies were broken up with little tolerance. The security forces, especially the CIO, were widely feared. Independent candidates were also the victims of violence from ZANU(PF) party activists.

Despite this, quiescence dominated the political scene, masking building discontent with economic conditions, health and education provision, and employment prospects. By the late 1990s, the regime's commitment to the ideology of development, nationalism and unity had begun to be questioned. Revelations about the Matabeleland massacres in the national press, declining health and educational standards, and corruption scandals forced tax-payers to ask questions about developmental priorities.

¹⁴³ Margaret Chinowaita, "War veterans get 41% pensions increment" *Standard* 5 March 2000.

As the party's hegemony frayed, isolated political alternatives started to emerge and challenge ZANU(PF)'s dominance. Significantly, both Edgar Tekere and Margaret Dongo, the most prominent political challengers in the 1990s, were ex-combatants and ex-ZANU MPs. Their challenges began within the party, and were pursued outside only after they were expelled. For some time after her expulsion from the party, Dongo continued to seek reinstatement. Yet, her eventual position as an independent MP was significant. She became an independent voice, able to challenge the government on her own terms. Her support for both former ZANU and novice politicians in council elections further challenged the ability of ZANU (PF) to dominate political debate. Her effective use of Parliament to question government policy also challenged the benefits of 'unity'.

The regime's ability to reward its allies diminished along with their political capital. Yet, for much of the 1990s, those groups which did question the regime's decisions, or propose themselves as alternate leaders, did so almost entirely from within the dominant paradigm of 'unity, development and nationalism' as we shall see in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

Part III NGOs and the State in Zimbabwe, 1990-1997

In Part II, a framework was set out for understanding how organized groups within society related to the state between 1980 and 1997. The discussion in chapters 3 and 4 was derived mainly from secondary sources and newspapers. In this part, I want to use my own empirical research to demonstrate how NGOs fit into this broader state-society framework in Zimbabwe during the same time-frame. NGOs differ from the groups considered above because they were relatively insignificant in both financial and political terms at independence. From the late 1980s onwards, however, they become increasingly significant as employers, participants in development provision, and as commentators on political events.

Most writing on NGOs in Africa focuses on and evaluates NGOs as development organizations. This is certainly true of most published material on Zimbabwean NGOs in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁴⁴ These studies rarely examined the dynamics of NGO decision-making other than to assess if they were 'donor-driven' or 'GONGOS' (government-NGOs). As I argue in this part, many different pressures may affect the functioning of NGOs, especially the differing agendas of staff, members and trustees. These agendas then affect the ways in which NGOs relate to the state and other NGOs.

Compared to the broad, theoretical discussions of NGOs, country-specific studies of the relations between NGO and the state in Zimbabwe has been relatively nuanced. Martin de Graaf, who was based in Zimbabwe in the 1980s, wrote that, in contrast to presumed NGO suspicions of donors and western governments:

...there seems to be fully internalized recognition and acceptance of the Government's mandate to direct development and change. The supremacy of ZANU(PF) under Mugabe's leadership appear to be genuinely accepted, with a far-reaching tolerance for the inevitable frailties and failures of this political system....Government is seen as the only source of political authority.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Diana Conyers, *Report of a Study of Existing NGO Activity in Zimbabwe* November 1991; Maureen Dekker, *NGOs in Zimbabwe: developments and changes since 1990* Autumn 1994; Ann Muir, *Evaluating the impact of NGOs in rural poverty alleviation* ODI 1992.

¹⁴⁵ Martin De Graaf, "Context, Constraint or Control", 292.

This depiction continued to be true well into the 1990s. Despite this, journalists and some political scientists seemed particularly prone to statements which made claims about NGOs' confrontation with the state. For instance, articles about the implementation of the PVO Act in Zimbabwe claimed that "NGOs are fighting for their lives"¹⁴⁶ and "NGOs protested vigorously."¹⁴⁷ In Chapter 6, we will see that a more detailed, empirically-grounded consideration of the process by which the PVO act was brought in reveals very little concern on the part of most NGOs and a thoroughly ambiguous attitude towards the state.

In 1997 Richard Saunders argued that

...it appears that the space for democratic activism continues to open, with a reformulated popular nationalist critique ranged against ESAP and its World Bank and IMF sponsors being one of the most effective wedges used by civics to pry their way into engagement with the state.¹⁴⁸

In contrast, my examination of this process in Chapter 6 reveals that what Saunders terms 'civics' represented a narrow segment of the wide sector of extra-governmental organizations and that they failed entirely to engage with the state. While this 'cheer-leading' attitude to state-society interactions is understandable, it does not make for nuanced analysis. Research which documents the reaction of some NGOs, without considering whether they are representative of NGOs as a whole, or examining the process through which discontent is voiced, may exaggerate the levels of conflict and therefore misunderstand the relationship between NGOs and the state. What is needed is more detailed and grounded research, which examines the debates within and between NGOs as they consider engaging with the state.

Chapter 5 focuses on the intra-organizational level of decision-making, looking first at the NGO sector in general, followed by a case study of a prominent NGO – ZimRights. This

¹⁴⁶ Julius Zava, "State seizes control over local NGOs" *Horizon*, July 1995, 11.

¹⁴⁷ Lizwe Moyo, "Zimbabwe: government and NGOs lock horns" *ALA* 11 March 1996.

¹⁴⁸ Richard Saunders, "The Press, Civil Society and Democratic Struggles in Zimbabwe" paper presented to the Conference on National Identity and Democracy, Cape Town, March 1997, 13.

chapter examines how individual NGOs related to the state, for much of the 1980s and 1990s. Chapter 6 moves to the inter-organizational level, examining the ways in which NGOs relate to each other and to the state as a sector. The ability of NGOs to organize and lobby collectively depends on their internal decision-making, but can also influence it in return. This chapter examines ways in which NGOs attempted to mobilize around policy issues, and emphasizes the difficulties encountered in doing so.

Chapter 5 NGOs and the State: the Intra-politics of NGOs

5.1 Determinants of Strategic Pragmatism

For much of the 1980s and early 1990s, most Zimbabwean NGOs emphasized that on a day-to-day level they interacted regularly and informally with individual ministries within the Mugabe government. NGOs described these relationships as “co-operative,” “positive,” or “good.” In interviews in 1995, they often emphasized the extent to which they complement governmental development efforts: “We are the hand of the government to help it boost the people;”¹ “We are supplementing and complementing [Social Welfare's] efforts;”² “The government is not able to reach everyone, we are trying to help government, to work hand-in-hand with government;”³ “We are not trying to be the government...in many ways our efforts are complementing a lot, to a large extent to the social uplifting of the lives of people....If we can find the ground to work together, that is the best we can do.”⁴ This supports the evidence of survey research carried out among NGOs in the early 1990s. Although some NGO leaders wished to make demands upon the government, the majority of rural development NGOs described the state as primarily co-operative (60%) or as both co-operative and interfering (27%). Similarly, 43% described their relations with the state as generally positive, 18% had mixed positive and negative relations, and 25% had isolated problems, leaving only 14% with generally negative relations.⁵ NGOs did attempt to influence policy, yet this was rarely predicated on adversarial action, although some described themselves as being “forced into” confrontation with the state.⁶ NGO staff members avoided confrontation because it wasted

¹ Interview, Grace Moyo, ORAP, 27 September 1995.

² Interview, Charles Gotosa, HSCO, 18 September 1995.

³ Interview, Fisherman Chiyani, Society for the Needy, 23 August 1995.

⁴ Interview, Murombedzi Kuchera, 11 September 1995.

⁵ Jessica Vivian and Gladys Maseko, *NGOs, Participation and Rural Development* (Geneva: UNRISD, 1994), 33-34.

⁶ Interview, Makusha Mugabe, ZimRights 25 September 1995.

resources and was self-defeating. In a workshop-based discussion on the nature of advocacy, several participants emphasized that no matter what tactics were used “...we must avoid confrontation.”⁷

Sam Moyo presents a useful analysis of NGO-State relations which helps us make sense of this preference for non-confrontational tactics. He proposes that NGOs exercise different modes of advocacy: passive resistance, collaboration, entryism, and opposition.⁸ He defines passive resistance as a tactic used by NGOs who want to empower people through alternative development strategies different from those professed by the state: “we do what the government official tells us to do while he is there, and as soon as he leaves, we do our own thing.”⁹ The collaborative model reflects the existence of NGOs which work closely with ministries but which have little interest in policy change; instead they are more concerned with implementing particular projects.¹⁰ In contrast, entryism is a tactic whereby “organisations attempt to penetrate the state machinery in order to influence policy directions and decisions from within.”¹¹ As Moyo notes, this strategy presupposes an existing positive relationship between NGOs and state, as well as “general political trust and openness” but it does entail attempts by NGOs to change specific policies.¹² More confrontationally, NGOs may adopt tactics of the oppositional model and use high-profile appeals, protests and demonstrations in attempting to bring about policy change.¹³

In Zimbabwe, entryism is by far the most common form of policy lobbying.¹⁴ Where the state remains relatively administratively competent, typically, all the ‘sticks’ — closure,

⁷ Research Notes, Public Policy Training Workshop, Bulawayo, 14 July 1997.

⁸ Sam Moyo, *NGO Advocacy in Zimbabwe: Systematizing an Old Function or Inventing a New Role?* (Harare: Zero, 1992), 7-10.

⁹ Moyo, *NGO Advocacy*, 9-10.

¹⁰ Moyo, *NGO Advocacy*, 8-9.

¹¹ Moyo, *NGO Advocacy*, 7.

¹² Moyo, *NGO Advocacy*, 7.

¹³ Moyo, *NGO Advocacy*, 10.

¹⁴ Moyo, *NGO Advocacy*, 11.

deregistration, investigation and co-ordination — and ‘carrots’ — tax exemption, access to policy-makers and public funding — are seen as emanating from it. By contrast, NGOs have few, if any, such resources with which to bargain. Not surprisingly in such circumstances, entryism may be a means by which NGOs seek to avoid conflict with the state.¹⁵ Incorporation then, is not just the strategy of states seeking to dominate civil society. It also involves social forces seeking to secure access and extract protection from the state.¹⁶ Although the government has on several occasions used heavy-handed tactics against NGOs I found that those who reported problems took great pride in having ‘patched up’ relations.¹⁷

Some theories of NGOs propose that in the 1990s, a new generation of organizations arose in reaction to ‘new’ problems, such as homeless people, Aids, and women’s rights. These NGOs were interested in changing the conditions within which they operated, and focused on policy-advocacy rather than welfarist strategies.¹⁸ In the 1990s, such a group did develop in Zimbabwe, with less coherent linkages to the state and therefore less innate ability to practice ‘entryism’. Despite their reduced access to the state, even these attempted to forge links with government and ruling-party figures by inviting MPs to sit on their boards.¹⁹ In general then, the government was neither avoided, nor perceived as an opponent. As one NGO staff member said, “donors come and donors go, but the Ministry is always there.”²⁰

¹⁵ David Hulme and Michael Edwards, *NGOs, States and Donors: too close for comfort?* (London: Macmillan/Save the Children, 1997), 13.

¹⁶ Steven Burgess, “Non-Governmental Organisations and the State in Africa: Competition and Conflict Avoidance in Rural Zimbabwe” Paper presented to the African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Toronto, Ont. Canada, 3-6 November 1994., 20; Bjorn Beckman “Explaining democratization: notes on the concept of civil society” in Elisabeth Özdalga and Sune Persson eds. *Civil Society, Democracy, and the Muslim World* ([Istanbul] : Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 1997.), 5.

¹⁷ Interview, Sally Zimbiti, SHDF, 19 September 1995.

¹⁸ David Korten, “Third Generation NGO strategies” *World Development* 15 supplement (1987), 145-59.

¹⁹ Interview, Rudo Kwaramba, Musasa Project, 25 September 1995.

²⁰ Interview, Vimbai Zinyama, IBWO, 30 October 1996.

As this suggests, Zimbabwean NGOs practiced strategic pragmatism in their decision-making, seeking incorporation when possible. Like the unions, churches and students whom we considered in Chapters 3 and 4, NGOs existed within the political hegemony of state and ruling party, ZANU(PF). Despite the significance of Ministry and Party, however, other influences also need to be considered. Donors, and donor funding, have an increasing influence on NGOs in the 1980s and 1990s, as state capacity and resources decline.

As they became increasingly important sites of job opportunities and career advancement, NGOs were also affected by material and organizational factors, which affected their ability to practice advocacy politics vis-à-vis the state. Under donor pressures to ‘professionalize,’ NGOs, which may have started as a group of volunteers, hire staff to carry out their activities. Where employment opportunities are limited, volunteers and unemployed NGO members may seek access to newly created jobs. Even those with jobs elsewhere may wish to move into the sector because of its superior remuneration in comparison to the public service, and access to such perks as vehicles, housing, and foreign trips. As Moore and Stewart note in their ODA assessment of NGOs in Zimbabwe and Nepal, this ‘life-style dependence’ is a much more serious and far-ranging problem than direct corruption.²¹ NGO staff may be understandably reluctant to engage in activities which might threaten their security of employment. This further reinforces the already described tendency towards risk-averse behaviour.

Moreover, this pressure to professionalize has other implications:

[Local] NGO budgets increase rapidly. The number of different donors with whom they interact grows just as fast. And much of their money comes from ...donors who are demanding in terms of ‘bureaucratic’ skills and capacities to interact professionally with external donors.²²

²¹ ODA. “The Impact of External Funding on the capacity of local Non-governmental organisations” Final Report no. R5968. (1997) 51.

²² ODA, “The Impact of External Funding,” 10.

This ‘professionalization’ has at least two potential impacts. First, donors fund NGOs as part of their scheme to support civil society, yet:

there is an assumption made that smallscale, voluntary organisational characteristics can be retained while the organisation is scaled-up to deal with largescale developmentally complex issues without any explanation of how this might be possible.²³

Second, it affects the balance of power and authority between members, staff, and donors – in peculiar and not always predictable ways – which may lead to organizational crisis and breakdown, effectively destroying the intentions of both members and donors in supporting the NGO. Donor funding and organizational growth may thus actually impede – in unintended ways – the viability of the organization.

These influences on NGO decision-making are examined in more detail in the subsections that follow. In 5.2 and 5.3 I examine the influence of the nationalist period, the legitimacy created by the liberation war, and how it was entrenched by post-war development and the Mugabe government’s willingness to coerce and co-opt would-be dissidents. In 5.4, the emphasis turns to donor funding and professionalization, through a case-study of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Organization.

5.2 The Historical Roots of NGOs: the Nationalist Era

Unsurprisingly, most organizations in Rhodesia before independence like the SPCA or theatre groups, were run by and on behalf of interests of the white community.²⁴ Yet there were also a variety of inter-racial, often church-related, organizations, as well as political and welfare associations for blacks. These organizations developed in response to particular needs and employed varied tactics, depending on their resources and their goals. A brief overview of the

²³ ODA, “The Impact of External Funding,” 63.

²⁴ See for instance, George Maxwell Jackson, *The Land is Bright* (Salisbury: National Arts Foundation of Rhodesia, 1974) and National Federation of Business and Professional Women of Rhodesia. *Profiles of Rhodesia’s Women* (NFBPW: Salisbury, 1976).

evolution of the more prominent bodies indicates how they evolved from often tribally based welfare organizations, to non-oppositional political associations and subsequently into nationalist political parties, in response to grievances over land and workers' rights

The first category of important organizations of Africans formed in the 1910s – 1920s were welfare associations which brought black workers together, in urban areas and on the mines. Informal social get-togethers organized by the rapidly urbanized black work-force prior to World War I created an organizational base for the burial societies, mutual aid societies and other welfare associations that developed in the colonial towns and in mining compounds during the war years.²⁵ The development of these associations reflected the needs of urbanized blacks without family networks to support them as living conditions deteriorated and during the 1918 flu epidemic. Demobilized soldiers provided models of organization and hierarchy, as the Beni dance societies of the era demonstrated.²⁶ The principles of these clubs spread to more formal institutions, taking a pro-active role in the welfare of members. The colonial regime recognized these welfare associations under the 1891 Friendly Societies Act.²⁷

Within the same time frame, the first ethnic Ndebele associations were formed. During WWI, Nyamanda, the son of Lobengula, brought together a coalition of forces to protest the grievances of the Ndebele people, which became known as the National Home Movement and organized in the 1920s for both the return of land to the people and also the return of Nyamanda as Head Chief.²⁸ This movement was regenerated and radicalized in the

²⁵ See for instance, Charles van Onselen, *Chibaro: Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia 1900-1933*. (London: Pluto, 1976), 198 and Louis Masuko, "The Zimbabwean Burial Societies" in *African Studies in Social Movements and Democracy* Mahmood Mamdani and Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba eds. (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1995), 285.

²⁶ van Onselen, *Chibaro*, 199.

²⁷ Masuko, "The Zimbabwean Burial Societies", 285.

²⁸ T.O. Ranger, *The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia, 1898-1930* (London: Heinemann, 1970.), 78.

1950s, taking up the issue of evictions in Matabeleland.²⁹ It eventually fed into the proto-nationalist Southern Rhodesian Bantu Congress and the All-African Convention.

In the 1920s, the Rhodesian Bantu Voters Association (RBVA) and the Rhodesian Native Association (RNA) developed to represent élite demands for amendments of the pass laws, the right to buy Crown land, the reducing of franchise restrictions and educational reforms.³⁰ The Gwelo Native Welfare Association gained momentum in 1926 in reaction to the Morris Carter Land Commission, renaming itself the Southern Rhodesian Native Welfare Association (SRNWA) and combining the support of Ndebele and Shona Chiefs with their originating membership of the 'progressive' educated élite.³¹ This success in building a broad support base for their movement was their undoing, and it crumbled under opposition from the Government.³²

In the 1930s, other explicitly politicized groups also formed, including the Southern Rhodesian Bantu Congress, later the Southern Rhodesian National Congress (SRNC) which brought together groups, including the Southern Rhodesian Native Missionary Conference, into what became a mass organization.³³

Trades unions often replicated the roles of welfare associations. The Rhodesian Railways African Employees Association, for example, grew out of the Bantu (Transport) Benefit Society, a mutual aid society.³⁴ As Ranger says of the Rhodesian Industrial and Commercial Worker's Union (ICU), "It did not really function as a Trade Union at all. Its forum was the public square rather than the workshop."³⁵ Similarly, Burombo described his African Worker's Voice Association as "just an association in general." As Bhebe notes, the

²⁹ Ranger, *Are we not also men?*, 142.

³⁰ Hooker, "Welfare Associations" 58-9 and Ranger, *The African Voice*, 107-108.

³¹ Ranger, *The African Voice*, 175-179.

³² Ranger, *The African Voice*, 181.

³³ Ranger, *Are we not also men?*, 88-93.

³⁴ Richard Gray, *The Two Nations: Aspects of the Development of Race Relations in the Rhodesias and Nyasaland*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 316.

³⁵ Ranger, *The African Voice* 165.

Voice was really a “political pressure group acting on behalf of all Africans in Southern Rhodesia.”³⁶

The nationalist political parties, which dominated associational life in the 1950s and 1960s, grew out of this combination of the trade union movement and the often more elitist associations, including the inter-racial Capricorn Africa Society.³⁷ In 1957, the Bulawayo branch of the SRNC and the Youth League – which began as a civic organization in Harare – organized the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress, which moved these organizations into the realm of nationalist mass politics, and soon enabled black-led associational life.³⁸

The 1960s and 1970s also saw the formation of several church related bodies in response to the intensifying racial politics of the post-UDI Smith government. The Christian Council was founded in response to a division within the Protestant Christian Conference over the ‘hanging bill’ which became the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act (LOMA).³⁹ The Council’s mandate was ostensibly to work with youth, urban questions, including work in African townships, and supporting Christian values in home and family life. However, the intensification of political activity leading to the declaration of UDI in 1965, meant that the Council was an integral supporter of for the families of detained nationalists.⁴⁰

Christian Care was founded in 1967 to take over these welfare provision duties in response to the Rhodesian government’s implementation of the Welfare Organisations Act

³⁶ Ngwabi Bhebe, *B. Burumbo: African Politics in Zimbabwe, 1947-1958*. (Harare: College Press, 1989), 41.

³⁷ See for instance, I.R. Hancock, “The Capricorn Africa Society in Southern Africa” *Rhodesian History* IX (1978); Hardwicke Holderness, *Lost Chance* (Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1985), 122-135; James R. Hooker, “Welfare Association and other Instruments of Accommodation in the Rhodesias between the World Wars.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 9 (1966); Bhebe, *B. Burumbo*; and Jane Farquar, *Jairos Jiri: the Man and his Work 1921-1982* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1987).

³⁸ Terence Ranger “Legitimacy, Civil Society and the State in Africa” (1992).

³⁹ C. D. Watyoka, *25 years of struggle* (ZCC: Harare, 1991).

⁴⁰ Carl F. Hallencreutz, “Council in the Crossfire: ZCC 1964-1980,” in Carl F. Hallencreutz and Ambrose M. Moyo eds *Church and State in Zimbabwe*, (Gweru: Mambo, 1988), 57-59.

which would have prevented the Christian Council from visiting political detainees in prisons and camps.⁴¹ Nonetheless, the Christian Council did not keep away from politics. At its first meeting in 1964, a statement was issued rejecting the demands for immediate independence, stressing that the establishment of “better relationships between the inhabitants of this country” was a more important goal.⁴² This resolution led the Council to oppose UDI internally and also externally through an international awareness-raising tour.⁴³ Bishop Skelton noted that statements issued under the aegis of the Council were few and far between because it was felt that: “...the more we spoke the less we should be listened to.”⁴⁴ As he recognized, these pronouncements had little effect on government policy and offended many white churchgoers; instead, they built up confidence among black members in the leadership of the Churches:

...it got around that the representative body of the Rhodesian Churches was not afraid to stand up for justice and to challenge the Rhodesian Front's claim to be upholding Christianity by its political policies.⁴⁵

Skelton saw this principled stand of the Council also as a protective stance, which encouraged black membership of the Churches and might help prevent Church divisions along racial lines.

As the liberation war progressed the Anglican church, more in touch with Rhodesian society and more dependent on the white laity, became less militant.⁴⁶ Individual members of the Anglican hierarchy were especially noted for their close ties to the Smith government.⁴⁷ These conservative Rhodesian Anglicans were influential in restraining the Christian Council. Their influence was counter-balanced, however, by the World Council of Churches' controversial Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) which supported the guerilla movement.

⁴¹ Watyoka, *25 years*, 10-11.

⁴² Hallencreutz, “Council in the Crossfire”, 60.

⁴³ Hallencreutz, “Council in the Crossfire”, 61.

⁴⁴ Kenneth Skelton, *Bishop in Smith's Rhodesia* (Gweru: Mambo, 1985), 102.

⁴⁵ Skelton, *Bishop in Smith's Rhodesia*, 102.

⁴⁶ Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe* (Gweru: Mambo, 1986), 75.

⁴⁷ Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option?* 73.

However, Bishop Muzorewa's continuing position within the Council as head of his denomination complicated its position. In 1978, the Internal Settlement between Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front, Muzorewa's UANC and Chief Chirau, gave power to Muzorewa as Prime Minister of 'Zimbabwe-Rhodesia'. The liberation movements refused to recognize the validity of this settlement, and continued their struggle until the Lancaster House agreement in 1979. The Council, presumably influenced by Muzorewa, supported the Internal Settlement, although this is now significantly underplayed in its official history.⁴⁸

The Roman Catholic Church, with its often expatriate clergy less connected to white Rhodesian society and influenced by the international Catholic church, became more radicalized as the war deepened.⁴⁹ Morally, the Church was also influenced by the provenance of its members. Bishop Lamont, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Mutare emphasizes the impact of his time as a student in Rome, which revealed to him the brutality and injustice of the fascist regimes of Hitler and Mussolini.⁵⁰ Bishop Skelton also recalls Bishop Lamont speaking of the "deep distress" of German nuns who "...saw too clearly the similarity of Government policy to that of the Nazi period."⁵¹ The Catholic Church's position was reflected in the formation of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) in 1972. The first objectives of the CCJP were to research and educate the public on questions of sectoral injustice, for example, amongst mineworkers, domestic workers, and land distribution. The intensification of the war in 1972-73, brought the CCJP to the more confrontational task of investigating and documenting the human rights abuses of the security forces.⁵² The CCJP denounced the internal settlement as a non-solution to the problems of Rhodesia and was active in the

⁴⁸ David Maxwell, "The Church and Democratization in Africa: the Case of Zimbabwe" in Paul Gifford, ed. *The Christian churches and the democratisation of Africa* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 112; Watyoka, *25 years*, 19.

⁴⁹ Ian Linden, *The Catholic Church and the struggle for Zimbabwe* (London: Longman, 1980); Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option?* 75.

⁵⁰ Donal Lamont, *Speech from the Dock*, (Great Britain: Kevin Mayhew, 1977), 26-29.

⁵¹ Skelton, *Bishop in Smith's Rhodesia* 109.

⁵² Interview, Mike Auret, CCJP, 14 September 1995.

negotiations and diplomatic efforts throughout 1978 and 1979 that led to the Lancaster House peace agreement and independence.⁵³

5.3 Independence: from Euphoria to Conflict

At independence a transformation occurred as previously welfarist or political organizations turned to development, following the government's lead in reconstruction and de-racialization. In this section we will examine how individual organizations developed during independence and their individual relations with the state. Unlike countries which had become independent at a time when state-led development was *de rigueur*, such as Tanzania or Malawi, local and international NGOs in Zimbabwe have been accepted contributors to the development process. In keeping with their socialist ethos, co-operatives were prominent on the government's agenda, but NGOs were not discriminated against. Like churches, unions and other groups, the government made it clear that as long as NGOs contributed to the government's development efforts in ways that complemented the state's efforts, they would be left alone. As the Minister of Social Welfare advocated "NGOs must keep in step with government...It's completely counter-productive to contradict government thinking."⁵⁴ Reflecting on this period, former President Banana noted, "...many NGOs...accepted our prescriptions [of socialism]—should I say, joined us...we became partners in development."⁵⁵

In general, the groups which had been active during the liberation war found themselves suddenly working not against the government but with it. This brought certain adjustments. Because many organizations now had links with the state, Paul Themba Nyathi

⁵³ R.H. Randolph, *Dawn in Zimbabwe: The Catholic Church in the New Order: a report on the activities of the Catholic Church in the Zimbabwe for the five years, 1977-1981*. (Gweru: Mambo, 1985), 173-4.

⁵⁴ "NGOs must keep in step with government" *Herald* 1 May 1984, 3.

⁵⁵ Revd. Canaan Banana, "Official Opening" in Val Thorpe and John Vekris, "Workshop on the Effects of ESAP on Zimbabwean NGOs and their Services." Harare, Zimbabwe, 20-24 March 1995, 4.

says, “we laid down our advocacy.”⁵⁶ As Raftopoulos has noted, “their accommodating role stemmed from a perspective of shared goals and a belief in having emerged from a common tradition of struggle.”⁵⁷ This relationship was more complicated for those groups which did not clearly have a liberation war pedigree, and who came under internal and external pressure to prove their loyalty to the new regime’s developmentalist agenda.

5.3.1 Adjusting to Independence

Groups which were not perceived as working sufficiently in-line with the state’s agenda encountered difficulties. The state took a particular interest in the ZCC, as the largest ecumenical church NGO. In November 1981, President Banana criticized the ZCC in the national press for taking a ‘wait and see’ attitude towards the government.⁵⁸ He claimed to have heard this from the WCC, which was withholding funding because of the “unco-operative attitude of the Christian Council towards the Government’s policy of reconciliation and reconstruction.”⁵⁹ The continuing involvement of Bishop Muzorewa with the ZCC, and the Ndaue ethnicity of the General Secretary which associated him with Ndabaningi Sithole’s ZANU Ndonga, apparently led the state to see the ZCC as a political irritant.⁶⁰ These developments led the ZCC to replace its General Secretary, in the hope of restoring relations with both the state and the WCC.⁶¹

Another NGO which encountered problems was Self-Help Development (SHD).

⁵⁶ Interview, Paul Themba Nyathi, 18 September 1995.

⁵⁷ Raftopoulos, “The State, NGOs, and Democratization”, 45.

⁵⁸ “Church probes charge by president” *Herald* 10 November 1981, 3; “[Editorial] Visionary dilemma” *Herald* 10 November 1981, 6; “[letter to the editor] WCC Charges must get serious consideration” *Herald* 16 November 1981, 8; Carl Hallencreutz, “Ecumenical Challenges in Independent Zimbabwe” in Hallencreutz and Moyo, *Church and State*, 267.

⁵⁹ “Church probes charge by president” *Herald* 10 November 1981, 3.

⁶⁰ Carl Hallencreutz, “Church and State in Zimbabwe and South Africa” in Carl F Hallencreutz and Mai Palmberg, eds. *Religion and politics in Southern Africa* (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1991), 159-165.

⁶¹ Hallencreutz, “Ecumenical Challenges,” 275.

The organization, essentially a co-operative society, was formed in 1963 by a white Catholic Missionary, and two white laymen, who encouraged and supported the establishment of savings clubs among small scale farmers. By the time of Independence, there were approximately 200 clubs with 4000 members, organized under the name Savings Development Movement (SDM). Soon after independence, the movement was targeted by the Department of Co-operatives, who threatened to absorb the movement into the government system and seize their assets because they were running co-operatives outside its remit.⁶² Michael Bratton's study of this case suggests that it was the very success of the organization that prompted this intervention.⁶³ The founding members argued that, at the time of registration, they had not been aware of the risks associated with calling the clubs co-ops. The Ministry accused the treasurer, Peter Arnold, of financial mismanagement, an allegation that was not substantiated by auditor's reports. Arnold took the Ministry to court, and won his court action.⁶⁴ However, faced with the forced appropriation of their buildings and organization, they followed government advice and removed the (white) founding members from its board of directors and replaced them with blacks "to cool it down" and changed its name "as a way of trying to escape from this problem."⁶⁵ Currently, the movement has an MP on its Board of Directors and the relations with the government are considered much improved as the organization works extensively with Agritex and the Department of Co-operatives. Raftopoulos and Lacoste further note that this good relationship developed after the 1987 Unity Accord, and emphasize that conflict

⁶² Brian Raftopoulos, and Jean-Paul Lacoste, "From Savings Mobilisation to Micro-Finance: An Historical Perspective on the Zimbabwe Savings Development Movement" Paper presented at the SARIPS Colloquium 2001, on "Social Policy and Development in Southern Africa", Harare, 23rd-26th September 2001.

⁶³ Michael Bratton, "Non-governmental Organizations in Africa: can they influence Public Policy" *Development and Change* vol 21 (1990), 96-99.

⁶⁴ Raftopoulos and Lacoste, "From Savings Mobilisation to Micro-Finance" 10.

⁶⁵ Interview, Sally Zimbiti, SHDF, 19 September 1995.

between a ZAPU supporter on the original board and the government contributed to the tension during the Matabeleland Conflict.⁶⁶

5.3.2 NGOs during the Matabeleland Conflict

In general, most NGOs reinvented themselves as development organizations and embraced the new government's agenda of reconciliation, development and unity with enthusiasm. But while this was possible for NGOs working in areas like Mashonaland and Manicaland, where rebuilding after the war started in earnest, it was not so easy for groups working in Matabeleland. As discussed in section 3.1.2, the tense political situation in Matabeleland shaped state-society relations for much of the 1980s.

The CCJP was receiving numerous reports of human rights abuses of civilians being perpetrated by the security forces from church-members and priests on the ground. Their attempts to document and publicize them were rebuffed and denied by the state.⁶⁷ As discussed in section 3.2.5, the CCJP Director, Nick Ndebele and the Chairman, Mike Auret, were arrested in 1986, although they were eventually freed by direct intervention of Prime Minister Mugabe.⁶⁸ In this case, the CCJP's reputation helped guarantee the release of Ndebele and Auret, but led to an immediate cooling of the formerly close relationship between the Catholic Church and the governing party.⁶⁹

Similarly, the Matabeleland branch of Christian Care experienced some friction with the government during the period of unrest in Matabeleland because government officials

⁶⁶ Raftopoulos and Lacoste, "From Savings Mobilisation to Micro-Finance" 10.

⁶⁷ See for example, "Why the outcry over curfew, premier asks Church" *Herald* 18 April 1984, 1; "[editorial] Church and State" *Herald* 19 April 1984, 6; "Stop the gossip, President tells Church" *Herald* 8 May 1984, 1; "Church accused of double standards" *Herald* 20 February 1986, 1.

⁶⁸ Auret, *Reaching for Justice*, 215-217; Interviews Nick Ndebele, former CCJP Director, 27 September 1999; Mike Auret, Former CCJP Chair and Director, 14 September 1995 and 28 September 1999.

⁶⁹ Paul H. Gundani, "The Catholic Church and National Development in Independent Zimbabwe" in Hallencreutz and Moyo, *Church and State*, 215.

suspected that if NGOs were not being targeted by ZAPU 'dissidents' then they must be collaborators. They would ask: "Why aren't your cars being burned?" Nevertheless, Christian Care, among others, felt itself to benefit from the linkages with the government during the liberation war: "when in trouble [the government] will call upon us to assist them."⁷⁰

ORAP, the Organization of Rural Associations for Progress, was a new organization that emerged in the post-independence period to contribute to the reconstruction and development of rural Zimbabwe, answering what the Executive Director referred to as "...the open but sincere invitation to all those who wanted Zimbabwe to succeed to come forwards and collaborate with the Government in its development efforts."⁷¹ ORAP drew on previously existing groups, like women's clubs, as well as newly formed groups including ex-combatants to bring people together to foster local culture and traditions along with income-generating projects.⁷² Like other NGOs, ORAP was affected by the intolerant political activity in Matabeleland in the mid-80s, when the curfew and banning of meetings made it difficult to carry out programmes. Because ORAP, unusually for a Zimbabwean NGO, worked only in Matabeleland and the Ndelebe speaking areas of the Midlands, it was perceived as being a tribal organization.⁷³ Yet after the 1987 Unity Accord, ORAP was rehabilitated and Sithembiso Nyoni, the founder and director of ORAP was elected to Parliament in 1990 as a ZANU(PF) MP; she later became a junior Minister. Nomalanga Zulu, the ORAP administrator, felt that ORAP's high-profile had helped other NGOs secure funding and therefore the government hadn't made any problems for them, but within ORAP there remained divisions about how close they should be to the ruling party.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Interview, John Bakila Sibanda, Christian Care, 26 September 1995.

⁷¹ Dexter M. Chavunduka, Gerrit Huizer, Tholakele D. Khumalo, and Nancy Thede, *Kbuluma Usenzga: The Story of O.R.A.P. in Zimbabwe's Rural Development* (Bulawayo: ORAP: 1985), III.

⁷² Chavunduka *et al.*, *Kbuluma Usenzga*: 3.

⁷³ "Dismantle ORAP system" *Herald* 22 March 1985, 3.

⁷⁴ Interview, Nomalanga Zulu, ORAP 17 February 1997,

The Zimbabwe Project (ZimPro), had been formed in the UK in 1978 by exiles and deportees of Smith's Rhodesia, to raise awareness of and raise money in support of refugees in camps. In 1981, ZimPro relocated to Zimbabwe and started working exclusively with ex-combatants: "Zimbabwe Project Trust was transformed from a channel for emergency humanitarian aid to a service and development agency that complimented the government's efforts for growth and development."⁷⁵ The director was Judith Todd, (daughter of the former liberal Prime Minister Garfield Todd) who had supported the liberation struggle for many years.

As the decade progressed, ZimPro widened its client base and worked with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) from all backgrounds to reflect the fact that the ex-combatants themselves did not exist apart from the rest of society: "over the years the role of the organization was redefined, sometimes not very consciously, by developments within Zimbabwe."⁷⁶ Like the Savings Development Movement, the Zimbabwe Project also endured opposition because of its leadership's ties to ZAPU and its work with ex-combatants but "after a lot of advocacy work and lobbying, it has improved."⁷⁷

5.3.3 New Issues and New NGOs

After the signing of the Unity Accord in 1987, it became easier for NGOs to function, as they were less likely to be accused of supporting ZAPU and constituting a divisive influence on national unity. At the same time, international funding was beginning to shift towards NGOs and new groups emerged to deal with new sets of issues. No doubt influenced by the

⁷⁵ Zimbabwe Project Trust Annual Report, 1998, 5.

⁷⁶ Interview, Paul Themba Nyathi, 18 September 1995.

⁷⁷ Interview, Paul Themba Nyathi, 18 September 1995.

incremental growth of a middle class, environmental NGOs proliferated, as did organizations working with streetchildren and on women's issues.⁷⁸

Early in the 1990s, the existence of streetchildren was seen as an affront to the government's pro-development policies. Three distinct tactics seem to have been used by the state in responding to NGO and donor interest in the issue. In one case, an organization that wanted to make videos and publicize the plight of streetchildren was prevented from forming when the government deported the American volunteer who had started the project, and harassed the Zimbabweans who were working with him.⁷⁹ At the same time, however, two other NGOs – Streets Ahead and the Harare Street Children's Organisation – started up with little difficulty, although the latter's close links with the prominent ZANU(PF) Mayor of Harare may have facilitated matters. In 1995, a further strategy was implemented, in which the government attempted to take advantage of donor funding for NGOs working with the urban poor. The state created the National Organisation for the Development of the Disadvantaged (NODED), described in Parliament as a "Government NGO" to remove street-children and destitute families from the streets of urban areas and relocate them to the refugee camps on the eastern borders, from which Mozambicans had recently been repatriated.⁸⁰ NODED was initially funded by a government grant, although its administrator emphasized that they were looking for donor funding.⁸¹

The government seems to have responded to the proliferation of women's organizations in the 1980s and 1990s by attempting to bring them into a more corporate relationship. From at least 1986, the government attempted to introduce legislation to create a National Women's Council, that would regulate women's organizations, arguing that existing

⁷⁸ Sam Moyo, "Towards an Understanding of Zimbabwean NGOs" Paper prepared for the NANGO/MWENGO Self-Understanding Workshop, November 1995.

⁷⁹ Interview, Simeon Mawanza, Street Kids in Production, 25 September 1995.

⁸⁰ GOZ, *Parliamentary Debates*, 16 August 1995, vol. 22 no. 29, 1643-4.

⁸¹ Interview, Charles Rutanhira, NODED, 28 September 1995.

NGOs were failing to support rural women. NGOs, however, interpreted this as being “swamped by the [ZANU(PF)] women’s league.” The proposal was effectively stalled until the 1990s, when NGOs argued that the proposal was out of keeping with post-cold war trends towards de-regulation and liberalization.⁸² Although the sector is very diverse, the post-independence women’s NGOs have tended to be policy-oriented, with an emphasis on changing laws to enhance women’s social, political and legal status.

The Women’s Action Group (WAG), for instance, was founded in reaction to the infamous 1983 Operation Clean-up, in which the police arrested over 6000 women in urban areas all over Zimbabwe on the pretext of removing prostitutes from the streets. The women arrested included the elderly, schoolgirls, and women with babies. A group of middle-class women, mainly foreigners and whites working in the NGO sector, met with the intention of researching the incident and lobbying parliament and created what became the Women’s Action Group (WAG).⁸³ The process catalyzed further meetings with women, and advocacy around other issues of concern to women including access to birth control. At this stage, WAG’s campaigning efforts were quite high-profile. Although they failed to meet with Prime Minister Mugabe over the continuing detention without trial of the women, they did have a sympathetic hearing from the Minister for Women’s Affairs.⁸⁴ When they later protested to then President Canaan Banana over discrepancies in sentences passed on women convicted of infanticide (which the press referred to emotively as baby-dumping) compared to male murderers, 23 women were given presidential pardons and freed from prison.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the attitude of the government to WAG’s intervention is clear in an anecdote reported by a

⁸² Cephas Chitsike, “Government, NGOs head for show-down” *Sunday Mail* 13 October 1991, 1, 7.

⁸³ Peggy Watson, *Determined to Act: the first 15 years of the Women’s Action Group*, (Harare: WAG, 1998).

⁸⁴ Watson, *Determined to Act*, 13.

⁸⁵ Watson, *Determined to Act*, 28.

former women's ministry official that "a directive was issued to staff at the ministry [that] WAG must be discredited and destroyed."⁸⁶

In 1986, WAG became a donor-funded rather than a voluntary organization, with paid workers.⁸⁷ By 1998, it had a full-time staff of 14, plus six field workers. All but two of the original volunteers had moved away, died or left the organization. When I interviewed the director, who had been with WAG since 1990, she emphasized:

...when we have our members meeting, I always call for a government official to attend, to show we are not doing anything wrong. I always emphasize that as NGOs we complement the government. Strategies are important...lobbying depends on the issue we are dealing with, what level you should act on....there are situations where confrontation doesn't help. If people agree to sit down with you then you can get somewhere....you may seem to be weaker but you can make mileage that way, try not to make enemies....If you are allowed to sit at the right table, that is where you can have influence.⁸⁸

Although this attitude was common earlier in the decade, the director was making these statements at a time of polarization between NGOs and the State. Considering WAG's radical origins, some of those involved in WAG felt that the organization was "moving from critical engagement to co-option...they want to bring everyone into ZANU."⁸⁹ The director would no doubt suggest that she is simply being pragmatic. She notes that since many of the problems with women and law occur at the level of magistrates, every two years she visits all the provincial magistrates with the intention of telling them about the problems that women face in court. The magistrates agree to meet with WAG because the chief magistrate provides them with a letter of introduction, on the condition that WAG does not "go to the press," which is acceptable because "my aim is to change policy."⁹⁰

The Musasa Project began in 1988 to provide counseling and support for battered women. However, the movement also finds itself lobbying the government because "the

⁸⁶ Watson, *Determined to Act*, 35.

⁸⁷ Watson, *Determined to Act*, 45.

⁸⁸ Interview, Selina Mumbengegwi, WAG, 6 October 1999.

⁸⁹ Interview, Jonah Gokova, WAG Trustee, 20 September 1999.

