

# Planning for SIKOTA WINA Zambian Integration



WHEN ONE TALKS ABOUT the integration of a nation, the immediate issues that arise before the vision are many and complex, and all depends upon what particular aspect of integration one would like to look at. I have taken the liberty to survey only the most important aspects, such as the need for political stability, education, manpower, and, in our society, inevitably the problem of tribalism and regionalism. In one way or other issues which appear to be much more urgent, such as unemployment, automatically fall within the ambit outlined above.

## POLITICAL STABILITY

I have started with the problem of political stability because I know that in every country, especially after 70 years or more of foreign rule, there is bound to be an anti-climax in the minds of some section of the population on the morning following Independence. There is always the expectation that the day after an Independence flag has been hoisted on the nation's flag posts, the rest of the good things of life automatically follow.

This is correct in one sense: in the sense that the immediate result of Independence is the freeing of the human spirit towards broader paths; the generation of a new spirit of determination under whose glow the leaders of the nation can sit down and plan anew with a sense of confidence which hitherto had been latent.

The second, and much more erroneous assumption, is that on the night of Independence, stalwart Party organisers have come to the end of their organisational labours.

While this attitude is perfectly understood in that during the period of the struggle the entire population is based on an emergency footing and when all-night committee meetings were the rule and not the exception and when Party organisers would, to use the words of the famous poet, the late Robert Frost, say to themselves —

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep.  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep."

the coming of Independence to some means the end of their labours and the expectation of immediate results.

This period, the period I prefer to call the darkness before dawn, is one of the most delicate in the history of any new emerging nation, and is the period when political leadership and firmness are qualities which would be more essential than all the Seven Wonders of the World.

It is during this period that while the Party organisers are having a brief rest from the bustle and hurry of the hustings, that opposition and dissident groups, for either personal reasons or sheer stupidity, prefer to use their energy to disrupt the stability of newly won Independence. It is during this period, before the dust from the campaign vans has been cleaned, that these various groups

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try to exploit the ignorance of the masses for their own personal ends.

It is also interesting to note that, arising out of this temporary confusion, an average citizen in Zambia will be unable to identify three-quarters of the Members of this Parliament. What is more alarming is the fact that even knowledgeable citizens are sometimes unable to name the members of their country's Cabinet. Sometimes too, they lack knowledge about their head of State. Often members of the diplomatic corps and visitors find on arrival that they know more about the Cabinet and politicians of the country than the prominent citizens of that country do.

This in a country like Zambia is a state of affairs which directly stands in the way of integration and I have a remote suspicion that it is primarily due to this fact that President Kaunda has put his Ministers, members of his Government and Party Officials on an 18-hour day working schedule, thus giving the *Zambian Cabinet* the credit of being the hardest working Cabinet on the Continent of Africa.

As I stated earlier, the exploitation of this twilight state of affairs by dissident groups of the opposition always drives governments in newly independent states towards the one-party trend of thinking. In itself there is nothing wrong in this principle. At a Party caucus I attended recently a fresh view was expressed on this question. It was that since there were not enough able men in Zambia's opposition groups to be able to afford the country a good alternative Government the opposition should join the ruling Party in forming a National Government for the people of Zambia. The U.N.I.P. organisers and Members of Parliament represent, and rightly so, the State and its Independence unless they voluntarily abdicate as leaders or retire into honorific positions as fathers of their country.

It is not my intention to re-open the debate on the merits or demerits of the one-party state, for my views are well-known — or ought to be — on this subject.

The hard fact, however, still remains that the average age of the present *Zambian Cabinet* is roughly 39 and it is thus unlikely, one-party state or not, that the nature of leadership, with the exception of a few cases, will change for the next decade or so.

## EDUCATION

HAND IN HAND WITH THE PROGRAMME of keeping the fires of the struggle alight must be considered the very serious question of education in Zambia. By education I want it understood that I mean all levels of education for I know there is no greater insult today than to ask an applicant for a job: "Did you do your Form II?"

This is one of the fundamental problems facing every new nation. On Independence there inevitably arises a sharpening of educational appetite which comes with more demand for more and better educated personnel.

As far as primary and secondary education is concerned, the *Zambian Government* has already made preparations for the opening up of several thousand school places for our children. According to our present planning every child reaching the age of seven

**Zambia***continued*

by 1970 will get a minimum of four years primary education and by 1975 it will prove possible to let at least 75% of the 1975 entrants go on to complete a full seven-year primary course.

