

lead blood levels - some as high as 400 ug/dL. However, because of lack of records and follow-ups, one can only speculate as to their current status. The total number of children that lead has poisoned in Kabwe is difficult to know because both Anglo and ZCCM that operated the mine tried to conceal the extent of the problem, as revealed by the February 2015 edition of this journal.

The threshold for how much lead a body can safely tolerate has shifted dramatically over the years as researchers have come to more fully understand its dangers. It was said in the past that levels of up to 70 micrograms per deciliter (ug/dL) or above were considered a medical emergency requiring hospitalisation. But now it is believed that anything higher than 5 ug/dL can cripple a child's mental development. Studies show that lead can diminish cognitive function, increase aggression and ultimately exacerbate the cycle of poverty that is already exceedingly difficult to break.

Is it not then time for a different approach to be taken at Kabwe to protect the lives of tens of thousands of children there and make

homes safe? The correct decision, difficult as it might sound, is to relocate people living in the old mining area. What makes the clean-up task so difficult is that the lead is in the soil, it is in the plants and even in animals that people eat.

World Bank staff themselves acknowledge that "a major challenge in Kabwe since project (CEP) completion has been the sustainability of the investments." For example, they say locks of designated fenced-off areas of tailing dams with high pollution have been broken with children now playing there, and bricks are produced from the contaminated material.

It seems likely that after five years we will recognise that much of the World Bank's money has been used - part of it on the clean-up exercise but a significant amount of it on allowances and travel. At that time ZCCM-IH will almost certainly not be anywhere near to provide answers to what the project has achieved. As in the past, they will probably try to cover their activities with a blanket of silence while the people of Kabwe continue to be poisoned with lead and wallow in poverty - too weak to take their government to task. ■

The PF's Simbyakula and the "Strategy for Domination"

By Charles Mafa and David Julian Wightman

Justice Minister Ngosa Simbyakula has broken his silence over allegations that he co-authored an inflammatory document allegedly detailing the PF's intended use of violence and suppression to win the 2016 General Election. After receiving four formal letters and repeated visits and calls to his office, Mr Simbyakula finally agreed to an interview with the *Bulletin & Record* in which he denied any involvement with the document.

"This particular thing has come to me with a great sense of shock because I'm now wondering why someone would put me in this situation to cause me harm," he said, expressing "shock" and insisting that "[violence] is not something that should be entertained in this country".

Dated 23 January 2015 and entitled *Strategy Of Domination PF Against Opposition UPND 2015 - 2016 And Beyond*, the document's alleged authors relate that the ruling party intends to use "violence" and "divide and rule as a self-governing political weapon in the country". The document was first revealed by *Zambian Watchdog* on 20 February 2015 but was largely ignored.

Investigations by the *B&R* to substantiate the document's authenticity have been on-going for several months. It was allegedly co-authored by Mr Simbyakula and two high-ranking Zimbabwean officials, General Tendai Muduli, and former Parliamentary Speaker and Zanu-PF Secretary, Didymus Mutasa.

Under the sub-heading "State Sponsored Violence and Intimidation", the document states that it is "meant to add value to President Lungu's habitual use of divide and rule as a self-governing political weapon in Zambia. We further advise President Lungu and his team to develop a two-tiered theoretical framework within which the case UPND (sic) will be analysed".

Furthermore the document says "the team will analyse how President Michael Sata utilised ethnic divide and rule to neutralise po-

litical opposition: the campaign against UPND using Poniso [Njeulu] and [Richwell] Siamunene", both of whom are UPND MPs.

Other strategies laid out in the document are legal harassment of private media such as *The Post* and Muvi TV, as well as destabilisation of trade unions and NGOs. It further says "there will have to be a crackdown on the human rights for those supporting the opposition although brutal intimidation will often be replaced by more subtle forms (sic)".

It also advises the use of "surrogate speakers" whose "persuasive attack and persuasive defence will be oftenly (sic) used in smear tactics and political hatches (sic)." One of these supposed surrogates is listed as Father Frank Bwalya, the former Catholic priest who dissolved his Alliance for Better Zambia (ABZ) party in March 2015 in order to join the ruling PF.

The document goes further, advising that "Opposition supporters will have to be beaten, tortured or even killed, particularly in rural areas by the PF youth militia wing unleashed to terrorise the electorate into supporting the ruling party. These actions will be taken with the complicity of the police and with total impunity".

Despite continued questions of the document's origins, there is no doubt that several of the strategies and tactics outlined have come to pass. Coincidence perhaps? Mr Siamunene is now Defence Minister, political violence is on the rise, and the ruling party has repeatedly accused the UPND of being a tribal grouping.