⁹⁰ Interview, Selina Mumbengegwi, WAG, 6 October 1999.

government doesn't feel it has any role in domestic violence.”⁹¹ The Musasa Project has made a conscious effort to foster support in government by having a number of MPs and high level ZRP officers on their board, even though they feel that: “...the Government doesn't even morally support us.”⁹² Musasa’s advocacy is often on a case by case level: when, for instance, local police refuse support or protection to woman, the project lodges a formal complaint on her behalf with higher levels of the ZRP. This ad-hoc advocacy is complemented by the presentation of petitions and more explicit lobbying of the police and policy-makers. Sheelagh Stewart, a co-founder of Musasa, suggests that the organization became radicalized as it moved from being a ‘helping’ organization to campaigning for cultural and legislative change.⁹³

The state’s reaction to the formation – and popularity – of the Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project (MZWP) an explicitly policy-oriented group in 1991, is also instructive. MZWP was formed by group of mainly white businesspeople in Matabeleland, to promote the idea of a pipeline to bring water to the drought-stricken areas of Matabeleland from the Zambezi River. Despite its narrow origins, this group galvanized public support from all sectors of Bulawayo society, with donations coming from schoolchildren, factory workers, the city council and local businesses. By 1994, the MZWP had collected a total of ZWD 8 million. Despite having Dumiso Dabengwa, then Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, as chair, the scheme was seen with some suspicion by the ruling party. In 1994, a new NGO called the Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project Trust, was launched, which had representation from the MZWP, the Bulawayo City Council, the Matabeleland Chamber of Industry, the Chamber of Commerce, the Matabeleland Action Group (a group of ZANU PF politicians), ZANU-PF Bulawayo, ZANU-PF Matabeleland North, ZANU-PF Matabeleland South, the Commercial Farmers Union, the Zimbabwe Farmers Union and the government. While the government had been

⁹¹ Interview, Rudo Kwaramba, Musasa Project, 25 September 1995.

⁹² Interview, Rudo Kwaramba, Musasa Project, 25 September 1995.

⁹³ Sheelagh Stewart, “Working with a radical agenda: the Musasa project, Zimbabwe” *Gender and Development*, 3, 1 (1995), 30-35.

hostile to the MZWP, it seemed to have accepted the involvement of an NGO in the policy-making process, but required it to be less confrontational.⁹⁴

In the 1990s, some existing NGOs started paying attention to new sets of issues. In 1993, the Zimbabwe Council of Churches diversified their activities and created a Justice, Peace and Reconciliation (JPR) desk, to deal with issues of economic justice and civic education.⁹⁵ The ZCC also claims credit for having lobbied the Electoral Supervisory Commission to permit NGOs and Churches to monitor the 1995 parliamentary election.⁹⁶ After that election, churches and NGOs which had been involved in election-monitoring, formed a coalition to pursue civic education in preparation for future elections. They organized workshops and meetings throughout the country, bringing local church members and community activists together to talk about civic issues.⁹⁷

Ecumenical Support Services, a small but very active church-based NGO, started out as a theological reflection group in 1992. Run by an ecumenical and inter-racial group of lay Christians, committed to “achieve liberation and self-reliance for the oppressed, poor, marginalized and disadvantaged” it began to organize meetings and conferences on religious topics ranging from economic justice to gender discrimination.⁹⁸ As a small NGO, with no membership and only two paid staff members, but substantial funding from European Church groups, it has chosen to tackle quite controversial topics. In 1997, when most Zimbabwean

⁹⁴ Derek Gunby, Roger Mpande, and Alan Thomas, “The campaign for water from the Zambezi for Bulawayo” in Alan Thomas, Susan Carr and David Humphreys, eds. *Environmental Policies and NGO Influence: land degradation and sustainable resources management in sub-saharan africa* (London: Routledge, 2001), 72-93.

⁹⁵ Interview, Tawanda Mutasah, ZCC-JPR 15 September 1995.

⁹⁶ ZCC, Annual report 1994-1995. 5 July 1995, 56; Research notes, Dean Simukai Mutamangira, ZCC Election briefing, 20 June 2000.

⁹⁷ Research notes, Church-NGO Civic Education Project, Chitungwiza Workshop, 2-3 November 1996; See also, Church-NGO Civic Education Project, Harare Province Workshop Report, 28-19 September 1996; Church-NGO Civic Education Project, Chitungwiza Workshop Report, 2-3 November 1996; Church-NGO Civic Education Project, Highfield Workshop Report, 9-10 November 1996.

⁹⁸ ESS, “Liberation and Self-reliance through Ecumenical Action based on Radical Christian Commitment” leaflet, c. 1997.

Churches were actively supporting the President's anti-homosexuality campaign, ESS's co-ordinator, Jonah Gokova, issued a progressive statement on homosexuality and Christianity, which condemned the reaction of both church and state:

It is very unfortunate that some elements within the Church in Zimbabwe have contributed ideologically to the persecution of homosexuals by the state without bothering to address fundamental questions to do with Christ's teaching of love, understanding, compassion and tolerance.⁹⁹

ESS's internationally recognized gender programme, Padare/Enkundhleni/Men's Forum on Gender also broke taboos by involving men in discussions of gender violence.¹⁰⁰ Another unusual emphasis of ESS's programmes was to provide capacity-building workshops for membership NGOs and community-based organizations, rather than attempting to build up its own membership.¹⁰¹ Links developed through these workshops were then called upon when ESS began establishing coalitions of NGOs to work together on controversial issues (as discussed in Chapter 6).

Despite the positive note on which state-NGO relations had started at independence and subsequent meetings to advance co-operation in NGO - state relations, by the end of the 1990s, the regime was increasingly suspicious that NGOs were no longer co-operating as part of the development process.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ ESS. "Sexual Orientation in Zimbabwe: A Christian Reflection" 1997.

¹⁰⁰ The Hunger Project, "Africa Prize for Leadership Winners Announced" September 12, 2001; The Hunger Project. "Overflow Crowd Honors African Leaders in the Fight Against HIV/AIDS: The 14th Africa Prize for Leadership held in New York on October 13th" 2001.

¹⁰¹ ESS, Public Policy Analysis Training Workshop 29 May - 2 June 1995; ESS, [Report on] Workshop on the effects of ESAP on Zimbabwean NGOs and their services. 20-24th March 1995; ESS, [Report on] Public Policy Analysis Training Follow-up Workshop Chibanguza Hotel, Mrewa. 29-31 July 1996.

¹⁰² "NGO-Government Relations: Lessons from India; Challenges for Zimbabwe" 1990 organized with the Commonwealth secretariat as part of the lead up to the 1991 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM) and a follow-up NEPC and NANGO sponsored workshop on "Government of Zimbabwe and NGO Relations in Development" (1993).

5.4 ZimRights: “To the Extent of Doom”?

As a high-profile human rights organization in Zimbabwe, ZimRights followed a more confrontational path than the older, development-oriented NGOs on which we have so far focused. However, ZimRights succumbed to infighting and terminal collapse just when state-society relations in Zimbabwe were at their most critical, losing much of its funding in 1999-2000 and declaring bankruptcy in June 2001.¹⁰³ The state had consistently targeted ZimRights for attack over the years. As one member put it “..the party of the present government has waged a protracted war against ZimRights membership countrywide to the extent of doom.”¹⁰⁴ Some describe this as the CIO’s most effective infiltration of civil society to date.¹⁰⁵ There is no doubt that ZimRights’ collapse suited the interests of the state. However, an examination of the broader history, impact of donor funding and organizational development of ZimRights helps us to understand the organization’s vulnerability to external and internal challenges.

ZimRights was founded in 1992 by a group of prominent professionals and activists including lawyers, doctors, an award winning author, and a former prime minister of Southern Rhodesia.¹⁰⁶ It was Zimbabwe’s only significant NGO dedicated explicitly to human rights issues. As such, it was perhaps inevitable that ZimRights was both visible and controversial within Zimbabwean politics. Indeed, since its founding ZimRights has rarely been out of the headlines, ironically, most often providing the story itself, rather than uncovering human rights abuses.

ZimRights was both a membership organization and a professionally-run NGO. Its offices provided membership services and co-ordinated donor-funded programmes. The latter

¹⁰³ Although there are signs that ZimRights has continued to function in a much reduced capacity, I shall examine only the period until the declaration of bankruptcy.

¹⁰⁴ Memo from the Gweru Chair of ZimRights to the National Director, 16 December 1996, 5.

¹⁰⁵ For example, discussion with John Makumbe 18 June 2001; see also David Jamali, “How to sustain a human rights organisation in the face of challenges and sabotage: a case of ZimRights - Zimbabwe” unpublished paper, Coady International Institute, 2000.

¹⁰⁶ “New Human rights organisation formed” *Herald* 22 May 1992.

included projects run by the Education, Information and Legal departments. The Education department organized civic education workshops in peri-urban and rural areas. The Information office, which relied on a steady stream of foreign interns, mainly issued press releases and published the membership newsletters. The Legal Desk, which came into being in May 1996, gave legal advice to members and clients, as well as the organization.

5.4.1 Membership, Staff and Employment Opportunities

The grass-roots of ZimRights were its estimated 14 000 members. Membership gave ZimRights a particular cachet with donors, who want to work with grass-roots organizations. Further, the existence of ZimRights' members gave a certain weight to its pronouncements in the press. Yet a membership survey which I carried out in 1997 suggested that most members felt they had neither been adequately informed nor involved in the organization.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, membership lists, which would enable members to at least receive newsletters, have tended to be sketchy and addresses frequently incorrect. Relatively few members ever actually received the publications of the information desk. The Gweru chair claimed that none of the 300 plus members of his branch ever received a ZimRights publication.¹⁰⁸

In contrast, ZimRights' élite is the Advisory Board — composed of well-known public figures who lend prestige to the organization, such as Sir Garfield Todd, Enoch Dumbutshena, Chenjerai Hove, and Morgan Tsvangirai. Members were represented through a structure of regional committees, known as Regional Councils, the chairs of which were automatically members of the National Council, the main policy-making body, to which others were also elected at the AGM. Councils did not exist consistently in all provinces, but have tended to reflect the existence of donor-funded projects, which catalyze membership and

¹⁰⁷ ZimRights, "Self-evaluation report" March 1997.

¹⁰⁸ Memo from the Gweru Chair of ZimRights to the National Director, 16 December 1996.

organization. Some regional councils were quite actively involved in nationally-driven activities such as workshops and election-monitoring, while others pursued local human rights cases, which are brought to their attention. In rural areas, regional council members may have been quite involved in complaints relating to land tenure, for instance attempts to remove squatters, disputes over land ownership or water usage rights. More recently, they also supported communities displaced by political violence.

In between the membership and the Advisory Board is the National Council which used to oversee much of the day-to-day management of the organization, but since 1994 the Executive Director and staff took on increased responsibilities and the Council met less frequently. This was a matter of regret for some older members who remembered the old ‘activist’ days fondly. Inevitably there was been conflict between Council and staff, as many of the older members believe that they had more commitment to the issues than the new, younger, staff.¹⁰⁹ Council members, especially those based in Harare or Bulawayo, did continue to exercise some authority until 1996, as they sat on committees which supervised particular areas or programmes. However, these ‘activist’ council members tended to demand input into day to day management, leading to staff complaints of interference. In reaction, committees were abolished, except on an ‘ad-hoc’ basis, further reinforcing staff-control over decision-making.

Many older council members – those who recall the ‘good old days’ – suggested that the people employed by ZimRights were not ‘activists’ in the sense of those who were involved in starting the organization.¹¹⁰ There was also a sense of nine-to-fiveism and an expectation

¹⁰⁹ Interview, Arnold Payne, National Vice-chair, ZimRights, 26 February 1997.

¹¹⁰ Discussions with National Councillors throughout 1996-7; issues raised at Institutional Development Workshop, 5-6 April, 1997, see Thoko Ruzvidzo and Alice Zinyemba, *Report on ZimRights Institutional Development Workshop*, 5-6 April, 1997, n.d. esp. pp. 18-19. The main outcome of this workshop, which discussed the conflicts between National Council and Secretariat, was to abolish sub-committees through which National Council had supervised secretariat structures, *i.e.* to strengthen the Secretariat’s position vis-a-vis the Council.

that volunteers would be paid for the time they put in outside regular office hours, although this reflects a wider attitude in the Zimbabwean NGO community, reinforced by the dire economic situations of many. However, ZimRights did not see a simple withering of the Council. Former Council members formed the backbone of the secretariat as well — of the twenty-four employees in 1997, six were former National Council members, and these were often in particularly powerful positions within the organization.

As more staff were hired divisions between staff and membership became blurred. When ZimRights was formed, all the staff of ZimRights were volunteers, who were paid allowances and eventually given salaries. Subsequently, ZimRights has expanded immensely, moving from two part-time staff in 1993, to three full-time staff members in 1994, to eight in 1995, eleven in 1996, twenty-four in 1997, and forty in 1998. External evaluators in 1997 recommended the decentralization of the secretariat which resulted in the opening of regional offices in Bulawayo, Midlands, Mashonaland East, Masvingo and Mutare, all requiring their own staff. This might have contributed to ZimRights strengthening its membership base and diminishing the power of the Harare central office, but at the same time it strengthened the Secretariat.

In addition to the six former National Council members who became staff members, other positions were filled by ZimRights members and/or volunteers who turned voluntary positions into paid ones. While it is difficult to be conclusive, my research suggests that at least half the secretariat from 1996 onwards were members or volunteers who had fundraised and created full-time jobs for themselves.

Indeed, for some, being active in an NGO like ZimRights is only possible when unemployed, but is also seen as a 'job' in so far as it occupies one's time, inspires respect in the community, and brings in some remuneration. It is not insignificant, perhaps, that a listing of National Council members for 1999-2001 identifies 8 out of 20 as 'unemployed' — although

some of them might dispute this label, preferring to be described as ‘self-employed’.¹¹¹ The saliency of this issue is most strongly revealed in the dependence on ‘per diems’ given to members for attending meetings. Theoretically, per diems cover out-of-pocket expenses, recognizing that receipts are rarely available on informal-sector transport. In reality, though, the money is an incentive to attend, or at least a reward for attending. For Harare based participants, 1997 AGM transport expenses were unlikely to have been higher than ZWD 30 (USD3), for transport from most suburbs to the city centre, where transport was organized to take delegates to the conference centre in an outlying suburb. However, all delegates received ZWD100.00 (USD10.00) attendance allowances per diem, which grew to ZWD200 in later years.

5.4.2 Activities and Advocacy

Most ZimRights’ activities were organized by the staff and not the membership. They tended not to emphasize human rights *per se* – instead they resembled civic education and legal aid projects run by other NGOs throughout the country. While the membership structures did channel some grass-roots concerns to the national level, most staff were occupied with relatively uncontroversial donor-funded ‘projects’. Occasionally, the ZimRights information office responded to current political events by issuing press releases. While many of these were picked up by the government and independent media, reference to particularly sensitive incidents provoked attack from the ruling party.

Within a month of its formation, ZimRights was in the media, defending the inclusion on its board of former Chief Justice Enoch Dumbutshena, denying any link with Dumbutshena’s Forum for Democratic Reform Trust, which went on to become the Forum Party.¹¹² And then, at the official launch, Garfield Todd, the former Southern Rhodesian

¹¹¹ ZimRights. “ZimRights National Council, 1999-2001 April”.

¹¹² “We are not Political, says ZimRights” *Weekend Gazette*, 5 June 1992, 5.

Prime Minister, attacked the state press, comparing their editors to the three monkeys who see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil. In the racially charged environment, this was interpreted in the worst possible way by the state-controlled *Sunday Mail*: “Zimpapers editors are monkeys.”¹¹³ And, in the same speech, he also criticized the decision to promote Perence Shiri, former commander of 5 Brigade, to Air Force Commander, which led to another acrimonious exchange in the media, in which Defence Minister Moven Mahachi challenged Todd’s record on human rights while Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia.¹¹⁴

ZimRights was again targeted in the official media in November 1995, in the aftermath of a rally protesting police brutality. While pursuing petty criminals, police officers accidentally shot and killed three by-standers. The protest march organized by ZimRights, degenerated into rioting and looting. In an inflammatory speech, President Mugabe labeled ZimRights “ZimLooters” and a “gangster organization.” ZimRights denied that the rioting and looting had any link at all to their protest, suggesting that the march had concluded and dispersed long before the riots, and that ZANU(PF) youths were responsible for the violence.¹¹⁵

In 1996, ZimRights also came under attack in the government-controlled media, for their support for a sustained and damaging strike by doctors and nurses. The largest civil service strike since independence appeared to be resolved by the offer of a 20 percent increment.¹¹⁶ However, nurses and junior doctors in Harare resumed the strike in October in protest against delays in contractual negotiations to confirm the increment.¹¹⁷ They were joined

¹¹³ “Zimpaper editors are monkeys, says Todd” *Sunday Mail*, 30 August, 1992, 1.

¹¹⁴ “Fifth Brigade – Mahachi replies Todd” *Sunday Mail*, 6 September 1992, 1; “Don’t point accusing finger – ZimRights” *Herald* 9 September 1992, 3.

¹¹⁵ Cris Chanaka, “Mugabe labels Zimbabwe human rights activists gangsters” *Reuters* 13 December 1995.

¹¹⁶ “State orders a ‘blackout on strike’” *MISA* 28 August 1996; “Civil servants strike to continue” *Independent*, 30 August 1996; “Civil Servant strike costs \$120 million” *Independent* 30 August 1996; John Vekris, “Chronicle of two strikes” *Social Change and Development* February 1997, 3-7, 29.

¹¹⁷ “Government slated for its handling of strike” *Independent* 15 November 1996; John Vekris, “Chronicle of two strikes” *Social Change and Development* February 1997, 3-7, 29.

by medical staff from Bulawayo and other regional hospitals after strikers were dismissed, and the strike leaders were prosecuted.¹¹⁸ In October, the nurses and junior doctors were dismissed by the government. Their union, the Zimbabwe Nurses Association (ZINA), denied any further responsibility for them and they were tear-gassed when they attempted to congregate at their union headquarters. They then sought sanctuary at ZimRights – an interesting choice, because the leader of their union, Clara Nondo, was a member of the ZimRights National Council. ZimRights let the nurses and doctors meet on their premises during the day – in lieu of picketing – and let their leaders use ZimRights telephones and faxes. On their own front, ZimRights issued several press releases to the media about the need to resolve the strike issue, and in particular, appealed to MPs to find a solution, which led to a very critical discussion of the issue in Parliament.¹¹⁹ ZimRights was attacked for this very visible and public support of the nurses and doctors in both a *Herald* news story and an editorial, which claimed that the strike was ‘hardly normal’ and alleged outside interference. The editorial claimed that ZimRights had been used as a conduit to transfer ZWD 2 million from ‘foreign well-wishers’ to the nurses and doctors, although this was firmly denied.¹²⁰

A more pro-active project was undertaken in 1996 when an American intern, Charlie Cater, proposed that ZimRights conduct research on the human rights abuses in Matabeleland with the intention of publishing a book. Even here, of course, Cater was reacting to the CCJP and LRF project which drew primarily on records of human rights abuses collected by the CCJP in the early 1980s. Cater proposed that ZimRights should interview survivors of the *Gukurahundi* in the interest of providing a more contextualized and analytical account of the

¹¹⁸ “Strikes spread countrywide” *Independent* 8 November 1996; John Vekris, “Chronicle of two strikes” *Social Change and Development* February 1997, 3-7, 29.

¹¹⁹ ZimRights Information Dept, “Junior Doctors and Nurses Strike: Report to ZimRights Advisory Board and Council” 6 December 1996.

¹²⁰ “Fired Nurses await pledged cash” *Herald* 24 December 1996, 1; “Editorial: Nurses and doctors strike was hardly normal” *Herald* 25 December 1996, 4; ZimRights Press release, “The Herald Xmas day comment” 27 December 1996.

period. He solicited donor funding for the project mostly from European embassies, and conducted much of the research himself, with the aid of ZimRights members in Matabeleland. In January 1997, following the conclusion of Cater's internship and his departure from Zimbabwe, I took over what we thought were the final stages of production – copy-editing, lay-out and production. At the time, we thought the major delay would be waiting for the cover-art, which we had commissioned from a talented local artist and the foreword which was to be written by the then ZimRights' Chair, Reginald Matchaba-Hove. While I waited for this material, I liaised with the LRF's Dave Coltart and the CCJP's Mike Auret on the publication of their long-awaited book. We agreed that their book would come out first, as the CCJP itself negotiated with the Bishops' Conference, which was unwilling to publish the book without prior approval from the President.¹²¹ This process, was, however, circumvented by leaking of the CCJP/LRF book to the South African *Mail and Guardian* newspaper in March.

In May I left ZimRights with printer-ready text – with exception of Chair's foreword – with cover-art, and quotes from publishers, and schedule and bookings for its launch. However, despite pressure from the donors who wanted the project completed on deadline, there was a further hiatus after the ZimRights 1997 AGM while the newly appointed National Council members – many of whom who had not been councillors previously and did not know of the existence of the publication – considered the draft.¹²² Those with personal knowledge of the Matabeleland conflict wanted their experiences included and were concerned that it missed events they considered significant. Eventually, the text was deemed to conform with the demands of the National Council, giving them a sense of ownership over the project. In February 1999, another foreign intern, Rigmor Argren, took up the task and again collected quotes from printers. From this stage, Argren started documenting delays and categorizing them as internal (ZimRights) or external (technical hold-ups at the printers). Of the 11

¹²¹ Research Notes, February 1997.

¹²² Interview, Munyaradzi Bidi, Acting Director ZimRights, 13 September 1999.

documented delays between February and August, 8 were internal to ZimRights – delays caused by controversies between staff and council members about the title of the book and responsibility for the foreword. In the end, the Executive Director wrote a foreword and the book was released in October 1999 nearly two years after its text was finalized.¹²³ By this time, discussion of the Matabeleland conflict had become less sensitive owing to widespread media discussion and the acceptance of culpability by some party and army officials.

The Matabeleland book was probably the most controversial project undertaken by ZimRights between 1992 and 1999. The book was both a product and a victim of ZimRights' organizational culture. The informality of ZimRights' office life allowed Cater to get approval for the book from the Executive Director and Chairman:

Chimhini [the director] was initially very supportive because he wanted the organization to be seen to be doing 'serious work' like other NGOs that publish books and document abuses ... Matchaba-Hove [the chairman] appeared to be most concerned about what the donors would think and how they would react...he did not want the project to jeopardise funding for the organization by being too controversial, but once the donors lined up with funding, then he showed some support.¹²⁴

However, their commitment to the project was weak, because there were more potential costs than benefits to such a controversial project and publication was easily delayed once the newly elected Council members expressed concern. The book's eventual publication, with which staff members credit Director David Chimhini, was probably influenced by donors who wanted the organization to account for the expenditure of their funding.

¹²³ ZimRights, *Choosing the Path to Peace and Development: Coming to terms with Human Rights Violations of the 1982-1987 Conflict in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces* (Harare: ZimRights, 1999); "ZimRights releases report on '80s atrocities" *Financial Gazette*, November 11, 1999; "ZimRights launches book on civil strife" *Herald* 5 November 1999.

¹²⁴ Personal Communication, Charles Cater, 7 August 2001.

5.4.3 Leadership Struggles and Organizational Growth

As the previous sub-section suggests, ZimRights did come under attack from the state and its intelligence operatives, but it suffered more grievously from internal, personalized conflicts arising from the blurred distinction between members and staff discussed in 5.4.1. To date, these have been little considered in accounts of ZimRights' troubled history, which either ignore ZimRights problems, or blame them all on malicious infiltration.¹²⁵

ZimRights' first Secretary-General was the former director of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) Nick Ndebele, who, it is widely believed, had been forced to resign from the CCJP in 1991 owing to accusations of financial mismanagement.¹²⁶ These allegations made Ndebele an ambiguous figure, but many continued to respect his championing the cause of those tortured and brutalized in Matabeleland in the 1980s. Ndebele "...with no thought for his own safety, had traveled through the troubled areas of Matabeleland and the Midlands interviewing people who had been the victims of atrocities."¹²⁷ He did not escape unscathed. As previously discussed, Ndebele was arrested and detained under the Rhodesian-era Law and Order Maintenance Act. He and his family were also been traumatized during the conflict, in which his father was detained and tortured and his grandfather was allegedly shot by government soldiers disguised as dissidents. His grandmother was forced to cut off her husband's limbs; she later committed suicide.¹²⁸

In 1992, after serving as Secretary-General of ZimRights for only a few months, Ndebele was replaced by Oziya Tungwarara, after further accusations of financial irregularity

¹²⁵ See for instance, Sarah Helen Chiumbu, *Democracy, Human rights and the Media* Masters Thesis University of Oslo, Dept of Media and Communication 1997; David Jamali, "How to sustain a human rights organisation in the face of challenges and sabotage: a case of ZimRights - Zimbabwe" unpublished paper, Coady International Institute, 2000.

¹²⁶ "Catholic Commission director quits" *Sunday Mail*, 31 March 1991, 3.

¹²⁷ Auret, *Reaching for Justice*, 162.

¹²⁸ Auret, *Reaching for Justice* 161-2; ZimRights, *Choosing the path to Peace and development*, (Harare: ZimRights, 1999) section 4.3; Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, *Zimbabwe: Wages of War* (New York, Lawyers Committee), 28.

– charges he always strenuously denied, but which were lodged by the highly respected Zimbabwe Project, which had been providing offices and access to phones for ZimRights, as well as ‘banking’ their monies. They claimed that cash advances had been requested by Ndebele, of which the Council had remained unaware.¹²⁹ Ndebele later claimed that his dismissal was because in 1992 he had again highlighted issues around the Matabeleland massacres—alleging that human remains found near a CIO building were linked to the Matabeleland disappearances.¹³⁰ Nevertheless, as a member of the organization, Ndebele continued as chair of the human rights education committee, and, as we shall see, was given a full-time job organizing human rights education in 1994.

After this initial controversy, ZimRights grew gradually and relatively smoothly from 1993 until 1995 under Tungwarara’s leadership. Programmes and budgets had expanded and ZimRights acquired new staff members and moved in 1995, from cramped city-centre offices to a spacious, if somewhat run-down, house on the outskirts of the Central Business District. In the tense political environment of 1995, which was an election year, ZimRights began to feel they were being targeted by a ‘destabilization’ campaign, typified by Mugabe’s labeling them “ZimLooters.”¹³¹ This feeling of attack intensified in late 1995 when a document was circulated accusing Tungwarara of sexual misbehaviour. ZimRights has always claimed that this was planted by the CIO plant. Despite support within the organization, he left soon afterwards. He was replaced by David Chimhini, a ZimRights member and former employee of the Zimbabwe Teachers Association.

Despite his dismissal as Secretary-General, Nick Ndebele had remained a member of ZimRights, and he had returned as a paid employee of ZimRights, in 1994, working as

¹²⁹ Anonymous National Council Member, “A case study of ZimRights” 8; “ZimRights man replaced” *Herald* 4 November 1992, 1; Interview, Nick Ndebele 27 November 1996; Interview, Nick Ndebele 27 September 1999.

¹³⁰ Interview, Nick Ndebele 27 September 1999.

¹³¹ ZimRights, “Minutes of the ZimRights 3rd AGM, 27-28 April 1996”, 4.

education officer until 1996. When Tungwarara left, Ndebele applied for his job: “as the second most senior employee” Ndebele felt that he was the “obvious” successor to Tungwarara.¹³² However, when asked in his interview how ZimRights should relate to the CIO, Ndebele says he answered that it was best to make information available to the CIO, so as to “clear misunderstandings.”¹³³ Soon after this, a story appeared in the respected weekly *Financial Gazette* saying, that Ndebele had admitted to being a CIO agent, and the job went to David Chimhini.

Ndebele lost his job as Education Officer with ZimRights the next year, when Ford Foundation funding for the project expired. But soon after, a new department for civic education for community theatre, funded by Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA) was opened and therefore the new civic education officers were hired, who had both worked in the Zimbabwe Association of Community Theatre (ZACT).¹³⁴ Ndebele claimed that the new director, David Chimhini, had manufactured the move from Ford Foundation funding to the NPA project as an excuse to get rid of him.

The claims that Ndebele was a CIO informant continue to reverberate, despite an apology made by Reginald Matchaba-Hove for the rumour at the 1997 AGM.¹³⁵ Many of Ndebele’s former close associates steered clear of him and concerted efforts were made within the organization to prevent him holding an elected office at either regional or national levels, though these proved unsuccessful.¹³⁶

¹³² Interview, Nick Ndebele, 27 September 1999.

¹³³ Interview, Nick Ndebele, 27 September 1999; This is, I suspect, standard practice for most NGOs in Zimbabwe. See for instance, Peggy Watson, *Determined to Act: the first 15 years of the Women’s Action Group*, pp. 40-41, which notes that WAG had always invited the CIO to their workshops and provided them with copies of workshop reports. Many other Zimbabwean NGOs report similar relations to the CIO.

¹³⁴ Interview, Emma Chiseya and Cousin Zilala, 8 October 1996.

¹³⁵ Research notes, ZimRights AGM, Adelaide Acres, 10 May 1997.

¹³⁶ Research notes, ZimRights Harare Regional Council AGM, 19 April 1997.

Nevertheless, despite these internal conflicts, ZimRights grew even more rapidly under Chimhini's guidance. The numbers of staff more than doubled between 1996 and 1997, and then doubled again between 1997 and 1998. Similarly, membership doubled from a claimed 3000 in both October 1995¹³⁷ and April 1996,¹³⁸ to 6 000 in May 1997,¹³⁹ to 10 000 in 1997, and 14 000 in 1998.¹⁴⁰ This growth served to exacerbate internal tensions further. Unemployed, and smarting from rejections, Nick Ndebele had made no attempt to hide his interest in either the Directorship or the Chairmanship. He was unsuccessful in his bid to win control of the Harare Regional Council in 1997 but was subsequently elected to represent Harare on the National Council.¹⁴¹ In 1999, he was elected Chair of the Council. When Reginald Matchaba-Hove resigned the Chair in 1999, the anti-Ndebele faction felt sure that they had guaranteed the election of academic Charles Nhachi as Chair and Paul Nyathi as Vice-Chair.¹⁴² Indeed, they have accused Ndebele of unfairly influencing 'naive, rural' voters into voting for him as an anti-élite candidate.¹⁴³

It was clear from the outset that, despite protestations to the contrary, David Chimhini, who had presided over Ndebele's departure as education officer, would be unable to work with Ndebele, and *vice-versa*. The Advisory Board, composed of several members who had previously been Councillors and had resigned in protest at Ndebele's election as Chair, intervened, advising that, Ndebele should resign for the good of the organization. Allegations

¹³⁷ ZimRights, Director's report to the 2nd AGM October 1995, 1.

¹³⁸ ZimRights, Report of the 3rd AGM, 27-28 April 1996, 8.

¹³⁹ ZimRights, National chairman's report to the 4th AGM, 10 May 1997, 2.

¹⁴⁰ ZimRights, 1998 Annual Report, 18.

¹⁴¹ Research Notes, ZimRights Harare Regional Council AGM, 19 April 1997.

¹⁴² Much of the following is based on interviews with: Munyaradzi Bhidi, Acting Director 13 September 1999; Peter Maregare, Legal Officer, 13 September 1999; Paul Themba Nyathi, former National Council Member, 16 September 1999; Weston Kwete (member) and Never Gadaga, former Information Officer, 24 September 1999; David Chimhini, [Former] Director, 4 October 1999; Interview, Reginald Matchaba-Hove, Zimbabwe Human Rights Association, 8 October 1999.

¹⁴³ Interview, Paul Themba Nyathi, Zimbabwe Human Rights Association, 16 September 1999; Interview, Reginald Matchaba-Hove, Zimbabwe Human Rights Association, 8 October 1999.

against Ndebele at this point included his firing as Secretary-General of ZimRights in 1992 over alleged financial mismanagement, unpaid debts to the organization, and alleged connections with the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO).

Ndebele also began to articulate political positions which were very much at odds with the attitudes of most other NGO élites. For instance, influenced by a particular strain of radical Africanism, he wrote a letter of support to President Mugabe over Zimbabwe's intervention into the Congo War.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, he backed campaigns against the white judges, who Mugabe was also attacking.¹⁴⁵ He later tried to pull ZimRights out of the National Constitutional Assembly framework, just as it was squaring up to the government.¹⁴⁶ At a time when politics in Zimbabwe was becoming more and more polarized, the closeness of policy between ZimRights and the President's pet projects was interpreted by observers as complicity.

Replicating the scandal over Tungwarara in 1995, Ndebele then leaked allegations that Chimhini had sexually harassed his former secretary to the ruling party's paper.¹⁴⁷ A month later, it was also alleged that there had been financial mismanagement, although internal investigations failed to reveal any wrong-doing.¹⁴⁸

In August, Chimhini organized a meeting between staff and donors at which he emphasized the importance of the staff in the running of ZimRights, hinted at the dangers of 'uncontrolled' membership decisions for such an organization, and enunciated a plan under

¹⁴⁴ Basildon Peta, "ZimRights fumes over chairman Ndebele's praise letter to Mugabe" *Daily News*, 11 May 1999.

¹⁴⁵ Interview, Nick Ndebele, 27 September 1999. See also, "Ndebele's fate in the balance", *Standard* 23 May 1999; "Gubbay, ZimRights boss clash over alleged racism" *Financial Gazette*, 6 January 2000.

¹⁴⁶ "ZimRights unhappy with NCA decision" *Chronicle*, 26 July 1999, 9.

¹⁴⁷ "Sex Scandal at ZimRights" *The People's Voice* 28 June 1999.

¹⁴⁸ Stephen Ndlovu, "Misuse of funds alleged at ZimRights" *Sunday Mail*, 18 July 1999; ZimRights "NO Misuse and abuse of funds" Press statement, 25 July 1999; "ZimRights denies report on books" *Herald* 30 July 1999.

which ZimRights would become a Trust which would be more active in lobbying and advocacy and eschew membership-driven activities.¹⁴⁹

Upon hearing of this meeting, the National Council voted to suspend Chimhini, and seek his dismissal, describing his actions as an attempt to sideline both them and the membership. Chimhini, on the other hand, suggests that Ndebele was under pressure from his ‘supporters’ to remove him from the office. Chimhini was correct to note that the then extant ZimRights constitutional structures were not equipped to rein in a ‘rogue’ chair.¹⁵⁰ Council members might not agree with statements being issued by Ndebele, but they had no formal sanction. They were dispersed across the country and communication with them was not always possible, nor was it feasible to arrange *ad-hoc* meetings.

Unlike Matchaba-Hove, who was both on the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Zimbabwe and kept up a profitable private practice, Ndebele was unemployed or periodically self-employed and quite prepared to become Chair full-time. In the circumstances, it surprised few that, although a former employee was brought in as Acting-Director, Ndebele essentially took over the position, using the Director’s office and issuing statements which would previously have come from the Director.

Chimhini pursued a case for unfair dismissal, which he won in August 2000.¹⁵¹ ZimRights protested against his reinstatement but lost that suit as well in February 2001, a decision which required them to pay him some months of back pay and costs, which amounted to more than ZWD 1 million.¹⁵² In the interim, he founded the Zimbabwe Civic Education Trust, as he had earlier advocated, which has attracted funding from some of ZimRights

¹⁴⁹ See for example, the documentation prepared for this meeting: “Donor’s/Partners meeting with ZimRights” 19 August 1999, paper presented by David A Chimhini and David Chimhini, ZIMCET proposal n.d..

¹⁵⁰ David Jamali, “How to sustain a human rights organisation” discusses this point usefully.

¹⁵¹ “Chimhini, ZimRights saga takes a new twist” *Daily News* 11 October 2000.

¹⁵² “ZimRights loses appeal against reinstating Executive Director” *Daily News* 2 February 2001

former donors. He was briefly the administrator of the new opposition party MDC and active in another organization entitled United People for National Survival. The state, and especially the state media, has not been slow in trying to play off the divide between ZimRights loyalists and those who left with Chimhini.¹⁵³ At the same time, however, Ndebele was forced to resign as ZimRights chair by members who saw his resignation as the only way to salvage the organization.¹⁵⁴ However, in June 2001 the remaining rump of ZimRights admitted that it could no longer pay salaries, as there were no incoming donor funds.¹⁵⁵ Donors, who had flooded ZimRights with substantial funding, began removing their financial support soon after Ndebele's election as Chair, in response to letters from Chimhini.¹⁵⁶ ZimRights has since sold its headquarters to settle its debts.¹⁵⁷

5.4.4 Understanding ZimRights' Collapse

ZimRight's demise had a number of causes. These included: a protracted and unequal confrontation with the Zimbabwean state, the internal dynamics of the organization in a setting where NGOs become a preferred source of employment for their ostensibly 'volunteer' members and the funds with which donors supplied it. All of these factors should lead us to be skeptical that NGOs – by virtue of their 'voluntary' nature – represent a panacea for donors trying to foster grass-roots advocacy as part of some larger governance or civil-society project.

Even if one discounts assertions that ZimRights was the victim of CIO machinations, the organization was in an isolated position throughout its brief existence. Without the protection of a larger body grounded in Zimbabwean society – the CCJP, for example, was

¹⁵³ "Crusade against newspapers unconstitutional says Moyo" *Herald* 29 March 2001.

¹⁵⁴ "Ndebele resigns as ZimRights chairman" *Daily News* 29 August 2000; David Jamali, "How to sustain a human rights organisation"; various discussions with Jamali and others in September 1999 and June 2000

¹⁵⁵ Pedzisai Ruhanya, "ZimRights goes bankrupt" *Daily News* 13 June 2001.

¹⁵⁶ Interview, Clare Morris and Hilary MacKay, Westminster Foundation, London, 30 January 2001; Letter from David Chimhini to unspecified donors, dated 10 September 1999.

¹⁵⁷ Collin Chiwanza, "ZimRights puts office on sale" *Daily News* 10 August 2001.

bolstered by its position within the Catholic Church – it had little protection when singled out for attack. ZimRights was also one of the only NGOs in Zimbabwe which occasionally used Moyo’s oppositional tactics by issuing press releases and organizing demonstrations. No other Zimbabwean organization was so regularly attacked in the media by President Mugabe and such pressures contributed to internal tensions and suspicions. Yet, at the same time, ZimRights’ only pro-active attempt to document human right abuses – the Matabeleland book – was initiated and carried through almost entirely by volunteer interns from the US, Canada, and Sweden.

Perhaps even more crucially, the resources to which ZimRights had access made it a site of even more determined contestation. Its objectives as an advocacy organization were undermined by the job-creating and resource-distributing functions it came to serve. For example, one of the issues of conflict between David Chimhini and Nick Ndebele in 1999 was a proposal to remove sitting allowances for Council members and staff to attend meetings. This was a particular threat to those councillors who were unemployed, many of whom were allied to, or sympathetic to the position of, Ndebele who played a populist card against the ‘élite’.

The intra-organizational divisions are on one level merely a fight between two disparate personalities and their factions, exacerbated by both sides’ willingness to use the press to press their points. Ndebele’s relation, Weston Kwete, became a reporter for the explicitly pro-ZANU *Sunday Mail* and leaked many of the anti-Chimhini stories. On the other hand, the independent press did publish a vituperative exchange between Chimhini and Matchaba-Hove on the one side versus Ndebele, and the former ZimRights’ information officer Never Gadaga, with the dubious, but high-profile, backing of Jonathan Moyo.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ Never Gadaga, “ZimRights infighting open’s a Pandora’s box” *Independent* 21 May 1999; David Chimhini, “Gadaga’s ramblings on ZimRights complete lies” Letter to the Editor *Independent* 4 June 1999; Reginald Matchaba-Hove, “Attack on ZimRights reveals wider covert strategy” *Independent* 4 June 1999; “ZimRights breaks all the tenets of democracy-

However, while this reveals the dangers implicit in hiring councillors as staff it also reflects the ability of a large, professionalized secretariat to alienate membership. Ndebele has always described himself as the founder of ZimRights and feels that he deserved more respect from the organization. ZimRights under Chimhini's leadership had gained a high profile and large increases in donor funds, all of which had merely led to the organization distancing itself from its roots. Donors developed particularly good relations with Chimhini, who is articulate and speaks their language well.

This conflict between advocacy and employment was, ironically, aggravated by the donor funding, upon which ZimRights came to depend. Many donor-dependent organizations go through similar explosive spurts of growth, often accompanied by crisis. ZimRights was clearly a case of the 'flavour of the month' syndrome in that it was so popular it rapidly raised money from multiple sources. While Oxfam is reported to have a rule that an annual budget increase of more than 25% is likely to lead to organizational difficulties,¹⁵⁹ ZimRights, in just one of the years studied, is reported to have multiplied its budget nearly five-fold.¹⁶⁰

The people who have lost out are the Zimbabweans, especially those displaced by the recent violence, who have need of both documentation of their rights and protection from those abusing them. ZimRights members too, still have great faith and hope in their organization. Donors, on the other hand, have merely transferred their funds to other, perhaps equally vulnerable, organizations.

Ndebele" *Independent* 11 June 1999; Jonathan Moyo, "ZimRights leader's stooping too low" *Independent* 11 June 1999.

¹⁵⁹ Moore and Stewart, "Corporate Governance" End-note, 3.

¹⁶⁰ ZimRights. Executive Director's Report to the Fourth Annual General Meeting. 10 May 1997, 2.

5.5 Conclusion

The politics of inclusion incorporated NGOs firmly with the ZANU(PF) regime. NGOs were vulnerable to co-option because of their roots in the liberation war and their commitment to the government's agenda of development. Although NGOs with links to opposition parties were required to prove their loyalty, the 1980s were relatively free of conflict between NGOs and the state. In addition to their ideological and social tendencies, material and organizational factors reinforced NGOs' inclination to work co-operatively within the state's framework.

In the 1990s, the decreasing importance of the state and the decline in civil service salaries made the NGO sector an increasingly attractive place of employment. Increased donor funding to NGOs increased staff numbers and strengthened their position *vis-à-vis* volunteers. This tendency of so-called voluntary organizations to 'professionalize' leads to conflicts between 'old, committed' members and new staff. In many cases, volunteers also see NGOs as sources of employment or enrichment.

As a result of all these influences, NGOs may become more interested in completing projects, accessing funding, and meeting donor requirements. The case study of ZimRights shows how such internal pressures can create divisions within NGOs that threaten their viability and render them vulnerable to malicious attacks. The case of the Association of Women's Clubs (AWC), presented in the next chapter, follows a similar pattern. At the same time, organizational growth may also make NGOs less inclined to pursue demands for policy change with the state. There is too much at stake to risk when a more adversarial relationship might affect the organization's ability to function, impairing both its developmental and its employment creation function.

