

The ‘One Zambia One Nation Motto:’ Implication on Multiculturalism

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Abstract: Zambia is one of the countries in Africa which is largely and predominantly heterogeneous in terms of tribes or ethnic groups. The nation boasts of 73 different ethnic groups each with a different cultural and traditional orientation. This multicultural aspect of the nation was one of the challenges faced by the independent government led by President Kenneth Kaunda and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) in 1964 shortly after gaining control from the colonial masters. It was clear at that time that despite Zambia being one country, it was ethnically divided and that, according to President Kenneth Kaunda, posed a great danger to the unity of the nation. Important to note is the fact that in the decade immediately before and after independence, ethnic tensions remained a distinct threat to Zambian unity. The ethnic divisions, which had fermented in the pre-independence period began to spill-over into the new nation. After independence, ethnicity remained the strongest and most logical form of identification for many Zambians. It was in response to this challenge, to which Kaunda was highly attuned as a result of his own family’s history, that Kaunda developed and effected a political ideology and agenda of nationalist unity. In this article, we argue that the ‘One Zambia One Nation Motto’ was not only meant to unite the 73 ethnic groups in Zambia but also to unite Africa for a common good as expressed by heads of states and representatives at Dr. Kenneth David Buchizya Kaunda’s state funeral on 02nd July, 2021 at Heroes Stadium in Lusaka, Zambia. Furthermore, we discuss in this article the implication of ‘One Zambia One Nation Motto’ on multicultural aspect.

Key Words: Motto; One Zambia One Nation; Ethnic Groups; Multiculturalism

I. INTRODUCTION



This article was written as a way of remembering Dr. Kenneth Kaunda’s legacy after his demise on 17th June, 2021. He was born on 28th April, 1924 in Lubwa, Northern Province of Zambia to Malawian parents. He leaves behind a legacy that is unmatched in the political history of Zambia. In this article, he is remembered as a pioneer of the ‘One Zambia One Nation motto,’ an ideology he cherished till his demise.

After independence, Zambia needed to be a united nation despite the fact that it was ethnically diverse. This prompted the government to think of coming up with strategies to ensure a united Zambia. One of such strategies was to come up with a national motto of ‘One Zambia One Nation.’ This national motto was meant to ensure that although Zambia was made up of various ethnic groupings, it was one nation (Prokopenko, 2018). According to Musambachime (2016), this slogan was credited for uniting the country and building a strong foundation of a modern, stable and united nation. Maggie Kaweche reported in the Zambia Daily Mail of 29th August, 2016 that according to Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, the first President of the Republic of Zambia, “the One Zambia, One Nation Motto simply means whether you are white, yellow, pink, black, red or green, as long as you are in Zambia, you are a Zambian.” This means that the national motto was meant to unite Zambians.

a. *The Motto ‘One Zambia One Nation’ – Ethno-Political Consolidation*

Of particular importance to this motto is the Western Part of Zambia which initially had plans to break away from Zambia, as Barotseland. This part of Zambia had the desire and potential to be an independent state away from Zambia. It was ready to stand on its own as a Monarch. However, President Kaunda and his team, working together with some people from Barotseland saw it fit to enter into an agreement to make Zambia and Barotseland become a unitary state. As a result, a Barotse Agreement was signed thereby making Zambia and Barotseland getting independent as one Nation. To this effect, the ‘One Zambia One Nation Motto’ is seen as a contributing factor to strengthening that agreement. According to Prokopenko (2018), one of the main problems in implementing the idea ‘One Zambia, One Nation’ has been the long-standing problem of the autonomy of Barotseland (Western Province) inhabited by Lozi (Barotse). The kingdom

of the Lozi people, Barotseland, created in the eighteenth century, a British protectorate since 1891, became part of the independent Republic of Zambia in 1964 under the terms of the treaty on its special status. In socio-economic terms the Western province was one of the most underdeveloped in the country during the colonial period. However, western province (Barotseland) has still remained underdeveloped.

Another important aspect to note of one Zambia one nation motto was the change of the constitution provision from Zambia being a Multiparty to a One Party Participatory Democracy in the year 1973. The argument of the UNIP Government was that multiparty or plural politics had the potential to cause ethnic conflict because political parties based their foundations of ethnicity, for instance, the African National Congress of Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula was predominant among the Tonga of Southern Province where Nkumbula originated from, the United Party of Nalumino Mundia was dominant in Balotseland and the United Progressive Party of Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe was seen to be for the Bembas from the Northern part of Zambia. It was said that, like other African leaders, Kaunda faced many complex post-independence problems, especially on the issue of tribalism. He succeeded in continuing to negotiate on this issue, saving Zambia the trauma of tribal civil war. Nevertheless, interparty political violence occurred during the elections of 1968, in which Kaunda and his party were returned to power. In response, Kaunda in 1972 imposed one-party rule on Zambia, and in 1973 he introduced a new constitution that ensured his party's uncontested rule. However, this move by KK was viewed as dictatorship and as a way of silencing political opponents. Through a one party state, divergent views were no longer tolerated. This undermined the freedom of expression and assembly, and the right to belong to a political party of their choice.