As recommended in the document, the PF have used the police to prevent UPND rallies taking place using the *Public Order Act* (POA) as justification. In addition, the document advises that the UPND must be prevented from accessing state-controlled media. The document concludes with the point that there is a risk that unstructured "mass actions" could explode: "If the mass action strategies are employed our response will likely be

Open letter to Charles Mafa

Dear Mr Mafa,

How brave and responsible of you to "finally" listen to your inner voice and start a column about the environment. Did anybody tell you: IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE? Few of your readers are likely to be unaware of climate change and its implications. Telling them what they already know will be very boring indeed. In spite of the unwarranted excitement over the agreement at the recent Paris conference, I suspect that, yet again, little or no action will be taken by government at all. Governments, like people, think short-term and make short-term decisions.

It is acknowledged that average world temperatures have risen by 1 degree. Commitments to limit carbon emissions by 2050 or the end of the Century...? IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE. This year our government will bring online power from a coal-fired power station. Do I hear an outcry - an outburst of public protest against those extra carbon emissions? Where is the investment in solar and hydro-power? Where was your inner voice when the PF government cancelled the contract for a second hydro-power facility at Kafue Gorge in 2011?

Unless you are sure you can inspire action by both individuals and the government to limit effects of climate change and to help us adjust to the inevitable hardships already affecting our lives in Zambia, please do not write a column on this topic.

The *Bulletin and Record* is a great magazine. Keep it that way.

Ann Phiri.



Dr. Simbyakula (in brown safari suit) talking to President Lungu, with Cabinet Secretary, Roland Msiska, on Simbyakula's left

violence to stop UPND making inroads. On the other side UPND youths and Students (sic), who are expecting and preparing for the worst. These are highly frustrated actors who may be more radicalized than their leadership. These are more potential spark plugs for mass actions that are less structured... waves of smaller actions that could eventually explode."

In his position as Justice Minister, Ngosa Simbyakula remains one of the most powerful cabinet ministers. He has a background in academia, having been Dean of the School of Law at the University of Zambia.

When PF formed government he was nominated to Member of Parliament by the late Michael Sata be-

fore being appointed Home Affairs Minister. Following the election of Edgar Lungu, Mr Simbyakula was the first minister appointed by the new president and is seen as one of the most powerful and trusted figures in the current government.

When interviewed by the *B&R* at his office recently, Mr Simbyakula not only denied co-authoring the document but also refuted any knowledge of or acquaintance with General Tendai Muduli or Didymus Mutasa, the other named co-authors.

"Political violence," he said, "is abhorrent and obviously our government as you have seen is doing the best to ensure our cadres are reigned in and the climate should be conducive for everyone to carry

out their political activities peacefully". He, added that the allegations of co-authorship were putting him in "grave danger".

Mr Simbyakula observed that violence can be prevented if politicians stopped transporting cadres for campaigns elsewhere. "That is what usually sparks these things," he explained. "The local people who live there know each other and can't fight... Let us not take cadres from outside to go and campaign elsewhere."

According to the Minister, "Politics is not dirty, it is people who make it dirty... I think in Zambia we have tried our best to make politics clean." He however acknowledged that "the leadership needs to do more to reign in over their sup-

porters," adding that "If people at the grassroots can take a leaf from the way we interact, I think things can be much better." He pointed out though that "things are not that bad compared to other countries".

Mr Simbyakula believes that politics in Zambia are migratory: "People migrate from one political party to another. I am sure you have seen what has taken place," he says. "Depending on which way the elections go, you will see more movements." He says there is no point in engaging in violence because "we're all one".

Despite assurances from the Justice Minister, it seems this country has a long way to go before the slogan "One Zambia, One Nation" is meaningful and true. ■

A sampling of events Are these coincidental, or not?

07 January 2015:

Mr Hichilema who was on a campaign trail was unable to fly out of Mongu on this day due to a visit to the area by Acting President, Dr Guy Scott. In the process cadres from UPND and PF clashed. A UPND provincial trustee was hit with a plank by a PF cadre in the presence of police.

02 January 2015:

The helicopter carrying former first lady,

Dr. Maureen Mwanawasa and former Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Mrs. Mutale Nalumango was stoned by PF cadres when they attempted to address a campaign rally in Shiwang'andu Constituency in Chinsali. The UPND claimed the incident happened in full view of the senior PF and government leaders.

23 February 2015:

Suspected Patriotic Front cadres beat up and stabbed to death a UPND sympathiser in Lu-

saka's Mtendere East. Mr Grayzer Matapa was stabbed in the chest. The late Matapa had earlier filed a complaint at Woodlands Police station of malicious damage to his property by PF cadres. Matapa's killers were recently found guilty by the High Court and sentenced to death by hanging.