Yet, as we shall see in Chapter 6, working in concert with other NGOs helps overcome some of these impediments to lobbying and advocacy.

Chapter 6 NGOs and the State: Inter-politics, Issues and Coalitions, 1990-1997

Previous chapters have suggested that relations between state and NGOs in Zimbabwe are complex and multi-faceted. Many NGOs do not undertake lobbying and advocacy activities. They tend to describe their relationship with the state as co-operative and based on non-confrontation. Yet NGO activists in Zimbabwe have tried to network with each other and engage the state in order to challenge its autonomy in policy-making in several key issue areas, despite its consistent obstruction of pluralistic participation in decision-making.

6.1 VOICE, NANGO, and Ad-hoc Coalitions

NGOs in Zimbabwe have had a series of ineffective umbrella bodies which claimed to co-ordinate them and facilitate their relations to the government since independence. The Southern Rhodesian National Council of Social Services (NCSS), at that time predominantly white-run, renamed itself Voluntary Organisations in Community Enterprise (VOICE) in 1981, asked the new President to be its patron, and proposed to move from supporting welfare projects towards self-help.¹ At the same time, VOICE advertised for a new national director and later appointed Zebediah Gamanya, an ex-combatant who had been based in Mozambique during the war.² While VOICE continued existing NCSS projects such as starting pre-schools in rural areas, they also moved more towards providing support for the new NGOs. In 1984 they convened the first workshop on NGO management.³ VOICE remained centralized and welfare-oriented. In 1990, Gamanya was dismissed for mismanagement, as the organization could no longer pay its staff's salaries, and VOICE was again renamed.⁴ The new National

¹ Sheila White, "A New Voice in Rural Welfare" *Herald* 27 November 1981, 13.

² Advert for National Director, 18 November 1981, p23; conversations with Zebediah Gamanya, July 1991.

³ "Teaching good management by Voice..." *Herald* 1 February 1984, 6; "Voluntary body sets up 1000 pre-schools" *Herald* 29 July 1985, 3.

⁴ "NGOs to map out further strategies" *Herald* 9 March 1991, 3; "Director of Voice suspended" *Herald* 17 June 1990; "Former director awarded full pay and benefits" *Herald* 26 April 1991, 5.

Association of NGOs (NANGO) was intended to be more decentralized and represent a broader coalition of groups, reflecting the newer NGOs and their concerns with social and economic issues and human rights; however, its constitution and format remained much the same.⁵ NANGO, like VOICE, also continued to receive an operating grant from the Department of Social Welfare. Through the 1990s NANGO experienced financial and administrative problems which were exacerbated, rather than solved, by decentralization into regional offices. For most of the 1990s, around 500 - 800 NGOs have been registered with the Department of Social Welfare (as required by law) but at most only 140 - 300 of those have been members of NANGO, and even fewer paid their membership dues.⁶

As will be seen in section 6.3, NANGO's weakness became very visible when faced with the PVO Act, introduced in 1995 to replace the Rhodesian-era Welfare Organisations Act in regulating the sector. NANGO failed to notify members of the Act until it had reached Parliament, nor did it lobby the Social Welfare Department on their behalf. Its main contribution seems to have been a letter to the Minister of Public Services and Social Welfare pointing out that the proposed name change from "Welfare Organizations" to "Private Voluntary Organizations" was "...rather alien to Zimbabwe."⁷ A second submission, written after a meeting of concerned NGOs and directed to the Director of the Social Welfare Department, detailed a few other concerns.⁸

⁵ Interview, Agatha Dodo, NANGO, 5 September 1995; NANGO, Constitution, Welfare Organisation No. 221/68); JB Kiragu and Sarah Sakupwanya, *Evaluation of NANGO*, 18 October - 27 November 1995.

⁶ The lower figures are from the 1995 Evaluation Report: Kiragu and Sakupwanya, *Evaluation of NANGO* n.p.; the higher figures are from: Sam Moyo "The Structure and Characteristics of NGOs" in Sam Moyo, John Makumbe, and Brian Raftopoulos, *NGOs, the State and Politics in Zimbabwe* (Harare, SAPES, 2000), 57 and appear to be based on statistics from 1992.

⁷ Letter from S.S.P. Matindike, Executive Director of NANGO to the Hon. Mr. J. Nkomo, Minister of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare. 7 February 1995.

⁸ Letter from S.S.P. Matindike, Executive Director of NANGO to the Director of Social Welfare, 9 February 1995.

This failure was compounded by a financial and administrative crisis, which intensified in 1996. Like VOICE, NANGO had lost the capacity to pay its staff, who not surprisingly left for jobs elsewhere in the sector. While it appears that no monies were misappropriated, they had been spent improperly. Administrative funding had ended in 1994, but activities had carried on, using programme funds to finance NANGO's day-to-day administration. NANGO was therefore unable to report to donors on the expenditure of their funds and as a result donors had refused to continue payment.⁹ This led to a debt-load of at least ZWD 1.5 million (USD 150 000). Attempts to reverse the decline, including a detailed external evaluation and two comprehensive workshops involving staff and membership failed.¹⁰ The entire northern region committee, including two national committee members resigned.¹¹ They were also, at this critical time, given notice by the landlord, Lonrho, which had for many years subsidized their rental of a prime piece of real estate along Samora Machel Ave, which housed the increasingly dilapidated head offices.

Against this back drop, a few NGOs began organizing in issue-driven coalitions. Key policies between 1995 and 1997, to which Zimbabwean NGOs have responded with the creation of issue-based coalitions have been economic policy, land, gender, health, the Constitution, and the PVO Act. This chapter will examine the evolution of campaigns surrounding two of these issues — economic policy and the PVO Act — assessing their strengths, weaknesses, strategies and results.

⁹ NANGO "A report of the Northern region general meeting held on 4th September 1996 at the Holiday Inn Crown Plaza Monomatapa Hotel".

¹⁰ J.B. Kiragu and S. Sakupwanya, *Evaluation of NANGO*, 1995; NANGO, *Report of a workshop on strengthening the planning process within NANGO structures*, 2-3 April 1996 (often referred to as the Adelaide Acres report); NANGO, *Report of a workshop on strengthening the planning process within NANGO structures* 16 July 1998 (often referred to as the Westwood report); G. Madzima, *A Co-ordinated voice for NGO's—The path ahead*. May 1997.

¹¹ "Officials resign as NANGO goes broke" *Financial Gazette*, 1 August 1998. The members who resigned were: Paul Themba Nyathi, Thoko Ruzvidzo, Eunice Njovana, Niki Jazdowska, and Priscilla Misihairambwi.

6.2 Structural Adjustment

The case of adjustment in Zimbabwe shows the extent to which moments of opportunity, intended or not, may provide an opening for the creation of a lobbying and advocacy campaign. Zimbabwean NGOs, caught off guard with the introduction of ESAP, proved unable or unwilling to develop a campaign, until there was a reason for contacting the government — the expected design of the next phase of the programme, into which they wished to be able to make an input.

As we have seen in Chapter 4, ESAP was a major policy shift for the Mugabe government. It liberalized trade, reduced the civil service, lifted subsidies and price controls, devalued the currency, and was accompanied by a reduction in real incomes for most families.¹² The introduction of health user fees and school fees, in urban areas, coupled by decreases in the availability of drugs and equipment for hospitals, have led to decreasing levels of maternal health, and left many others unable to seek medical care or remain in hospital for treatment. School fees have led to declining enrollment in education in urban areas and the overburdening of rural schools, where poor urban children may be sent since there are no school fees.¹³ The Social Development Fund (SDF), part of a programme to mitigate the social costs of adjustment, which was supposed to help poor families pay for tuition and examination fees and health costs, was inadequate and poorly administered.¹⁴ Formal job creation failed to provide employment for school-leavers, although this was not necessarily translated into widespread unemployment but rather into increased self-employment in the informal sector.¹⁵

¹² P. G. Kadenge, H. Ndoro, B. M. Zwizwai, "Zimbabwe's Structural Adjustment Programme: the First Year Experience" in *Structural Adjustment Programmes in SADC* ed. Allast Mwanza, (Harare: Sapes, 1992), 169.

¹³ A S Mlambo, *The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme: the case of Zimbabwe, 1990-1995* (Harare: UZ, 1997), especially Chapter 5, 83-96.

¹⁴ Dashwood, *Political Economy of Transformation* 172-4, 178-9; see also, "Inquiry begins into SDF looting" *Herald* 15 January 1999, 1; "SDF reels under \$206 million debt" *Herald* 18 January 1999, 1, 11.

¹⁵ Debby Potts, "Structural Adjustment and Urban Poverty: the impact on employment and immigration patterns" paper presented at the BZS Research Day, St Antony's College June

6.2.1 *The Dog That Didn't Bark in the Night, 1990-1994*

Yet, despite the impact of ESAP on many Zimbabweans, NGOs paid relatively little attention to the policy-level of government, contenting themselves with trying to alleviate the impact of ESAP. Although associational life expanded rapidly and criticism of the government was prevalent in the wake of several scandals, NGOs failed to question ESAP in any extensive way. Those organizations which might have been expected to lobby for change, particularly for change in socio-economic policies, did not do so. NGOs stress that ESAP's implementation took them by surprise, that people believed the government when it said that the Social Dimensions Fund would support the poor and that they didn't know how to respond to ESAP. Even the ZCTU, which did publically question the implementation of ESAP, moved from a confrontational engagement with the state, to a much more co-operative one between 1992-5.

This is not to say that ESAP was not a matter for discussion and limited mobilization. The local press, especially the independent magazines, regularly published articles questioning the implementation of ESAP. In 1991, the Popular Education Collective (PEC) published an issue of *Read On*, a magazine aimed at people with basic literacy, which addressed the impact of ESAP. *Read On*, although reaching a limited audience, attempts to provoke debate on current issues. Although PEC do not see themselves as doing advocacy *per se*, their goals are to empower groups by "cultivating an interest in people standing up for themselves."¹⁶ Similarly, in 1992, Silveira House, a Catholic Development Training Centre, published the first in a series of critical booklets on socio-economic issues, *ESAP and Theology* which was followed in 1993 by *A Critical Guide to ESAP*. These booklets, aiming "to be in some small way a voice for the voiceless and to advocate with the poor to change socio-economic policies and

2000; see also, Debby Potts, "Urban unemployment and migrants in Africa; evidence from Harare, 1985-94" *Development and Change*, 31, 4 (2000), 879-910.

¹⁶ Interview, Elijah Chiwoto, Popular Education Collective, 19 September 1995.

structures which disadvantage them”, were published and sold at a price level to be accessible to “ordinary Zimbabweans.”¹⁷

6.2.2 Advocacy and Action: 1994-1995

From 1994 onwards a small group of mostly church-based NGOs came together to discuss the impact of structural adjustment on them, and their members in a series of meetings starting with a workshop organized by Ecumenical Support Services (ESS). At this workshop, NGOs discussed taking up advocacy strategies. Many of the NGOs which attended this meeting did become involved in further activities. Yet they were unsuccessful in dealing with the government and in attempting to recruit more NGOs to their cause.

In 1994, as the government, aided by UNDP and the World Bank, began to design the second phase of ESAP, NGOs began to demand a say in such policy-making. As the then General Secretary of the ZCC, Murombedzi Kuchera, said: “...even before the nation has collectively evaluated ESAP I and drawn a balance sheet, we suddenly find ourselves at the threshold of another ESAP, with a new name, but with a similar body and soul.”¹⁸ The remainder of this section will chart the progress of civil society advocacy as both indigenous and international NGOs demanded participation in the development of the second phase of adjustment, known as the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Strategic Transformation (ZIMPREST).

The first decisive action was taken by OXFAM UK&I, which published a critical pamphlet about the implementation of user-fees in the health care system in October 1994, entitled *Paying for Health*. The research prepared was part of a study that OXFAM had been asked to provide for a World Bank Country Economic Memorandum on Zimbabwe. The

¹⁷ Peter Balleis, *ESAP and Theology*, (Harare: Silveira House, 1992), 7.

¹⁸ Rev M C Kuchera, “Official Opening Address”, ZCC National Consultation on the second phase of the economic structural adjustment programme/ZIMPREST, 29-30 October 1996, 2.

report criticized the implementation of user-fees and the real-term decline in funding for health and the decreasing percentage of national income being spent on health care, which is leading to less investment in medication, accessibility of vaccination programmes, and medical equipment.¹⁹

The government's attack on OXFAM alleged factual inaccuracies in the report and their failure to clear the field research conducted with the Government Research Council.²⁰ The government hinted that OXFAM had come close to abrogating its agreement to “respect the law and institutions of Zimbabwe and...conduct its affairs in consultation with the Government, people, and institutions of Zimbabwe.”²¹ The government was appalled at the unnecessarily public character of OXFAM'S disclosure in New York, without having previously shown the material to the Zimbabwean government. A *Financial Times* report alleged that the Zimbabwean government was threatening to expel OXFAM.²² OXFAM refused to confirm the allegation that the government had threatened to expel the organization, although a researcher described the report as “fairly accurate.”²³ In March 1995 health user fees for rural residents were removed, suggesting that the government may have rejected the medium, but accepted the message.

In March 1995 ESS organized a workshop on the effects of ESAP on Zimbabwean NGOs. The workshop brought participants together to examine the impact of ESAP, to make a collective response to ESAP, and to collect data for use in advocacy work.²⁴ The workshop involved representatives of 34 indigenous NGOs and three international organizations, including the World Bank.

¹⁹ Jean Lennox, *Paying for Health*, (Oxford: Oxfam, 1994), 14-15.

²⁰ “State angered by Oxfam report” *Daily Gazette*, 17 October 1994, 1,4.

²¹ GOZ, *Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. 21 No. 36, 12 October 1994, 2729.

²² Michael Holman, “Zimbabwe may tell Oxfam to leave” *Financial Times* 28 October 1994, 4.

²³ Interview, Kevin Watkins, OXFAM UK&I, 28 November 1995.

²⁴ ESS. *Report on the Workshop on the Effects of ESAP on Zimbabwean NGOs and their Services*, 1995.

At the workshop, NGOs discussed how they had changed to meet the challenges of ESAP. Some had increased their capacity and/or reprioritized demands, while others had cut back on service-provision. Most NGOs reported responding to ESAP by trying to meet the new needs of their clients and to overcome the obstacles established by ESAP. Only one NGO recorded undertaking lobbying to have policies changed which affected its members. The workshop was challenged as to whether it could provide an alternative to ESAP and what role NGOs could play in implementing that alternative.²⁵

Participants developed a series of recommendations. The workshop noted that NGOs are no longer able to meet the increasing demands for their services but must instead: “insist that government should do more for its people.” It also advocated that NGOs, as “development actors” should insist on inclusion in debates on national development. NGOs also agreed that they must move past the simple provision of services towards “policy analysis and advocacy.”²⁶

6.2.3 Networking: ZCC-EJN

The Zimbabwe Council of Churches expanded their range of operations in the 1990s, creating a Justice, Peace and Reconciliation (JPR) desk, which was intended to pursue advocacy and lobbying activities.²⁷ In December 1994, staff from the JPR desk organized a meeting of what became the Economic Justice Network (EJN) — a network of regional groups organized through the member churches. The EJN, working with Christian Aid (UK), organized regional

²⁵ John Makumbe, “The Effects of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) on NGOs and their Services in Zimbabwe” in ESS, *Report on the Workshop on the Effects of ESAP on Zimbabwean NGOs and their Services*, 1995, 15-19.

²⁶ ESS. *Report on the Workshop on the Effects of ESAP on Zimbabwean NGOs and their Services* ESS. , 31.

²⁷ Interview, Tawanda Mutasah, ZCC-JPR 15 September 1995.

working groups to target local government and also to link with similar local level groups in the UK.²⁸

In 1996 and 1997, the EJNI held regional and national meetings on the annual budget before submitting the results of this consultation to the government.²⁹ In late 1996 the ZCC also hosted a national consultation on ZIMPREST “a platform for civic actors and actresses, men and women of Zimbabwe, an opportunity to rethink and relaunch the development process in Zimbabwe.”³⁰ Yet this bold attempt floundered when the Minister responsible failed to turn up for the workshop. Since none of the participants had actually seen the ZIMPREST document, it was difficult to debate its pros and cons in any concrete fashion. The final status of the workshop report is also unclear, Deprose Muchena, a member of the JPR team, said later “We sent it to the Minister and didn’t hear from him. We then sent it to ZANU(PF) after we heard that they make the policies.”³¹

6.2.4 NGO-LAG: A Call to Justice

Between September and November 1995 NGOs and Churches in Zimbabwe began a Campaign called: A Call to Justice.³² Sparked by the World Bank’s approach to NGOs for dialogue on the second phase of ESAP, in preparation for the October IMF/World Bank meetings in Washington, D.C., the events organized under this theme began the resurgence of

²⁸ NORDIC-FOCCESA, Economic Justice workshop report, 10-14 April 1996; Interview, Deprose Muchena, ZCC Economic Justice Desk, 8 October 1996; Jessica Woodroffe, Suggestions for ZCC on the Economic Justice network, unpublished mimeo September 1995; Interview, Tawanda Mutasah, ZCC-JPR 15 September 1995.

²⁹ Research Notes, ZCC national pre-budget consultation meeting, 6 May 1997; ZCC, 1996-1997 Post National Budget Consultation Discussion Document, 7 August 1996; ZCC, *A People Centred National Budget* (Harare ZCC, 1996).

³⁰ ZCC. National Consultation on the second phase of the economic structural adjustment programme/ZIMPREST. Official opening address by Rev M C Kuchera, 29 October 1996; 2-3.

³¹ Research Notes, LAG meeting, Harare 18 March 1997.

³² Memorandum from Jonah Gokova to NGO and church fraternity, 20 September 1995

activism in Zimbabwe. In September, ESS, the ZCC, and other NGOs met with the Zimbabwean delegation to the Washington meetings. This meeting was preceded by a strategic preparatory meeting to ensure that all the NGOs had something to say “so that there was not just one loud mouth NGO” but a clear NGO agenda.³³ As Deprose Muchena, the ZCC delegate to the preliminary meeting, noted, “[the people] require [sic] take an active role in defining the development paradigm, through churches, civic groups, and NGOs.”³⁴ The NGOs claimed that as ‘development actors’ they must be involved in the planning process and stressed the need for ESAP to have a human face and to emphasize job creation and equity as well as economic growth.³⁵ The meeting with the government delegation was the first time that they had met with NGOs.

In October, NGOs organized two days of events focusing on the WB/IMF meetings in Washington. This was started with drama, poetry and speeches in Stoddart Hall, in Mbare. The next day, NGOs faxed a statement to the IMF/WB in Washington. Finally, in November the series of meetings was held with the IMF/WB Poverty Mission, in which NGOs asked for World Bank poverty studies to examine the structural causes of poverty and to look specifically at how adjustment policies have contributed to the increase of poverty in Zimbabwe.³⁶

The return of the World Bank Poverty mission in April 1996 provided another chance for LAG to meet and re-invigorate itself. On the 24 May 1996, LAG established an internal taskforce to evaluate the second phase of adjustment. It was assumed that the ZIMPREST document would be sent to ESS on behalf of LAG.³⁷ However, the government’s failure to

³³ Interview, Tawanda Mutasah, Zimbabwe Council of Churches, 15 September 1995.

³⁴ ZCC. “Economic Justice Network/Ecumenical Support Services/NGOs meeting on the preparation to meet the Zimbabwean Delegation going to Washington for the October 7 and 8 meeting”. Minutes compiled by Deprose Muchena, n.d.

³⁵ “An appeal to the IMF/WB on the occasion of your AGM, 9 October 1995, from the very concerned NGOs and church related organisations in Zimbabwe” n.d. n.p.

³⁶ NGO-LAG, Arguments, evidence and suggestions for discussions with Zimbabwe delegates to the World Bank/IMF Directors annual general meeting in Washington DC, 9 October 1995.

³⁷ NGO-LAG, Minutes of LAG meeting 24 May 1996.

release the document formally rendered this taskforce irrelevant. A campaign was also mounted of sending letters of protest to the Ministry of Finance against lack of consultation in the drafting of the economic policy.³⁸ As the letter sent from ESS to the Minister of Finance, the permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and the Planning Commissioner in the President's office said:

This is the only opportunity available over the next five years maybe for us to consult with each other...we wish to remind you that ESAP is a National programme whose success will only depend on our people's sense of ownership...You are therefore, in our opinion, obliged to open up national debate, discussion on both ESAP I and the process and content of ESAP II.³⁹

The Ministry responded to all thirteen letters sent by LAG members, with what appeared at the time to be a very encouraging tone, welcoming the participation of civil society. However, hearing nothing further from the Ministry about participation, LAG, on late September, forwarded a petition signed by fifty-eight individuals. In February 1997, the Minister was invited to address a LAG meeting in March, which he was not able to attend because "the ZIMPREST document was still in its draft stage..."⁴⁰ As he explained, the:

...draft document is in the process of being discussed by heads of Ministries and the Cabinet. Thereafter the document will be discussed widely by the various stakeholders in a series of workshops. *It is hoped that your organisation will be invited to attend the workshops for your inputs...*⁴¹

Perhaps this was merely a grammatical infelicity, but the letter explicitly did not invite either NGO-LAG or ESS to contribute to the process, but merely expressed the hope that they might be invited to do so. The irony, of course, that the document can only be discussed by "stakeholders" when it is no longer in a draft stage, was not lost on the recipients.

³⁸ NGO-LAG, Minutes of LAG meeting 24 May 1996.

³⁹ Letter from ESS to Minister of Finance, 29 May 1996.

⁴⁰ Letter from M Dzinotizei for senior secretary for finance, to Jonah Gokova, ESS 10 March 1997.

⁴¹ Letter from M Dzinotizei for senior secretary for finance, to Jonah Gokova, ESS 10 March 1997 (emphasis added).

As ZIMPREST was not formally launched, nor were NGOs invited to “workshops or consultations,” LAG more or less stalled. At a meeting in March 1997, LAG members agreed that the Ministry was obviously unwilling to meet with them. In reaction, it was proposed that LAG instead target “progressive” Parliamentarians. Various strategies were discussed and it was decided to hold a one day meeting with a select group of parliamentarians. This planned meeting was delayed as MPs left on summer recess. Plans restarted in August, facilitated through contacts with the Chair of the Parliamentary Reform Committee, whose wife conveniently shared an office with ESS, but were over taken by hearings on civil society participation in Parliament.

LAG’s weakness in approaching the government stemmed primarily from its Harare-dominated membership. While the NGOs involved are committed, they are by no means representative of the NGOs which form the mainstay of the development sector. Although attempts were made to expand LAG’s membership in the provinces of Manicaland and Matabeleland, little emerged from these efforts. In Manicaland, only a small number of NGOs were represented at a meeting called for this purpose. Some participants complained that there was no *per diem* or transport money provided for participants while others were somewhat hostile to the LAG member’s portrayal of government policy.⁴² In Matabeleland, a large number of participants showed up for the afternoon meeting, filling the meeting room to overflowing. Nevertheless, participants were again hostile and critical of the organizer’s motives. Participants were wary of the idea of joining LAG, which was seen as a challenger to NANGO. Although the Matabeleland Chair of NANGO said that there was no reason that NANGO should monopolize advocacy and that NANGO was unable at this time to carry out any such activities, the concern was expressed, several times, that the proposed advocacy group or coalition would duplicate the efforts of NANGO or trespass on NANGO’s territory.⁴³

⁴² Research Notes, Manicaland NGO Lobbying and Advocacy Meeting 20 May 1997.

⁴³ Research Notes, Bulawayo NGO Lobbying and Advocacy Meeting 16 July 1997.

Much as the NGOs were interested in talking about lobbying and advocacy, they were also suspicious of becoming involved in a ‘political’ or unpopular campaign.

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6.2.5 A Call to Prophetic Action

Drawing on both the idea of the international Jubilee 2000 campaign for debt forgiveness and the Kairos document of South Africa, which called for church people to act against an unjust government⁴⁴ ESS convened a regional workshop in October 1996 on Prophetic Action. This meeting was attended by the prominent churchmen from Zambia and South Africa—Revd. Edwin Sakala of the Zambian Christian Council and Dr Molefe Tsele of the Institute for Contextual Theology in South Africa—as well as church-people and laity from Zimbabwe. The enthusiasm for the three-day meeting led to the idea of writing a “Kairos” document for Zimbabwe which could then be used within churches for discussion or action. The meeting attracted the interest of the CIO, probably because of the attendance of Sakala and Tsele, and that of the former President Revd Canaan Banana, who opened the meeting.

The Kairos process revealed most strongly the importance of both language and content in the advocacy process. The former President, Revd Banana, also Zimbabwe’s best known ‘progressive’ theologian, called for a “collective onslaught by the government, NGOs, churches and the people themselves” against the impact of structural adjustment, although discussions also stressed issues of governance, youth, AIDS, gender and the environment.⁴⁵ Yet, despite the meeting being entitled “A Call to Action”—designed explicitly to move the churches towards action, participants felt insulted, rather than challenged, by Revd Banana’s

⁴⁴ Kairos Theologians Group. *The Kairos document : a theological comment on the political crisis in South Africa* 2nd rev. ed (London : Catholic Institute for International Relations and the British Council of Churches, 1986).

⁴⁵ Address by His Excellency, the Rev. Professor Canaan Banana on the occasion of the Ecumenical Support Services Conference at the Management Training Centre in Msasa-Harare, 2 December 1996; Research Notes, 2 December 1996.

call to “more and more programmes of action” in place of “pious prayers;” Banana’s radical theology did not appeal to all.⁴⁶

Drafting committees were brought together composed of a balance of men and women, denominations, and with student/youth delegates included, to address the three main areas of concern — governance, economic justice, and gender and youth – through the drafting of a ‘Kairos’ document. At each meeting drafts were prepared, then read out and discussed. On the following morning, participants would examine a typed draft of the previous day’s discussions, and begin to discuss the impact of the word-usage, and, in some cases, add/derive a theological basis for the arguments being made. It was a fascinating balance of wanting to be critical, but at the same time wanting to be acceptable to the government, so that it would listen.

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Mutare, Bishop Muchabaiwa, provides an interesting example. As the highest profile participant in the drafting process, he had the most to lose by being connected with the project. He was most insistent that the document must be sent to the President before it was released and absolutely refused to allow the inclusion of any reference to the Matabeleland crisis. But it was not just the inclusion/exclusion of material or the fashion in which it was released which concerned him, but also the language used in the document. He warned participants at the first drafting meeting on the issue of governance that “we should speak with the voice of God...we must avoid speaking like an opposition party.”⁴⁷ At a subsequent meeting, he again reminded participants, “We are people sent by God to say something about our country...We are not political people.”⁴⁸ And indeed, the most intractable debates were less about the inclusion of material — sexuality, references to vote-rigging, or

⁴⁶ Research notes, “It is time for Prophetic Action: Towards a Threshold of Jubilee” Harare, 2 December 1996.

⁴⁷ Research Notes, Drafting Meeting: A Call to Prophetic Action!, Mutare, 11 February 1997.

⁴⁸ Research Notes, Drafting Meeting: A Call to Prophetic Action!, Mutare, 10 March 1997.

Matabeleland — and more about toning down the explicitly ‘political’ language in the document.

The document, a fifty page booklet, was launched during the World Council of Churches meeting in Harare in 1998.⁴⁹ It was then distributed to individual churches and workshops were organized by ESS, with the intention of bringing together clergy who worked in town or high-density areas to discuss the issues.⁵⁰ The jubilee theme also linked into the international Jubilee 2000 campaign, with both the ZCC and ESS organizing further around the issue of Zimbabwe’s debt in 1999-2000.⁵¹

6.2.6 Church NGOs and Economic Policy Issues

The two most striking aspects of NGO involvement with economic issues in Zimbabwe are the preponderance of church organizations and the language used in contacts among NGOs and between NGOs and the state.

ESS and ZCC have been the leaders of advocacy around issues of economic justice, basing their critiques on biblical citations and/or theological premises, reflecting both their rationale for addressing such issues and their recognition that explicitly political actors will be ignored. The ZCC calls this its ‘midwifery role’ and denies that there are political overtones to their activities. Reverend Kuchera insisted fervently that “we [ZCC] are not a political organization,”⁵². Similarly, as we have seen, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Mutare reminded participants in the drafting of a document on economic justice and governance that, they were church people, not political activists. At the same time, a strong thread of nationalism is also

⁴⁹ ESS, *A call to prophetic action! Towards the jubilee year 2000* (Harare, ESS, 1998); Stephen Brown, “Zimbabwe Kairos document dares to condemn corruption and inequality” *ENI* 14 December 1998.

⁵⁰ Research notes, Highfield Kairos meeting, 21 September 1999

⁵¹ Research notes, ZIMCDD founding meeting, 23 September 1999; Busani Bafana, “NGO calls for probe into govt debt” *Independent* 1 September 2000; “Developing countries debt be written off - ZCC” *Mirror* 11 September, 1998.

⁵² Interview with Murombedzi Kuchera, ZCC, 11 September 1995.

present in criticisms that the “[economic] planning system is outward looking”⁵³ and that the people of Zimbabwe must be involved in the planning process.

These two trends mean that in many ways the discourse of economic advocacy in Zimbabwe reflected the official discourse of Zimbabwe, adopting a nationalistic tone and deferring to government. The leaders of these groups were not unsophisticated and using the language of the state and refusing to challenge the government’s ostensible monopoly on politics both protected their status and encouraged the less radical among their flocks to become involved.

6.3 The PVO Act

The introduction of the PVO Act in 1995, while interpreted by some as a sign of increasing government repression, was not initially of concern to a wide number of NGOs. The PVO Campaign illuminates both the strengths and the weaknesses of the NGO community in Zimbabwe.

6.3.1 The History of the Act

In 1995, the Welfare Organizations Act, which had been brought in in 1967 to oversee the actions of organizations supporting the ‘terrorists’ and their families during the liberation war, was amended and renamed the Private Voluntary Organizations Act. The amended Act gave the Minister responsible for NGOs (currently the Department of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare) the power to suspend (or ‘gazette’) any or all members of executive committees and to appoint trustees to run the organization. The Minister was to base such a decision “...on information supplied to him” which would determine if an organization was deemed to have “...ceased to operate in furtherance of the objects specified in its constitution; or the mal-

⁵³ Kuchera, “Official Opening Address” 3.

administration of the organization is adversely affecting the activities of the organization; or, the organization is involved in any illegal activities; or it is necessary or desirable to do so in the public interest.”⁵⁴ The Minister was therefore not required to carry out any investigations into the allegations, nor were organizations provided with the possibility of appeal or presentations of their case. The Minister was to be constrained by an appointed Board composed of representatives of NGOs, Ministries, and the provinces of Zimbabwe; however, all appointments were made through the Minister.

6.3.2 *The AWC Case*

To date the Act has been used only once, to ‘gazette’ the executive members of the Association of Women’s Clubs (AWC), a grass-roots NGO with over 40 000 members founded in 1938. Helen Vera Mangwende founded the organization to “uplift the lives of her fellow women.” The AWC faced administrative and financial difficulties in the 1980s as membership had declined in the later years of the liberation war.⁵⁵ The first post-independence chair of the AWC appointed in 1982, Mrs Betty Mtero, was also at that time employed in the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Community Development.⁵⁶ She then became the National Director of AWC, but was dismissed in 1992 for financial mismanagement.

In the 1990s the AWC had begun to revive, under the chairship of Sekai Holland. Holland was the daughter of the first black editor of a newspaper, MM Hove, later a Rhodesian MP and ambassador to Nigeria for the Federation of Nyasaland and the Rhodesias. A student overseas in the 1960s, Holland was ZANU’s representative in Australia in the 1970s and

⁵⁴ GOZ, *Welfare Organizations Amendment Act* 1995.

⁵⁵ “New hope for ailing organisation” *Herald* 3 September 1982, 7.

⁵⁶ “Learning never stops” *Herald* 3 September 1982, 7.

remained a staunch supporter of the Women's League in the 1980s and 1990s after her return.⁵⁷ The AWC's outlook improved in the 1990s, with promised donor funding of ZWD\$ 11 million for programmes between 1994 and 1998.⁵⁸ However, in 1995, after some informal meetings with the Social Welfare department, the government issued a gazette, or notice, that the Executive Committee of the AWC was suspended, indefinitely, from their roles and responsibilities.⁵⁹ A caretaker administration was installed, which was later replaced with an elected committee of women alleged to be "loyal" representatives of ZANU(PF)'s Women's League. The former Chair and Director, Mrs Mtero was reappointed Director, which led to suspicions that the attack on AWC was little more than her orchestrated revenge.⁶⁰

The gazetted women applied to the Supreme Court in May 1996, asking the court to rule on the constitutionality of the Act. They alleged that it infringed on rights guaranteed in three sections of the constitution. Firstly, it was suggested that the Act infringed on the right to freedom of association (section 21(1) of the constitution) as the gazetted women were removed from being able to exercise rights and duties of members of the AWC. Similarly, the suggested that their gazetting infringed on their rights of freedom of expression (section 20(1) of the constitution), arguing that expression might be construed broadly to include serving as an executive member, that is, putting into practice their thoughts and beliefs through the executive office. Finally, they argued that their right to a fair hearing was infringed because the

⁵⁷ "Sekai begins a new struggle" *Herald* 6 November 1981, p. 12 and various discussions, 1996-7.

⁵⁸ Vincent Chikwari, "Shamuyarira accused of bid to hijack women's projects" *Financial Gazette* 30 November 1995; Diana Mitchell, "Political leaders frustrating women's efforts" *Independent* 11 October 1996, 23; various discussions with Sekai Holland, 1996-1997.

⁵⁹ GOZ, Government Gazette Extraordinary, Vol. LXXIII, No. 59A, 2 November 1995.

⁶⁰ "Team of Trustees to run association of women's clubs" *Sunday Mail*, 5 November 1995; "Newly elected women's clubs council urged to be vigilant" *Sunday Mail* 9 June 1996; "Party Women take over NGO" *Independent*, 19 July 96, 1; various discussions with Sekai Holland 1996-1997; personal communication from Jim Holland, 7 August 2001.

Act makes no provision for a fair hearing, nor was one held, in violation of section 18 (9) of the Constitution.⁶¹

In February 1997, the judges found unanimously in favour of the third argument, that the right of the applicants to a fair hearing had been obstructed. They noted that there had been no notice given of the charge or complaint, that the applicants had been given no chance to respond to the charge or complaint and that therefore there had been no impartial hearing.⁶²

6.3.3 The Campaign for the Repeal of the PVO Act

NGOs were slow in responding to the invasive potential of the Act. In January 1995 the then Acting Director (subsequently Director) of the Department of Social Welfare had informed the Annual General Meeting of NANGO that the Ministry was in the process of revising the Act.⁶³ However, both NANGO and most NGOs insist that the details of the Amendment only came to the attention of NGOs after its second reading in Parliament on 7 February 1995 led to a report in the daily newspaper.⁶⁴ There seems to have been no consultation between NANGO and Social Welfare until this time, at which point the Executive Director of NANGO contacted the Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare to criticize the proposed name change from Welfare Organizations to Private Voluntary Organizations.⁶⁵

However, in the months following the adoption of the act, some NGOs became aware of the Act and concerned about the potential for Ministerial abuse. ZimRights publicized

⁶¹ Applicants' Heads of Argument. Supreme Court of Zimbabwe, Case No. S.C. 333/96, 14 October 1996, 2.

⁶² Judgement No S C 15/97 Civil Application No. 333/96. Supreme Court of Zimbabwe. 11 February 1997, 9; Judgement also reported as "Holland & Ors. V. Minister of the Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Zimbabwe Law Reports, 1997 (1), pp. 186-196.

⁶³ E. Maisiri, "The Fourth NANGO national annual general meeting: Cresta Oasis Hotel, Harare: January 7, 1995" *NANGO News and Views*, February 1995.

⁶⁴ "State to introduce Bill to monitor activities of NGOs" *Herald* 8 February 1995; Interview, Agatha Dodo, NANGO, 4 September 1995.

⁶⁵ Letter from S.S.P. Matindike, Executive Director of NANGO to the Hon. Mr. J. Nkomo, Minister of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare. 7 February 1995.

concerns about the Act at the 1995 Zimbabwe International Book Fair, but there was little other public attention.⁶⁶ In mid-1995, when I asked Revd Kuchera of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, what his organization was doing about the new Act, he said:

I am not really very worried about it...the basic welfare operations will remain the same...so I am not going to spend my time and my energy trying to look at the dots and the full-stops.....what difference does it make?⁶⁷

But this did not represent the views of all NGOs. A taskforce established by NGOs within NANGO's Northern region suggested that “..the present Act goes beyond the legitimacy of the Government to oversee the work of NGOs. NGOs feel that the Act has every room to cater for abuse, corruption and even threatening the independence of NGO work.”⁶⁸ The NGOs therefore suggested several amendments to the Act including definition of what sources of information the Minister can use to justify the suspension of an NGO, that the Board should be appointed from a short list of nominees prepared by NGOs and that at least two-thirds of the members should represent NGOs, and the inclusion of a process of appeal.⁶⁹ This effort to respond to the Bill within the strictures of NANGO failed to reach a broad spectrum of NGOs and fell into abeyance with the resignation of several key actors from the Northern Region Executive committee, who had also been involved in the TaskForce.⁷⁰

Finally, in June 1996, seven months after the gazetting of the AWC and eighteen months since the introduction of the Act, ZimRights organized a workshop on NGO Activism —“...instigated by the failure of NGOs to unite in opposition to the PVO Act”⁷¹ — which was

⁶⁶ ZimRights. “New NGO Act Threatens Freedom.” (Harare: ZimRights, n.d.).

⁶⁷ Interview, Murombedzi Kuchera, ZCC General Secretary, 11 September 1995.

⁶⁸ NANGO. “Amendments to the Social Welfare Organisations Act (PVO) Recommendations by the Task Committee”. n.d.

⁶⁹ NANGO, “Amendments to the Social Welfare Organizations Act (PVO), recommendations by the Task Committee.” n.d.

⁷⁰ “Officials resign as NANGO goes broke” *Financial Gazette*, 1 August 1998. The members who resigned were: Paul Themba Nyathi, Toko Ruzvidzo, Eunice Njovana, Niki Jazdowska, and Priscilla Misihairambwi.

⁷¹ ZimRights. *Report of a Workshop on NGO Activism held at Adelaide Acres Jun1 17-19, 1996* (Harare: ZimRights, nd.) 2.

followed in September 1996 by a second meeting sponsored by MWENGO, a regional NGO led by Ezra Mbogori, one of the lead actors in Kenya's own campaign against regulation. Out of this workshop emanated the Steering Group of the Campaign for the Repeal of PVO Act,⁷² which was composed of six staff members of five different NGOs.⁷³ While the Campaign had a mailing list of dozens of NGOs, these initial members remained the key players. As the Campaign progressed, other people, including myself, attended meetings regularly, but were never publicly recognized as campaign members. The steering committee was aware of its potentially high profile and concomitant points of weakness — such as “foreign influence” — leading them to suggest that the taskforce be extended by inviting staff from MWENGO, OXFAM, and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) to attend as “invisible members.”⁷⁴

Costs of the Campaign were shared between NGOs, one paying for meetings, another for advertising space in newspapers, others providing photocopying for materials, or meeting space. This channeling of funds was facilitated by the relative access to funds of those members who were directors of their NGOs. Funds were also found from OXFAM, and channeled through the Committee to support the AWC women in collecting signatures. In August 1997, it was proposed that donors be approached to fund the campaign formally.

The PVO campaign was handicapped by the limited networking of NGOs in Zimbabwe, which prevents the spread of information and the reluctance of the mainstream press to print articles on the PVO Act. At the same time, the Campaign had decided not to seek media attention for itself, but to ‘conscientize’ NGOs first and then ‘go public’. It was felt

⁷² Another Working Group on Land also evolved from this process, convened by ZimRights. It organised a workshop on Land Issues in July 1997.

⁷³ Emilia James, Streets Ahead (an organisation working with streetkids), Barbra Kohlo and Regis Mtutu (Convenor) of Housing People of Zimbabwe (an organisation working with housing co-operatives), Jonah K. Gokova of Ecumenical Support Services (an interdenominational church organisation), Paul T. Nyathi of the Zimbabwe Project (a development NGO), and David Chimhini of ZimRights (a human rights organisation); the latter three are all directors of their organisations.

⁷⁴ Research Notes, Steering Committee Meeting, 10 February 1997.

that the Minister of Social Welfare would not understand if a public campaign was launched before the Ministry had been formally appraised of the Campaign's activities: "This could be seen as a sign of negotiating in bad faith."⁷⁵

Few NGOs had much information about the PVO Act or the gazetting of the AWC. The Campaign's first tactic was to prepare a briefing paper with information about the Act.⁷⁶ The briefing paper explained the Act, gave details of the AWC case, and suggested that the Act was neither enabling nor supportive of NGO efforts. It proposed that:

...serious and constructive dialogue between the Government of Zimbabwe and leaders within the NGO community from across the country is long overdue....Otherwise the conflicts and antagonisms will continue to the detriment of development."⁷⁷

A 'joint statement' or petition launched in October was circulated to as many NGOs as we could find addresses for along with copies of the briefing paper.⁷⁸ The petition began by explaining the PVO Act, suggested that NGOs need to be accountable, and concluded by noting that:

...civil society has always and continues to make valuable contributions to the development of this nation and that Government has on numerous occasions committed itself to promoting good governance, democracy and the rule of law. The Private Voluntary Organisations Act runs contrary to these commitments. We, the undersigned are therefore determined to have the Private Voluntary Organisations Act repealed. We demand a democratic environment free of the threatened government interference for meaningful NGO participation in Zimbabwe. We call upon the Minister to institute an open and serious discussion with NGOs so as to involve them in the drafting of acceptable NGO legislation.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Campaign for the Repeal of the PVO Act, "Minutes of the PVO Act NGO Meeting held at Monomotapa Crowne Plaza 23 October 1996, 2:30pm-5pm." 7.