At a much higher level, that is the university level, we are aiming at giving the whole of our education locally, and where it is essential that an African should go to Europe for the final steps to enter a profession, we must arrange our system in such a manner that his absence will be reduced to the shortest possible time and the foundations of his character firmly laid before he goes.

It is perhaps at university level that the true spirit of the integration of the Zambian Nation will be mostly felt. This is simply because it is at this level that a lot of problems in connection with manpower — a subject I will come to later — are involved.

Zambia intends to open its university gates early next year and a prospectus of likely admissions at the moment indicates the following figures: —

1966	230 students	1970	2,540 students
1967	540 „	1971	3,810 „
1968	1,090 „	1972	4,810 „
1969	1,860 „	1973	5,650 „

and it is then that thought must be given to the opening of subsidiary universities in Zambia.

IN THINKING ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY of Zambia and the integration process, we have to bear in mind the clear definition of the role of a university in the process of Nation building.

If this purpose is to be achieved it means that the university must have four prerequisites, namely, that it must provide the highly-skilled manpower necessary for the running of modern Zambia; for in most cases universities in modern African states have not done this in the past and have rather tended to follow the British Oxbridge model of the 19th and early 20th century — in short the mass production of white collar graduates tailor-made for a colonial era instead of the post-colonial era.

If Britain, for example, had depended for its skilled manpower on similar university criteria, it would have been in a parlous state. As far as we in Zambia are concerned, however, there are definite signs that the proposed university is concerned more with the broadening of curricula for the provision of skilled manpower for Zambians rather than with the factory production of white-collar graduates.

Secondly, it will be the duty of the University of Zambia to encourage readings and research in African art and history with the possibility of the so-called Rhodes-Livingstone Institute turning into a centre for African studies.

Thirdly, all of us can look forward to the university as a reservoir for the provision of a body of specialists who will help with advice in the solution of national problems through research. And, perhaps more important, the university should provide facilities for the development of extramural work both in towns and in rural areas and initiate extension activities in such fields as agriculture.

Only in the foregoing manner can the projected university ever hope to play its full part in the integration of the Zambian nation.

## MANPOWER

WHILE GRANTING GREAT EXPECTATIONS for the production of manpower from the projected Zambia University, however, one has to bear in mind the fact that it will not be until 1973 that it will have reached its expected quota of 5,000 students. And yet the immediate problems of filling the gap between the colonial era and the period when local people will be in a position to fill these posts with all clear conscience raises the problem of recruitment and what has generally become known, wrongly, as the expatriate personnel to bridge the gap between the two needs.

In most African states the problem of the future of expatriate officers is famous for its usual characteristics — the golden handshake; the usual threats to walk out in a body in order to bring the established order to a grinding halt — examples which can well be cited with perfection in such cases as Kenya, the Congo and Malawi. Of all the problems facing the success or failure of integration of a nation, perhaps this, more than any other, is the classic test. Hand in hand with this problem goes the burning issue of unemployment for the Zambian citizen.

Zambia, like several other newly emerged countries on this continent, will have to depend for some time to come on expatriate skilled labour — a subject which raises several important questions among the local people, such as — when are we going to fill the jobs which are now being taken up by expatriates? Is it really

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## In the September issue A supplement of African writing

a contribution to the

1965 Commonwealth Arts Festival

is edited by LEWIS NKOSI

and includes literary prize-winning writers NADINE GORDIMER, CHINUA ACHEBE, BREYTEN BREYTENBACH, also ALEX la GUMA and JAMES NGUGI, with reviews on art, autumn books and cinema by GERALD MOORE, ARTHUR MAIMANE, BARRY RECKORD

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necessary to recruit this kind of labour force at so much cost, etc. How shall we bring down the rate of unemployment if we still continue to recruit personnel from overseas?

As far as Zambia is concerned, the last question perhaps is not such a burning issue, for the construction programme under the £35,000,000 Development Plan is expected to create 40,000 new jobs, a factor which could more than halve the unemployment problem.

Still, there are interesting problems in connection with the expatriate worker. Most of them who are working in Zambia feel that they must give some reason for being in Zambia and Africa. Even those who come here quite clearly to make money or to stretch out a meagre and unfair pension feel that they need to provide some other special reason for being here.