18 June 2015:

The Post quotes PF General Secretary, Mr Davies Chama issuing tribal remarks against the UPND. He is quoted to have said that Tongas ▶

should use their polygamous nature to bear more children in order to stand a chance of producing a republican president in 100 years' time because the UPND, under Hakainde Hichilema, would never rule Zambia.

30 June 2015:

PF and UPND cadres clashed during campaigns for the Mulebezi parliamentary bye-election. PF Secretary General, Mr Chama is alleged to have shot and wounded one of the UPND cadres.

15 July 2015:

Armed PF thugs in the evening surrounded the Catholic-owned Radio Icengelo in Kitwe and prevented the UPND leader from speaking on a scheduled live programme. Earlier in the day, PF cadres armed with guns, machetes and axes disrupted a UPND meeting that was being addressed by Mr Hakainde Hichilema at the party's Copperbelt office in Kitwe. The cadres declared Copperbelt as a no-go area for Mr Hichilema.

16 July 2015:

Police arrest Post Newspapers Editor-in-Chief, Mr Fred M'membe and reporter Mukosha Funga, charging them with the offence of publishing classified information under the State Security Act. This relates to an article published in the newspaper on 17 April 2015 in which it was reported that the Anti Corruption Commission Director General, Ms Rosewin Wandu had written to President Edgar Lungu informing him that the ACC was investigating his special assistant for political affairs, Mr Kaizer Zulu, for allegedly soliciting US\$1million from a Chinese contractor to fix an appointment for him with the President.

19 July 2015:

Tongas meet to discuss the alleged tribal remarks made by PF secretary General, Mr Chama. The meeting asked the President to dismiss his Information Minister, Chishimba Kambwili, the PF

Secretary General and his deputy, Mrs Mumbi Phiri.

22 July 2015:

President Edgar Lungu meets 26 Southern Province chiefs to discuss Mr Davies Chama's tribal remarks. The chiefs are reported to have demanded the firing of Mr Chama. But he is still party secretary general.

23 July 2015:

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) arrests Chongwe Member of Parliament, Ms Sylvia Masebo and charged her with two counts of abuse of authority of office when she served as minister of Tourism and Arts. The ACC accuse Ms Masebo of cancelling the hunting concession tender of the Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) and abusing her authority of office by terminating contracts of employment of some senior ZAWA officers. Ms Masebo who is currently appearing in court has fallen out of favour with the ruling PF and campaigned for the UPND leader, Mr Hichilema during the January presidential election.

07 August 2015: Mr Geoffrey Bwalya Mwamba, the UPND vice president for administration is arrested in Kasama. He is charged with assault and injuring two PF female cadres during the Bululu Ward by-election campaign. Mr Mwamba lost his Kasama seat for accepting a position the opposition UPND when he was still PF MP.

11 August 2015:

President Edgar Lungu appoints Richwell Siamunene, a UPND MP as Defence Minister. The UPND parliamentarian, who is named in the document, was previously serving as Deputy Minister of Transport, Works, Supply and Communication. In March this year, the UPND expelled Mr Siamunene from the party, a decision he has challenged through the courts.

18 September 2015:

Posting by Frank Bwalya on his Facebook page. "Before I go to sleep let me say the following: The UPND mouthpiece, the Zambia Watchdog has been reporting about alleged booing of our Republican President Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu. What they are forgetting is that PF and many patriotic Zambians have capacity to boo HH at any fora. Even in Solwezi PF has members and supporters who can equally boo HH."

1 October 2015:

Posting by Frank Bwalya on his Facebook page. "The statement by HH on QFM this morning alleging that PF was responsible for the shooting at the Post Newspapers offices on Bwinjimfumu is reckless and highly irresponsible. But if he has evidence let him cooperate with the police so that they can quickly bring culprits to book. A leader seeking the highest public office in the land should tame his tongue and avoid misleading the public. Zambians should condemn this propaganda."

10 January 2016:

Information minister, Chishimba Kambwili claimed that the people in the (southern) region were so tribal that even if Jesus Christ came on earth and stood on a different political party, the people in the region would reject the Son of God and vote for their tribesman.

24 January 2016:

PF cadres besiege Ndola Airport and prevent the plane carrying Miles Sampa from landing on the main runway. They also beat up airport staff and those who went to welcome Mr Sampa.

28 January 2016:

The police arrest 21 people for riots sparked by clashes between the officers and UPND cadres who swarmed the street to welcome their leader, Hakainde Hichilema. ■

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