⁷⁶ Campaign for the Repeal of the PVO Act, "NGO Briefing paper: *The private voluntary organisations Act: A widening rift between civil society and the state in Zimbabwe.*" n.d. n.p.

⁷⁷ Campaign for the Repeal of the PVO Act, "NGO Briefing paper: *The private voluntary organisations Act: A widening rift between civil society and the state in Zimbabwe.*" N.d. 5.

⁷⁸ Campaign for the Repeal of the PVO Act, Joint statement by Non Governmental Organisations and concerned citizens demanding the Repeal of the Private Voluntary Organisations Act 1995 (chapter 93). October 1996.

⁷⁹ Campaign for the Repeal of the PVO Act, Joint Statement by Non Governmental Organisations and Concerned Citizens demanding the Repeal of the Private Voluntary

It was widely signed and although several hundred signatures came in from NGOs, most of the signatures were collected by the gazetted women from rural members of the AWC. In March 1997 the Campaign sent several letters to the Minister of Social Welfare requesting a meeting at which these petitions could be presented, but as no response was ever given, this was never done.

In April 1997, the campaign realized that the briefing paper needed to be supplemented with some easier to read materials and created an Information Kit of four fact sheets, which were initially distributed at the NGO Convention.⁸⁰ These sheets tried to address some of the issues raised in the briefing paper in an accessible point-form format, as well as updating NGOs on recent events, such as the AWC case and the campaign's activities. As word came in that the Ministry was willing to consider consulting NGOs on the revised Act, a decision was made by the campaign that it was essential to begin a consultative process with NGOs. It was agreed to ask a consultant to draft a new Act, to be used as a discussion piece with NGOs. Tawanda Mutasah, a ZCC employee with legal training, prepared the draft.⁸¹ A funding proposal was prepared to be distributed to likely donors, and a timetable developed for contacting NGOs in all regions.

6.3.4 The Politics of not being NANGO

One of the strengths of the PVO Campaign was the trust that developed between campaign members, as they talked, joked and shared information. Nevertheless, the Campaign was

Organisations Act 1995 (Chapter 93), October 1996, 2.

⁸⁰ Campaign for the Repeal of the PVO Act, Fact Sheet No. 1 "The PVO Act: A History and Analysis"; Fact Sheet No. 2: "A Case Study: The AWC"; Fact Sheet No. 3 "NGO Responses to the PVO Act"; Fact Sheet No. 4 "New legislation? Towards a Consultative Drafting Process" n.d.n.p..

⁸¹ Campaign for the Repeal of the PVO Act, The Non-Governmental Organisations Act, Zimbabwe: for discussion; first draft, July 1997.

regularly challenged by members of other NGOs to justify its existence. The Campaign was seen as trespassing on NANGO's space, since NANGO remained the Government-endorsed umbrella organization for NGOs. Therefore, NGOs who disapproved of the Campaign's notoriety were sceptical of the campaign's motives. As a new attendee at one meeting said "We've never had any such thing in this country, we have been working so well with government" asking, "had we [the campaign] gotten legal advice before proceeding?"⁸²

Committee members answered such criticisms by saying that NGOs needed to speak for themselves. At previous meetings (under the aegis of NANGO), the government had set the agenda and sometimes government representatives had outnumbered the NGOs present. It was therefore proposed that NGOs need a united front: "We as NGOs should lay down the agenda and follow it through."⁸³

Another challenge to the Campaign's legitimacy was that the NGOs within the Campaign were not necessarily representative of the NGO community in Zimbabwe as a whole, but were instead a Harare-based élite, concerned with issues less "grounded" than those of rural or small-town NGOs. As the chair of the first meeting of the Campaign said, even if all the NGOs in Zimbabwe were not involved, it doesn't matter because "...we are letting the government get away with what it wants to do."⁸⁴

Another frequent challenge was "Is NANGO here? Were they invited?"; "What about NANGO, shouldn't NANGO be doing this instead of you?" The campaign was perceived to have been working behind NANGO's back. Some campaign members responded by suggesting that there was no reason that all NGOs must be united, decrying the Zimbabwean "fetish for unity."⁸⁵ A more common response was to legitimize the PVO campaign by linking

⁸² Research Notes, PVO Act Meeting, 29 January 1997.

⁸³ Campaign for the Repeal of the PVO Act, "Minutes of the PVO Act meeting held at Monomatapa Crowne Plaza 23 October 1996, 2:30pm-5pm" 4.

⁸⁴ Research Notes, PVO Act meeting, 23 October 1996.

⁸⁵ Research Notes, PVO Act meeting, 23 October 1996.

it with NANGO and suggesting that the Campaign was the logical outcome of previous NANGO involvement. In order to minimize the problems created by such questions, the Campaign made a tactical decision to meet with NANGO's Chair, Alexander Phiri, who was known to resent the Campaign, and had warned NGOs publicly of "the dangers of operating in an unco-ordinated way" and suggested that the problem with the AWC issue was that "there are too many actors working on it."⁸⁶ Phiri appeared to support the campaign in the private meeting, but then suggested activists "hand it over" to NANGO, leaving matters at a standstill.⁸⁷

The state also used NANGO's inefficiency and the campaign's unofficial status to justify its own failure to consult or inform NGOs of developments. As the Director of Social Welfare, said:

The problem we have had with you NGOs is that when we want to dialogue with you who do we approach? There are 700 of you...One of the things we want to encourage is that NGOs have boards we can approach who are actually representing you. Currently we do not have this. Some of you have denounced your own board but have not managed to replace it with something else.⁸⁸

When challenged to consult with NGOs, and not simply present another *fait accompli*, the Director replied: "I can't be in limbo...I must go to NANGO if there is a decision to be made."⁸⁹

6.3.5 The Politics of Opposing the State

The PVO Campaign's ambiguous status, in that the Ministry claimed that NANGO was the preferred channel for complaints about policy, meant that it never formally met the

⁸⁶ NANGO, "Minutes of the NANGO Northern region Extra-ordinary Meeting. Zimbabwe Women's Bureau, Harare," 20 November 1996.

⁸⁷ Campaign for the Repeal of the PVO Act. "Minutes of the joint PVO Act Steering Committee/NANGO. Held at NANGO offices, 6 November 1996."

⁸⁸ Research Notes, PVO Act meeting "Unfinished Business" 7 March 1997.

⁸⁹ Research Notes, PVO Act meeting "Unfinished Business", 7 March 1997.

government. However, two mediated meetings were organized to bring NGOs and the state together. The first, organized by the ZCC, occurred soon after the Supreme Court ruling on the AWC case. The Minister of Social Welfare had been invited, but sent the Director instead. In welcoming people to the meeting, Deprose Muchena, who chaired the meeting, described it as merely an example of the ZCC's "midwifery role to bring government to dialogue with civil society."⁹⁰ The Director argued that the new Act was intended to recognize the shift of NGOs from charity work towards development, indeed that "the soul of the new Act places emphasis on development."⁹¹ Although not attacking this pronouncement directly, Rudo Kwaramba, one of the speakers, suggested that:

It is essentially the right to development of our entire society that is at stake...This is why people should not be unnecessarily confrontational...We need to come up with a process that will continue the discourse of government and civil society.⁹²

At the next meeting, this time organized by a collection of organizations which had been present at the previous meeting and entitled "The PVO Act: Unfinished Business," the Director stressed that he almost didn't accept the invitation to address the meeting because "...at the last meeting it seemed there was no dialogue; that people were more interested in attacking."⁹³ There was discussion, however, at this meeting, and the Director insisted, "we want to see NGOs operating with us as partners. NGOs are doing a very good job in this country, and we want to facilitate that...we want to see NGOs being complementary to Government activities."⁹⁴ Yet, despite NGOs and government both laying out their positions and clearing the air somewhat, neither the government nor the NGOs initiated any further contact or negotiations in 1997.

⁹⁰ Research Notes, ZCC-PVO Act Meeting, 13 February 1997.

⁹¹ Research Notes, ZCC-PVO Act Meeting, 13 February 1997.

⁹² Research Notes, ZCC-PVO Act Meeting, 13 February 1997.

⁹³ Research Notes, PVO Act Meeting "Unfinished Business" 7 March 1997.

⁹⁴ Research Notes, PVO Act meeting "Unfinished Business" 7 March 1997.

While official contact with the Ministry was limited, the ruling party and the government's Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) seemed more interested. On the Friday following the Supreme Court ruling, ESS received a phone call from the gazetted chair of the AWC, saying that she had just been warned to maintain a low profile on the weekend following because the ZANU(PF) Women's League was "out to get gazetted women and PVO Committee members; that we would all be beaten up."⁹⁵ Similarly, when the AWC members were campaigning for signatures on their petition, women in Masvingo only put their first names on the petition because they were afraid that CIO would "wake them up at dawn", but they wanted their names on it because they thought "there might be some money in it if it was successful."⁹⁶

ESS was also vulnerable because it was not registered with the Department of Social Welfare as an NGO. A senior official in the department called one morning to arrange a meeting, at which he said that ESS was on a list of unregistered NGOs which the government planned to close down. The Co-ordinator promised to register and nothing further was heard about it. It was also during this period that Housing People of Zimbabwe, which provided the Campaign's official address and phone numbers, was paid its first visit by the CIO's NGO desk. On the whole, members of the Campaign did not feel themselves to be particularly threatened, nor felt the need to hide their activities, although the single mothers who were members were conscious of their more precarious situations.

Despite its slow start, the Campaign was successful in educating and informing people about the PVO Act. Its failure to interact on any formal level with the Ministry responsible for the Act suggests that the state's stonewalling or non-decision-making tactics — aided and abetted by the divisions within the NGO community — were effective in keeping the campaign at an arm's length. Nevertheless, the Campaign stirred up NGOs in Zimbabwe and became

⁹⁵ Telephone conversation with Sekai Holland 14 February 1997.

⁹⁶ Research Notes, Steering Committee meeting with gazetted women, January 1997.

a model for further lobbying and advocacy. The Campaign's depiction of NGOs as development actors, deserving of input into state policies, effectively made a mockery of the state's own discourse of facilitating development.

6.4 From Ad-hoc Coalitions to the NGO Coalition for Change

These coalitions were not without their weaknesses. They were reactive rather than proactive in that they only came into existence when there was an issue to be addressed. The arrival of a new issue easily distracts many of the key actors into a new stream of coalitions and advocacy. While coalitions of this sort may be less vulnerable to government intrusion, they are more vulnerable to other challenges and it is more difficult for them to keep up the momentum of activities. The PVO Coalition proved to be especially dependent of the more active members — those who got something done. In August 1997, the regular meeting pattern broke down and following my departure and the departure of the convenor for a business trip to Sweden, even less happened.⁹⁷ Several key actors of the PVO Campaign—Jonah Gokova, Regis Mtutu, and Niki Jazdowska — joined by Fr Brian MacGarry, a Catholic priest deeply involved with campaigns for economic justice, then became involved in the Parliamentary Reform Committee's call for input from civil society. The World Bank's SAPRIN initiative, designed to bring civic organizations into dialogue with their governments and the Bank, also made demands on activists' time and energy.⁹⁸

The PVO campaign also indirectly spurred activity within those NGOs dedicated to resuscitating NANGO. A remarkably well attended national meeting was held in 1997, to discuss NANGO's crisis. Yet, the meeting failed to explicitly refer to either NANGO's debt

⁹⁷ Personal communication, Regis Mtutu, December 1997.

⁹⁸ For an initial commentary on this process, see: Erin McCandless, "Zimbabwe's Social Movement Organizations: Challenging Economic Policy Reform" in Yuka Suzuki and Eric Worsby, eds. *Zimbabwe: the Politics of Crisis and the Crisis of Politics* (New Haven: Yale Centre for International and Area Studies, 2001)

or the record of financial mismanagement. It was also left to the PVO campaign group to circulate information and let non-Harare based members know about their activities. The meeting further elected the Deputy Director of Social Welfare onto the Task Force charged with resolving NANGO's administrative and financial crisis.⁹⁹

NANGO was forced to retrench most staff, leaving a core of only three, closed the regional offices that had been opened as part of the transition from VOICE to NANGO, and managed to reduce debt to a manageable ZWD 500, 000.¹⁰⁰ By 1999, NANGO seemed to have been resuscitated with the appointment of a new Director whose probity was respected by many of the NGOs. New donors had been signed up including the EU, DFID, USAID, and NPA and an updated membership list recorded 200 members, of which perhaps 50-60% had paid fees.¹⁰¹ Leaving the VOICE and NANGO offices in 1999, they had moved into smaller, but tidier premises in Mass Media House. With new funding, staffing levels rose back up to eight, and the NANGO offices presented a far more efficient and orderly presence than in the previous 10 years.

Yet, it was not clear, despite these promising moves that NANGO was going to be any more effective in co-ordinating NGOs, especially vis-a-vis government. Those NGO personnel who had been most active in networking and activism refused to be nominated for the NANGO board, because the new chair was Mrs Kgogo Mudenge, the director of the Danhiko project but also the wife of Stan Mudenge, the Minister of Foreign Affairs.¹⁰² As a result, the new committee was distinctly lacking in seasoned activists.

⁹⁹ Research Notes, 29 April 1997; NANGO. *A Co-ordinated voice for NGO's—The path ahead* by G. Madzima May 1997, 48.

¹⁰⁰ "Phiri vows to change NANGO" *Sunday Mail*, 19 July 1998.

¹⁰¹ Interview, Jonah Mudehwe, NANGO, 16 September 1999.

¹⁰² NANGO "Dissemination of news on election of a new NANGO national Board" 8 June 1999; "Kgogo Mudenge is new Nango chairperson" *Herald* 16 June 1999; Interviews, Jonah Gokova 9 September 1999, Paul Themba Nyathi, 16 September 1999.

At the same time, although the new committee of NANGO had decided that advocacy would be one of its three key programmes, the on-going NCA-CC confrontation (discussed in chapter 7) meant that NANGO “was having to take a back seat because some members feel strongly about the CC. We don’t want problems, for NANGO to be split.”¹⁰³ While this would no doubt assuage the concerns of the more pro-government NGOs, including presumably the new national Chair, it only served to further alienate the ‘activist’ NGOs. In response, ESS co-ordinated a series of meeting in late 1998 and 1999, attended by a select group of ‘activist’ NGOs.¹⁰⁴ The NGO Coalition for Change (NCC) was created as an informal coalition which aligned itself explicitly and publicly to the NCA and ZCTU.¹⁰⁵ As we shall also see in chapter 7 and 8, all of those involved in the economic justice networks and the PVO campaign also became key players in the NCA and the MDC.

6.5 Conclusion

While the 1990s represented a growth period for NGOs in Zimbabwe, it was also a time when economic and social conditions became much more difficult. Despite NGOs’ involvement with the social welfare of both urban and rural peoples, few NGOs were involved in lobbying and advocacy work concerning economic policy. Even when legislation was implemented to control NGO activity, NGOs were reluctant to intervene.

While most NGOs were constrained by ideological and material constraints, a few ‘activist’ NGOs attempted to create networks through which activism could be initiated. Many,

¹⁰³ Interview, Jonah Mudehwe, NANGO Executive Director, 16 September 1999.

¹⁰⁴ NGO Coalition for Change, Minutes of the first meeting for the establishment of an issue-based Non-governmental Organisations Coalition held on the 24th of September 1998; NGO Coalition for Change, Minutes from constituting meeting of the NGO Coalition for Change, NCC, on 30 November 1998; NGO Coalition for Change, NGO coalition meeting held at OTD on 16-17 February 1999; NGO Coalition for Change, NGO coalition meeting held at NPA offices on 20 March 1999.

¹⁰⁵ NGO Coalition for Change, Press statement, 30 November 1998; “NGOs in coalition” *Independent* 11 December 1998.

if not most, of the activists were staff or board members of NGOs, yet because of their functional difference from NGOs, coalitions seem to accomplish more, at least on overtly political issues, than individual NGOs. Coalitions were “safer” from attack either by the state or donors because they were not isolated NGOs, in that they were not vulnerable to ‘gazetting,’ and because they depended less on donor-funding.

The cases discussed in this chapter reveal the continuing power of the regime’s politics of inclusion. Even those NGOs concerned about economic policy or the PVO Act continue to be wary of moving outside the approved networks that mediated relations between the state and NGOs. NGOs were sensitive to the way appeals were framed and the mechanisms used to propagate their perspectives. They attempted to avoid confrontation with the state and party policy-makers, for their own protection and because they were balancing the concerns of disparate organizations.

As we shall see in Chapter 7, it is only when NGOs are able to ally with other social forces, and when the political hegemony of the regime is much weakened, that NGOs are willing to enter into more adversarial confrontation with the state.

Part IV The Politics of Exclusion, 1997-2000

Between 1997 and 2000 politics in Zimbabwe changed dramatically, culminating in the constitutional referendum in February 2000 and the election in June 2000. While, as it will be seen below, a series of events both political and economic contributed to these changes, NGOs were significant in originating the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA). Unlike earlier NGO coalitions, which seemed to exist on the periphery of political events, the story of the late 1990s is very much the story of the NCA, and the ways in which it opened up political debate. Analyses of the NCA and the political shifts that follow its formation need to be carefully nuanced. The story of the NCA discussed in Chapter 7, reveals the government's continuing ability to divide and co-opt civil society actors. In our surprise at the opposition's strength in the 2000 elections and the regime's desperate recourse to violence, we should not forget the ambiguities revealed by a careful case study of the NCA. As Brian Raftopoulos notes,

... some NGOs have been willing to develop a more openly critical political stance against the state, particularly on the issue of constitutional reform. This development does not mean that such NGOs have completely discarded their more cautious political strategy towards the state. However, it does signal the capacity to move beyond such caution when national and regional conditions make this a calculated risk.¹

Therefore, Chapter 7 will examine the NCA and the broader context of politics between 1997 and 2000, following on both from the focus in section II on state and societal politics more broadly and section III's engagement with the specific relation between NGOs and the state. Chapter 8 will conclude our analysis of the period. First, it will examine how the constitutional debate sparked the re-emergence and remobilization of the ruling party and its key allies, the war veterans. Next it examines the development of opposition parties after 1997, emphasizing the MDC, and its links to the ZCTU and NCA. Finally, it considers the regime's tactics vis-à-

¹ Raftopoulos, "The State, NGOs and democratization" 45.

vis farmers, farm-workers, and other perceived supporters of the opposition. Like the violence after the referendum, the conduct of the election tells us a great deal about the regime's attitude not only to its formal opponents, but also those – especially NGOs – who it has by this time declared to be 'enemies'. As this suggests, the final section of the chapter brings the thesis back to the question of regime endurance.

The mobilization of the war veterans in 1997, the increasing militarization and politicization of the state apparatus, and the regime's increasingly heavy-handed approach to the media, together with the self-inflicted economic crisis, drove previously quiescent groups into alliance with the 'opposition'. By February 1999, Minister Sidney Sekeramayi alleged that "some foreign governments are forming an informal coalition with the press to try and remove the Zimbabwean government from power."² And later the same month, the President stated that the actions of some groups (presumably including the NCA and journalists) might force the party to 'revisit' the policy of reconciliation.³ Such rhetoric intensified during the referendum and elections, and relations between state and society became increasingly polarized.

The material presented in the following chapters suggests that the regime also continued to attempt to incorporate activists and others into its coalition. As Aristide Zolberg, observing the West African party states in the 1960s, noted, even as coercion and violence escalated, "the earlier process of co-optation, negotiation and reconciliation [was] never fully superseded."⁴ The mobilization of one group – the war veterans – within the ruling coalition was not just *perceived* as a threat, but was a real threat to the continued livelihood of farmers and white businesspeople, as well as farm workers.⁵ By 2000, the war veterans had made it clear that the condition of their co-option was the appropriation of land. ZANU(PF) then integrated

² "Minister attacks acts of sabotage" *Herald* 5 February 1999, 9.

³ "Reconciliation policy may be revisited: President" *Sunday Mail*, 28 February 1999.

⁴ Zolberg, *Creating Political Order*, 87.

⁵ Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, 166.

the discourses of land and nationalism into a potent rhetorical vision. In arguing this, I am not dismissing the ways in which land, like the concomitant anti-white rhetoric, was an electoral tool, nor am I suggesting that the war veterans were in control of the party's agenda. But I am suggesting that we need to step back and situate these political decisions against the historical development of state-society relations. To simply dismiss the Zimbabwean crisis as the result of poor leadership, connived at by weak neighbours and donor governments, as in Robert Rotberg's "Africa's Mess, Mugabe's Mayhem" is unsatisfactory.⁶ Nationalism continues to be a potent force in Zimbabwean politics, as does the incontrovertible desire for access to land among both urban and rural peoples.

Between 1997 and 2000, we see a regime struggling to maintain its hold on power, losing both the active and passive support of groups which had been significant to regime maintenance since 1980, and attempting to go back to the allies of the 1960s and 1970s.

⁶ Robert Rotberg, "Africa's Mess, Mugabe's Mayhem" *Foreign Affairs*, 79, 5 (2000).

Chapter 7 The Politics of 1997-2000: the January 2000 Referendum

Apparently contradictory trends dominate the political landscape after 1997. While some have described this process as a period of ‘democratization’ it might also be seen as increased authoritarianism, following trends set between 1990 and 1997. This chapter will track the changes in state-society relations, looking at how NGO coalitions worked with a broad range of societal organizations to profoundly shape political outcomes at the end of the decade.

7.1 Growing Unrest

In 1997 a series of incidents, which included the crisis over the claims of the war veterans, Zimbabwe’s entry into the Congo war, and the weakening economy sent reverberations across the political sphere. The regime’s basis of legitimacy was called into question as veterans of the liberation war camped outside the President’s official residence and stormed the ZANU(PF) headquarters, in reaction to Margaret Dongo’s revelation in Parliament that a fund set up to compensate war veterans injured during the liberation war scandal had been looted by high-level ZANU(PF) functionaries.¹ These embarrassing disclosures led Mugabe to commit funds to war veteran pensions in November 1997, which was one of a series of financial actions that led to the dollar’s collapse on ‘Black Friday’.² While import and investment sectors of Zimbabwe’s economy had benefitted under ESAP, the dollar’s collapse in 1997 meant that conditions worsened for all but a very few.

¹ “Meetings with war vets turn nasty” *Herald* 21 July 1997, 1, 8; “Ex-combatants loot ZANU (PF) HQ” *Herald* 14 August 1997, 1; “Compensation demands to continue: Hunzvi” *Herald* 15 August 1997, 1, 7; GOZ. Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Administration of the War Victims compensation Act [Chapter 11.16]. May 1998.

² Iden Wetherell, “Mugabe under siege: ending the plunder?” *Southern Africa Report* March 1998, 16-18

7.1.1 Economic conditions and labour unrest

The economic crises of the late 1990s, typified in the falling value of the Zimbabwe dollar and the fuel shortages of 1999-2000, coupled with continuing issues of unemployment, declining health and education standards, catalyzed an unprecedented and public critique of the Mugabe regime. In 1999, even the *Herald* commented that the failing urban transport system was back to pre-structural adjustment conditions, with many workers cycling and walking to their jobs.³ Although the failures of economic policy were mainly blamed on ESAP, the *Herald* further noted that workers were on average 10 times poorer in 1999 than in 1990.⁴

As detailed in Chapter 4, a wave of strikes in all sectors of the economy in 1996 and 1997 articulated widespread popular discontent. In protest at tax increases, the ZCTU successfully called for a 'stay-away' in December 1997, which they estimated to have been supported by 3.5 million workers.⁵ While this estimate may have been optimistic, the stay-away was the first widely observed national protest at government policy since independence. In January 1998 food riots erupted throughout Chitungwiza and Harare's high-density areas,⁶ followed by a two-day stay-away called by the ZCTU in March.⁷ The government's first reaction to these 'stay-aways' was to ban all demonstrations⁸ and then to send in the army.⁹ After the December stay-away, Morgan Tsvangirai was attacked in the Harare ZCTU offices

³ "Commuters relive '80s public transport blues" *Herald* 15 February 1999, 11.

⁴ "Ordinary workers worse off now than 10 years ago as inflation bites" *Herald* 24 May 1999, 1.

⁵ "ZCTU bills strike the most successful ever" *Financial Gazette*, 11 December 1997; Never Gadaga, "Rage at Police attacks in Zimbabwe" *Mail & Guardian*, 11 December 1997; Chris McGreal, "Zim's 'unholy alliance': black workers, white farmers" *Mail & Guardian*, 17 December 1997.

⁶ Never Gadaga, "Violent demos rock Harare" *Mail & Guardian* 20 January 1998; Pedzisai Ruhana, "Riots bring hasty reverse on maize prices" *MISA* 20 January 1998.

⁷ "Tens of thousands defy Mugabe in Zimbabwe anti-government strike" *SAPA* 3 March 1998; "National strike cripples economy for second day" *SAPA* 4 March 1998; Iden Wetherell, "Threats fail to halt Zim's workers" *Mail & Guardian*, 6 March 1998.

⁸ "Demo ban unconstitutional - lawyers" *Independent* 1 August 1997, 8.

⁹ "Army deployed to quell food riots" *PANA* 20 January 1998; "Military spark panic in Zimbabwe's riot-torn capital" *SAPA-AFP* 21 January 1998.

and after the March stay-away, the ZCTU offices in Bulawayo were destroyed by fire.¹⁰ Further protests occurred in November and December 1998, in reaction to increased fuel prices and the Congo war intervention.¹¹

7.1.2 Urban conditions

Housing shortages in urban areas, always a problem, had intensified at the end of the decade with a recognition that government policies had failed to meet its target of housing for all by the year 2000, set in 1985. By 1999, there was a backlog of 1 million units of housing, with only 200 000 housing units/serviced stands having been created in the intervening period.¹²

Municipal facilities, including refuse collection, sewage disposal, water supplies and roadworks, have been under particular stress with city councils increasingly unable to provide basic services. The Harare Council called upon residents to “hold meetings among themselves to discourage refuse dumping.”¹³ Municipalities also suffered as the central government failed to pay bills, leaving them ‘cash-strapped’.¹⁴ The decline of socio-economic standards appears to have also sparked the increasing militancy of rate-payers associations in most towns and an intensification of urban politics.¹⁵

¹⁰ Never Gadaga, “SG of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions attacked” ZimRights Press release 11 December 1997; “Union is Strength” *Africa Confidential*, 20 March 1998, 5-6.

¹¹ Lewis Machipisa, “Zim panic over price rises” *Mail & Guardian* 29 September 1998; Andrew Meldrum, “Fuel riots erupt in Zimbabwe” *Guardian* (UK) 5 November 1998; Lewis Machipisa, “Zim unionists upbeat after massive strike”, *Mail & Guardian* 12 November 1998; “ZCTU to go ahead with next stayaway” *Independent* 13 November 1998.

¹² “Housing for all misses 2000 target” *Herald* 13 August 1999, 10

¹³ See for instance: Angeline Mushakavanhu, “A filthy problem” *Standard* 24 September 2000; “Virginia Dhliwayo, “Ratepayers protest over rubbish” *Standard* 26 November 2000.

¹⁴ “Bulawayo council to meet” *Independent* 20 April 2000; “Harare council owed \$120 million: ministers not paying rates” *Independent* 4 June 1999..

¹⁵ See for instance: Farai Mutsaka, “Mutare residents want demo over 4000% rates hike” *Standard* 7 January 2001; Farai Mutsaka, “Ratepayers halt payments” *Standard* 11 February 2001; Chengetai Zvauya, “Norton residents refuse to pay rates” *Standard* 22 August 1999.

7.1.3 Scandals

As detailed in Chapter 4, in 1997 three major political scandals had hit the headlines: the VIP housing scheme, the War Veterans, and the Airport tender. As the decade continued, the list of scandals unearthed by the increasingly vigilant press increased.

The Harare city council was disbanded after charges of corruption and fraud were laid against the mayor and senior officials.¹⁶ At the same time, senior ministers were implicated in corruption scandals within two significant parastatals – the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM) and the Grain Marketing Board (GMB).¹⁷ Ministers were reported to have benefitted from clandestine fuel deals, which cost NOCZIM an estimated ZWD 1 billion.¹⁸ The consequent debts resulted in the fuel crisis of 2000-1. Kumbirai Kangai, a long-serving cabinet minister, was alleged to have siphoned ZWD 228.4 million from the GMB while Minister of Lands and Agriculture.¹⁹ In other cases, Ministers were accused of benefitting disproportionately from the use of government vehicles and services through the District Development Fund (DDF),²⁰ while in 1999 allegations surfaced that bribery was widespread within the Attorney-General's office.²¹ In the lead-up to the 2000 election, the government established an anti-corruption commission, which was widely interpreted as a politically expedient move.²²

¹⁶ "Tawengwa and Vingirai arrested" *Herald* 23 March 2000; "Tawengwa appears in court" *Herald* 24 March 2000.

¹⁷ "Massive corruption costs NOCZIM \$1.4 bn" *Herald* 4 February 1999, 1.

¹⁸ Wisdom Mdzungairi, "Ex-NOCZIM Boss, senior staff arrested" *Herald* 1 March 2000; "Chihuri consults Mugabe on ministers implicated in NOCZIM/GMB scandals" *Independent*, 3 March 2000.

¹⁹ "Chefs offshore accounts probed" *Financial Gazette* 6 April 2000.

²⁰ "Scam may have cost DDF \$12 million" *Herald* 10 April 1999, 1; "DDF prejudiced of millions of dollars" *Herald* 21 May 1999, 1; "As DDF scandal widens, high level graft impoverishes rural folk" *Independent* 16 July 1999.

²¹ Brian Hungwe "AG's office accused of taking bribes" *Independent* 8 October 1999.

²² "Mugabe accuses ministers of accepting bribes" *Daily News* 21 July 1999; "Sudden anti-corruption drive raises eyebrows" *Independent* 31 March 2000.

7.1.4 The Congo Intervention

In August 1998, the Zimbabwean government sent soldiers to support Laurent Kabila's government in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which was being militarily challenged by internal rebels allied with Rwanda and Uganda. The motives for this intervention remain somewhat murky but probably include two main factors. First, Mugabe's concern to present himself as the leader of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), whose charter obligates members to assist each other in the case of foreign invasion. Second, the Zimbabwean government had an interest in preserving Kabila in power because of substantial outstanding loans, which the rebel forces would doubtless not repay.²³

More recently, as Zimbabwe's commitment to the Congo war has been extended and expanded, economic interests – especially investments made by army officials – have come to predominate explanations of Zimbabwe's involvement. Increasing emotional costs to the families of soldiers, and financial costs to the Treasury thought to be USD 3 million a month, led to questions being asked about how the army supported its Congo activities.²⁴ It is alleged that soldiers were being paid bonuses directly from some DRC companies, and more significantly, that concessions and joint ventures have been set up to facilitate the expansion of Zimbabwe investment, benefitting companies controlled by high-ranking military officers and ZANU officials.²⁵ A UN Security Council report suggests that, “[a]mong all of its allies, Zimbabwean companies and some decision-makers have benefitted most from this scheme,”

²³ Michael Nest, “Ambitions, Profits and loss: Zimbabwean Economic Involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo” *African Affairs* 100 (2001), 470-471.

²⁴ UN Security Council. *Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. (2001) 28; Andrew Meldrum, “Zimbabwe loans cut off as leak shows war costs” *Mail & Guardian* 7 October 1999; “Zimbabwe's Congo intervention in official figure” *Mail & Guardian* 27 October 1999.

²⁵ “Inside Zimbabwe Inc” *Focus* 19 (September 2000); UN Security Council. *Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. (2001) 33-36.

which they refer to as “incentives for assistance.”²⁶ The World Bank’s suspension of a much-needed USD140m loan in October 1999, and aid cancellations by bilateral donors, after a leaked government memo revealed the extent of government expenditure in the Congo, further contributed to economic strain.²⁷ Unsurprisingly, many Zimbabweans view these developments as further evidence that the developmental priorities of the state have shifted away from poverty-reduction and towards providing investment opportunities to the élite.

7.1.5 Media Expansion and Crackdown

Media and communication technology expanded greatly with more urban consumers able to access cell phones, email and independent radio, TV, and more newspapers than ever before, but at the same time, government attacks on such media intensified. In 1999, the independent editors were accused of being used by “hostile forces in the UK, South Africa and the United States to plot the downfall of President Mugabe’s government.”²⁸

A turning point for the media was the South Africa publication of the CCJP/LRF report on human rights abuses in Matabeleland in the weekly *Mail and Guardian*.²⁹ Not only was the *Mail and Guardian* widely available in Zimbabwe, but the local independent media immediately carried the story and followed it up.³⁰ In response, the government acknowledged

²⁶ UN Security Council. Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. (2001) 34.

²⁷ Andrew Meldrum, “Zimbabwe loans cut off as leak shows war costs” *Mail & Guardian* 7 October 1999; “Netherlands cancels aid to Zimbabwe” *Mail & Guardian* 29 September 1999.

²⁸ “Private press editors dismiss government claims” *Daily News* 4 May 1999, 2.

²⁹ “Grisly trail of 5th Brigade atrocities exposed” *Mail & Guardian* 9 May 1997; “Memories of army atrocities still haunt Matabeleland, *Mail & Guardian*, 13 May 1997; “The Matabele wounds are still open” *Mail & Guardian*, 21 May 1997.

³⁰ The independent media had run stories on the atrocities in the 1990s, and in 1996-7, but the CCJP report provided a particularly stringent account, and the CCJP’s role was, in and of itself, an important story. “CCJP Submits report on Mat atrocities to Mugabe” *Independent* 21 March 1997; “Matabele Slaughter: CCJP report exposé” *Standard* 4 May 1997, 1, 4; “Matabeleland atrocities return to haunt the President: Mugabe battles with past that won’t go away” *Financial Gazette*, 15 May 1997, 4; “Fifth brigade victims demand official apology”

the human rights abuses perpetrated by government forces and, for the first time, made official commitments to compensation in 1999.³¹

In response to the increasing willingness of the independent media to publish stories critical of the government, the state seemed to change tactics radically *vis-à-vis* the media in 1999. After the *Standard* published a story written by Ray Choto alleging that an attempted army coup had been foiled, its editor Mark Chavunduka was detained illegally by the army for 7 days.³² After the courts ordered his release, the army handed him over to the police. Having evaded the army, Choto turned himself into the police but was, with Chavunduka, handed over to the army who tortured them for 36 hours.³³ Clive Wilson, their managing editor, was also detained, by the police, after holding a press conference at which the journalists alleged torture. Ibbo Mandaza, editor of, and Grace Kwinjeh a reporter from, the *Mirror*, another weekly launched in 1998, were arrested on 8 February 1999, and charged in connection with an article published in October, also concerning the war in the Congo.³⁴ Kwinjeh's story alleged that the family of a Zimbabwe man serving in the Congo had received not his body, but only his head. Like Choto and Chavunduka, they were charged with publishing false information which is "likely to cause fear, alarm or despondency among the public"³⁵ although charges against them were eventually dropped.³⁶ The political unpopularity of the war in the Congo was

Independent, 16 May 1997, pp 1, 2; "Amnesty challenges Mugabe to atone for Matabeleland rights violations" *Independent* 23 May 1997; "Government must not cover up 5 Brigade atrocities, says ZimRights" *Daily News*, 27 September 1999; "Remains of 5 brigade victims exhumed" *Daily News* 10 October 1999; "Mat exhumations help to heal wounds of bereaved" *Financial Gazette* 11 November 1999.

³¹ For example, "Zimbabwe compensation offer" *BBC* 12 July 1999; "Committee on Gukurahundi seeks to meet Mugabe" *Mirror* 24 March 2000.

³² "Chihuri admits illegal Act" *Standard*, 19 September 1999.

³³ Mark Chavunduka and Ray Choto, Royal Commonwealth Society Meeting, London, 16 April 1999; see also news reports, Andrew Meldrum, "Mugabe 'Foiled Officer's Coup'" *Guardian* (UK) 11 January 1999, Andrew Meldrum, "Zimbabwe Army Torture Alleged" *Guardian* (UK), 22 January 1999.

³⁴ "Zim police arrest three journalists" *Mail & Guardian* 8 February 1999; "Zimbabwe Mirror journalists further remanded" *Herald* 2 March 1999.

³⁵ Law and Order (Maintenance) Act (revised edition, 1996), Section 50 (1).

³⁶ "Charges Against Two Zimbabwean Journalists Dropped" 30 April 1999 *Sapa-AFP*.

blamed for the government's harsh reaction. Mark Chavunduka said, "if things had been normal, I think they would just have laughed it off."³⁷ The government was also clearly concerned about ensuring the loyalty of the army, as the torture of the reporters was aimed solely at uncovering their sources.³⁸

The contest between the government and the independent media was intensified with the establishment, and rapid popularity, of the *Daily News* in 1999.³⁹ The *Daily News* was the first financially successful independent daily and in immediate competition with the states' main mouthpiece, the *Herald* and was attacked directly and indirectly by the state through economic threats, intimidation, allegations of assassination plots, and, finally the bombing of its printing press.⁴⁰

In the same time frame, the state also targeted email and the radio waves. In March 2000, an act was rushed through Parliament which enabled the state to order internet service providers (ISPs) to "...intercept or monitor communications or suspend services to individuals in the interests of national security or the maintenance of law and order." The new act also introduced a licensing scheme for ISPs, which was thought likely to threaten those which were foreign-based.⁴¹

Similarly, attempts to start an independent radio station were crushed by the state which closed down the Capitol radio broadcasts, accusing them of operating illegally.⁴² When

³⁷ Chavunduka, speaking at Royal Commonwealth Society, London 16 April 1999.

³⁸ Mark Chavunduka and Ray Choto, Royal Commonwealth Society Meeting, London, 16 April 1999.

³⁹ "Daily News records phenomenal growth" *Daily News* 10 November 2000

⁴⁰ "Plot to close Daily News" *Daily News* 21 November 2000; "War vets besiege The Daily News" *Daily News* 24 January 2001; "War veterans 'ban' Daily News" *Daily News* 27 January 2001; "Press bombed" *Daily News* 28 January 2001.

⁴¹ "Communications bill seen as draconian" *Independent* 10 March 2000; Nqobile Nyathi, "ISPs vow to fight Bill gagging email" *Financial Gazette* 23 March 2000; Grant Ferrett, "Outcry at Zimbabwe Internet bill" *BBC* 20 March 2000.

⁴² "Capitol Radio to be launched soon" *Daily News* 26 September 2000; "Moyo warns Capitol Radio" *Daily News* 3 October 2000; "Capitol Radio defies government" *Daily News* 4 October 2000. "A fresh breath on the air waves" *Standard* 8 October 2000, "Moves to extend ZBC monopoly to 2002" *Standard* 8 October 2000.

the broadcasters challenged the ZBC monopoly provided for by the Broadcasting Act, the Supreme Court struck it down as unconstitutional. The state responded by using the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act to put in place a Statutory Instrument to regulate the issuing of licences, which gave the minister personal control of the process.⁴³ The Minister of Information also claimed that Capital Radio would not be given a licence under the new regulations because all the directors of the corporation were white, and one was British.⁴⁴

In the same period, the government also began to exercise more control over the state-run media, which had been subject to self-censorship rather than outright control. In 1997, it was revealed that a 'D notice' had been issued to all ZBC sub-editors the previous year to the effect that: "All stories on Margaret Dongo, Councillor Lawrence Mudehwe, and Strive Masiywa ... should be referred to the chief subs for radio news before being used in our bulletins."⁴⁵ A ZBC radio personality was fired after she permitted callers to her 'open-line' programme to criticise police violence against protesters during the 1997 anti-tax demonstrations and another similar programme was abruptly cancelled in December 1998.⁴⁶

7.2 NGOs Take the Initiative: the Growth of the NCA

Starting in May 1997, the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) called a series of meetings for NGOs, Churches and Unions interested in working on the Constitution. This group became the nucleus of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA). The initiative started with two staff members of the Justice, Peace and Reconciliation (JPR) office, Tawanda Mutasah and

⁴³ "Freeing of airwaves unleashes scramble for radio licences" *Mirror* 6 October 2000; Dumisani Muleya "New broadcasting law grossly restrictive" *Independent* 6 October 2000; "Capital Radio judgment reserved" *Daily News* 10 October 2000; "Search on Aret's home yields nothing" *Daily News* 11 October 2000.

⁴⁴ "Capital Radio judgement reserved" *Daily News* 10 October 2000; "Latest on Capital Radio" *Independent* 3 November 2000.

⁴⁵ "Dongo asks ZBC to lift news blackout on her" *Standard* 2 November 1997.

⁴⁶ On attempts to control ZBC coverage: "ZBC fires DJ for rapping police action" *Financial Gazette* 18 December 1997; "Govt tightens gag on ZBC" *Independent* 4 December 1998.

Deprose Muchena, who were both ‘veterans’ of student politics as well as both the coalitions discussed in chapter 6. Initial funding for the period June 1997-June 1998 was provided by the German social democratic NGO, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).⁴⁷ Their budget was later supplemented with funding from Oxfam, HIVOS, Friedrich Naumann Foundation, and the embassies of Denmark, the Netherlands, Canada, Australia and Sweden.⁴⁸

The provisional taskforce was headed by Morgan Tsvangirai representing the ZCTU. A steering committee was chosen which included both representatives of particular constituencies, including the churches, human rights NGOs, labour, women’s groups, and youth groups as well as individuals acting in the role of ‘consultants’ primarily lawyers and academics (see Appendix 1).⁴⁹ Masipula Sithole, emphasizing the democratic and representative nature of the NCA, has also stressed the attention paid to ethnic balance within its leadership.⁵⁰ Labour-oriented academics, on the other hand, describe the NCA as a middle-class alliance because trade union participation was “not extensive.”⁵¹ Munyaradzi Gwisai claimed that the “the popular ZCTU leaders Morgan Tsvangirai was put at its head in order to hoodwink the masses that such a body represented them.”⁵² While membership was dominated by NGO and Church members and staff, veteran unionists were present and effective participants in discussion from the start.⁵³

⁴⁷ Research notes, 28 May 1997, 11 June 1997; see also *inter alia* NCA, The NCA: First Interim Report, 3 July 1997 and T Mutasah, “Building a representative and all-inclusive constitution: proposals and strategies” in ESS, *Tolerance in Zimbabwe: towards a political, cultural and constitutional basis*, Report of a workshop held in Harare, 28 May 1997.