Occasionally, a straight-forward reason is given: for example, downright curiosity; to save souls; to defend the Empire; to civilise the African; to seek biological kinship; to escape the northern winters; to teach and research; to visit on duty or secondment; to recover from a broken romance or to find a husband!

This would not be the entire picture, however. There are some who came here genuinely and with humility, belonging to no religious body, but believing that in Zambia they can answer some vague longing within themselves to serve and in so doing gain peace of mind and private salvation; hoping at the same time, that whatever skills they possess may help us too in the process of nation building and integration.

It must, however, be obvious that the age of evangelism is over and that from those expatriate officers who come out to Zambia on recruitment this country and its people expect not charity but service, not religious zeal but a firm conviction that the country gets its money's worth during the period of the contract.

#### TRIBALISM AND REGIONALISM

FINALLY I COME to the subject of tendencies among some sections of the population, in particular the rural population, towards sectarian thinking and regionalism. The first duty of an elected government is to ensure that on the take-over of responsibility for Independence the country remains as united, if not more, as it was during the colonial era.

This concept of centralised government and the subjection of regionalist tendencies to centralised control always come as a shock to more conservative minds. Fortunately for us the Lenshina trouble, which in a way was a religious and fanatical issue, came to a head immediately after Independence and the action taken at the time has been a clear indication of how firmly the Government of the Republic of Zambia intends to go about the task of national integration.

There is, however, still some dead wood to be removed. One clear case is the issue concerning one or two provinces of this country, where after having been used to the flattery and ineffectiveness of a spent colonial regime the people still have occasional temptations to flout the authority of Central Government.

Sometimes the issues are not put as bluntly as that. Sometimes the issues involved are veiled in a spider's web of finance, the preservation of culture and tradition, the so-called desires of the people, etc., etc.

It is my firm belief that our people elect a Government for that Government to rule. If at any time President Kaunda's Government clamps down on regionalism then the only people to blame are the handful of discontented individuals who seek more regional power for themselves than the Constitution allows.

I WOULD LIKE TO CONCLUDE by stating that the problems which face us as a new nation in Zambia are immense and complex. Government is setting the lead in finding solutions but it is also important that the ordinary man, black and white, should contribute his share towards the attainment of the solution.

I am deliberately stressing black and white because both sections have, during the past seventy years or so, suffered from the system of Government. The European in Zambia has always subjected himself to the rule of Whitehall, to the dictates of the "Home Government" and to the feeling that he was a transit passenger.

The African has always felt that his country of birth had set him down in a ghetto in which it intended him to perish. He legitimately felt he was born in Zambia and faced the bleak future that he faced because he was black. The limits of his ambition were set for ever.

He was born into "a society which spelled out with brutal clarity, and in as many ways as possible, that he was a worthless human being. He was not expected to aspire to excellence: he was expected to make peace with mediocrity." Wherever he turned he was told where to go and what to do and how to do it; he was told where to live and in some cases who to marry.

In short, the life of the African, the details and symbols of his life were up until the 24th October 1964, deliberately constructed to make him believe what white people said about him.

All that is now ended and all of a sudden they realised on the night of Independence that, as one famous poet put it —

"The very time I thought I was lost  
My dungeon shook and my chains fell off"

During the coming days of winter, summer and spring, we are going to be faced with various problems all of which will not be easy to solve. But the Government and the President of the Republic of Zambia will solely rely upon the good commonsense of a new generation of Zambians to face these critical times with vigour and confidence. Our problems today are not the same as the problems of the people of twenty years ago.

Our age is not their age. As every past generation has had to disenthral itself from an inheritance of truisms and stereotypes, so in our own time we must move on from the reassuring repetition of stale phrases to a new, difficult, but essential confrontation with reality.

One thing this nation must not cheat itself about is the fact that during the painful process towards integration there will always be dissident voices heard in the land, expressing opposition without alternatives; finding fault but never favour; perceiving gloom on every side and seeking influence without responsibility.

I venture to suggest that all of us are ready to meet such types of opposition for we are all trustees for the Zambian people, custodians of the Zambian heritage.

It is the task of Government to plan for the integration of the Zambian Nation but to implement the plan is the task of us all. ●