⁴⁸ NCA, Annexure 1: NCA income and expenditure 1998, NCA annual report, 1998.

⁴⁹ Brain Kagoro, ‘The evolution of the NCA’ in *Agenda*, vol 2, 1 suggests that this committee was elected in May 1997, my notes, and the meeting’s agenda suggest that this was formalised in June. Research notes, 11 June 1997; NCA, The NCA: First Interim Report, 3 July 1997.

⁵⁰ Masipula Sithole, “Fighting Authoritarianism in Zimbabwe” *Journal of Democracy* 12, 1 (2001), 167 and footnote 7, 169.

⁵¹ Peter Alexander, “Zimbabwe workers, the MDC and the 2000 election” 389.

⁵² Munyaradzi Gwisai, “Constitutional controversy: elected constituent assembly is the only way forward” *Herald*, 14 April 1999, 6.

⁵³ Research notes, 7 September 1997; see also “Spotlight falls squarely on the constitution” *Financial Gazette*, 11 September 1997.

Unlike the coalitions discussed in chapter 6, the NCA was a much bigger and disparate group of over 100 NGOs, community associations, and trades unions, as well as an indeterminate number of individual members.⁵⁴ With numbers of NGOs operating in Zimbabwe estimated to be in the thousands, the 30-40 NGOs that joined the NCA may not be considered representative of the wider sector (see Appendix 2). In addition to its large taskforce with 19 members, it also created an advisory committee of 10 members, and legal, disciplinary, media and information, finance and management, gender and youth committees chaired by taskforce members, all of which had 6-8 members. It also had a much larger budget and a permanent secretariat. So, the group of people working together in the ‘coalition’ was much broader and much more numerous. Nevertheless, many of the key leaders were ‘veterans’ of previous coalitions.

7.2.1 The popularity of the NCA

The NCA capitalized on both the latent critique of the government and the newly expanded independent media. Despite the sense of crisis rapidly emerging in 1997, public criticism of government policies had remained until then the domain of a few activists. But using the framework of the constitution, which was described by NCA members as a ‘non-political’ way of talking about the exercise of politics, the NCA rapidly gained momentum. The NCA was premised on a critique of the constitution, which emphasized the multiple amendments made to the Lancaster House constitution by the ZANU(PF) government. Many of these amendments were perceived as ‘panel-beating’ designed to constitutionalize laws the Supreme Court had ruled unconstitutional.⁵⁵ This meant that the issues discussed by the NCA

⁵⁴ Brian Raftopoulos and Gerald Mazarire. “Civil society and the Constitution making process in Zimbabwe: NCA 1997-2000” in Kayode Fayemi and Sam Moyo, eds. *Evaluating the Constitutional Process in Zimbabwe* (Forthcoming SAPES Books). MS dated September 2000, 31.

⁵⁵ The phrase ‘panel-beating’ is from Dr John Makumbe, speaking at “Public Meeting: Establishing a Constitutional base for Democratic Practice: lessons from South Africa” Harare, 28 May 1997. For a useful if dated discussion see: John Reid Rowland, “Amendments to

inevitably touched on many of the key political issues of the past decades, in a political environment which was much more volatile than any previous point after independence. Starting with this issue of the amendments, Morgan Tsvangirai highlighted the lack of “public scrutiny and accountability” in the legislating of those amendments and linked them in to “abuse of power....personality cults, and lack of transparency in our governance.”⁵⁶ As Masipula Sithole sagely observed, the NCA was formed more in reaction to the creation of the Executive Presidency in 1987 (Amendment 7), rather than the Lancaster House constitution.⁵⁷ So, just by bringing up the issue of the constitution and encouraging public participation, the NCA catalysed and regularised a debate which until then had had no formal place in the public domain.

The ZCC’s presence as organizer was particularly valuable in legitimating the process. Some participants wanted the NCA to be a free-standing body, autonomous from the ZCC, but were told in response that “we need an umbrella...the church is always considered impartial. If we have ZCC as our umbrella no one will say we are being political.”⁵⁸ Even an outspoken human rights activist suggested that “[t]here is risk of a boycott or attack if not under ZCC...Maybe we should form an [autonomous] body corporate? But the ZCC umbrella is strategically a good one.”⁵⁹

7.2.2 The NCA’s outreach programme

From 1998 the NCA developed materials and training facilitators to provide grass-roots ‘conscientization’ using ‘participatory civic education’ techniques. In its series of pamphlets entitled ‘Debating the Constitution’, the NCA addressed issues using simple English and

Zimbabwe’s constitution: a summary” *Legal Forum*, 6, 2 June 1994, 38-42.

⁵⁶ NCA [Morgan Tsvangirai], Welcome address at the National conference on the Zimbabwe constitutional debate project” Kadoma Ranch motel, 6 September 1997, 3.

⁵⁷ Masipula Sithole, “Minister with many portfolios and the NCA” *Agenda*, April, 1999.

⁵⁸ Research Notes, Constitutional Assembly Meeting, Kadoma, 7 September 1997.

⁵⁹ Research Notes, Constitutional Assembly Meeting, Kadoma, 7 September 1997.

cartoon sketches, designed to be used in workshops by facilitators. The booklets addressed the issues of citizenship, the constitution, finance, principles of democracy, declaration of rights, the executive, parliament, and the judiciary. As can be seen in Figures 1 and 2, these cartoons combined realistic situations with humour and the occasional didactic message (see Appendix 4). By the end of 1999, 576 facilitators across the country were trained to hold district level meetings, using these booklets to elicit feedback from participants.⁶⁰ In its newspaper adverts, the NCA similarly used graphics effectively to bring up sensitive issues, as can be seen in Figures 3 and 4 (see Appendix 4). In the first image, we can see the ‘boot’ of the Executive crushing Parliament. Readers are asked “What should the powers of parliament be?” Similarly, in the second image we see the familiar image of bystanders being forced off the road by the presidential motorcade and the readers are asked “What should the powers of the Executive be?”

Yet these booklets and their intended users were not ready until 1999 and, during 1998, the NCA carried out a more typical NGO agenda of urban-based meetings.⁶¹ Much effort and resources went into the urban-based thematic discussions of land, business, youth and women’s issues, which attracted wide participation, including at least one Cabinet Minister. The momentum of these meetings to some extent diverted the NCA away from grass-roots activism.

The NCA was also involved in protests against the Public Order and Security Act, which was intended to replace the Rhodesian era Law and Order Maintenance Act, sections of which had been declared unconstitutional. Similarly, in October 1998, the NCA organized a protest march against the Zimbabwean intervention in the DRC. But not all NCA members

⁶⁰ Raftopoulos and Mazarire, “Civil society and the constitution-making process in Zimbabwe”, 15.

⁶¹ NCA evaluation report, n.d. NCA files, 14; also “Evaluation of Strategic Process” NCA Annual Report 1998, 40-41; Interview, Mrs Kowo, Head of Church and Society ZCC, 7 October 1999.

were comfortable with this move from ‘educating’ people about the constitution towards advocacy on issues concerned with government policy. On the eve of the march, the moderator of the NCA, Bishop Nemapare, who was also Vice-President of the ZCC, issued a press release stating that the ZCC would not participate in the march. This enabled police to claim that the march had been cancelled by its organizers, and to use tear gas to disperse those who had gathered.⁶² Informed sources within the NCA and ZCC believe that Nemapare was pressurized by President Mugabe to call off the march.⁶³

7.3 The Government Changes the Rules of the Game

The Government launched its own constitutional commission (sometimes referred to as the Constitutional Review Commission) in March 1999.⁶⁴ While there had been suggestions that the NCA process would feed into the government’s proposed commission, and talks were held between the two groups, agreement could not be reached on the issue of guaranteeing the commission freedom from presidential interference.⁶⁵

Unlike the NCA, the CC has emphasized not the amendments to the constitution, but the problematic nature of the Lancaster House constitution, written by a small élite group in the UK. The CC’s goal was thus often described as a ‘home-grown’ constitution. Minister Eddison Zvobgo said “we are not amending the Lancaster House constitution but moulding

⁶² “Unity of NCA hangs in balance” *Herald* 8 November 1998; “Activists hit at govt ban on protest” *Independent* 7 November 1998.

⁶³ Interviews, Mrs Kowo, Head of Church and Society ZCC, 7 October 1999 and Isaac Maphosa, Director, NCA 28 September 1999.

⁶⁴ On launch of government’s CC: “Constitutional amendments to involve all-president” *Herald* 23 February 1999; “President gives notice to appoint commission” *Sunday Mail*, March 1999, 1, 4; “Commission of Inquiry into a new constitution for Zimbabwe” Advertisement in the *Herald* 15 June 1999, ; On NCA reaction: Daniel Manyandure “NCA won't accept govt 'fraud'” *Standard* 2 May 1999; Dumisani Muleya, “NCA vows not to take part in presidential commission” *Independent* 2 April 1999.

⁶⁵ Basildon Peta, “NCA and government discuss the way forward” *Agenda*, November 1998, 6; “Clashes as constitutional talks breakdown” *Herald* 26 March 1999; see also, Raftopoulos and Mazarire, “Civil society and the constitution-making process in Zimbabwe”, 6-10.

it in our own image as you cannot have a nation which breathes the historical experiences of another nation.”⁶⁶ Aware of the need for transparency, the CC went far beyond any previous commission in Zimbabwe in using paid advertisements and press releases to outline exactly how it would function because “the whole world is watching.”⁶⁷ The CC launched its consultation by printing a document entitled “Constitutional issues and questions” which ran as a multi- page submission in the main papers.⁶⁸ It raised a series of themes accompanied by questions, such as:

1.2 Citizenship. What should be the grounds for acquisition, loss and restoration of Zimbabwean citizenship be? What rights and duties should citizenship confer?

1.6 Supremacy of the Constitution. Where there is a conflict between customary practices and provisions of the constitution, which should prevail?....

4. Separation of Powers (Pillars of the State) How should the head of state be chosen? How many terms can the head of state serve?....

7.7.1 The Right to Life. Should the death sentence remain? Should abortion be allowed?.....

7.7.11 The Right to Vote. What should the minimum voting age in public elections be: 16 year or 18 years or 21 years? Should voting be by secret ballot or show of hands or head count?.....

Much the same sets of questions – in English, Ndebele and Shona – were asked in newspaper adverts which further invited participation in the process, as we can see in Figures 5 and 6 (see Appendix 4).

The makeup of the commission included Justice Godfrey Chidyausiku, who had recently chaired the investigation into the looting of the War Veterans’ Compensation Fund, as Chair; Anglican Bishop Jonathan Siyachitema, Professor Walter Kamba, former Vice-

⁶⁶ “Church leaders meet over constitutional reform process” *Herald* 4 March 1999, 4.

⁶⁷ “Daunting task for commissioners—Chidyausiku” *Herald* 8 June 1999, 5.

⁶⁸ E.g. 5 (tabloid) pages in English in the *Daily News* 5 August 1999 16-21; 3 (broadsheet) pages in the *Herald* 5 August 1999 C1, C2, C3; 3 (broadsheet) pages in Shona in the *Herald* 21 August 1999, 4, 5, 6.

Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe, and Mrs Grace Lupepe as vice-chairs. Kamba chaired the co-ordinating committee which had two sub-committees – administrative and finance headed by Ibbo Mandaza, media and information, chaired by Jonathan Moyo. Of the 395 Commissioners, 150 were MPs. The remainder were described as representing interest groups, but this included chiefs, presumed to be ZANU(PF), mayors, at that time all ZANU(PF), as well as a wide range of opposition politicians, church-people, and NGO representatives (see Appendix 3). This mix of ZANU(PF), opposition, and non-aligned commissioners, was quite unprecedented, but it was still interpreted by some as over-representing ZANU(PF). Margaret Dongo, for instance, accused the commission of duplicating the structures of ZANU(PF), arguing that “...three-quarters are the ruling party’s politburo, central committee members, provincial chairpersons, and so-called indigenous business persons aligned to the party.”⁶⁹ As we will see, this led to conflict between the two groups because the NCA held that anyone who had accepted appointment to the CC should recuse themselves from the NCA.⁷⁰

Like the NCA, the CC appealed for donor funding. While it is not entirely clear how much they received, their projected budget was said to be ZWD 300 million. They were reported to have received funds of ZWD 22.8 million from the Ford Foundation, and ZWD 19 million from the Kellogg Foundation, both controversially channelled through the SAPES Trust.⁷¹ Bilateral funding also came from South Korea (ZWD 380 000), Canada (ZWD 4

⁶⁹ “ZUD describes CC as a political joke” *Herald* 6 May 1999, 6.

⁷⁰ NCA. “Resolution passed at the Harare NCA assembly” 13 April 1999.

⁷¹ “Constitutional Commission get \$20 million from US donor” *Herald* 24 August 1999, 11; “Commission concerned about \$500 000 demand” *Sunday Mail*, 3 October 1999, 15; “\$30m grant for Constitutional Commission approved” *Herald* 20 September 1999, 9; “Commission put fund in private bank account” *Daily News* 7 October 1999, 1; “CC dismisses allegations of misuse of donor funds” *Mirror* 8 October 1999, 2.

million) and Australia (ZWD 1.2 million).⁷² The UNDP facilitated donations of ZWD 20 million from the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Denmark.⁷³

7.4 Divide and Rule: the Politics of Polarization

The formation of the Constitutional Commission led to serious divisions within ‘civil society’, as some groups chose to be incorporated into the state process, while others insisted on remaining autonomous. Against the background of the government’s implicit corporatist approach to NGOs, churches and unions, the opportunity to continue to work within the system was attractive to many organizations. In contrast to NGOs reluctance to work outside NANGO in the coalitions described in Chapter 6, as politics became more polarized, some NCA members became more assured in their determination not to co-operate with and therefore lend legitimacy to the government’s process.

7.4.1 The ZCC: Not ‘Rocking the Boat’

The ZCC had a fraught relationship with the NCA for some time before the formation of the CC. Conflict first became visible in October 1998, during the NCA march against Zimbabwe’s intervention in the Congo war. As discussed in chapter 5, the ZCC has not been the most consistently outspoken NGO in Zimbabwe and was particularly vulnerable to government pressure at this time because they needed its support to ensure the smooth functioning of the upcoming World Council of Churches (WCC) meeting which was to be held in Harare in December 1998. Some of its clerical leaders were unwilling to be associated with

⁷² “Commission receives financial support from Republic of Korea” *Herald* 6 August 1999; “Canada pledges \$4 million to constitutional commission” *Herald* 14 August 1999, 1; “Five countries donate \$20.1 million to Constitutional Commission” *Herald* 6 October 1999, 5.

⁷³ “Five countries donate \$20.1 million to Constitutional Commission” *Herald* 6 October 1999, 5.

a protest against the government's foreign adventure – especially if they were expected to lead the procession through Harare. A decision was taken at the highest level of the ZCC to withdraw from the march, and a press release was issued to that effect. This led the police to claim that the march was cancelled and those who did march were dispersed and tear-gassed.⁷⁴

Frustration at this sabotage led the NCA, which had been housed within the ZCC, to move abruptly to new offices in November – a decision taken without notice being given to the ZCC staff who had been working with them. ZCC staff further felt alienated as the funds and computers their donors had provided were shifted to NCA accounts.

When the government created the CC in March 1999, the ZCC withdrew its membership from the NCA. The ZCC Secretary-General described the NCA as a process that had grown beyond the ZCC: “we wanted to ‘unpack’ the constitution...[by this time] the understanding of unpacking was lost” and was out of its control: “...they were using our credibility, the actors were being political, there was no way to control them”.... “Actors in the NCA were exploiting the ZCC.”⁷⁵

While the ZCC's Justice, Peace and Reconciliation (JPR) staff, who had originated the NCA project considered remaining within the NCA, they felt there was no mandate for them to do so. ZCC staff emphasize that as the impetus developed for the Zimbabwe Congress of Trades Unions (ZCTU), which was a major player in the NCA, to form a political party, “[i]t was difficult to separate issues from the party and constitutional reform....” The churches felt threatened. As a key-player said “...as churches we had to take issues that don't raise too much dust or rock the boat too much, *but the boat was rocking.*”⁷⁶ By this time, the two ZCC staff members who had initiated the programme had also left to take better remunerated jobs with international NGOs. The ZCC-NCA break was complete.

⁷⁴ “Unity of NCA hangs in balance” *Herald* 8 November 1998; “Anti-congo demo falters as alliance splits” *Sunday Mail* 1 November 1998

⁷⁵ Interview, Densen Mafinyani, Secretary General ZCC, 29 September 1999.

⁷⁶ Interview, Mrs Kowo, Head of Church and Society ZCC, 7 October 1999

7.4.2 *Further Fractures Within the Coalition*

The appointment of various high-profile figures to the Constitutional Commission created friction within a wide variety of other organizations and social groups. A three day People's Constitutional Convention agreed to launch an alternative constitution-writing process that would be 'people-driven' instead.⁷⁷ The NCA had resolved that any NCA members could not also be Constitutional Commissioners.⁷⁸ However, several well-respected individuals previously aligned with the NCA did become commissioners. Law lecturer Ben Hlatshwayo and Commentator Lupi Mushayakarara both moved from the NCA to the CC, Mushayakarara became chair of the CC sub-committee on the pillars of democracy (see Appendix 3), while Hlatshwayo chaired a sub-committee that supported all the thematic committees.⁷⁹ Professor Heneri Dzinotyiweyi, of the Zimbabwe Integrated Programme (which later became a minor opposition party) and Dean of the Faculty of Science at the University of Zimbabwe, who had attended NCA meetings in the past, and who also became a sub-committee chair, expressed many people's opinions in saying:

Boycotting the process creates unnecessary antagonism. We also have our own suspicions but it is better to confront the issue than confront each other.... There is no balance in the commission yet but we hope the NCA and opposition parties will come and work from within.⁸⁰

Other groups which withdrew from the NCA in order to participate in the CC included the Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU) and the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists (ZUJ).⁸¹ The Anglican Church did not take an official position on the NCA/CC divide, but as we have seen, the Bishop of Harare became Vice-Chair of the CC and his Cathedral refused

⁷⁷ Declaration and resolutions of the 1st People's Constitutional Convention 18-20 June 1999; "NCA says constitutional review process in danger of being hijacked" *Daily News*, 20 April 1999, 2;

⁷⁸ NCA, "Resolution passed at the Harare NCA assembly" 13 April 1999.

⁷⁹ Hlatshwayo, who was probably second only to Jonathan Moyo in his prolific public engagements with the NCA was rewarded with an appointment as a High Court judge in 2001.

⁸⁰ Dumisani Muleya, "Unwieldy, accused of partisan bias, Constitutional commission seeks legitimacy" *Independent* 7 May 1999.

⁸¹ "NCA must stop shifting goalposts" *Herald* 19 April 1999, 1.

to let the NCA hold meetings on their premises.⁸² No similarly placed Anglicans held positions within the NCA, although individual parishes and parishioners did not follow the Bishop of Harare.⁸³ Indeed, an Anglican priest, Fr Tim Neill, was widely reported in the press as calling the draft constitution flawed.⁸⁴

The Catholic Church was divided, with the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) remaining within the NCA, and several of their staff members playing high-profile roles. Their nominal superiors, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), supported the Commission and called for priests and the laity to make representations to it.⁸⁵ Mike Auret, who was about to leave the CCJP and to launch a political career, interpreted the Bishops' stance cynically: "[They] have no objection to our being on the NCA, but want to hedge their bets."⁸⁶

The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights), which was at a particularly weak point with deep organizational divisions, was pressurized by the newly elected chair to pull out of the NCA. Members over-ruled this and insisted on remaining within the NCA.⁸⁷ Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights held a referendum, in which a majority of members advocated staying with the NCA, but a substantial minority did not.⁸⁸ The women's movement

⁸² "Anglican Church bars NCA from meeting in cathedral" *Financial Gazette*, 13 August 1999.

⁸³ See for instance, the letter to the editor entitled "Church leaders negating spirit of evangelism" *Financial Gazette*, 9 September, 1999, 9.

⁸⁴ "Church vote rejects constitution" *Daily News* 28 January 2000, pp1,2.

⁸⁵ "Constitutional reforms split Catholic Church" *Financial Gazette*, 5 August 1999; "Catholic Bishops Divided" *Daily News* 7 August 1999, 1,2; "Church Split Dramatised, says Wermter" *Standard* 8 August 1999; "We are not part of the NCA: CCJP Chairman" *Financial Gazette* 13 August 1999; "Catholics protest" *Sunday Mail* 18 April 1999.

⁸⁶ Interview, Mike Auret, Director CCJP, 28 September 1999.

⁸⁷ "ZimRights unhappy with NCA decision" *Chronicle*, 26 July 1999, 9; Interview, Munyaradzi Bhidi, Acting Director 13 September 1999; Interview, Peter Maregare, Legal Officer, 13 September 1999; Interview, Paul Themba Nyathi, former National Council Member, 16 September 1999; Interview, David Chimhini, [Former] Director, 4 October 1999.

⁸⁸ "Human Rights Lawyers divided" *Standard*, 2 August 1999; Interview, Beverly Hargrove, ZLHR administrator, 28 September 1999.

was seen as being particularly divided, although it eventually formed a coalition to promote women's constitutional interests within both the CC and the NCA.⁸⁹

The long-term impact on the Zimbabwean academic community, similarly divided by alternate loyalties, remains to be seen. The Southern Africa Political and Economic Series Trust (SAPES), whose director, Ibbo Mandaza, was a constitutional commissioner, also channeled donor funds to the Commission. A row about alleged misappropriation of funds contributed to the increasing polarization between SAPES' weekly *Mirror* newspaper, which along with the *Herald* took a strongly pro-CC line and the other independent press, which was equally as strongly pro-NCA.⁹⁰ While many high profile Zimbabwean academics arrayed themselves on different sides of the NCA-CC alignment, Jonathan Moyo was by far the most prominent. Moyo, a professor at Witswatersrand University in South Africa, had gained a strong reputation as a pro-democracy activist in the 'one-party state debate' in the late 1980s, but had been based in the US, Kenya, and South Africa for much of the 1990s. As the CC's spokesman he was responsible for much of the most personalized commentary against the NCA.

7.5 Conflicting Concepts of Constitutionality

As this suggests, the formation of the CC created a situation for a much more conflict-prone and combative discussion of the constitution.

⁸⁹ "Coalition dismisses shift from 'No' vote stance" *Daily News*, 24 January 2000; "Harare women march against draft constitution" *Standard*, 2 February 2000; Interviews Thoko Matshe, ZWRCN, 30 September 1999 and Selina Mumbengegwi, Women's Action Group, 6 October 1999.

⁹⁰ "Commission funds put in private bank account" *Daily News* 7 October 1999, 1; "Commission's donor funds misused" *Financial Gazette* 7 October 1999; "CC dismisses allegations of mis-use of donor funds" *Mirror*, 8 October 1999, 2; Jonathan Moyo "War on discrediting Constitutional Commission still on" *Sunday Mail*, 10 October 1999, 8.

7.5.1 The CC outreach programme

In August 1999, the Constitutional Commission began a programme of 5 000 meetings, organised by 8 provincial teams. While the independent press took great pleasure in detailing the Constitutional Commission meetings which had low turnouts, many people did address the commissioners and with great forthrightness.⁹¹ As a prominent NCA activist ruefully acknowledged: “we told people to boycott [the CC hearings] but now they are enjoying voicing their opinions”.⁹² In an intriguing front-page story in the *Herald*, it was reported that in Tsholotsho, villagers said that they could not speak freely to commissioners until after the CIO was disbanded.⁹³ Meetings with students were also particularly prone to conflict.⁹⁴ The Constitutional Commission claimed to have organized 4 321 public meetings which were attended by 556 276 individuals, as well as 700 special ad-hoc meetings attended by 150 000 people. In addition, they received 4000 written submissions and had 16 programmes on Radio 1 [English]; 55 programmes on Radio 2 [Shona and Ndebele]; 2 programmes on Radio 3 [English]; 70 programmes on Radio 4 [minority languages - Tonga, Venda etc]; as well as 31 programmes on ZBC-TV.⁹⁵ Zimbabweans in South Africa and the UK were also consulted.

Despite the Commissions’ own over-whelming focus on the Lancaster House constitution as flawed, the input that it received emphasized instead the reforms of 1987, which brought in the executive presidency, and linked the growing political and economic crisis clearly to the constitution. Just as the ‘non-political’ NCA had sparked a most political debate, the CC

⁹¹ For example, “Citizens cold-shoulder Commission meetings” *Financial Gazette*, 19 August 1999, 5; “Tough time for Commission team in Chirumanzu” *Daily News*, 20 August 1999; “Public ignores Constitutional Commission meetings” *Daily News* 18 August 1999.

⁹² Interview, Paul Themba Nyathi, NCA Taskforce, 16 September 1999.

⁹³ “Villagers not free to contribute views” *Herald*, 13 September 1999, 1.

⁹⁴ “Govt panel tries to sell itself to sceptical students” *Financial Gazette*, 5 August 1999; “Chakaredza says older commissioners botched meetings with students” *Daily News*, 22 September 1999, 3; “Commission meeting abandoned because of UZ rowdies” *Herald* 4 September 1999, 1; “Trials, tribulations of Commissioners” *Herald* 18 September 1999, 1.

⁹⁵ Plenary Statement by Justice Godfrey Chidyausiku. Constitutional Commission 3rd plenary 22 October 1999.

hearings provided a forum in which the current government's policies were explicitly criticized. From the time that the Constitutional Commission hearings began, the overwhelming topic of conversation was of addressing the problems of the current government, which had led to the economic downturn. Their input also revealed a thorough understanding of the political manipulation that had occurred. The commissioners heard demands that all MPs and cabinet ministers be elected not appointed, that the post of Provincial Governor be abolished, that the size of the legislature be reduced, that parliament should have responsibility for the budget and more power in general, that presidential powers be reduced, that political party financing be reformed, that an independent electoral supervisory commission be appointed.⁹⁶ This led commissioners to accuse people of using the meetings "as a platform to present their complaints about the economic problems they are facing, while others think the meetings are held to source their views of the present government and the ruling party."⁹⁷

In October the CC held a three day plenary meeting at which in addition to each provincial team reporting back, special interest groups and political parties also presented their positions, all of which was also broadcast on ZBC and reported in both the state and independent press. It was at this point that clear divergence emerged between the proposals from the opposition parties, interest groups and the general public, *vis-à-vis* the presentation from ZANU(PF), which encompassed an executive presidency as well as a prime minister.⁹⁸ These hearings also provided groups like Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ), which submitted a proposal to the commission that the rights of gays and lesbians be enshrined in the proposed Bill of Rights, with access to the electronic media for the first time in 5 years.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ For example, "Residents give view on the constitution" *Herald* 24 August 1999, 1; "Public not aware of objective of meetings" *Herald* 25 August 1999, 9; "Commissioners job is to reflect people's wishes accurately" *Herald* 24 September 1999, 6.

⁹⁷ "Public not aware of objective of meetings" *Herald* 25 August 1999, 9.

⁹⁸ Dumisani Muleya, "The public interest versus Zanu PF blueprint" *Independent* 29 October 1999.

⁹⁹ "Gay broadcast sparks heated debate in Zimbabwe" *Mail & Guardian* 5 November 1999; "Galz wants homosexuality enshrined in new constitution" *Herald* 25 October 99, 6.

7.5.2 *The Draft Constitution and the Referendum Campaigns*

The Commission's attempt to prepare a draft constitution after all this publicity led to internal conflict.¹⁰⁰ A significant minority of commissioners petitioned President Mugabe, alleging that the draft misrepresented the people's views.¹⁰¹ The draft prepared by the co-ordinating committee resembled the submission presented to the commission by ZANU(PF), rather than the provincial reports.¹⁰² A particularly controversial aspect was a debate within the 'transitional mechanisms' committee, which was divided as to whether President Mugabe should serve out his current term as president, much less be allowed to contest future elections, if the draft recommended a limit of two 5 year terms. The face-saving compromise decided upon was to drop the entire matter of transitional mechanisms, on the basis that it was not included under the commission's mandate, although it was one of the 9 thematic committees.¹⁰³ Despite a report that 24 commissioners dissociated themselves from the draft, a final version was made public at the end of November and a referendum on it was scheduled for February 2000.¹⁰⁴

After the plenary session in October, the thematic committees had analysed the 10 provincial reports. Because these reports had been broadcast publically and reported in detail in an 11 part series in the *Herald*, people were well aware of what information the commission received, which meant that everyone had an opinion on whether or not the draft reflected the input. Chisaka's useful analysis suggests that the provincial and the thematic committees 'did a good job' and that it was only when these views went to the executive that 'people's views

¹⁰⁰ "Storm brewing over constitutional draft" *Independent* 26 November 1999.

¹⁰¹ "Commission adopts draft constitution" *Herald* 30 November 1999, 1.

¹⁰² "Read constitutional draft thoroughly" *Herald* 2 December 1999, 1.

¹⁰³ "Mugabe must resign" *Independent* 26 November 1999; "Constitutional commission rift deepens: Moyo said to have threatened to resign" *Herald* 29 November 1999, 1; Commission adopts draft constitution, *Herald* 30 November 1999, 1.

¹⁰⁴ "Commission adopts draft constitution" *Herald* 30 November 1999, 4; "Draft advocates creation of a national assembly" *Herald* 30 November 1999, 4; "Constitutional court will be superior" *Herald* 30 November 1999, 4; "New constitution brings electoral commission" *Herald* 30 November 1999, 4.

were either distorted, ignored or rejected”.¹⁰⁵ Most of the cases where strongly expressed views were not reflected in the final draft concerned the limitations on the powers of the executive and separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches. For instance, seven out of ten provinces favoured a non-executive president as head of state and an executive prime minister as head of government.

The CC’s draft constitution retained the executive presidency and added a prime minister. Eight out of ten provinces wanted the president only to have the power to declare a state of emergency or a state of war after consulting parliament. The draft constitution gave this power to the president in consultation with the prime minister. Seven out of ten provinces said that Parliament should have fixed term-limits, but the CC gave the president the power to dissolve parliament as he saw fit. As Chisaka suggests:

the majority views of those consulted clearly wanted a governmental system that was accountable to them through their elected representatives in parliament...but this was denied them by the commission.”¹⁰⁶

The very public failure of the draft constitution to reflect the content of people’s submissions to the commission in the course of their hearings led to particularly dramatic rejections of the draft.¹⁰⁷ Unsurprisingly, it was criticized by those outside the process, who emphasized that the retention of an executive president was against the people’s wishes, and that it retained a large assembly and made no restrictions on the size of the cabinet.¹⁰⁸ More damagingly, it was also criticized from within. Commissioners were particularly critical of the

¹⁰⁵ Chenjerai Chisaka, “Did the constitution correctly interpret the views of the people?” *Social Change* 50, June 2000, 3.

¹⁰⁶ Chenjerai Chisaka, “Did the constitution correctly interpret the views of the people?” *Social Change* 50, June 2000, 3, 19; see also “NCA Vote No” supplement inserted in the *Financial Gazette*, the *Independent*, the *Standard*, the *Daily News*, the *Eastern Star* and the *Dispatch*, 4 February 2000 which similarly details ‘what the people wanted’ vs. ‘what the commission wrote’.

¹⁰⁷ “3000 walk out of referendum meeting” *Daily News*, 27 January 2000; “Tough time for commissioners” *Daily News*, 21 January 2000.

¹⁰⁸ President quizzes commission again” *Herald* 10 December 1999, 1,10; “Women’s coalition wants Constitution adjusted *Herald* 16 December 1999, 16; “Regard draft constitution as a green paper: church leaders” *Herald* 11 December 1999, 1.

undemocratic way in which the draft had been rushed through their final session. Several commissioners switched sides and urged a 'NO' vote.¹⁰⁹

In one of the most high-profile defections, Bishop Ambrose Moyo, of the Evangelical Lutheran church, resigned from the CC in December 1999 on the grounds that the draft constitution did not reflect the views of the people, that the commissioners had had no time to study or debate the draft, and that "...there was no democracy in the manner in which the chairman...processed both the Draft Constitution and the Final Report of the commission."¹¹⁰ Several commissioners, including the chair, acknowledged that the draft constitution did not reflect all the views of the people.¹¹¹ Two former commissioners launched an unsuccessful legal battle to have the draft reconsidered and the referendum postponed.¹¹² The draft was even criticized by those who were expected to support the government, ZANU(PF) and the war veterans, because it did not provide a framework to expedite the land reform process, although both groups did advocate a YES vote.¹¹³ In a last ditch effort to win over voters, the President gazetted some 'corrections and clarifications' to the draft constitution, the main effect of which was to introduce a substantive new clause which permitted the state to compulsorily acquire agricultural land, and obligated Britain as the 'former colonial power' to compensate farmers.¹¹⁴

The CC had run a high-profile and professional advertising campaign in the 6 months before the referendum in both the print and electronic media, even launching a music video

¹⁰⁹ "Commissioner snubs draft constitution" *Chronicle*, 27 January 2000.

¹¹⁰ "Bishop changes colour on draft constitution" *Chronicle*, 8 February 2000.

¹¹¹ "Draft ignored people, says Zvobgo" *Daily News*, 9 February 2000.

¹¹² "Mushayakarara, Mudzingwa apply for an urgent hearing" *Herald* 9 February 2000; "Mushayakarara, Mudzingwa fail to stop referendum" *Herald* 11 February 2000; "Last minute bid to stop draft poll fails" *Daily News*, 11 February 2000, 1, 2.

¹¹³ "Party to support draft constitution" *Herald* 17 December 1999; ZNLWVA "The 'NO' Vote to the Draft Constitution: which way forward?" 15 February 2000.

¹¹⁴ "Don't be misled - read for yourself; draft constitution for Zimbabwe; Corrections and Clarifications" advertisement inserted by Constitutional Commission in the *Mirror*, 28 January 2000.

and CD.¹¹⁵ The NCA, on the other hand, had been effectively blocked from airing programmes or adverts on ZBC airwaves. Officials claimed that ‘political advertising’ must have government approval. Persistent court battles failed to gain the NCA equal access to ZBC channels.¹¹⁶ The Media Monitoring Project (MMPZ) reported that in the week following a high court ruling which required ZBC to broadcast adverts, there were 22 CC adverts during and after the main news bulletins, and no NCA adverts at all.¹¹⁷ The MMPZ also observed that the NCA was rarely provided with a right of reply in either news or current affairs broadcasts throughout the referendum campaign period. In a one week period, they suggest that 30 out of 42 minutes of television news coverage was allocated to CC officials.¹¹⁸

Despite its vociferousness, in retrospect the referendum campaign was relatively peaceful and free of intimidation. Some meetings did break down into violent confrontation, and there were reports that the police were called in to protect commissioners. On the last day before the referendum, two NCA leaders were arrested along with six other members.¹¹⁹

7.6 Who Represents the People?

The NCA-CC debate also catalyzed a much broader set of questions about the role of NGOs, trades unions and individual citizens and their relationship to the state. The existence of the NCA challenged the previously dominant rhetoric and practice of the state, which presumed

¹¹⁵ “Constitutional commission launches campaign CD’ *Herald* 24 September 1999, 12; ZBC programmes, September-October 1999.

¹¹⁶ “ZBC defies court order, blocks NCA programmes” *Independent* 28 January 2000; “ZBC refutes NCA allegations” *Sunday Mail* 30 January 2000; “NCA seeks legal advice to recover funds from ZBC” *Independent* 10 March 2000, 11; see also the detailed discussion of these negotiations in Raftopoulos and Mazarire, “Civil society and the constitution-making process in Zimbabwe”, 17-18.

¹¹⁷ MMPZ, Media Update 2000/4, 24-30 January 2000.

¹¹⁸ See for example, MMPZ, Media Update 2000/13 January -9 January 2000 ‘Countdown to referendum’; MMPZ, Media Update no. 2000/4 24-30 January 2000, “Referendum on the draft constitution.”

¹¹⁹ “Top NCA leaders arrested” *Daily News*, 14 February 2000.

that it must initiate and control such consultations. The NCA was tagged as political, foreign-funded and anti-unity because it challenged this premise.

In language reminiscent of 1980s nation-building, the NCA was accused of failing to support “national consensus-building”¹²⁰ and of disrupting a “national process” when it refused to take part in the CC.¹²¹ In return, the NCA emphasized its demand for a “..stabilizing and unifying constitution-making process”.¹²²

The issue of which process was the more legitimate dominated much of their rhetoric. Each accused the other of being less inclusive. The Constitutional Commission launched its public campaign in mid-July with a two page advert labeled “The New Democratic Constitution...And a Few of the Questions That You Might Be Asking.” Using a question and answer format, the advert addressed the issues of what the commission was, how commissioners were chosen and most tellingly of all “Is the Constitutional Commission in competition with the NCA?” The answer given is:

The commission is not in competition with the NCA or any other group or individual. Unlike bodies like the NCA and other membership groups like political parties, the commission is a non-partisan body determined to hear and listen to all the views of the people of Zimbabwe and through their organizations such as the NCA....What the commissioners will not do is be dragged into a debate or situation that confuses changing the government with changing the constitution...the commission will take into account even the views of those groups or individuals who are critical of the Commission.

These arguments were replicated in a set of adverts where the NCA and CC squared off against each other asking “will the new constitution be about our rights...or theirs?” and “the new Constitution is for all of us...so why can’t we all have a say in it?”(See Figure 7; Appendix 4) versus “They say that you should boycott your national process and withhold your views on

¹²⁰ Jonathan Moyo, “Is the NCA grouping still existing?” *Financial Gazette*, 30 September 1999, 12.

¹²¹ Jonathan Moyo, “Greatest enemy of truth is myth” *Independent* 21 May 1999; see also “NCA subverting constitutional process” *Herald* 22 June 1999, 8; “Constitution, lets stop bickering and get moving” *Herald* 5 July 1999, 6.

¹²² Welshman Ncube, “Insults won’t deter NCA” *Financial Gazette*, 13 August 1999, 8.

the new constitution...The Constitutional Commission's outreach programme is giving all Zimbabweans a chance to have their views heard and recorded." (See Figure 8; Appendix 4).

The NCA was also attacked for representing foreign or colonial interests. Representatives of the CC repeatedly suggested that a No vote was tantamount to a Yes vote for the Lancaster House Constitution, and implied that the NCA was in favour of the Lancaster House constitution.¹²³ Foreign Affairs minister Stan Mudenge asserted on ZBC that 'foreign governments' were working against the constitutional reform process.¹²⁴ Jonathan Moyo was quoted as saying "...this stupid bunch of protesters is being paid and used by overseas donors who do not want to see anything good coming out of this country."¹²⁵ Or again "...this country would run a high risk of being a non-transparent donor's republic."¹²⁶ An editorial in the *Mirror* claimed, "The NCA has no local content and is therefore a myth, an international myth about Zimbabwe."¹²⁷ Ironically, as we have already seen the NCA and CC were both donor funded, but rebuttal was rarely permitted.¹²⁸

The inclusion of many NCA officials and members in the leadership of the new opposition party the Movement for Democratic Change, launched in September 1999, led to accusations that the NCA was merely a front for opposition politics:

...the new discourse on the quest for an all embracing democratic constitution was suddenly entangled and confused with the old quest for political power pursued under the auspices of an array of failed political parties.....the NCA strategy has been based on a....premise that the process of constitutional reform

¹²³ Commissioner Walter Kamba, ZTV evening news, 16 January 2000 as reported in MMPZ, Media Update 2000/2, 10-16 January 2000; "Referendum – What will a no vote mean for the country? *Herald* 18 January 2000.

¹²⁴ ZTV news, 15 January 2000, as reported in MMPZ Update 2000/2.

¹²⁵ "Political temperature rises in constitutional debate" *Independent* 25 June 2000.

¹²⁶ Jonathan Moyo, "Is the NCA grouping still existing?" *Financial Gazette*, 30 September 1999, 12; see also, Alexander Kanengoni, "NCA now experiencing some rude awakening" *Herald* 26 May 1999, 8.

¹²⁷ "NCA demo out to tarnish country's image" *Mirror* 19 November 1999.

¹²⁸ "Commission concerned about \$500 000 demand" *Sunday Mail*, 3 October 1999, 15; "\$30m grant for Constitutional Commission approved" *Herald* 20 September 1999, 9; "CC dismisses allegations of misuse of donor funds" *Mirror* 8 October 1999, 2; "Donors reluctant to fund commissions work" *Independent* 13 August 1999, 3.

should be used along with the current economic crisis in the country to change the government.¹²⁹

Does the NCA still exist? Yes and no depending on what you mean by the NCA. The answer is no if what is meant by the NCA is the organization that was almost formed not too long ago as a loose affiliation of civil society groups, churches, trade unions, academics and human rights lawyers who said they were committed to promoting a non-partisan civic education in favour of democratic constitutional reform. But the answer is yes if by the NCA is meant the de facto secretariat and fundraising arm of the Movement for Democratic Change. That is why the NCA is the first name of the MDC whose full name is NCA-MDC.¹³⁰

But the electorate's rejection of the Constitutional Commission's draft in the February referendum, with vote of 54% against to 44% in favour, implicitly answered many of these questions.¹³¹ The NCA did represent the opinions of the majority of those who participated in the plebiscite, and was therefore, a publicly legitimated voice.

7.7 Conclusion

During the constitutional debate, the regime attempted to continue, and enhance, the politics of inclusion, by claiming for itself the privilege of leading the debate. Its proposals, and the coalition it created to advance them, were participatory and inclusive. Opposition politicians, NGO activists, and church-people were included on an equal footing with ZANU (PF) stalwarts. At the same time, rhetoric against those who rejected the invitation to participate was increasingly exclusionary and intolerant. In this period after 1997, the ruling party was beset by revelations of scandals, financial crises, and declining social services. The constitutional debate was, at least in part, an attempt to regain control of political discourse, even as the state's ability to administer services was weakened. Instead, the public consultations provided a platform for

¹²⁹ Jonathan Moyo, "NCA not interested in changing the constitution" *Independent* 2 July 1999.

¹³⁰ Jonathan Moyo, "Is the NCA grouping still existing?" *Financial Gazette*, 30 September 1999, 12.

¹³¹ Innocent Kurwa "Draft Constitution a 'fraud'" *Daily News* 17 February 2001; Tarcey Munaku, "referendum results rock ZANU (PF) Foundations" *Daily News*, 17 February 2001.

the articulation of devastating critiques of the regime's political and economic policies in public meetings, reported extensively in the state-controlled media.

The regime's attempt to dominate the constitutional and civic debate by launching the Constitutional Commission had three, perhaps unexpected, results. Firstly, it succeeded in polarizing and politicizing the debate, which forced groups that had previously avoided 'politics' to take a stand. This forced groups, and individuals, to debate and articulate where they stood *vis-à-vis* the ruling party, and the incipient opposition. Secondly, the CC briefly eclipsed the NCA, holding out the possibility of fair and equal consultation. But the very openness of the process, and the expectations it raised, was its downfall. The publication of the draft constitution revealed the regime's inflexibility and the futility of seeking change from within. Thirdly, the victory of the 'No' camp publicly recognized their claim to represent the wider citizenry. This fundamental challenge to the premises on which the regime was based set the tone for the confrontation between state and society that developed as soon as the referendum results were announced.

In winning the referendum, the NCA alliance had legitimated the existence of organizations and ideas outside the hegemony of the ruling party/state. The ideology of unity, the claims to dominance of public discourse, and the control over state institutions were no longer accepted. The voting public (albeit a largely urban selection of the potential electorate) affirmed the claims made by the NCA to speak and act outside the remit of the state. This was a fundamental rejection of the way in which politics had been done since independence.

Chapter 8 The Politics of 1997-2000: the June 2000 election

The NCA profoundly changed politics in Zimbabwe by changing the conditions under which the 2000 elections were to take place. In this chapter, I examine the shift in electoral and party politics, in the context of changes in relations between the state and society after 1997.

8.1 Recreating the nationalist coalition: the party and the war veterans

The patterns of state-society relations described in Chapters 3 and 4 were fundamentally changed by the events of 1997 to 2000. Ruling party attitudes to NGOs, church and unions were affected by their involvement in the constitutional debate and the parliamentary election in June 2000 and also by the prospect of the presidential election in 2002.

Until 1997 the politics of Zimbabwe may, generally, be interpreted as the politics of inclusion, in which the ruling party and the state sought to incorporate most groups into their alliance, on their own terms but after 1997, the politics of exclusion intensified. Especially after the constitutional referendum, the ZANU(PF) government became increasingly intolerant of groups organized outside the state. After the June 2000 election, violence moved from the rural areas into urban areas and was increasingly perpetrated by sections of the formal security apparatus, including the army and police, and not by the war veterans and party youth alone.¹

Yet this new politics was not solely exclusionary. It was also about creating support amongst land-poor rural people and unemployed or poorly remunerated urban families. Promises were made in 1999 and 2000 that reparations would be forthcoming for victims of the Matabeleland conflict.² This campaign seems to have been masterminded by Jonathan

¹ "CCJP blasts army attacks" *Financial Gazette* 22 February 2001; "Opposition stronghold of St Mary's under siege" *Daily News* 3 March 2001; "Riot squad unleashes terror in Chitungwiza" *Daily News* 5 March 2001; "Govt incites crackdown on voters" *Independent* 9 March 2001.

² "Hundreds throng Heroes' Acre as Moyo is laid to rest" *Herald* 16 October 1999; "Mugabe promises to pay Matabeleland victims" *Mail & Guardian* 18 October 1999;

Moyo. In 1990, in his guise as a liberal democrat, he was a harsh critic of the ruling party. In 1999, and since then, he has taken his place at the heart of the government's coalition, being appointed Information Minister after the June elections. Other influential commentators, mostly academics linked to SAPES, also remained on-side. Sam Moyo's commitment to land reform appears to overwhelm his ability to appraise the process critically.³ Tanzanian academic Mwesiga Baregu extended his nationalist critique of outside interventions to condemning foreign election observers.⁴ Ibbo Mandaza's *Mirror*, while occasionally critical, maintained a sympathetic approach to the governing coalition. Structurally and rhetorically, ZANU(PF) attempted to recreate the social and political coalition of forces that had supported the liberation war, and to de-legitimize voices from outside that network. Whereas the post-liberation alliances in the 1980s and most of the 1990s were premised on the depoliticization and demobilization of all the social forces, the new, mobilized, forces of war veterans and party activists made this balancing act unstable, forcing groups into conflict with each other.

Although the war veterans had demonstrated their power during the 1997 conflict, they had then receded from the public sight. As we have seen, they did make representations about land during the constitutional debate, but had not played a decisive role in the process. The referendum defeat on the 14th of February was a turning point. The Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA), released a statement on 15th February that reveals the thinking behind the destabilization programme that emerged:

As the liberation war veterans of this country, we have done our best to promote the 'YES' vote on the constitutional Draft, not because the Draft

"Committee on Gukurahundi seeks to meet Mugabe" *Mirror* 24 March 2000; "Committee on Matabeleland atrocities suspends operations" *Mirror* 13 October 2000; "Gukurahundi genocide compensation in doubt" *Daily News* 8 January 2001.

³ See for instance, Sam Moyo, "The Interaction of Market and Compulsory Land Acquisition Processes with Social Action in Zimbabwe's Land Reform" Paper presented at the SARIPS of the Sapes Trust Annual colloquium on Regional Integration: Past, Present and Future, Harare Sheraton Hotel and Towers, 24-27, September 2000.

⁴ See for example, "Expert accuses observers of bias" *Sunday News*, 25 June 2000, 1, 5; Baregu was also well-known as a pro-government commentator on ZBC.

favoured our position on all aspects, but because we realised the importance of the draft as being the land issue.⁵

The veterans took issue with the longevity of many of the Cabinet Ministers and the tendency towards corruption within the government, and the weakness of ZANU(PF) as a party. In particular, they noted that:

Our own machinery which kept the Chimurenga war going, though disgruntled and depressed, remains our real hope to the cause of our historic revolution. *We advice the party to give these people their rightful place and to put them to use without any delay. The spirit of the revolution, that of 1980, must be revived now.....the main factor we see as contributing to the NO result is the weakness of the Party's provincial structures, the reluctant mood, the failure to change with the times.....this weakness of the Party structures has watered down our revolutionary aspirations and has proved beyond doubt the decay within us and that necessary and immediate steps should be taken to unify all revolutionary groupings of ZANU(PF) and consolidate the pillars upon which our support and power rests.*⁶

The ZNLWVA's attempts to rebuild the party's coalition commenced immediately. Farm invasions began in Masvingo province on the 16th of February and quickly spread to the rest of the country.⁷ The invasions were later called the fast-track resettlement programme and, more evocatively still, the third *chimurenga*.⁸

Although the invasions were initially described as 'war veterans' invading land, it quickly became clear that many invaders were either ZANU(PF) cadres or simply unemployed youths. That the invasions were not spontaneous was demonstrated by reports of invaders congregating near roadsides to receive their payments.⁹ Journalists observing the invasions claimed that CIO operatives were involved in planning them, and that government and army

⁵ ZNLWVA "The 'NO' Vote to the Draft Constitution: which way forward?" 15 February 2000 *emphasis in the original*.

⁶ ZNLWVA "The 'NO' Vote to the Draft Constitution: which way forward?" 15 February 2000 *emphasis in the original*.

⁷ "War veterans invade farms countrywide" *Herald* 29 February 2000.

⁸ Jonathan Moyo, "Oppositional Press put to shame" *Sunday Mail* 22 April 2001.

⁹ "Jobless hired to seize farms" *Financial Gazette*, 16 March 2000.

vehicles were used to transport the invaders.¹⁰ Certainly, their presence was encouraged from the highest level; President Mugabe publically condoned their presence on the farms in early March.¹¹ High court orders to evict the invaders were ignored by police, presumably on the advice of the Police Commissioner Chihuri, who was specifically named in the court ruling.¹² In addition to ZNWLVA president, Chenjerai 'Hitler' Hunzvi, new leaders emerged, including Joseph Chinotimba, an employee of Harare city council, who became the self-styled leader of the land invasions.

Violence seemed to escalate from mid-March, when reports of attacks on farm-workers and farmers increased. Farmers were driven off their land, or expected to farm only a portion of it, while veterans and others claimed the remainder. In some cases this resulted in a stalemate and co-habitation; violence erupted in other cases. Five white farmers were killed. The CFU was explicitly warned to avoid involvement with the MDC.¹³ Farm-workers were dispersed, often after having their homes and belongings destroyed. In some cases they were promised land. 30 000 farm-workers were estimated to have been displaced by August 2000.¹⁴ Some peasants and farm-workers were also subject to quasi-Maoist 're-education' camps on occupied farms.¹⁵ These camps emulated the pre-independence *pungwes*, all-night meetings characterized by singing and dancing, which had been the guerilla's "chief vehicle for political education" during the liberation war.¹⁶

¹⁰ Vincent Kahiya, "Government directs farm invasions" *Independent* 3 March 2000.

¹¹ "War veterans can remain on farms says president" *Herald* 11 March 2000.

¹² "Police defy high court order to evict war vets" *Financial Gazette*, 23 March 2000.

¹³ "Stay out of politics, CFU warned" *Standard* 2 April 2000

¹⁴ Steve Kibble and Paul Vanlerberghe, "Land, Power and Poverty: farm workers and the crisis in Zimbabwe" (London: CIIR, 2000) 32-33, 41.

¹⁵ Steve Kibble. "Zimbabwe: the State, Development and Democratization" Unpublished paper. 2000.

¹⁶ See for instance, Lionel Cliffe, Joshua Mpfu, and Barry Munslow. "Nationalist Politics in Zimbabwe the 1980 elections and beyond" *Review of African Political Economy* 18 (1980), 51-53.

As the election approached, those thought to support the opposition or to be likely to do so, began to be intimidated. War veterans disrupted NCA marches in April and May.¹⁷ In justifying police failure to protect marchers, the Commissioner of Police referred to them as ‘NCA/MDC’.¹⁸ Those targeted included teachers, priests and nuns¹⁹, activists such as ZimRights members in Marondera²⁰ and opposition party members.²¹ An estimated 7000 teachers fled their homes, shutting 250 primary and secondary schools.²² The MDC estimated that 10 000 people were displaced;²³ the Human Rights NGO Forum estimated that 13 000 rural people had fled to family in urban areas;²⁴ the *Financial Gazette* estimated that 6 000 people had fled from rural areas.²⁵

Unsurprisingly, the rhetoric of this period, like previous elections and the constitutional debate revolved around the liberation war and nation-building. Referring to white farmers, the late Border Gezi, Governor of Mashonaland Central said “They now don’t appreciate the

¹⁷ “Police and War Vets Attack NCA” *Standard* 12 May 2000; “Havoc in City” *Standard* 2 April 2000; Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, *The Unleashing of Violence: A report on violence against peaceful protestors in Harare April 2000*.

¹⁸ ZBC 8 pm news bulletin, 6 April 2000, as cited in Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, *The Unleashing of Violence: A report on violence against peaceful protestors in Harare April 2000*, footnote 24.

¹⁹ “Teachers abducted as political tension reaches fever high” *Parade* June (2000), 3, 7, 13; “Zanu PF terror targets rural professionals” *Independent* 26 May 2000; “Another safe home for fleeing villagers, teachers established” *Daily News* 29 May 2000; “War vets blackmail teachers” *Daily News* 5 June 2000; “Nun relives ordeal at the hands of ZANU (PF) enforcers” *Daily News* 22 June 2000; “ZANU PF mob brutally assaults Catholic priest” *Daily News* 24 June 2000, 1; “Threatened teachers flee from 3 schools” *Daily News* 26 June 2000; numerous personal communications.

²⁰ ZimRights *Early warning and Alert: 2* 5 April 2000 esp case no. 1 “Activist headmaster brutally assaulted by land-grabbers” and case no. 2 “ZimRights members attacked”.

²¹ “31 deaths of MDC supporters in political violence” MDC Press release 22 June 2000; Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, *Politically motivated violence in Zimbabwe, 2000-2001 July 2000*, 3-5.

²² EU Election Observation Mission Zimbabwe 2000, “Report of the EU Election Observation Mission on the Parliamentary Elections which took place in Zimbabwe on 24th and 25th June 2000”, (Harare/Strasbourg, 4 July 2000) 15.

²³ “31 deaths of MDC supporters in political violence” MDC Press release 22 June 2000.

²⁴ “Terror reigns in Mberengwa” *Daily News* 24 June 2000

²⁵ “Refugees in their own country” *Financial Gazette* 22 June 2000.

benefits of the reconciliation policy because we want to redistribute land to the people.”²⁶ The MDC was portrayed as the “puppet of white people who wanted to recolonise the country.”

²⁷ President Mugabe accused whites of perpetuating:

.... vestigial attitudes from the Rhodesian yester-years, attitudes of a master race, master colour, master owner and master employer. Our whole struggle was a rejection of such imperious attitudes and claims to privilege.²⁸

The land invasions were explicitly linked to the rejection of the government’s draft constitution, which they perceived to have been orchestrated by white and foreign interests. In response, in April the government enacted into law the controversial constitutional clause which entitled it to acquire land without compensation.

The government’s attempt to reconstruct this alliance was not without problems. The mobilization of the war veterans is, as Kriger shows, the culmination of their demands over two decades for compensation and inclusion.²⁹ However, the war veterans themselves are divided and claims to the liberation mythology continue to be contested. The ZNLWVA itself is deeply divided by factional disputes. After Chenjerai ‘Hitler’ Hunzvi’s death in 2001, the leadership was hotly contested between two factions.³⁰ The new resources have also intensified competition from other groups, those claiming to be ‘war vets’ but not officially recognized as such: cadres, collaborators (*mujibas*), and war widows, for equal access.³¹ While these groups have been useful in occupying land (*mujibas* are an ‘official’ category of recipient under the fast-track programme) their future organizational demands may be less easy to meet. Not all war veterans desire to be included in this process. The Zimbabwe Liberators Platform, formed by

²⁶ “Gezi slams whites for funding MDC” *Herald* 3 March 2000.

²⁷ “MDC admits anti-Zanu (PF) alliance with whites” *Herald* 10 April 2000.

²⁸ Televised Address by His Excellency the President on the Occasion of Zimbabwe's Twentieth Anniversary, Pockets Hill, Harare, 18th April, 2000. Transcript of Address.

²⁹ Kriger, “Les vétérans et le parti au pouvoir.”

³⁰ See for instance, “Confusion reigns over war vets leadership” *Daily News* 8 September 2000; “War vets power struggle deepens” *Independent* 8 September 2000; “War veterans split over election” *Independent* 14 September 2001; “Ndlovu threatens to deal with Nyaruwata, Mhlanga” *Mirror* 14 September 2001.

³¹ “War Vets group takes government to court” *Standard* 6 August 2000.

Wilfred Mhanda, of ZIPA, was also afforded a great deal of press coverage within and outside Zimbabwe, in an effort to construct an alternate legitimacy for anti-ZANU(PF) liberation-based perspectives.³² The chair of the new body said,

The farm occupations could have been a demonstration if they had been spontaneous....But this demonstration is illegal because it was denounced by courts of law, which are the custodians of law in this country....We want to convince the people that war veterans are members of society who should not be seen as working against the interests of the country.³³

The regime's own emphasis on liberation war history led to the credentials of its new leadership being challenged. Jonathan Moyo was accused of running away from training at Mgagao camp in Tanzania after 6 weeks; Chenjerai Hunzvi was alleged to have spent the struggle in Poland training to become a medical doctor; Joseph Chinotimba was revealed to have been a refugee, not a soldier, in Mozambique in late 1979.³⁴

The politics of choosing heroes also intensified. The politics of choosing heroes, already under question in the 1980s, became even more of a political hot potato in the 1990s. Nkomo's death in 1999 brought this to the attention of many, for while it was important politically that Mugabe recognize him as 'national hero' (and thereby entitled to be buried at the National Heroes' Acre near Harare) many in Matabeleland were said to be calling for him to be buried there.³⁵ The spontaneity of grief and the huge turn-out at Nkomo's funeral was in sharp contrast to the stilted and artificial nature of previous ceremonial events. Public pressure was enunciated in the media for streets to be named after Joshua Nkomo after his

³² See for instance, David Moore [letter] "How Mugabe came to power", *London Review of Books*, 5 April 2001; R W Johnson, "How Mugabe came to power" *London Review of Books*, 22 February 2001; RW Johnson, "Interview: Wilfred Mhanda, former freedom fighter" *Focus* December 2000.

³³ "New war vets body attacks Hunzvi executive" *Mirror* 15 September 2000

³⁴ "I never saw Moyo in the struggle--Tekere" *Independent* 27 April 2001; "Controversy over Hunzvi's hero status" *Independent* 8 June 2001; "Chinotimba's credentials questioned" *Independent* 3 August 2001; "Chinotimba Attacks General Mujuru" *Standard* 5 August 2001; "Chinotimba a fake" *Independent* 10 August 2001; see also, "The struggle was not about places" *Sunday Mail* 1 May 2001.

³⁵ "Nkomo death sparks trouble" *Standard* 4 July 1999.

death.³⁶ In the lead-up to the 2002 election, both Bulawayo Airport, the road leading to it, and a local college were renamed in Nkomo's honour.³⁷ The failure of ZANU(PF) to recognize Ndabaningi Sithole, leader of the original ZANU, as a hero after his death in 2000 was seen as further pusillanimous politicking.

8.2 Post 1997 Party Politics

The main reason for the reinvigoration of these ZANU(PF) allies was the new momentum in electoral politics, following the successful challenges of the independent candidates in 1996-7, and the results of the referendum.

The movement for independent candidates formed a political party in 1998, known as the Zimbabwe Union of Democrats, led by Margaret Dongo.³⁸ At the time, it was expected to be the main challenger to ZANU (PF) in the 2000 elections. However, following personality clashes, exacerbated by CIO infiltration, the party split into two camps in mid-1999.³⁹ Kempton Makamure's formation of an off-shoot called "Zimbabwe Union of Democrats – Transparency Front, was claimed as a victory by CIO agents.⁴⁰ Following the formation of the MDC, more of Dongo's key members deserted.⁴¹

In 1999, an attempt to revive ZAPU, as ZAPU 2000, began in Matabeleland. Although ZAPU 2000 has tended to capitalize on the discontent of Matabeleland, organizers insist that

³⁶ Daniel Muleya, "Streets to be renamed, statue erected to Nkomo", *Independent* 9 July 1999.

³⁷ "Street names change" *Standard* 23 December 2001; "Renaming Bulawayo Airport after Nkomo an insult" *Standard* 23 December 2001.

³⁸ "Dongo launches political party" *Sunday Mail*, 20 December 1998 provides a surprisingly detailed and sympathetic portrait of Dongo's agenda; see also, Kempton Makamure, "Its time we graduated from personality politics" *Independent*, 28 May 1999.

³⁹ "ZUD claims CIO infiltration" *Standard* 23 May 1999; "Things fall apart: Margaret Dongo, Kempton Makamure part ways" *Parade* September 1999, 3, 43.

⁴⁰ "CIO claims victory for splitting Dongo's party" *Independent*, 16 July 1999.

⁴¹ "Misihaibwi joins MDC" *Standard*, 5 March 2000; "ZUD official defects to MDC" *Mirror* 24 March 2000; "Mhashu to contest in Chitungwiza East" *Standard*, 20 February 2000.

they intend to organize throughout Zimbabwe. They are campaigning for a federal system, with devolution of powers to provinces, challenging the government's centralized development strategy.⁴² ZAPU 2000 campaigned to great acclaim in municipal elections in August 1999 but had little practical impact, and won no seats.⁴³

In 1999, the ZCTU announced that it would begin the process of forming a political party, which became the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). As suggested in chapter 4, in the mid 1990s the ZCTU had adopted a conciliatory approach to the state, typified by their acceptance of the tri-partite bargaining schemes. Yet in 1997, they responded to the public mood, by successfully organizing the anti-tax demonstrations, which continued into 1998. Several key members of the ZCTU were prominent members of the NCA. After the President banned stay-aways and other demonstrations at the end of November 1998, the ZCTU withdrew from the tri-partite negotiations on a social contract between employers, workers and the state. Workers' interests began to be pursued through more overtly political means.⁴⁴

In February 1999, the ZCTU called a National Working Peoples' Convention (NWPC). Without ever using the term 'political party', it called for a "strong, democratic and organized movement of the people," which would "recognize and protest the discrete and independent role and mandate of the various associations of working people, including the labour movement, informal traders associations and peasant farmers association." The convention resolved to "implement a vigorous and democratic political movement for

⁴² Masipula Sithole, "ZAPU 2000: Do you see what I see?" *Financial Gazette*, 11 March 1999.

⁴³ Mercedes Sayagues, "New Party has Bulawayo on the Boil" *Mail & Guardian*, 30 April 1999; Mercedes Sayagues, "ZAPU starts its political revival" *Mail & Guardian*, 24 June 1999; "ZAPU seeks nullification of council polls" *Mirror* 8 October 1999, 3.

⁴⁴ "President uses his powers to amend act: Mass job actions temporarily banned" *Herald* 28 November 1998; "ZCTU pulls out of tri-partite talks" *Herald*, 2 March 1999; "Unions form party to challenge Mugabe" *Mail & Guardian*, 2 March 1999.

change.”⁴⁵ The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) was launched in September 1999, to an estimated 15 000 member audience at Rufaro Stadium, most of whom seemed to be organized groups of workers representing various unions.⁴⁶

The MDC leadership contained many of the individuals who had moved onto the public stage through the NCA, such as Welshman Ncube and Lovemore Madhuku of the University of Zimbabwe, Mike Auret, who had just resigned as director of the CCJP, and Paul Themba Nyathi, the Zimbabwe Project director.⁴⁷ David Chimhini, recently laid off from ZimRights, became the MDC’s executive director. Although the dominance of these educated, NGO-aligned activists led to suggestions that “key working class leaders” were sidelined, Morgan Tsvangirai and Gibson Sibanda, the secretary-general and president of the ZCTU respectively, were President and Secretary-General of the new party.⁴⁸

The links between the ZCTU, the NCA and the MDC created problems and opened all three to attack for compromising their autonomy.⁴⁹ As we have seen, the ZCC used this development as an after-the-fact justification for their withdrawal from the NCA.⁵⁰ Morgan Tsvangirai gave up his leadership of the NCA, in order to avoid accusations of it being partisan, which would alienate the other opposition parties, although he retained his post as secretary-general of the ZCTU.⁵¹

⁴⁵ NWPC, “Declaration of the National Working Peoples Convention” Harare, February 1999.

⁴⁶ Research notes, 11 September 1999; “MDC launched” *Standard* 12 September 1999.

⁴⁷ Nyathi, who had been in charge of raising funds for the launch of the MDC indicated to me that he had intended to remain in the background of the new party, but was unintentionally exposed (Interview, 16 September 1999) .

⁴⁸ Alexander, “Zimbabwean workers, the MDC and the 2000 election” 391.

⁴⁹ “No formal links between ZCTU and new party” *Herald* 16 September 1999, 1.

⁵⁰ Interview, Densen Mafinyani, ZCC Secretary-General, 29 September 1999.

⁵¹ Lovemore Madhuku, “NCA cannot be a member of MDC” *Financial Gazette* 16 September 1999, 9, 10; “Tsvangirai quits NCA” *Mirror* 17 September 1999, 1, 2; “Tsvangirai resigns form NCA, *Independent* 17 September 1999, 2; “NCA denies allegiance to MDC” *Daily News* 25 September 1999, 5.

As we have seen in Chapter 7, conflicts still emerged. Opposition parties accused the NCA of “behaving like an opposition party.”⁵² However, after the NCA’s referendum victory, this potential weakness became a strength, as a much wider and more diverse membership adhered to the MDC, in reaction to the dramatically proven ability of the NCA-MDC team to win a convincing victory. In this post-referendum, pre-election period many of the previously apathetic – or at least apolitical – white voters began attending MDC meetings and joined the party. During this period, after attempts to create a voting coalition between the MDC and ZUD failed, prominent ZUD candidates joined the MDC.⁵³

For the first time since independence, ZANU(PF) was facing an opposition which brought together diverse social forces, including the experience of the independent candidates victories, the recently victorious NCA, and the financial backing of the business and farm communities. This election was to be the hardest fought since independence, with violence allied to the electoral manipulation developed over the years.

8.3 The Election: Free and Fair or Flee and Fear?

As in the past, the election was run by the Director-General and the elections directorate and the Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC). The ESC, however, was a less willing accomplice than in the past. Frustration with the conduct of the local council elections in 1998 and 1999, led to much more open criticism.⁵⁴ The long-time chair, former Anglican Bishop Peter Hatendi, resigned in protest at government obstruction in January 2000.⁵⁵ The remaining three

⁵² “Opposition parties pull out of NCA” *Mirror* 13 November 1998; “NCA in policy crisis” *Sunday Mail*, 10 March 2000; “NCA denies siphoning off \$6 billion to MDC” *Daily News*, “NCA rally in Bulawayo a flop” *Daily News* 20 September 1999, 1; “Opposition political parties slam NCA” *Sunday Mail*, 26 September 1999.

⁵³ “Misihairabwi joins MDC” *Standard*, 5 March 2000; “ZUD official defects to MDC” *Mirror* 24 March 2000.

⁵⁴ “Recommendations on electoral conduct made” *Herald* 18 February 1999, 11; “ESC concerned with by-election delays” *Herald* 22 February 1999, 6.

⁵⁵ “Case for an independent electoral body” *Mirror* 17 September 1999, 6; “Polls conduct taxes man of the cloth’s patience” *Financial Gazette*, 30 September 1999, 3; “ESC

members were also much more public about their predicament, and called for an independent body to be set up to oversee the elections.⁵⁶ When, a week before the nomination court was to sit, the ESC had not received details of constituency boundaries or polling stations, they complained that the Elections Directorate was ‘not co-operative’.⁵⁷ An ex-combatant and retired army colonel, Sobuza Gula-Ndebele, was appointed as head of the ESC in June just days before the election.⁵⁸

Three aspects of the election’s administration by these problematic groups need to be examined: the electoral roll and voting (including postal ballots); the role of observers and monitors, and the ability of parties to campaign.

8.3.1 The Electoral Roll and Voting

As discussed in Chapter 4, the 1995 election and subsequent by-elections provided clear evidence that past electoral rolls were not accurate. A UN Electoral Assistance Mission assessed the electoral roll in December 1999 and calculated that between 10 and 20 percent of the names on the voter’s roll were deceased and that as many as two million voters — 40 percent of the electorate — had moved constituency since 1995 without being re-registered.⁵⁹ A study carried out by a local NGO on the municipal elections in July 1999, gave similar results.⁶⁰ Ministry officials said that 5.1 million out of a potential 5.5 million voters had been registered between January and March 2000. The voters roll opened for inspection in June, but many mistakes were found: voters who claimed to have registered were not there, others found

members protest” *Financial Gazette* 30 March 2000.

⁵⁶ “ESC members protest” *Financial Gazette* 30 March 2000.

⁵⁷ “ESC hamstrung: parties” *Daily News* 29 May 2000.

⁵⁸ “Gula-Ndebele tipped to head ESC” *Independent* 9 June 2000.

⁵⁹ EU Election Observation Mission, Report of the EU Election Observation Mission on the Parliamentary Elections which took place in Zimbabwe on 24th and 25th June 2000, chapter 3, 10.

⁶⁰ FODEZI, The state of the voter’s roll: preliminary findings local authority elections (1999). Interviews, Rashida Fazilahmed, FODEZI, 8 October 1999, Dr Christopher Mushonga, FODEZI 8 October 1999.

discrepancies in their ID numbers and name-spelling, while others noted that the names of many deceased voters were still present on the list. A supplementary roll was created for those who were registered between April and June, although it was in fact mainly a list of those who found themselves not on the roll and re-registered.⁶¹

One complaint was that, unlike in previous elections, no receipt or voters card was issued to prove that one had indeed registered. Ironically, in the 1995 election the issuing of such cards had been a big controversy and many people complained about it.⁶² However, the lack of proof of registration was now an issue, because many people claimed to have registered, but their names did not appear on the roll. Despite these problems, registration did seem to function better in this election than in 1995, when there were many stories of people entirely unable to register – long queues etc. In this election one needed a National ID (or temporary ID) or passport to register and to vote. It was widely reported that ZANU (PF) activists and war veterans seized upon this and were forcing people — especially farm-workers, but also rural people more generally — to hand over their identification documents in exchange for ZANU (PF) membership cards.⁶³

Postal ballots were equally problematic. Whereas the Electoral Act provides for Zimbabweans away from their constituencies — whether abroad or elsewhere in the country — to vote by postal ballot, on 7 June 2000 the President amended the Act so that only military serving outside Zimbabwe, diplomatic staff posted overseas, constituency registrars, presiding officers and polling officers could take advantage of postal ballots.⁶⁴ This disenfranchised

⁶¹ See for instance, EU Election Observation Mission, Report of the EU Election Observation Mission on the Parliamentary Elections which took place in Zimbabwe on 24th and 25th June 2000, chapter 3, 10-11.

⁶² See for instance, “Israeli-made voters cards cost a fortune” *Sunday Gazette* 26 March 1995 1, 3

⁶³ “Moving the goalposts” *Mail and Guardian*, 24 June 2000; “Villagers adopt new survival strategies to avoid beatings” *Standard* 18 June 2000; “War vets impound farm employees’ identity cards” *Daily News* 20 June 2000.

⁶⁴ *Government Gazette* 7 June 2000

Zimbabweans overseas and people serving as monitors during elections in constituencies other than their own.⁶⁵ Both of these groups, especially Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa, had been highly critical of the regime during the Constitutional Commission hearings, and were thought to support the MDC.

Postal ballots issued to nearly 6 000 military personnel serving in the DRC were later ruled invalid by the Supreme Court, on the grounds that the Registrar-General had not complied with the regulations.⁶⁶ The intended recipients had not signed the ballot application forms or the signatures had not been witnessed.⁶⁷ In some constituencies in Mutare there were also questions about people voting more than once, either through multiple postal ballots or once with a postal ballot and once in person.⁶⁸

8.3.2 Observers and Monitors

International observers and local monitors, most of whom represented NGOs and/or were funded by NGOs, were obstructed from observing the election. Although electoral law did not provide for monitors, in the 1995 election the ESC had asked civil society groups to assist them as monitors.⁶⁹ It was anticipated that the same procedure would again be followed in the 2000 election and NGOs had been training monitors in preparation.⁷⁰ It was expected that there would be over 20 000 trained monitors. On June 7, however, the government gazetted new regulations specifying that, while the ESC could appoint Zimbabweans as monitors, the

⁶⁵ “Lawyers attack electoral act amendment on postal votes” *Daily News*, 20 June 2000.

⁶⁶ “MDC wins case” *Daily News*, 16 August 2000.

⁶⁷ “Opposition cried foul over postal ballots” *Daily News* 22 June 2000.

⁶⁸ “Massive vote fraud alleged in Mutare central” *Daily News*, 27 June 2000; “Irregularities discovered on postal ballots from DRC” *Herald* 27 June 2000.

⁶⁹ Some groups refused in 1995, because there was no guarantee of independence. See Makumbe and Compagnon, *Behind the Smokescreen*, 230-232.

⁷⁰ “ZCC starts training election monitors” *Mirror* 6 December 1999.

Election Directorate would “on the recommendation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs” accredit foreign observers after the payment of USD 100.⁷¹

The ESC, headed by former ZANU (PF) politician Elaine Raftopoulos as acting chair, took the Registrar-General to court, alleging that, by claiming the power to accredit foreign observers, he had usurped the ESC’s role.⁷² As this case went to court, the government quickly appointed Gula-Ndebele head of the ESC. On 20 June the High Court ruled against the ESC, saying that there was no constitutional reason that the Registrar-General’s office ought not to have responsibility for accrediting observers.⁷³ On the same day, a press statement was released stating that no further foreign observers would be accredited, meaning that only a few hundred already accredited EU and Commonwealth observers would be in the field.⁷⁴ However, after much conflicting information, the ZCC/WCC and Congress of South Africa Trades Unions (COSATU) delegations were accredited with one day to spare before the election, but other groups including the National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Republican Institute (IRI), and Oxfam Canada were black-listed.⁷⁵

The ESC’s inclusion of NCA members as monitors had also come under attack from the Attorney-General, who accused the ESC of contravening the Electoral Act.⁷⁶ Presumably for this reason, on 20 June 2000, a further amendment was gazetted, which specified that only one monitor could be deployed in each polling station.⁷⁷ As the ESC had envisaged six

⁷¹ GOZ. Election (Amendment) Regulations, 2000 (number 7) Statutory Instrument 161A of 2000; see also, “Amendments to electoral act gazetted” *Herald* 21 June 2000, 10.

⁷² Research notes, 20 June 2000.

⁷³ “ESC loses case over polls” *Herald* 22 June 2000.

⁷⁴ “Zimbabwe Parliamentary Elections 2000: Accreditation of elections” Press Release, GOZ, Department of Information, 20 June 2000

⁷⁵ Research Notes, 20-22 June 2000; ZCC, Report of Ecumenical Peace Observer Mission, n.d. 9; “UK-sponsored observers barred” *Herald* 19 June 2000; “216 more election observers barred” *Herald* 21 June 2000; “Government bars 40 US observers” *Daily News*, 21 June 2000.

⁷⁶ “AG deplores recruitment of monitors” *Sunday Mail*, 18 June 2000, 4.

⁷⁷ GOZ, Election (Amendment) Regulations, 2000 (number 8)) Statutory Instrument 180A of 2000.

monitors at each station, this meant that only one fifth of the 20 000 or more trained monitors would be deployed. The Elections Directorate was convinced to relax this somewhat by the new Chair of the ESC. It agreed that four monitors would be accredited to each polling station, two during the day and two during the night; only one monitor would be allowed inside the polling station at a time.⁷⁸

Like the accreditation of observers, the accreditation of monitors was confused by misinformation and administrative delays. The EU Observer mission commented “the confusion over the role of domestic monitors was not due to administrative incompetence but to a deliberate attempt to reduce the effectiveness of independent monitoring of the election.”⁷⁹ Three modes of identification of monitors had been arranged by the ESC. Monitors were to have cardboard badges identifying them as monitors or supervisors of monitors, they were also to have black and white ESC T-shirts, as well as fluorescent pinneys – orange for supervisors and yellow for monitors. However, the Registrar-General’s claim to accredit monitors included the right to issue their own plastic badges incorporating monitor’s ID numbers, so that when matched with a monitor’s National ID card, which incorporates a photo, it would be impossible for monitors to trade badges. These badges were not distributed to the NGOs until Friday 23rd June which made it almost impossible to get the badges to the monitors. Only 8000 badges were ever printed, and the badges then had to be dispatched to the correct constituencies. Mistakes in this frantic process meant that Matabeleland supervisors were being sent badges for monitors based in Manicaland and *vice versa*.⁸⁰ Despite all this, in Matabeleland, presiding officers paid little attention to these regulations and allowed in four to five monitors in the polling station, as long as they had some sort of ID, either an official badge, an ESC T-shirt or a pinney.⁸¹ Patrick Bond estimates that roughly half the presiding officers acted

⁷⁸ ZCC. 2000 Parliamentary Elections Report. n.d. n.p. Section 2.3.

⁷⁹ EU, Final report, chapter 2, 9

⁸⁰ ZCC, 2000 Parliamentary Elections Report. n.d. n.p. Section 5.4.

⁸¹ Research Notes, 23-25 June 2000.

similarly in Manicaland.⁸² So, despite ruling party efforts to sideline them, NGOs were prominent during the election period.

8.3.3 Obstruction of Campaigns

The ruling party used all their usual techniques to effectively prevent the opposition parties from campaigning in many areas. Although the popularity of the *Daily News* gave the MDC a valuable entry into urban areas, the independent press has yet to successfully penetrate rural areas. The dominant medium in these areas remains the radio. ZBC broadcasts in English on Radio 3 aiming primarily at young urban dwellers. The MDC was allowed to run English language adverts on Radio 3, but refused access to the indigenous language – and predominantly rural – audience of Radio 2.⁸³ The MDC challenged ZBC in Supreme Court, alleging that both Zimpapers and the ZBC was violating section 23 of constitution -- freedom of expression. The Supreme Court issued an interim ruling to this effect and ordered ZBC and Zimpapers which owns the *Herald* to distribute news and general information impartially and without bias.⁸⁴ Bornwell Chakaodza, who was editor of the *Herald* during the election period, recently gave a particularly frank account of the *Herald*'s role: "...we went out of our way [to promote the ruling party] and abandoned all professional ethics as you know them." Chakaodza asserted that it was clear that the editorial position during the elections did not agree with the general mood in the country and that "I was conscious of being an editor who lacked credibility with readers and advertisers...also circulation had nosedived resulting in the flight of advertisers."⁸⁵

⁸² Patrick Bond, Notes from Manicaland. Unpublished MS, June 2000.

⁸³ "MDC accuses ZBC of holding back campaign advertisements" *Daily News* 21 June 2000.

⁸⁴ "ZBC ordered to stop propaganda" *Independent* 16 June 2000.

⁸⁵ "Former Herald editor speaks out", *Standard* 15 October 2000.

Violence and intimidation also continued into the election period, although in most areas, it diminished on the actual election days. In many areas, voters were forced to attend rallies, especially the President's 'star rallies'. In Bulawayo shops and churches were forced to close when rallies took place.⁸⁶ Polling agents, whose names were required by law to be published in the press were targeted in Mberengwa and Bulawayo.⁸⁷ The MDC candidate in Masvingo South and the Independent candidate in Mbare East were both reported to be in hospital the morning after the election.⁸⁸ In Kariba, both the MDC and UP candidates were said to be in hiding, which rendered them unable to campaign.⁸⁹ Candidates in Kwekwe and Gokwe were also forced to flee their constituencies.⁹⁰

8.4 Election Rhetoric and Results

The election rhetoric of the MDC and ZANU(PF) diverged more than the constitutional discourse. ZANU (PF) resorted to a more extremist, nationalist campaign. Under the slogan, "the land is the economy and the economy is land," ZANU(PF) emphasized that:

Our party is the only one with a proven history of revolutionary achievement whenever the political and economic situation in our country has called for real transformation.... Ever since its formation, ZANU PF has distinguished itself as an unwavering, principled, revolutionary party with a tradition of promoting political participation, social and economic advances and total human freedoms that are constitutionally protected and guaranteed under conditions of unity, peace and development....we do not blow with the winds but we blow the winds of revolutionary change to promote unity, peace, and development.⁹¹

The MDC was disparaged as simply another of the 'little parties' which had been ZANU(PF)'s main opposition in previous elections:

⁸⁶ "Mugabe rallies flop" *Standard* 18 June 2000; "Harare residents snub Mugabe rally — businesses defy orders to close shops" *Financial Gazette* 22 June 2000.

⁸⁷ "Suspected war vets abduct MDC poll agents" *Daily News* 26 June 2000; "MDC Polling agent abducted in Bulawayo" *Daily News* 26 June 2000, 17.

⁸⁸ "Candidates in hospital after brutal assaults" *Daily News* 26 June 2000.

⁸⁹ "Club monitors fail to locate MDC candidate for Kariba" *Daily News* 20 June 2000.

⁹⁰ "MDC candidate still in hiding despite winning poll" *Daily News* 29 June 2000; "MDC candidates flee terror in Gokwe" *Daily News* 22 June 2000.

⁹¹ ZANU (PF) Manifesto. Election 2000: the context.

....it is common that just before parliamentary elections little parties with no political history, typically led by well-known cowards trying their luck, plagiarists, sell-outs, shameless opportunists, and other well known merchants of confusion, spring up to distort the people by spreading lies. Already one of these little parties, formed only a few months ago with tainted money from some donors and right wing conservative racists associated with Rhodesia has proved to be a Movement for the destruction of our Country....even defeated and now embittered racists are using black mouthpieces to preach mean spirited democracy.⁹²

The campaign made effective use of the MDC's links to white farmers in its campaign posters and TV footage. President Mugabe accused supporters of the MDC of siding with "the Europeans and the British"⁹³ and linked the election campaign explicitly to the land issue.

The 20th anniversary of independence, occurring in the midst of the land invasions and shortly before the election, gave Mugabe the chance to bring all of these issues together in a statesmanlike fashion. He first reminded voters of the sacrifices made in the liberation war:

I remind you today that our Independence followed over ninety years of oppressive settler colonial rule imposed on us in 1890 when the British occupied our country. Our Independence followed years of bitter and protracted struggle. Ask yourselves how many had to die for this great day to come. Apart from our well-known national heroes of the struggle ... we recall on this day our freedom fighters who perished inside and outside the country. We also cannot forget the refugees and others --men, women and the children who were cut down in cold blood, often tattered book in hand, at Nyadzonia, Chimoio, Tembue, Mkushi, Luangwa, Solwezi, where to this day, they lie buried in mass graves.⁹⁴

The regime also made effective use of the very real successes of the regime:

The sacrifices we have made for our country and Independence simply mean that as Zimbabweans, we cannot settle for nominal sovereignty. It is not sufficient to have a national flag, a national anthem and a black President. These are mere signifiers and symbolic accoutrements of our Independence and sovereignty as a people. They need content, and content is what we have been struggling to give in the past twenty years. We successfully consolidated people's political power by gaining control and transforming instruments of governance. We also ensured that the majority of our people who had been

⁹² ZANU (PF) Manifesto. Election 2000: the context.

⁹³ Sydney Masamvu, "Mugabe declares total war on MDC" *Financial Gazette* 5 April 2001.

⁹⁴ Televised Address by His Excellency the President on the Occasion of Zimbabwe's Twentieth Anniversary, Pockets Hill, Harare, 18th April, 2000.

disenfranchised by colonialism got back and exercised their vote in choosing who governs them. ... All these developments gave political content to our Independence and sovereignty. The past twenty years have also seen enormous developmental changes that have touched practically every life.⁹⁵

Land was cast as the final goal of the regime:

The issue of land remains both emotive and vexed. ... Between 1980 and 1995, we were able to resettle 71 000 families on about 3,3 million hectares excised from the commercial sector. This was a far cry from the 162 000 families we had hoped to settle on 8 million hectares of land. We resumed land reforms under what we have termed the Second Phase and to this day over 2 422 households have been resettled on 66 farms. The Second Phase of Land Reforms envisaged the excision of about 5 million hectares of land from the commercial sector, with a million hectares set to be delivered for resettlement every year. We had hoped that this would start with nearly a thousand farms we had designated for acquisition. Sadly this was not to be as the commercial farmers contested the matter in the courts forcing Government to abandon the acquisition process. ... Even after removing the constitutional barriers, we were still faced with the issue of diminishing resources against ever rising prices. After 1997, we also had to content with the reluctance of the new Labour Government We also faced greater commercial farmer resistance whose manifestations included not just the legal challenges ... but also resistance to the land clause we had introduced in the rejected draft constitution. ... We should be able to find a way forward, but one that recognises the urgent need for land reforms. It is the last colonial question heavily qualifying our sovereignty. We are determined to resolve it once and for all.⁹⁶

Ironically, though, individual ZANU(PF) candidates eschewed much of this rhetoric, choosing instead to highlight their personal, local-level achievements within their constituencies. Some candidates' posters did not even mention ZANU(PF), or use its symbols.⁹⁷

The MDC campaign by contrast, attempted to focus debate on governance issues. In particular, they emphasized the mismanagement of issues such as land and health, in contrast the Mugabe's chronicle of all the advances in education, health care and agricultural production. Their deceptively simple slogan 'it's time for a change' was remarkably effective in uniting a wide and disparate coalition of the dissatisfied. But their campaign was not entirely negative,

⁹⁵ Televised Address by His Excellency the President on the Occasion of Zimbabwe's Twentieth Anniversary, Pockets Hill, Harare, 18th April, 2000.

⁹⁶ Televised Address by His Excellency the President on the Occasion of Zimbabwe's Twentieth Anniversary, Pockets Hill, Harare, 18th April, 2000.

⁹⁷ See for example, Nyasha Chikwina (Harare North); Joshua Malinga (Bulawayo North); Edward Simela (Pelandaba).

reacting to attempts to label the opposition anti-Zimbabwean and foreign influenced, it also took up the theme of nationalism:

Zimbabwe's strength lies in racial and ethnic diversity – we will overcome attempts to divide us. Without truth there is no justice, without justice no national reconstruction. Together we will build a great Zimbabwe.⁹⁸

On a similar note, in Rufaro Stadium, Morgan Tsvangirai emphasized both the potential of the state and his concerns for the people of Zimbabwe:

I stand before you as a messenger of peace, I have heard your anger, your pain. I have heard what old men in dark huts say, how sad they are that the greatness of Zimbabwe is no more....the red sand of Africa is the colour of the blood in our veins, this is our home, we have no other. There is a new wind whispering through the people of Africa. We suffered under colonialists, but after nearly 50 years of uhuru across Africa we find terrible oppression has come from African leaders who were supposed to liberate us....In this stadium 20 years ago, Robert Mugabe stood and announced the independence of Zimbabwe. But Zimbabwe has moved from the hands of one oppressor to another.....a vote alone does not give freedom and democracy is still born without economic liberation.⁹⁹

The ruling party's rhetoric and intimidatory tactics were concentrated on rural voters. And, in rural constituencies, especially in the Mashonaland heartland, this was very effective. ZANU(PF) won by relatively large majorities in many of these constituencies. But in urban areas throughout the country, the MDC won by large majorities, often gaining 70-80% of the vote. Even if there had been election-rigging, it could only have had a negligible impact. Other parties, including ZUD and ZAPU, and independent candidates were nearly invisible.¹⁰⁰

The MDC's ability to win rural constituencies in Matabeleland and Manicaland, suggested that the ZANU(PF) agenda did not have a uniform appeal. Alexander and McGregor show how the history of Matabeleland made the ZANU(PF) approach less appealing, even after the former ZAPU leaders had realigned themselves with the ruling party.

⁹⁸ MDC advert, *Daily News*, 23 June 2000, 15.

⁹⁹ Research Notes, 18 June 2000; "Victory is certain" text of Morgan Tsvangirai's speech to the "Freedom Rally" at Rufaro Stadium, 18 June 2000.

¹⁰⁰ See for results, "Tsvangirai loses Buhera north" *Herald* 27 June 2000, 1, 3; "The full list of candidates and results" *Daily News*, 28 June 2000.

As they suggest, a combination of factors led both urban and rural Matabeleland residents to vote for the MDC: historic grievances from the 1980s violence, economic malaise, and dissatisfaction with the meagre benefits of the unity accord. Joshua Nkomo's death in July 1999, seemed to have freed people from the obligation to support ZANU(PF).¹⁰¹

The final election results gave ZANU(PF) a small elected majority in parliament, which they bolstered through the appointment of 20 'non-constituency' MPs. Despite this success, the MDC's determination to challenge electoral results in several marginal constituencies, and the forthcoming Presidential elections in 2002, meant that ZANU(PF) was by no means secure. Although this section has emphasized the formal election process, the election campaign, and its aftermath, was also played out in through redefinitions and contestations of the place and role of groups such as the judges, churches, unions, and NGOs.

8.5 Changing State and Society Relations: the Cup-board Is Bare

The intense electoral politics both reflected and affected shifts within broader state-society relations. In section 8.1, we saw the party offering 'sweeteners' to its traditional supporters: this process continues after the election, although with limited effectiveness, as other than land, the cupboard is bare.¹⁰² But a parallel action was mounted to discredit, sideline, or re-incorporate those groups whose access to non-state derived resources render them potentially autonomous of the state.

¹⁰¹ Jocelyn Alexander and Joann McGregor, "Elections, land and the Politics of Opposition in Zimbabwe: a Matabeleland perspective" unpublished paper, esp. 23-27.

¹⁰² NB in particular reports of cheques bouncing after being handed out in Matabeleland before the Bulawayo municipal election. "Moyo quizzed over bounced cheques" *Daily News* 13 September 2001.

8.5.1 The white farmers, the business community and state employees

Increased mobilization around issues of land and labour led to targeting of white farmers and businessmen. The rhetoric of reconciliation was replaced by a rhetoric which claimed that these whites had not reciprocated the offer of reconciliation offered to them. They were instead, the “real enemy.”¹⁰³ In a BBC interview Mugabe said:

Yes, some of them are good people, but they remain cheats. They remain dishonest. They remain uncommitted even to the national cause. It is as if we are running a government of two communities, they on their own not wanting to get truly integrated into the social frame, but just wanting all the time to oppose government.¹⁰⁴

The Commercial Farmers Union (CFU), which had been close to ZANU(PF) until the 1998 land designations, wavered between attempting to maintain its position of non-confrontational interaction with government ministries and using the courts to seek redress, reflecting the presence of two camps within its membership. MDC members pressured the CFU to pursue legal action against the unconstitutional land seizures. Other groups of farmers, notably tobacco growers, producing mainly for export, have emphasized the economic realities, and urged the farm community to seek ways of compromising with the ruling party.¹⁰⁵ After several months of negotiation, in November 2001, the CFU and the state launched the Zimbabwe Joint Resettlement Initiative. As part of this initiative, farmers consented to the purchase of over 500 farms, comprising over one million hectares, contributed inputs to new settlers, and promised to support them in ploughing the soil.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ “Mugabe criticises 'white enemy'” *BBC* 14 December 2000.

¹⁰⁴ “Mugabe blasts whites” *Standard* 22 October 2000.

¹⁰⁵ Personal Communication, Angus Selby, 30 October 2001; “CFU faces split over withdrawal of charges” *Daily News*, 18 August 2000; Mercedes Sayagues, “CFU opens its chequebook to buy peace in Zim.” *Mail & Guardian*, May 19 2000.

¹⁰⁶ “White Farmers Offer Government One Million Hectares” *UN Integrated Regional Information Network* 25 May 2001; Commercial farmers break deadlock with government *Daily News* 27 July 2001; “State accepts land offer” *Herald* 6 September 2001; CFU. “GoZ /ZJRI implementation launch” 2 November 2001.

The regime also set out to politicize the previously relatively apolitical state apparatus.¹⁰⁷

As we have seen, the independent candidates, the ZCTU, the NCA, the media and the opposition parties had used the courts to seek redress against discriminatory government policies. As a result, the Supreme Court had retained a strong reputation for independent rulings. In 1999 Supreme Court judges adopted a more progressive position when faced with allegations of torture and a military which ruthlessly ignored court orders. Justices McNally, Muchechete and Sandura petitioned the President to confirm that the military has no right to detain civilians and that the government “...will not tolerate any torture of any persons by any authority in any circumstances” and to reaffirm that the “...judiciary and the Zimbabwe Republic Police [are] the proper authorities to deal with the allegations against the journalists in question.”¹⁰⁸ Mugabe’s reaction to this was to accuse the judges of playing politics:

...some of our judges have shocked us by behaving in a manner unbecoming of their status. In their overreaction they forgot that their professional role as judges was to sit in and hear cases and pass judgement on them on the evidence before them. ... In accordance with our Constitution and the principle of the separation of powers the Judiciary has no constitutional right whatsoever to give instructions to the president on any matter as the four judges purported to do.... Surely if Judges assume both a judicial and quasi-political role, what suffers is in effect their Judicial function. In those circumstances the one and only honourable course open to them is that of quitting the bench and joining the political forum where their political views would not offend against our Constitution and the principles of justice we should uphold.¹⁰⁹

Judicial rulings on the land invasions further contested the ruling party’s policies. In reaction, the government began sidelining independent judges, replacing them with those more acceptable to the regime. Chief Justice Gubbay was forced to resign after coming under attack for rulings challenging land acquisitions, and overturning a presidential decree which banned candidates defeated in the June election from contesting the results in court.¹¹⁰ Other senior

¹⁰⁷ Human Rights NGO Forum, “Politically motivated violence in Zimbabwe, 2000-2001” July 2001 especially sections 5 and 6.

¹⁰⁸ “Supreme Court petitions Mugabe” *Standard* 31 January 1999.

¹⁰⁹ R. G. Mugabe, Broadcast to the Nation, February 6, 1999.

¹¹⁰ “Mugabe rids bench of Gubbay but not its independence” *Financial Gazette* 8 March 2001; “Gubbay triumphs” *Daily News* 3 March 2001; “I am not going, says defiant

judges were similarly encouraged to resign by the Attorney-General. Those targeted included not only four white High Court judges – Smith, Blackie, Gillespie, and Devitte – but also the Supreme Court judges – Sandura, Muchechetere, Ebrahim, and McNally, of whom only one was white.¹¹¹ While several of the threatened judges resisted the pressure, others resigned, often citing personal reasons.¹¹² Many of the senior, long-serving judges were also approaching retirement age, and resigned at 65, rather than extending their terms for another 5 years. As the remaining judges refused to resign, the numbers of Supreme Court Justices were increased from five to eight, with three judges promoted from the High Court.¹¹³

The appointment of High Court Justice Chidyausiku as Chief Justice, presumably as reward for his work on the Constitutional Commission, above the more senior judges of the Supreme Court suggested that this was not so much a racial purge as a party political one.¹¹⁴ Chidyausiku, a former ZANU (PF) minister, chaired several politically sensitive commissions, and has a record of ruling in favour of the ruling party - decisions which were frequently

Gubbay: Government insists he must go today” *Herald* 28 February 2001; “Moyo insists Gubbay will leave” *Daily News* 28 February 2001; “Chief Justice won’t go” *Daily News* 28 February 2001; “Chief Justice Gubbay quits” *Daily News* 3 February 2001; “Poll petition ban unconstitutional” *Herald* 31 January 2001; “State loses poll case” *Daily News* 31 December 2001; “Chombo plots to oust judges” *Independent* 26 January 2001; “Chidyausiku attacks Supreme Court, police” *Daily News* 9 January 2000; “Supreme Court judges hit back” *Standard* 7 January 2001; “President attacks judiciary” *Financial Gazette* 14 December 2000.

¹¹¹ “Assault on Judges Continues” *Standard* 11 February 2001; “Supreme Court resumes sitting despite threats” *Daily News* 14 February 2001; “Judges refuse to meet Chinamasa” *Independent* 16 February 2001; “War Vets to Raid Judges Homes” *Standard* 18 February 2001; “Supreme Court judge Ebrahim refuses to go” *Herald* 22 February 2001; “Judges to stay” *Daily News* 23 February 2001; “State overtures in asking judges to resign mere courtesy” *Herald* 23 February 2001.

¹¹² “Justice Chatikobo resigns” *Independent* 1 June 2001; “Justice Devittie stops hearing MDC election petitions” *Herald* 15 May 2001; “Why I quit: judge” *Daily News* 6 October 2001; “Only two white judges remain” *Herald* 3 January 2002.

¹¹³ “Supreme Court to have 3 more judges” *Herald* 27 July 2001; “Chidyausiku sidelines judges” *Daily News* 18 September 2001.

¹¹⁴ “Lawyers move in to block Chidyausiku appointment” *Standard* 20 May 2001; “Judge attacks Minister” *Daily News* 3 October 2001; “Chinamasa slammed for 'simplistic' remarks on judges” *Independent* 5 October 2001.

overturned by higher courts.¹¹⁵ Lawyer Ben Hlatshwayo, was also rewarded for his support of the Constitutional Commission with an appointment to High Court.¹¹⁶

In 2001, membership of the police, army and public service was also politicized. As JoAnn McGregor demonstrates for Matabeleland, "...the ruling party has tried to insert itself within and gain more control over the local state at district and provincial levels."¹¹⁷ Throughout the country, those who were not thought to be sufficiently loyal to ZANU(PF) were sidelined or forced out of local government and the prison service under pressure from the party hierarchy.¹¹⁸ Police officers were purged and removed from positions of authority.¹¹⁹ Chihuri, the Police Commissioner, made his position clear by declaring "[m]any people say I am Zanu PF. Today I would like to make it public that I support Zanu PF because it is the ruling party."¹²⁰ Army officers were similarly warned against supporting the MDC.¹²¹

¹¹⁵ "Chidyausiku accused of bias" *Daily News* 20 September 2001; "Chidyausiku is Chief Justice" *Daily News* 21 August 2001; "Chidyausiku Set for New Job" *Standard* 24 June 2001; "Mugabe man appointed top judge" *BBC* 9 March 2001; "Chidyausiku's record inspires little confidence" *Independent* 16 February 2001.

¹¹⁶ "Top black lawyers earmarked for the bench" *Standard* 4 March 2001; "MDC to contest Justice Hlatshwayo's appointment in petitions" *Daily News* 25 June 2001.

¹¹⁷ JoAnn McGregor, "The Politics of Disruption: War Veterans and the Local State in Zimbabwe" unpublished paper, August 2001.

¹¹⁸ "War vets besiege [Chiredzi] district administrator's office" *Daily News* 14 March 2001; "War vets run show at Kadoma offices" *Daily News* 12 March 2001; "Govt purges suspected pro-MDC workers" *Financial Gazette* 1 March 2001; "Workers victimised [Matabeleland North]" *Daily News* 6 March 2001; "Government accused of 'militarising' civil service" *Mirror* 2 March 2001; "Prison service suspends 16 alleged MDC supporters" *Daily News* 6 October 2001; "Seven more officers fired for allegedly supporting MDC" *Daily News* 31 October 2001.

¹¹⁹ "Chihuri violates Police Act" *Standard* 28 January 2001; "Police chief told to quit" *Daily News* 16 January 2001; "Top cops victimised" *Standard* 25 February 2001; "Another cop victimised" *Standard* 11 March 2001; "Support for MDC lands detectives in hot water" *Daily News* 26 September 2000; "ZRP purge on suspected MDC cops up" *Daily News* 13 April 2001; "Chihuri purges top cops" *Financial Gazette* 14 June 2001; "Police have an obligation to support Government" *Sunday Mail* 10 June 2001.

¹²⁰ "Police chief told to quit" *Daily News* 16 January 2001.

¹²¹ "Commander tells soldiers not to vote for Tsvangirai" *Daily News* 29 May 2001; "Army chief decampaigns MDC" *Financial Gazette* 24 May 2001; "MDC blasts govt over army politics" *Independent* 1 June 2001; "Military does not engage in politics" *Herald* 1 June 2001; "Top army jobs for war vets" *Financial Gazette* 19 July 2001; "Army jobs for Zanu PF militia" *Standard* 23 September 2001.

Urban workers and white business people were also obvious targets, because of their support for the MDC. As we have seen, during the election, white farmers and business-people were thought to be providing much of the MDC's financial support. In addition, the overwhelming urban vote for the MDC, revealed to ZANU(PF) that they had lost the support of many workers. As Mugabe said to the Central Committee in July 2000,

With all price controls done away with in the spirit of liberalisation; with our policies and programmes generally failing or being quite slow to yield positive results; with all our safety nets simply failing, it was difficult to see how the Party would ever escape the winter of urban discontent and the harsh political verdict that this brings about in electoral terms. Little wonder then that the bulk of the support and vote for the opposition came from urban or peri-urban dwellers, chiefly from among the unemployed or frustrated youths. Little wonder then that a significant part of the opposition leadership draws from the trade union and tertiary student leadership. Indeed it should not be wondered why the most trenchant criticism against the Party emanated from both the high and low-density suburban dwellers, including professionals whose incomes are being eroded daily, as well as owners of indigenous businesses whose concerns are either struggling or have already succumbed to the negative performance of the economy.¹²²

These two campaigns, anti-business and pro-labour, coalesced into an attempt to intimidate white business owners, and appear to be supporting urban labourers, as will be discussed further in the next section.

8.5.2 Labour

Immediately after the election, intense violence permeated urban areas, perpetrated by the army and police.¹²³ In early 2001, this tactic shifted towards trying to regain the sympathy of urban voters and counter-act the influence of the ZCTU.¹²⁴ This took the form of an attempt to gain

¹²² Address by the First Secretary and President of Zanu (PF), Cde. R.G. Mugabe, At the Forty Third Ordinary Session of the Central Committee, July 21, 2000.

¹²³ "CCJP blasts army attacks" *Financial Gazette* 22 February 2001; "Opposition stronghold of St Mary's under siege" *Daily News* 3 March 2001; "Riot squad unleashes terror in Chitungwiza" *Daily News* 5 March 2001; "Govt incites crackdown on voters" *Independent* 9 March 2001.

¹²⁴ "War vets to storm cities" *Financial Gazette* 5 March 2001

control of the ZCTU, sanctioning war veteran involvement in labour disputes, and the re-invigoration of a splinter umbrella union.

ZANU(PF) first moved to take advantage of the vacancies within the ZCTU caused by the resignations of Tsvangirai and Sibanda. These power struggles were the continuation of earlier conflicts within the leadership of the ZCTU. Even before the elections, some within the ZCTU had tried to align with the ruling party, by adopting its proposed social contract – which Tsvangirai’s faction had rejected – but this attempt was foiled by the union leaders.¹²⁵

The social contract advocated by the ruling party, was intended to put an end to labour disputes, stay-aways, and return labour relations to a more consensual framework. As the ZCTU’s election approached, key individuals were positioning themselves and campaigning.¹²⁶

ZANU(PF) was alleged to have paid up membership dues for unions in arrears, so that they could vote.¹²⁷ In the end, however, the pro-MDC slate won.

In early 2001, workers who felt that the ZCTU was not responsive were encouraged to forward complaints to a newly formed ZANU(PF) labour committee. War veterans, led again by Joseph Chinotimba, further claimed the right to arbitrate labour disputes at a series of companies, as they had done at independence, before the formation of the ZCTU.¹²⁸ After complaints from several foreign governments, the Labour Ministry finally clamped down on

¹²⁵ “ZCTU officials face expulsion” *Daily News*, 22 January 2001.

¹²⁶ “MDC clash looms at ZCTU congress” *Daily News* 9 February 2001; “MDC-Zanu PF rivalry scuppers ZCTU Congress” *Mirror* 17 November 2000; “Daggers drawn at ZCTU’s Masvingo congress” *Independent* 23 February 2001; “ZCTU, MDC marriage comes under spotlight” *Mirror* 23 February 2001; “Zanu PF suspicious of new ZCTU executive” *Daily News* 10 March 2001; “ZCTU faces fresh polls” *Sunday Mail* 18 March 2001.

¹²⁷ “Alleged Zanu PF funding needs probe — ZCTU” *Independent* 15 December 2000; “Plot to rig ZCTU poll” *Financial Gazette* 1 February 2001.

¹²⁸ “War veterans hired to settle labour dispute” *Daily News* 28 March 2001; “War vets to storm cities” *Financial Gazette* 5 April 2001; “War veterans force director into hiding” *Daily News* 9 April 2001; “War vets displace ZCTU” *Independent* 12 April 2001; “War veterans close shop” *Daily News* 13 April 2001; “Company chiefs flee war vets” *Financial Gazette* 20 April 2001; “Steel company owner abducted by war vets” *Daily News* 24 April 2001; “Ex-fighters raid more companies” *Daily News* 25 April 2001; “War vets force NGO to pay ex-workers” *Daily News* 25 April 2001; “Joy and celebrations at Zanu-PF headquarters as Firms pay-up” *Sunday Mail* 22 April 2001; “Hunzvi targets embassies, NGOs” *Financial Gazette* 26 April 2001.

the veterans, alleging that rogue elements had gone beyond ZANU(PF)'s intentions and were merely extorting money from companies.¹²⁹ Instead, several new judges were appointed to the Labour Relations Tribunal, in an attempt to clear the backlog in cases.¹³⁰

Chinotimba then attempted to resuscitate the Zimbabwe Federation of Trades Unions (ZFTU) as a vehicle for further anti-ZCTU campaigning. The ZFTU was a pro-ZANU splinter union, formed in 1998 by an earlier leader of the ZCTU, which had never had much support from shop-floor unions.¹³¹ Government support is enabling ZFTU leadership to visit workplaces and forcefully encourage the formation of splinter unions.¹³²

That these efforts made any head-way at all on the shop-floors must be taken as evidence of labour weakness and divisions. Shop-floor grievances were real, and neither the ZCTU nor the MDC had developed strongly rooted allegiances from the workers. Low levels of internal union democracy also kept pro-ZANU leaders in place, even where workers were solidly MDC, which made them available for ZANU(PF)'s 'infiltration' tactics during the ZCTU elections.¹³³

8.5.3 Churches

Church-state relations had been strained during the constitutional debate. During the referendum, churches had been on the verge of calling for a no vote, when, they were

¹²⁹ "Zimbabwe's war vets told to back off" *BBC* 16 May 2001; "State working to stop firm invasions" *Herald* 17 May 2001; "Rogue war vets arrested over alleged extortion" *Herald* 17 May 2001; "Police hunting for Pasipamire" *Daily News* 17 May 2001; "War vets blame govt for chaos" *Independent* 18 May 2001; "Workers stage demo" *Herald* 18 May 2001; "Blitz on rogue war veterans nets twenty" *Herald* 18 May 2001; "Moyo says arrest Moyo" *Daily News* 22 May 2001.

¹³⁰ "Supreme Court to have 3 more judges" *Herald* 27 July 2001

¹³¹ "Chinotimba proclaims himself new ZCTU boss" *Daily News* 12 April 2001; "Chinotimba continues company raids" *Independent* 1 June 2001; "ZFTU latest vehicle for ZANU(PF)'s campaign" *Independent* 15 June 2001; "Chinotimba in new raids" *Independent* 29 June 2001; "ZFTU vows to intensify raids" *Independent* 27 July 2001.

¹³² "Govt pours money into Chinotimba's union" *Financial Gazette* 19 July 2001.

¹³³ Personal communication, Miles Larmer, 6 November 2001.

persuaded to back away from such a stand.¹³⁴ With a few exceptions, church voices were little heard during the lead-in to the election.

Those few individuals within the churches who took any sort of stand continued to be blacklisted by the state. Mugabe several times accused Pius Ncube, Catholic Bishop of Matabeleland, of causing the party's defeat in the election:

In Matabeleland, I think what we saw was tribalism and ethnicity emerging. We happen to know that some leaders of the MDC alongside leaders of the Church and names such as that of Archbishop Ncube of the Catholic Church have been mentioned banded together and used reasons that emerge from the history and the conflict situation and could want the people of Matabeleland to believe that the government is not attending to their own needs in as much as it is attending to the needs of other regions.¹³⁵

The most insidious side of the resurgence of white power came by way of the pulpit and in the human form of church figures who did not hesitate to "render unto God" things that belonged to Caesar. Especially in suburban parishes and in rural Matabeleland, prayers became full-blooded politics and congregations became anti-Zanu (PF) political communities.....¹³⁶

Ncube was also reported to be on a CIO hitlist.¹³⁷ Similarly, Evangelical Lutheran Bishop Ambrose Moyo fled the country during the election saying, "I was on the hit list of the Central Intelligence Organisation and was advised to leave. My only crime was that I was publicly condemning the violence."¹³⁸

During the election, churches were important providers of monitors and observers through the CCJP, ZCC and the Evangelical Fellowship. The ZCC, caught up in the euphoria of the event, perhaps, was not only highly critical of the ruling party, but claimed credit for

¹³⁴ Chengetai Zvauya, "Churches to reject draft constitution" *Standard* 2 December 1999; "Christian groups threaten to reject draft constitution" *Daily News* 13 December 1999; "Christian community resolves to appeal to constitutional body" *Herald* 26 January 2000; "Churches Threaten 'No' vote in referendum" *Daily News* 26 January 2000.

¹³⁵ "[South African] Bishops warn Mugabe" *Daily News* 6 July 2000; See also "Bishop seeks to meet Mugabe" *Standard* 12 November 2000.

¹³⁶ Address by the First Secretary and President of Zanu (PF), Cde. R.G. Mugabe, At the Forty Third Ordinary Session of the Central Committee, July 21, 2000.

¹³⁷ "Mugabe threatens Archbishop" *Daily News* 3 July 2000

¹³⁸ Eunice Mafundikwa, "After Zimbabwe's divisive poll, ecumenical leader aims for reconciliation" *ENI*, 27 July 2000.

launching the NCA and indirectly the MDC.¹³⁹ Afterwards, they seemed to retreat into confusion and quiescence in response to intimidation and co-option.¹⁴⁰ Although Bishop Moyo became the new President of the ZCC, replacing retiring Anglican Bishop Siyachitema, his more outspoken tendencies did not manifest themselves.¹⁴¹

The ZANU(PF) appeals to the church were also attempts to retain support and/or get the church back on side. The retirement of Mugabe's ally Siyachitema from the Harare Diocese led to a campaign to replace him.¹⁴² Fr Tim Neill, an Anglican priest, who had been an outspoken critic of the government's constitutional draft, and acting Vicar-general of the Diocese in the absence of a Bishop, contested the election. His appointment would have made him the only white Anglican bishop. Neill lost the election, amid allegations that supporters of the successful candidate circulated a letter accusing him of racism.¹⁴³ His public conflict with his church led to his removal, after he was accused of 'tarnishing the church's name' by making internal conflict public.¹⁴⁴ The new Bishop of Harare did little to assuage concerns when his first public statements were seen as repeating ZANU(PF) propaganda from the pulpit.¹⁴⁵ In a controversial speech, he said:

You are sick to think the Western political and economic interests are your interests. You are sick to think the Western world is interested in removing corrupt governments. They are here to look for puppets to put in

¹³⁹ Research Notes, ZCC briefing for election observers, 22 June 2001.

¹⁴⁰ Revd Gift Mkwasha, "[letter to the editor] Churches silence on human rights abuse embarrassing" *Daily News*, 15 January 2001; "Deafening silence on violence is frightening" *Daily News* 31 January 2001.

¹⁴¹ "Lutheran Bishop to head Zimbabwe's ecumenical organisation". *Lutheran World Information*, August 2000.

¹⁴² "Anglican Church dispute rages on" *Daily News* 15 January 2001; "Kunonga confirmed as Anglican Bishop of Harare" *Herald* 2 February 2001; "Committee wants Neill removed from position" *Herald* 19 January 2001.

¹⁴³ "Anglican church meets over objections to newly elected bishop" *Daily News* 7 March 2001.

¹⁴⁴ "Neill stripped of vicarship" *Daily News*, 9 March 2001; "Reverend Neill vows to soldier on" *Daily News*, 12 March 2001; See also, "Anglican vicar in mysterious accident" *Daily News* 9 March 2001.

¹⁴⁵ "Kunonga accused of making partisan statements" *Daily News* 15 May 2001; see also, "Outrage at Bishop's praise for Mugabe" *Telegraph* (UK) 14 May 2001.

government- ignorant African political leaders who can easily be manipulated.....We do accept that Zimbabwe is a symbol of the land of freedom where all people of all races, creeds and nationalities could live together. But it is not a land for all people to govern. *It is only for indigenous Africans to govern.....* Is interest in human rights in Zimbabwe not a tactical self-defence mechanism against grabbing of land by the Government?.....We live in a sick country. It is a neurotic nation where the young Africans are losing national identity, sense of history, African feeling and self-pride. *The sad thing is most of my priests are religious uncle Toms, puppets, parrots and religious fakers. Refuse to be ignorant and greedy. I am attacking the brainwashed preachers.*¹⁴⁶

The Apostolic faith also responded positively to the continuing attempts to incorporate it from about 1990 onwards (the 1980s having been typified by very anti-apostolic rhetoric from the state) as we have seen in Chapter 4. During the election, the popular Governor of Mashonaland Central, Border Gezi, made several very public appeals to his *Vapostori* brethren.¹⁴⁷ Although some members of the church criticized him for bringing politics – and the media spotlight – into their worship,¹⁴⁸ their leader encouraged all members of his flock to vote for the first time, because “we were told by the Holy Spirit that this country would be ruled by a black.”¹⁴⁹ Gezi’s untimely death in April 2001 led Apostolic leaders to make even more public statements of support to the president and ruling party.¹⁵⁰ In early 2002, there were reports that “hundreds of members of the Apostolic Faith sect [led by their pastor Godfrey Nzira] descended on MDC offices at Makoni shopping centre and later attacked the home of Fidelis Mhashu, the MP for Chitungwiza.”¹⁵¹

Churches in Manicaland, frustrated by the lack of assertiveness on the part of the national churches, organized a broad ecumenical coalition to provide shelter for those who had

¹⁴⁶ Weston Kwete, “New Anglican bishop says West out to control Africa” *Sunday Mail* 13 May 2001.

¹⁴⁷ ZBC TV evening news 18 June 2000; Picture of Border Gezi at Vapostori meeting *Herald* 19 June 2000, 1.

¹⁴⁸ “Church sect demands apology from Gezi” *Daily News* 21 June 2000.

¹⁴⁹ “Vapostori Vote for the first time” *Sunday News* 25 June 2000.

¹⁵⁰ “Apostolic sect supports President” *Herald* 3 May 2001.

¹⁵¹ “Militias on rampage” *Daily News* 7 January 2002.

been rendered homeless and to call for peace during the elections.¹⁵² The Catholic church had also issued several pastoral communications in the lead in to the election and in response to the post election violence.¹⁵³

The mainline churches did eventually take a stand on the land issue – albeit one that was interpreted as a victory by both sides.¹⁵⁴ The Catholic church later dissociated itself from this statement, because it attempted to dissuade farmers from using the courts to arbitrate the land issue, proposing instead a national roundtable to be convened by the churches.¹⁵⁵

The Catholic Bishops Conference took a much stronger stand, explicitly condemning the government-condoned violence.¹⁵⁶ Without naming either the war veterans or party leaders by name, they challenged the ruling élite's claim to power as liberators:

Let us remind each other that no one person or group of persons liberated this country alone. The great majority of Zimbabweans, because of their love for freedom and sense of justice, liberated it through their sacrifices... It is the duty of the government to ensure the nation is not held at ransom by a few... We urge the government to allow the law enforcement agents to perform their duties without interference so that there is a sense of security in the country.¹⁵⁷

The war veterans responded to this criticism bluntly. Joseph Chinotimba said: “The war veterans are championing a noble cause. If the churchmen think we are wrong they should mind their own problems and stop provoking us.”¹⁵⁸

¹⁵² See for instance, Pastoral Statement of the Churches in Manicaland, March 2001. Mutare, 13 March 2001.

¹⁵³ See for example, “Catholic bishops condemn violence” *Daily News* 5 June 2000; “Zimbabwe bishops condemn violence” *BBC* 2 May 2001; Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference Pastoral Letter May 2001.

¹⁵⁴ Heads of denominations. “Statement on the church's position on land reform” 25 January 2001; “Churches back land reform” *Herald* 26 January 2001; “Farmer injured in war veterans attack” *Daily News* 26 January 2001.

¹⁵⁵ “Catholics dissociate themselves from Christian heads stance on land” *Daily News* 2 February 2001.

¹⁵⁶ “‘Nation should not be held to ransom by a few,’ bishops say” *Ecumenical News International* 8 May 2001; “Catholic bishops blast government” *Daily News* 4 May 2001.

¹⁵⁷ Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference, Pastoral Letter Tolerance and Hope May 2001.

¹⁵⁸ “Mind your own business or else...war vets warn Catholics” *Mirror* 11 May 2001.

8.5.4 Non-Governmental Organizations

As both the constitutional debate and the election showed, NGO-state relations deteriorated during this period. In particular, NGOs were alleged to be undermining stable democratic processes because of their foreign funding.¹⁵⁹ In 1999, NGOs were accused of “...trying to create political figures out of the opposition.”¹⁶⁰ By the time of the 2000 elections, this had become quite explicit “NGOs should leave politics to locals.”¹⁶¹ After all, local church and election monitoring groups unanimously condemned the election as neither free nor fair. Their position, as sub-contractors to the ESC, further meant that the data on which it was supposed to base its report to Government, was highly critical.¹⁶² This led to a ban on churches and NGOs conducting civic education in the lead into the presidential elections.¹⁶³

Local government officials were also warned against working with NGOs. According to a newspaper report, the Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, said that councils:

...should look for alternative ways of raising funds but warned the councils against accepting money from non-governmental organisations, which had political agendas. He said a number of NGOs with political agendas had invaded rural areas to promote their own agendas and were not interested in development programmes. A number of NGOs were being used to campaign for MDC in rural areas. The Government has warned that it would not hesitate to cancel licences for those found undertaking political activities instead of focusing on developmental work. ‘Some of these organisations come to you with a packaging which looks good but the contents would be satanic. Do not accept such type of assistance.’¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ “Work together to educate society president tells opposition, NGOs” *Herald* 28 February 1997, 1.

¹⁶⁰ “Money won’t make leaders: president” *Herald* 21 July 1999.

¹⁶¹ “Chombo warns NGOs against meddling in political activity” *Herald* 10 July 2001.

¹⁶² “CCJPZ blames Zanu PF for pre-election violence” *Standard* 1 October 2000; “ESC divided over election report” *Independent* 13 October 2000

¹⁶³ “Govt to ban churches, NGOs from educating voters” *Africa Church Information Service*, 13 July 2001; “Statutory body to educate voters” *Sunday Mail* 1 July 2001.

¹⁶⁴ “State to hand over running of growth points to rural council” *Herald* 16 July 2001.

The operation of some international NGOs were disrupted when they were invaded.¹⁶⁵ Others were accused of helping to create artificial food shortages and distributing MDC propaganda and party cards with food.¹⁶⁶

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that all NGOs were involved with the NCA, or were affected by these new ways of operating. While the ruling party doubtless tried to hold onto some allies – as we have seen in Chapter 7 – it also pursued a new tactic with some vigour. This strategy involved facilitating the formation of new organizations, referred to as ‘liberation-based civil society’. In the post referendum period, several new groups, which appeared to be more or less strongly linked to ZANU(PF) appeared on the scene: Inyika Trust was described as a land rights association,¹⁶⁷ the National Debate Association (NDA) promoted civic discussion¹⁶⁸ while Heritage Zimbabwe was said to be a cultural association.¹⁶⁹ In addition, like the policy of forming rival trades unions, a ‘high-density’ residents association was proposed to contest the growing influence of the white-dominated Greater Harare Combined Residents Association.¹⁷⁰ Even the NDA, though, was subject to sanctions, when its ‘open-line’ programmes on television and radio were judged too dangerous and shut down.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁵ “SOS closes offices after war vets invasion” *Standard* 13 May 2001; “Canadian aid agency director released by militants” *Globe and Mail* (Canada) 5 May 2001; “Hunzvi targets embassies, NGOs” *Financial Gazette* 26 April 2001; “War vets force NGO to pay ex-workers” *Daily News*, 25 April 2001.

¹⁶⁶ “NGO implicated in food scam” *Sunday Mail* 8 July 2001.

¹⁶⁷ “Inyika Trust commends Government on proposed Bill” *Herald* 9 May 2001; “Inyika Trust condemns CFU’s plans” *Herald* 11 May 2001; “Inyika Trust slams judgment” *Herald* 9 February 2001

¹⁶⁸ “NCA, NDA clash over interests” *Standard* 5 November 2000.

¹⁶⁹ “Heritage linked to Jonathan Moyo” *Daily News*, 20 January 2001; “Heritage Zimbabwe refutes daily’s story” *Sunday Mail* 26 January 2001; “Heritage Zim hosted Hunzvi mourners” *Independent* 15 June 2001.

¹⁷⁰ “Zanu PF pushes for formation of rival residents association” *Independent* 26 January 2001

¹⁷¹ “ZBC bans another NDA programme” *Daily News*, 14 July 2001

8.6 Conclusion

During the constitutional debate, the ZANU(PF) regime had attempted to talk the language of liberal consultation and deliberation over policy. The failure of this strategy, which required the initiator to take these processes seriously, led to an increasingly autocratic and intolerant front. The ruling party accused those who rejected its stance of having forgotten their history and of being influenced by foreign interests. Nationalism, of a particularly unsubtle sort, was called upon to justify the violence and intimidation that was directed at opponents of the regime. During the election proper, all manner of legislative and administrative stratagems were resorted to, in further attempts to delegitimize both opponents and observers. In many ways, this election period resembled previous elections, what was different was that in this election, unlike in 1990 or 1995, there was a viable opposition party with candidates in all constituencies. The ruling party's loss of the constitutional referendum, and the scale of its defeat in many constituencies set the stage for more acrimonious and intolerant exchanges in the post-election period.

The ruling party's enduring scepticism that churches, NGOs, and unions were on their side took on the nature of a self-fulfilling prophecy. The more it targeted them and accused them of being unfaithful, the less they had to lose by aligning themselves with the opposition and their donors. NGOs that had been able to close their eyes to government's authoritarian tendencies, were forced to speak out when their own members and staffs were the victims of assault. Churches, similarly, were shamed into public reaction by their members and donor pressure.

By the end of 2000, Zimbabwe's state and society were deeply polarized, despite efforts of NGOs (and probably several levels of government) to avoid such divisions. From the politics of inclusion, Zimbabwe moved to a politics of exclusion. Coercion, backed up by the distribution of incentives to select groups, dominates the rules of the game. Those who are willing to be mobilized in defence of the regime are rewarded with land, contracts, and

employment. Individuals and groups which do not prove their loyalty are excluded socially, politically, and through violent attacks on their homes and workplaces. This polarization extends into villages, churches, and schools. As the Catholic Bishops stated in May 2001, harkening back to the earlier form of politics:

In unity we freed ourselves and today once more we need that unity: Unity of purpose and vision, in spite of different ideas of how best to achieve our goal. This means we should be ready and willing to accommodate different views and really tolerate different viewpoints. There is no single Zimbabwean with the monopoly of truth. We need each person's contribution in order to really build up a true Zimbabwe. No person should be excluded from positively making a meaningful contribution to nation building. Let our common enemy be poverty, disease and ignorance, not fellow citizens. Let us unite our efforts to defeat those enemies and we shall earn our rightful place in the family of nations.¹⁷²

¹⁷² Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference Pastoral Letter May 2001.

Part V Authoritarianism and Democratization

As outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, this thesis has three goals: first, to bring together the material and ideological aspects of relations between state and society to probe the character and ambiguities of Zimbabwe's shifts between authoritarianism and democratization; secondly, to provide an in-depth study of NGO-state politics in Zimbabwe, based on participant-observer research and capturing the experience of NGO activists in a period of flux; thirdly, to identify the relevance of this case to ongoing debates amongst political scientists studying NGOs and democratization. In the concluding chapter, I will consider how well and in what ways the preceding chapters meet these goals, first considering Zimbabwean politics, then NGOs, and finally the implications of my research for the discipline of political science.

Chapter 9 Zimbabwe in Comparative Perspective

9.1 Understanding Zimbabwean Politics

As suggested in Chapter 2, Zimbabwean politics is a surprisingly under studied topic, within an extensively studied country. Certain sectors of Zimbabwean politics – land, labour and the economy – have benefitted from extensive examination but there have been no monograph-length studies of politics more generally since Christine Sylvester’s admirable, but limited, *The Terrain of Contradictory Development* in 1991.¹ In order to draw together and bring out some of the numerous threads of Zimbabwean politics, this thesis has pulled together numerous studies and my own primary research, to explain how and why the Mugabe regime has maintained its hold on power since 1980. In emphasizing both rhetoric and policy, it has attempted to capture the ways in which state and society related to each other throughout these two turbulent decades.

In the years covered by this thesis there has been a remarkable shift in the discourse and practice of politics in Zimbabwe on the part of both the ruling party and organizations in society. Part II illustrated and examined how the politics of inclusion worked to promote co-operative relations between organizations and the state, marked by demobilization and quiescence. In Part III we saw how a few ‘activist’ NGOs attempted to mobilize the wider sector, to little avail. In this period, electoral politics was also characterized by low interest and turn-out, until Margaret Dongo and the independent candidates began to fight local elections successfully. However, as Part IV showed, after the turning point of 1997, NGOs, unions, churches and students, did mobilize around increasingly ‘political’ issues, albeit continuing to frame them in a ‘non-political’ form. The regime’s failure to re-incorporate these movements, along with its more authoritarian response to protests and the news media, led to a struggle for

¹ Christine Sylvester, *The Terrain of Contradictory Development* (Boulder: Westview, 1991).

control of public spaces and speech, in which the ruling party's dominance was firmly challenged. The threat that this policy-oriented challenge would transmogrify into an electoral challenge and defeat led to the emergence of a politics of exclusion, in which NGOs, donors, and 'foreigners' were terrorized, and steps taken to silence and discredit critical and alternative voices.

Zimbabwean politics between 1980 and 2000 was dominated by demobilization and incorporation. While elements of these strategies remain, the mobilization of certain social groups – war veterans and party activists – in the post-referendum period in support of the ruling clique also catalyzed the mobilization of farmers and other groups, previously content to work through and within the state, against the regime. This mobilization and counter-mobilization marks out the new instability and uncertainty of Zimbabwean politics. It remains to be seen if the ageing leaders who managed to retain control and balance within the demobilized authoritarian system of rule, are sufficiently adept to maintain power with the assistance of their younger acolytes, in the new, more turbulent, mode of politics that they brought into being.

9.2 Understanding NGOs

NGOs were part of the politics of inclusion that dominated the political space until 2000. This was the result of NGOs' ideological commitment to the development agenda of the liberation movement, the material constraints which arise when NGOs are sites of employment rather than sites of activism; and the strategic pragmatism which dominated their decision-making practices. From the late 1980s, NGOs became increasingly important players in Zimbabwe through their increased donor funding, which not only expanded their employment potential but also access to resources such as computers, cars, and foreign travel. However, even as some 'activist' NGOs attempted to intervene in policy discussions, NGO discourse remained depoliticized around the theme of 'development'.

9.2.1 Understanding in Order to Explain

Methodologically, the thesis research was premised on the argument that these dynamics of inclusion and exclusion could only be understood through attempts to ‘understand’ NGOs from within. Of course, even from the inside, one does not always get all the answers. As I noted in section 1.3, my participant-observer research needed to be complemented by archival research and interviews in order to tell the whole story. It can also be difficult for the researcher to be confident that the ‘whole story’ is being told. One measure I used of my success was to ask participants to read and comment on my cases. Five of my colleagues and informants read the cases in which they had been involved, and felt that they were useful and accurate accounts.² The ZimRights case study in Chapter 5 was both the most controversial and the least clear-cut. One of my informants said,

Your characterization of ZimRights seems on target...a few things are left vague and unanswered, but maybe that is best after all...It is OK not to have all the answers. In some ways it really confirms the need to take a very close look and use ‘thick description’. If you had done an organizational analysis from a macro perspective, none of these scandals would even come up on the radar screen – and they really tell a big part of the story as far as ZimRights is concerned. That you cannot get definitive answers is exactly the point....No one can get definitive answers, thus a climate of suspicion and rivalry prevailed.³

As the sub-sections below suggest, understanding intra- and inter-organizational dynamics as a participant-observer enables the researcher to make sense out of apparently incongruous evidence and guards against tendencies to romanticization and pathologization of NGOs.

9.2.2 Discourse and Practice

A major concern of the thesis has been to describe and explain how and why groups like NGOs were demobilized and quiescent during the often turbulent 1980s and 1990s, when

² These were: Charlie Cater (Chapter 5) Jonah Gokova, Regis Mtutu, Niki Jazdowska, (Chapter 6) and Brian Raftopoulos (Chapter 7); Brian Raftopoulos, an academic as well as a practitioner, also read and commented on the thesis as a whole.

³ Personal communications, Charles Cater, 19 and 20 July 2001.

significant policy shifts were undertaken by the state. In discussing the relationship between NGOs and the state before 2000, I have used the language of hegemony deriving from Gramsci's writings. In particular, my approach was influenced by Gaventa's excellent study of Appalachian coal-miners, *Power and Powerlessness*. Gaventa's thesis benefits from his *longue durée* approach, in which he shows how generations of workers have been reduced to an acceptance of the *status quo*. But the Zimbabwe case is more subtle than this. Evidence generated from participant-observation research shows how NGOs think about and negotiate their relationship with each other and the state. In the examples in chapters 5, 6 and 7 NGOs are actively seeking incorporation into the power structures. To middle-class, educated NGO staff members, the ZANU(PF) government has little in common with the multi-national corporation which mines the Appalachians nor with the remote colonial governments described in the contributions to *Contesting Colonial Hegemony*.⁴ The ZANU(PF) government is run by their peers, and even by their comrades in the struggle.

Yet, towards the end of Gaventa's study, he relates a telling anecdote. At a moment of great conflict over responsibility for a dangerous land-slide, hostility towards a local employer suddenly diminished, after he started attending the local church and gave work to local people. In ways that evoke James Scott's landlords, Gaventa tells us that "...the operator, too, began to insist that he, like the other residents, was a poor man who had been a victim of bad luck and outside forces."⁵ After this appeal to the local sub-culture, "the value of harmonious personal relation – especially with a fellow mountaineer – began to predominate over political grievances."⁶ NGOs too value harmonious relations with the state and cultural élites. I have argued that as NGOs become more professionalized, and are run by large staffs rather than by volunteers, the interests of the staff may begin to predominate over those of the membership.

⁴ Engels and Marks eds, *Contesting Colonial Hegemony*.

⁵ Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness*, 236.

⁶ Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness*, 236.

Michels' 'iron law of oligarchy' operates in NGOs as well as political parties.⁷ My analysis of ZimRights also points out that these divisions – between staff and membership – are not as clear cut as they are often assumed to be. This sort of personal politics is difficult to research and verify, but NGOs need to be understood as organizations with histories and internal conflicts which may have deep implications for their relations with the state. These organizational histories, which may be kept hidden from donors and consultants, make them particularly vulnerable at times of crisis.

With the formation of the NCA in 1997, some NGOs become part of a wider coalition which “attempted to repoliticize the language of development through a more tolerant language of politics.”⁸ Although they eased into this process gradually, the state's unwillingness to allow them this autonomy increasingly polarizes their relations. Yet, as chapter 7 reveals, this process is not accepted by all NGOs, nor is it without its own ambiguities of co-option and inclusion. NGOs can open up space for discussion and challenge the state's domination of the political sphere, but it is not a simple or straightforward process. The state's attempt to incorporate and control the constitutional debate came closer to succeeding than most activists would want to admit.

9.2.3 The Pathologization of a Romance

My critique of the romanticization of NGOs in Africa has been one of several similar projects. Amongst a plethora of writing on NGOs, a few significant studies which have emerged from research based mostly in East Africa, deserve serious consideration. Jim Igoe and Greg Cameron, studying pastoralist NGOs in Tanzania, emphasize the ways in which donor agendas shape NGOs, and the multiple ways in which NGOs become little more than new patronage

⁷ Robert Michels, *Political Parties: A sociological study of the oligarchical tendencies of modern democracy* Trans. Eden and Cedar Paul. (New York: Free Press, 1962).

⁸ Raftopoulos, 'Whither Zimbabwe' 1999.

vehicles for ‘big men’ in rural communities.⁹ In contrast, Tim Kelsall’s study of NGO operations in north-eastern Tanzania, is more interested in the attempts of NGOs to enhance communities’ abilities to undertake collective action. Kelsall is profoundly critical of the liberal development agenda of NGOs, but also questions the extent to which they accomplish their ends. In his account, the NGOs are unsuccessful in fostering participation, accountability or democracy within the community because of the way in which they impose their agendas.¹⁰ Also concerned about ‘liberal development’, David MacDermott Hughes’ very different methodology enables him to examine the interaction of NGOs with local people in remote areas of Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Hughes effectively identifies not only the ways in which NGO-led participatory workshops marginalize local peoples, but also their potential to eat away at land and resource entitlements of rural groups.¹¹

All of these recent studies suggest that we are right to be critical of claims and assertions about NGO abilities: “there is no magic bullet.”¹² Not only is there little evidence that NGOs are either more efficient or more participatory than other development schemes, but the exact opposite may be true.¹³ What Stewart calls the “NGOs do it cheaper, better faster” argument seems to have little evidence backing it up.¹⁴ However, there is a new danger

⁹ Greg Cameron, “Taking stock in Tanzania: Pastoralist NGOs and the Indigenous Question” paper presented to the Association for the Study of Anthropology, 2000; James Igoe, *Ethnicity, Civil Society, and the Tanzanian Pastoral NGO Movement*. Unpublished PhD Thesis Boston University, 2000.

¹⁰ Tim Kelsall, “Subjectivity, Collective Action, and the Governance Agenda in Tanzania” unpublished Ph.D. thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London 2000; for a more concise account of his argument see also, “Subjectivity, Collective Action and the Governance Agenda in Arumeru East” QEH Working Paper 42, June 2000.

¹¹ David McDermott Hughes, “Rezoned for Business: How Eco-tourism Unlocked Black Farmland in Eastern Zimbabwe”, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, Vol.1 No.4, October 2001, 575–599.

¹² Jessica Vivian, “NGOs and Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe: No Magic Bullets.” *Development and Change*, 25 (1994), 167-193.

¹³ Terje Tvedt, *Angels of mercy or development diplomats?* (1998), 137-157; Henrik Secher Marcussen, “Comparative advantage of NGOs: Myths and realities” in Olav Stokke, ed. *Foreign aid towards the year 2000: experiences and challenges*, 259-285.

¹⁴ Stewart, “Happily ever after” 13.

of donors and academics falling out of love with NGOs and descending instead into an equally problematic discourse which pathologizes NGOs, suggesting that they are nothing more than new power resources for élites. In the words of a recent, iconoclastic approach to African Politics, NGOs are:

... a successful adaptation to the conditions laid down by foreign donors on the part of local political actors who seek in this way to gain access to new resources....NGOs are often nothing other than the new 'structures' with which Africans can seek to establish an instrumentally profitable position within the existing system of neo-patrimonialism....The use of NGO resources can today serve the strategic interests of the classical entrepreneurial Big man just as well as access to state coffers did in the past.¹⁵

While such an account may provide a useful balance to earlier effusions, its reluctance to take NGO activists seriously betrays an equally limited approach. The authors dismiss NGOs summarily as merely saying what the donors want to hear, which is more of an *ad-hominem* attack than analytical reasoning or empirical evidence.¹⁶

9.2.4 NGOs as Political Resources: Kenya and Zimbabwe

While the romanticization of NGOs needs reconsideration, so do approaches which conclude that they fail in all capacities. Instead, NGOs need to be understood as organizations bound up in power relations on various levels. In this light, it is worth briefly examining Ndegwa's study of the politics of Kenyan NGOs.

In 1990, Kenyan NGOs were involved in opposing an act designed by the state to control their actions. Some of these NGOs then went on to be key players in the mobilization for multi-party democracy. Ndegwa charts the involvement of two significant NGOs – the Undugu society and the Greenbelt movement – in the democratization campaign. Ndegwa concludes that:

¹⁵ Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford: James Currey, 1999), 22.

¹⁶ Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*, 117.

NGOs were not predisposed to oppose the single-party dictatorship until their very existence and free operation were threatened by the NGO Co-ordination Act of 1990....the collective NGO action against the state was therefore a result of the threat of restrictive legislation rather than of an articulated consciousness to oppose the repressive state and to promote democratic values.¹⁷

Ndegwa's comparison of the Greenbelt movement led by the charismatic Wangari Maathai, and the more institutionalized Undugu society, led by an NGO professional, Ezra Mbogori, concludes that it is the quality and type of leadership – more than institutional resources – that determines whether or not NGOs are likely to engage the state politically.¹⁸ In narrowing down to a focus on these two individuals, Ndegwa avoids engaging at all with the question of how these NGOs, and their leadership, reflect the wider political culture in Kenya. Ndegwa does note the parallel between Maathai's ability to influence her 'grassroots' movement, and the influence of key individuals within Kenya's nascent democratization movement:

It is especially evident in opposition parties and in organizations that have been leading agitators for political reform. For instance, the following personalities heading or associated with important civil associational bodies are recognized as important political entities independent of their organizations: Paul Muite, the former chairman of the Law Society of Kenya who is credited with catapulting it to political prominence; Reverend Timothy Njoya of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa; Reverend Samuel Kobia of the NCKK; and Bishop Henry Okullu of the Catholic Church.¹⁹

Ndegwa considers that this confirms that personal politics is dominant in Africa, even within churches and NGOs. We might ask: does the willingness of high-profile individuals to take stands, but not necessarily to carry their membership or congregations with them, reflect the continued penetration of KANU politics? If these high-profile individuals did reflect personal rule, as Ndegwa proposes, surely they would have personalized followers. Perhaps the emergence of these few high-profile activists actually tells us more about mass politics than about elite politics. Non-élite Kenyans may be more willing to follow the 'safe' line in not

¹⁷ Ndegwa, *Two Faces of Civil Society*, 110.

¹⁸ Mbogori moves to Zimbabwe to become leader of Mwengo, which is peripherally involved in both the PVO Act Campaign and the attempts to resuscitate NANGO.

¹⁹ Ndegwa, *Two Faces of Civil Society*, 114.

challenging the KANU state, and the 'leaders' may not have followers. Maupeu notes, for example, "...les fidèles ne semblent pas prêts à laisser les Eglises jouer les rôles qu'elles s'attribuent et cet amer constat devrait amener les groupes confessionnels à réfléchir aux limites de leurs actions."²⁰ He emphasizes the marginalization of Protestant clerics like Njoya and Okullu who had very little influence over the agenda of their churches.²¹

A second question concerns the place of NGOs within this political culture. Ndegwa emphasizes the importance of "...the actual *will* to take advantage of political opportunity (and organizational resources and empowered grass-roots networks)."²² As in Zimbabwe, many groups do not have this will. However, Ndegwa's linkage of this will to individual leadership is less convincing. As he himself notes, the reasons that the Undugu Society do not actively engage the state with demands for reform "...can be found in the nature of Undugu as an institutionalized NGO and especially in its historically fruitful co-operation with the government."²³ As the Zimbabwe cases also suggest, the professionalization of NGOs, and material linkages of NGOs to the state and establishment, may limit activism. Professionalized NGOs have little to gain and everything to lose from actively engaging in public protest. Studying both the organizational encumbrances of NGOs and their position within the ideological sphere or political culture may help us explain their inter- and intra-organizational decisions. Situating NGOs within their political context and considering internal processes avoids both the romanticization and the more recent pathologizing of NGOs which dominate the literature. Considering the continued weight placed upon NGOs in donor discourses and funding, such an approach is not only timely, but necessary.

²⁰ "The faithful do not seem willing to let the Churches play the role which they have taken upon themselves and this painful realization should cause the faith groups to reflect on the limits of their actions." Hervé Maupeu, "Les Églises chrétiennes au Kenya: des influences contradictoires" in François Constantin and Christian Coulon, eds. *Religion et transition démocratique in Afrique*, (Paris: Karthala, 1997), 87.

²¹ Maupeu, "Les Églises chrétiennes au Kenya" 88-89.

²² Ndegwa, *Two Faces of Civil Society*, 104 (emphasis in the original).

²³ Ndegwa, *Two Faces of Civil Society*, 77.

9.3 Comparative Approaches

Large-scale comparative studies of African politics in recent years have been unsure whether or not to label Zimbabwean politics ‘democratic’ or ‘authoritarian’. Some settled upon democratic or semi-democratic.²⁴ Country-specific studies on the other hand, were more likely to position Zimbabwe firmly within the democratization framework (implying that it was authoritarian).²⁵ In the 1990s while we have seen more political activity in Zimbabwe – rallies, protests, civic education – the political climate has become significantly more authoritarian, as a series of laws and policies were implemented that made the polity less democratic in immeasurable ways. More critical assessments describe Zimbabwe’s politics along the lines of Célestin Monga:

...the *self-justifying dictatorial model* that oscillates between naked and brutal uses of power reminiscent of colonialism at its most high-handed and the practice of enlightened despotism African-style, informed by effulgent and elaborate propaganda.²⁶

The current term of choice seems to be crisis – which avoids the need to choose either authoritarianism or democratization as a label.²⁷ To label what one studies as authoritarianism continues to be problematic and unpopular. As Heydemann notes somewhat defensively,

...the importance of Syria’s experience rests not in its status as a populist authoritarian anomaly, an outlier in a world moving ineluctably toward democracy, but as an important reminder that processes of change that have been described as global, decisive and virtually irreversible are in fact highly contingent...[and] subject to local logics and constraints that broaden the range

²⁴ See for example, Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*; Diamond, Linz and Lipset, eds., *Democracy in Developing Countries*.

²⁵ Masipula Sithole, “Zimbabwe’s eroding Authoritarianism” *Journal of Democracy* 8, 1(1997), 127-141; Richard Saunders, “Trade Union Struggles for Autonomy and Democracy in Zimbabwe” Unpublished paper October 1996; Richard Saunders, “The Press, Civil Society and Democratic Struggles in Zimbabwe” paper presented to the Conference on national identity and democracy, Cape Town, March 1997.

²⁶ Célestin Monga, “Eight Problem with African Politics” in Larry Diamond and Marc F Plattner, eds. *Democratization in Africa* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1999) 54.

²⁷ As seen in recent conference titles, “Zimbabwe: the politics of crisis and the crisis of politics”, a meeting of concerned scholars held at Yale University on May 15, 2000; “Rethinking land, state and citizenship through the Zimbabwe crisis” CDR, Copenhagen, September 4-5 2001.

of popular responses open to regimes.²⁸

As the inability of researchers to label Zimbabwean politics as ‘democratizing’ or ‘authoritarianizing’ suggests, the study of one must include the other. In order to understand what is being democratized and what needs democratizing one needs to consider fully the authoritarian basis of power, which is not merely that of regulation and coercion. The apparatus of creating consent must be dismantled and re-constructed by the democratizers as thoroughly as the apparatus of coercion is replaced by liberal democratic institutions.

9.3.1 The Problem of Non-transitions

The study of ‘non-transitions’ is particularly relevant here: “the exceptional case, which stands out from the rest, invites us to explain why it is different and to reconsider why specific conditions gave rise to the features common to all the other cases.”²⁹ The ‘lack’ of a transition should lead political scientists to a more nuanced appreciation of the multiple ways in which authoritarian regimes enhance their power, in order to survive pressures to reform. Students of Middle Eastern politics have probably gone farther than most in grappling with this conundrum. Recently, a few scholars have begun talking about durable³⁰ or resilient³¹ authoritarianism, sidestepping the tendency “to collapse into the term authoritarianism all regimes that are not, or are not yet, democratic.”³²

²⁸ Steven Heydemann, *Authoritarianism in Syria* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1999), 7.

²⁹ Gavin Williams, Brian Williams and Roy Williams, “Sociology and Historical Explanation” *African Sociological Review* 1 (1997), 89.

³⁰ WJ Dorman, “The Egyptian State in Cairo: the Politics of Social Demobilization” paper presented at the 2nd Mediterranean Social and Political Research meeting, Florence, March 21-25, 2001, Mediterranean programme, Robert Schumann Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute.

³¹ Steven Heydemann, “Why is the Middle East Still Authoritarian?” paper presented at the 2nd Mediterranean Social and Political Research meeting, Florence, March 21-25, 2001, Mediterranean programme, Robert Schumann Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute.

³² Jill Chrystal, “Authoritarianism and its adversaries in the Arab world”, *World Politics*, 46 (1994), 262.

The Middle Eastern case is of interest because ideological claims have been taken seriously (sometimes too seriously) in explaining authoritarianism by writers who see in them long-standing non-democratic cultural norms of Arabs or of Islam.³³ In contrast, in studies of African politics, ideological claims are often dismissed as inconsequential.³⁴ Chrystal's approach, which is equally valid for the African cases, suggests that appeals to ideology by authoritarian leaders should be understood as:

...deliberate and careful attempts by rulers to deal with a crisis of legitimacy either by invoking a carefully crafted, selective, and often inaccurate past or by offering promises, perhaps wilfully false, of future material gain – an appeal to developmentalism – in order to fragment the opposition.³⁵

Egypt, like the centralized bureaucratic states of sub-Saharan Africa, has been led for several decades by nationalist leaders of a purportedly socialist inclination, making use of nationalist rhetoric and an implicit or explicit social contract with the masses. While minor opposition parties have contested Egyptian elections, and do have a presence in the parliament and opposition press, the regimes of Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak have never been substantively threatened. In contrast to many of the African states, the regime does face significant potential challengers in the form of the Islamist parties, which are prevented from contesting elections. Since the 1970s, Middle Eastern authoritarianism has taken on a distinctive character caused by the presence of domestic oil revenues and the large numbers of remittance workers in the Gulf, which create rentier-states. Donor conditionality also had little impact on Egypt in the 1990s, unlike Africa, as aid continued to be politically assured because of its role in maintaining Arab-Israeli peace.³⁶

Perhaps a more relevant comparative case is Cuba. Here Darren Hawkins notes that

³³ Most famously, Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the remaking of World Order* (London: Touchstone, 1998), 29.

³⁴ For a discussion of this point see, Thandika Mkandawire, "The terrible toll of post-colonial 'rebel movements' in Africa: Towards an explanation of the violence against the peasantry" unpublished draft paper 2001.

³⁵ Chrystal, "Authoritarianism and its adversaries in the Arab world," 264.

³⁶ Dorman, "The Egyptian State in Cairo."

Cuba's lack of transition points up the need for students of democratization to "examine all outcomes on the dependent variable: regime stability as well as regime change."³⁷ In some ways, Cuba parallels the Zimbabwe case. As the Cuban case suggests, even in the presence of apparently influential structural variables – socio-economic development, economic crises, and a favourable international environment – democratization may not occur. Hawkins proposes that Cuba's non-transition results from the lack of softliners within the regime and of independent social groups.³⁸ As theories of democratization have emphasized the importance of élite leadership choosing to liberalize or democratize, we need to consider more seriously the ideological and social forces which constrain élite decisions.

The existence of the American bogeyman means that in Cuba, "...to oppose Fidel meant to oppose national sovereignty, which is the revolution's central legacy."³⁹ It is therefore argued that "for many Cubans, to establish autonomous groups outside the revolution is to become a traitor to the homeland. Very little cultural middle ground is available for those who wish to claim autonomy from both the revolution and from Cuba's enemies."⁴⁰ America, and its sanctions, are also conveniently blamed for economic hardship.

Mugabe's similar attempts to blame capitalism, Rhodesians and the West, are less successful after the South African transition. Both the Cuban and the Zimbabwean cases help us to understand the role of ideological factors in preventing the development of alternative leadership and ideas. The significant difference between Cuba and Zimbabwe, however, is Cuba's formal one-party stance, and its control over NGOs until the 1990s, both of which are more reminiscent of Malawi, Zambia and Kenya than of Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe, where there were no legal restrictions on the formation of political parties, and relatively few on the

³⁷ Darren Hawkins, "Democratization Theory and Nontransitions: Insights from Cuba" *Comparative Politics* 33 (2001), 441.

³⁸ Hawkins, "Democratization Theory and Nontransitions" 445.

³⁹ Hawkins, "Democratization Theory and Nontransitions" 448.

⁴⁰ Hawkins, "Democratization Theory and Nontransitions" 455.

formation of NGOs, ideological factors seem to have been particularly potent. As Olcott and Ottaway emphasize, in what they call ‘semi-authoritarian regimes,’

...a combination of external pressures and countervailing forces created by domestic opposition has limited the capacity of most governments to impose their policies unilaterally and to continue governing in an authoritarian fashion....but these pressures have not been sufficient to bring about a new distribution of power...[and] regimes have been able to prevent further change through their successful manipulation of the new institutions and often of the opposition as well.⁴¹

Surely what they are referring to obliquely is hegemony. Even where rules, regulations and coercion are modified by liberal trappings, the continuing hegemonic power of élites prevents any real shifts in power. Olcott and Ottaway note that there are particular mechanisms which prevent the transfer of power through elections which function:

...despite the adoption of formal democratic institutions and despite a degree of freedom granted to citizens of the country. Semi-authoritarian countries may have a reasonably free press, for example; the regime may leave space for autonomous organisations in civil society to operate, for private business to grow, and thus for new economic élites to rise. The regime may hold fairly open elections for local or regional governments, or even allow backbenchers to be defeated in a parliamentary election. But there is no room for debate over the nature of political power in society, where it resides and who should hold it.⁴²

Olcott and Ottaway are right to emphasize this point, which identifies exactly the debate which occurred in Zimbabwe under the aegis of constitutional reform. Once this issue had been breached, and especially, once the referendum was won by the NO vote, the previously stable authoritarianism, predicated as it was on the assumed power of the ruling party, could no longer remain stable. As a result, this form of rule that had enabled ZANU(PF) to retain power throughout the 1980s and 1990s, was rejected, opening the way to a more mobilized and chaotic system. The new system retains elements of the old, but the effective challenge to the legitimacy of the regime means that the institutional arrangements and political discourses

⁴¹ Martha Brill Olcott and Marina Ottaway “The Challenge of Semi-authoritarianism” Carnegie Endowment Working Paper # 7, 1999.

⁴² Olcott and Ottaway, “The Challenge of semi-authoritarianism”

which once cohered and enhanced durability, must now be bolstered by significantly more reliance on coercion and material benefits. All the groups which had previously adhered to the rules of the game – NGOs, churches, labour, students, journalists, businessmen and farmers – now require controlling legislation, intimidation, and violence to keep them in line.

9.4 The Politics of Hegemony

Power – of both the cultural and the material sort – holds regimes together. The challenging of hegemony by ‘civil society’ indicates the weakening of the ideological hegemony of the hitherto dominant power, and may contribute to the weakening ability of coercive power to guarantee compliance – because it is increasingly seen as illegitimate. But the structure of cultural power often remains surprisingly resilient, penetrative and continues to cohere even after material and coercive power structures are being dismantled.

During the rush towards ‘democratization,’ political scientists tended to focus on the formal political institutions in line with concerns of agencies, aid donors and NGOs, international and national. We now need to reflect on these concerns, assumptions and findings of these studies and give more attention to political culture and hegemony. The authoritarian regimes of eastern and central Africa relied upon the institutions of the state to structure and legitimate their political dominance. They used the state apparatus not just to exercise coercion, and extract material resources, but to construct and disseminate a particular conception of nationalism. Politics in these regimes relied upon the incorporation of disparate groups with often conflicting interests, under a rubric of unity and development. Regime strength and durability relied upon balancing the potent combination of culture, force, and interests. The complexity of this nexus renders democratization an equally complex and ambiguous process.

The material presented in the preceding chapters suggests a need to reconsider the methodological and theoretical basis of the ‘democratization’ literature which dominated

African politics in the 1990s. Complex and dynamic processes are best studied using a multiplicity of methodological tools. Interview research, participant-observation, and documentary evidence reinforce each other and reflect different aspects of the process under study. Organizations like NGOs benefit from being studied from the 'inside' so as to generate 'deep description' and capture their internal decision-making processes. Documentary evidence enables the study of changes within discourses. Interview research is a necessary, if not sufficient, tool for clarifying information, and allowing the subjects of the study to speak directly to the topic. Together, these and perhaps other methods, provide the material through which we can construct historical narratives that enable understanding and explanation.

In addition to contributing to the understanding of Zimbabwean politics, and NGO-state relations in Zimbabwe, this thesis extends discussions of democratization and authoritarianism in the developing world. The material presented in the preceding chapters suggests a need to reconsider the methodological and theoretical basis of the 'democratization' literature which dominated African politics in the 1990s. By placing weight on the political constructions of nation-building and the establishment of political hegemony by nationalist movements, it enables us to understand the dynamics of post-colonial politics. In particular, it presents a much more complex and historicized vision of the role played by NGOs and churches in state-society politics. Yet at the same time, it avoids demonizing or otherwise dismissing as 'un-African' those political actors keen on reform. These are important lessons for political scientists, many of whom either accept at face value teleological narratives of democratization (and are then baffled by the lack of 'democracy' in post-transition societies), or see Africa's political cultures as irredeemably collapsing into chaos.

Appendix 1 NCA Taskforce membership

NCA Provisional Taskforce June 1997⁴³

David Chimhini	ZimRights
Brian Kagoro	Lawyer
Sheila Kanyangarara	ZWLA
Welshman Ncube	UZ
G Nyamuzuwe	WAG
Peter Maregare	ZimRights
R Matora	Mavambo Development Assoc
Tawanda Mutasah	ZCC
Brian Raftopoulos	IDS, UZ
Morgan Tsvangirai	ZCTU
Everjoice Win	Musasa Project

NCA Taskforce 1999⁴⁴

Mike Auret	CCJP
Tendai Biti,	ZLHR
David Chimhini	ZimRights
Brian Kagoro	ZLHR
Lovemore Madhuku	UZ
B Mapondera	MISA
Peter Maregare	ZimRights
Thoko Matshe	ZWRCN
R Matorwa	Mavambo Development Assoc
Priscilla Misihairambwi	WASN
Selina Mumbengegwi	WAG
Welshman Ncube,	UZ
Lydia Nyatsanza-Zigomo	ZWLA
Brain Raftopoulos	IDS, UZ
Morgan Tsvangirai	ZCTU

⁴³ Based on notes from election 11 June 1997 and minutes of provisional taskforce meeting, 30 July 1997.

⁴⁴ from *Agenda*, vol. 2, No1 April 1999 p. 5

NCA Taskforce 2000⁴⁵

Mike Auret	Churches
Tendai Biti	ZLHR
B. Chakanyuka	YWCA
F. Cherera	NCDPZ
David Chimhini	Human Rights Organisations
Jonah Gokova	Churches (ESS)
V. Gonda	Media and Information
Brian Kagoro	ZLHR
Lovemore Madhuku	UZ
Yvonne Mahlunge	ZWLA
B Mapondera	MISA
Thoko Matshe	ZWRCN
D. Mwonzora	Political Parties
Lydia Nyatsanza-Zigomo	ZWLA
Welshman Ncube	UZ
G. Kwinjeh	Individual
Gibson Sibanda	ZCTU
Trudy Stevenson	Harare Residents Association
T. Zhanghaza	ZINASU

⁴⁵ From Raftopoulos and Mazarire, “Civil society and the constitution-making process in Zimbabwe”, 33.

Appendix 2 NCA organizational membership

Membership of the NCA before February 1999⁴⁶

Church organisations	5
Interest groups	7
Women's organisations	6
Human Rights groups	2
NGOs	15
Trade Unions	9
Academic/research organizations	3
Cultural groups	8
Student groups	2
Residents Associations	3
Political parties	1
Youth groups	6
Pressure groups	6
Other	23
Total	96

⁴⁶ From Raftopoulos and Mazarire, "Civil society and the constitution-making process in Zimbabwe", 31.

Membership of the NCA after February 1999⁴⁷

Church organisations	9
Interest groups	8
Women's organisations	7
Human Rights groups	4
NGOs	20
Trade Unions	10
Academic/research organisations	5
Cultural groups	8
Student groups	5
Residents Associations	4
Political parties	14
Youth groups	6
Pressure groups	7
Other	28
Total	135

⁴⁷ From Raftopoulos and Mazarire, "Civil society and the constitution-making process in Zimbabwe", 31.

Appendix 3 Constitutional Commission: Committee Chairs and Membership

Plenary	Godfrey Chidyausiku (Judge)
Executive Committee	Godfrey Chidyausiku (Judge)
Co-ordinating Committee	Walter Kamba (UZ)
Financial and Administrative	Ibbo Mandaza (SAPES)
Media and Public Relations	Jonathan Moyo (Witswatersrand University)

Thematic Committees:

Separation of Powers	Rita Makarau (Non-constituency MP)
Executive Organs	Heneri Dzinotyiweyi (UZ, ZIP)
Pillars of Democracy	Lupi Mushayakarara (Media Commentator, Ex-NCA)
Citizenship Rights	Canaan Dube
Levels of Government	Dr Themba Dlodlo (Nust)
Public Finance and Management	Eric Bloch (Economist)
Customary Law	Rudo Gaidzanwa (NGO/UZ,)
Transitional Mechanisms	Honour Mkushi (Businessman)
Legal	Patrick Chinamasa (Zanupf)

Commissioners:

In addition to the 150 MPs, the following individuals were named as commissioners on 27 April 1999:⁴⁸

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Andersen, Adv. Jonas Christian | 39. Dhlakama Mr Lazarus. |
| 2. Aphiri, Mr. Francis. | 40. Dlodlo, Dr Mqhele Enock. |
| 3. Bepura, Chief Albert Godfrey | 41. Dlodlo Mr Temba Shadreck |
| Madachimani Dzvukamanja | 42. Dube, Mr Canaan. |
| 4. Bepura, Mr. Webster. | 43. Dube, Mr Kingsley. |
| 5. Beta, Mr. Shadreck | 44. Dzinotyiwei, Prof Heneri A.M. |
| 6. Bhala, Dr. Madlean J. | 45. Fernandez, Mr Arthur |
| 7. Bhuka, Mrs. Florence | 46. Gaidzanwa, Ms Rudo. |
| 8. Bloch, Mr. Eric W | 47. Gava Mr A. |
| 9. Bulle, Dr Bekithemba | 48. Gono, Mr Gedion. |
| 10. Bwerazuva, Mr. James Chizhande | 49. Goredema, Mr Charles J. |
| 11. Chakanetaa, Mr Pascoe. | 50. Govere, Mr Richard |
| 12. Chakaodza, Dr. Austin. | 51. Gowora, Mrs Anne. |
| 13. Chakaredza Chief Munhumutapa III, | 52. Gudyanga, Mrs Sarah. |
| Lawrence Zuze. | 53. Gumbo, Mr Boniface Mhariwa |
| 14. Chanetsa, Mrs. Beatrice. | 54. Guti, Dr Ezekiel |
| 15. Chavunduka, Dr. Dexter. | 55. Guni, Dr Vengai. |
| 16. Chavunduka, Prof. Gordon. | 56. Hanley, Mr Paul. |
| 17. Chetsanga, Prof. Christopher. | 57. Hasluck Ms Johanna. |
| 18. Chidaridire, Mr. Faber. | 58. Hatendi, Bishop Peter |
| 19. Chidzero, Dr. Bernard. | 59. Hawkins, Prof. Anthony. |
| 20. Chihambakwe, Mr Simplicius | 60. Hiabangana, Ms Rachael |
| 21. Chikambi, Mr Ernest | 61. Hlalo, Mr Matson. |
| 22. Chikerema, Mr James Robert | 62. Hlatshwayo, Mr Ben. |
| 23. Chikukwa, Mrs Chiedza. | 63. Hughes, Mrs Amina. |
| 24. Chimhundu, Dr Herbert | 64. Hungwe, Mr Silas. |
| 25. Chinamano, Mrs Ruth. | 65. Hwacha, Mr Selby. |
| 26. Chinogurei, Mr Gedion. | 66. Irvine, Mr William Michie (Snr). |
| 27. Chirau, Chief Dzomba Robert Dzvaka. | 67. Japa Japa, Mr Paddington. |
| 28. Chisango, Rev Marshall Alexander. | 68. Jirira, Ms Kwanele Muriel Onar. |
| 29. Chisunga, Chief Jabu Jofurayi. | 69. Kachingwe, Mrs Sarah. |
| 30. Chiteka, Dr Albert Zvenhamo. | 70. Kahari, Mrs Brenda. |
| 31. Chitepo, Mrs Victoria | 71. Kahari, Prof George |
| 32. Chitewe, Mr Enlem. | 72. Kamuriwo, Mr Samuel Dzidziso. |
| 33. Chivinge, Dr OA. | 73. Kaniushinda, Mr Enock. |
| 34. Chivore, Dr Boniface. | 74. Karadzandima, Mr Fredy |
| 35. Chiwawa, Mr Simbarashe. | 75. Katsande, Mr Kumbirai |
| 36. Chiyangwa, Mr Phillip. | 76. Kawara, Mr. Ranjenos. |
| 37. Cousins, Mrs Cathrine Mary | 77. Kazembe, Ms. Joyce. |
| 38. Deary Mr John. | 78. Khumalo, Ms Belinda. |

⁴⁸ Names are spelled as in the officially published list.

79. Khumalo, Chief Mutshani.
80. Khupe, Mr. Watson Pasa Malimbe.
81. Kulube, Dr. Herbert M.
82. Kurebwa, Dr. Joseph.
83. Labode, Dr. Ruth.
84. Linington, Mr. Gregory.
85. Macheke, Mr. Joseph.
86. Made, Mr. Joseph Mtakwese.
87. Madhuna, Vice Chief M.
88. Madzimbamuto, Mr Daniel.
89. Madzimbamuto, Ms Violet.
90. Mafundikwa, Ms Eunice
91. Magade, Mr Emmanuel
92. Magwaza, Mr Elliot.
93. Mahlangu, Mr Mordechai.
94. Mahlunge Ms Yvonne
95. Majome Ms Jessie.
96. Majonga. Mr Godfrey
97. Majongwe, Mr Peter.
98. Makonese, Mr D. Ignatius.
99. Makoni Dr Simba
100. Malinga, Mr Joshua
101. Malisa, Chief Cyprian Moyo.
102. Malunga, Mr Joseph Bingo.
103. Mamombe Mr Trust.
104. Mamvura Dr Fanuel
105. Manase, Mr Wilson
106. Mandaza, Dr Ibbo
107. Mandunya, Mr Matosi Herbhert Hakulandava
108. Maniltayi, Mr Edwin
109. Manyova, Rev C.B
110. Manyuke, Mr Crispen
111. Mapondera, Mr John
112. Marapuzah Mr Milton C.
113. Marere, Mr Robert
114. Marunda, Dr
115. Maruni, Ms Constance
116. Musawi, Mr Anthony.
117. Masaya, Mr Tichaendepi.
118. Mashaire, Ms Florence
119. Maahakada, Mr Tapiwa
120. Masuku, Mr Nhlahla.
121. Mataka, Dr Greg
122. Matshava-Hove, Dr Reginald
123. Matshe, Ms Priscillah.
124. Maunganidze Dr
125. Mawema Dr Michael
126. Mawere Mr Johnson
127. Mazobere, Dr Crispen Christopher Godzo
128. Mazungunye, Chief Lazarus Maipis
129. Meikle, Mr John
130. Mhembere, Fr Kizito
131. Mhlanga, Mr E.
132. Mhlanga, Ms Ketibe
133. Mkondo, Mr Paul Tangi Mhova
134. Mkushi, Mr Honour.
135. Mkwananzi, Mr Amos
136. Mombemuriwo, Mr Nofredge Lewin.
137. Moroney, Mr Michael
138. Moyo, Bishop Ambrose
139. Moyo, Dr. N. Jonathan
140. Moyo, Ms Rachel
141. Moyo, Dr. Siboniso
142. Moyo, Mr Stenford.
143. Mpani, Mr Glen
144. Mpofu, Mr Dumisani.
145. Mtoko, Chief Nathaniel Gurupira
146. Muchachi, Mr Clement.
147. Mucheche, Mr Ben.
148. Mudarikwa, Mr Timothy.
149. Mudehwe, Mr Lawrence.
150. Mudimu, Ms Virginia.
151. Mudzingwa, Mr Obey
152. Muguti, Dr Edwin.
153. Mukonori, Fr. Fidelis.
154. Mukombachoto, Ms Gloria Rumbidzai.
155. Mukonoweshuro,
159. Murangari, Mr David.
160. Muringani, Mr Willy
161. Musami, Dr Patrick
162. Mushayakarara, Mr Elisha.
163. Mushayakarara, Ms Lupi.
164. Mushonga, Mr Ferris.
165. Musiyazviriyo, Mr Sani.
166. Mutasa, Ms Jane.
167. Mutasa, Mr Philip B.
168. Mutema, Chief Philemon Sionani.
169. Mutendi, Bishop Nehemiah.
170. Mutizwa, Mr James.
171. Mutsvangwa, Mr Christopher.
172. Mutsvangwa, Ms Monica.
173. Muvhawa, Mr Weston.
174. Muzenda, Ms Tsitsi.
175. Mvududu, Ms Sarah.
176. Mwazha, Rev. Paul.
177. Naik, Mr Amratlal.
178. Ncube, Mr Edson.
179. Ncube, Mr Nicholas.
180. Miss Ncube, Ms Vivian
181. Ndlovu, Dr Callistus.

- 182.Ndlovu, Mr Sibusiso.
- 183.Nebiri, Chief Rabson Bere Matashu.
- 184.Neganje, Mr Naison.
- 185.Nekatambe, Chief Senga Romano.
- 186.Nemapare, Bishop Peter.
- 187.Nerwande, Ms Elizabeth
- 188.Ngungumbani, Chief Douglas Mkwananzi.
- 189.Ngwenya,Ms Jane.
- 190.Ngwenya, Ms Themba Dalubuhle.
- 191.Nhau, Mr Albeit
- 192.Nherera, Mr T.
- 193.Nish, Mr Crawford.
- 194.Nkomo, Mr Samuel
- 195.Nondo, Ms Clara.
- 196.Ntobi, Mrs Hiwani.
- 197.Nyakunhuwa, Chief Dzviti
- 198.Nyangazonke,Chief Hlati Ndiweni.
- 199.Nyangombe, Mr John.
- 200.Nyati, Mr Themba.
- 201.Nyazema, Prof. Norman.
- 202.O'Shea, Mrs Bernadette Luscinda.
- 203.Patridge, Mr Mark Henry Heathcote.
- 204.Peta, Mr Basildon.
- 205.Peters,Mrs Rose.
- 206.Phiri, Mr Robert Aaron.
- 207.Ryan, Dr P
- 208.Sachlkonye, Dr Llyod.
- 209.Sadza, Dr Hope.
- 210.Saungweme, Dr John.
- 211.Saungweme,Ms Nancy
- 212.Shamuyarira,Mr Ernest.
- 213.Sibindi, Ms Bekithemba.
- 214.Sigola,Ms Mabel
- 215.Sithole, Prof. Masipula.
- 216.Siwela, Mr Abel.
- 217.Smith, Mr Gerald.
- 218.Stewart, Prof. Julie.
- 219.Stumbles, Mr Robert Anthony
- 220.Swanepol, Mr Nick.
- 221.Takawira, Mr Isaac.
- 222.Takawona, Mr Matthew.
- 223.Tate, Mr Richard.
- 224.Tawengwa, Mr Solomon.
- 225.Tekere, Mr Edgar Zivanai.
- 226.Timbe, Mr Augustine.
- 227.Thanga, Ms Amy S.
- 228.Wakatama, Ms Eunice.
- 229.Whaley Mr William Rae.
- 230.Wutaunashe, Mr Andrew.
- 231.Xaba, Dr Elizabeth.
- 232.Zawaira, Dr Felicity
- 233.Zawaira, Mr Thomas T.
- 234.Zeederberg, Mrs Dawn
- 235.Zhanda, Mr Paddington
- 236.Zhou, Adv. Happias
237. Zhou, Mr Ishmael
238. Ziumbe, Mrs Florence
239. Zowa, Mr Joel Bigboy
240. Zvobgo, Prof Chengetai J.

Appendix 4 Figures 1-8

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(unless otherwise noted, all newspapers and magazines are published in Zimbabwe)

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