On Zambia's coat of arms are etched the country's official motto: "One Zambia, One Nation." In a country where it is widely believed – though the real number is unknown – that 73 ethno-linguistic groups live side by side, Zambia's motto was adopted, in 1964, to instill the importance of national unity. "A point of elevated pride to many Zambians, this is a unity that has seen Zambia remain peaceful in the half-century of its existence as a nation. In this sense, the leadership of Kenneth Kaunda cannot be over-estimated (Musambachime, 2016). Zambia is often called a successful example of achieving ethno-political consolidation in a multi-ethnic African state, which can be regarded as a certain success in the formation of a national state. For instance, in Chipata, civil servants that went to work there especially the Tonga from southern province were given land by the locals especially in the rural parts of Chipata. These people felt at home and did farming there. Dr. Kaunda was a visionary leader, he encouraged the Zambian citizenry, and everybody was free to live anywhere.

During his presidency, Kaunda went about achieving his ideology of ethnic balance through an active policy of giving

political, cabinet, and government appointments to Zambians from the major ethnic groups. With so many ethnic groups vying for representation and only so many government positions to be filled, Kaunda's system could not be said to be perfect by any means and it did not always achieve the stated goals. Although Zambia has remained largely peaceful since its independence, the country has also had its share of ethnic-based tensions (Gewald, Hinfelaar and Macola, 2008) which have today resurfaced among political players. It is also unclear how KK managed to balance the 73 tribes in his appointments.

It is reported that there was a telling day in Lusaka on the February of 1968. This was four years after independence, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) was holding its major party leaders convention. At that convention, delegates sat in groups according to ethnic and regional affiliation as they traded accusations and ethnically charged insults. The 5th of February was the last day of the convention and tensions were high. Kaunda sat in silence on the dais all day observing the confusion. When he rose to speak, it was to announce that given what he had just witnessed he believed himself to have failed in uniting his country and was effectively resigning from the presidency. By resigning, he said, the party could maybe find someone suitable to hold the country together. He left the convention hall and went home to prepare for transition. According to former Member of Parliament, Sikota Wina who documented the events in 'A Night without a President', senior church leaders and cabinet officials spent the night and morning convincing Kaunda to take back his decision (Muwina, 2016). By morning, Kaunda was still president.

It is not known whether Kaunda was serious about resigning but it seems clear that the events at Lusaka, coupled with the policies of ethnic balance he would go on to implement, pulled Zambia back from a brink that would have thwarted the development of the nascent Zambian nation. There is no doubt that the legacy of Kenneth Kaunda is a mixed one; it was after much opposition and criticism that Kaunda signed a new constitution in 1990 ushering in multi-party politics (Muwina, 2016). However, the unity that most Zambians alive today are proud of is squarely attributable to the life and work of Kenneth Kaunda. On the basis of common attitudes and values, the motto created the basis of the formulation of common destiny and co-operation in pursuing it.

Prokopenko (2018) explains that on October 23, 2014, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Zambia's independence, the national bank issued a commemorative 50 kwacha banknote (for the first time as legal means of payment) which portrays all the presidents of Zambia: Kenneth Kaunda, Frederick Chiluba, Levy Mwanawasa, Rupiah Banda and Michael Sata. The presentation in honor of this event was attended by Dr. K. Kaunda, Mr. R. Banda and the widows of ex-presidents F. Chiluba and L. Mwanawasa. At the same time, an original collage of portraits of five presidents of the country framed with a ribbon of yellow color with the

inscription 'One Zambia, One nation' and the dates '1964–2014' was placed on the website of the ruling Patriotic Front (PF) party. This symbolizes the unity of Zambia which in the eyes of the world community has acquired an image of a country that has become one of the examples of ethno-political consolidation and political stability on the African continent. And this image is preserved regardless of the political party in power. A peace-loving nation, as Zambians often call themselves, managed to understand, to accept, to forgive and to appreciate all its presidents without rewriting its history. However, in the recent past, Zambia has seen a rise of intolerance among political players, thereby, undermining the national motto of one Zambia one nation.

b. The Motto 'One Zambia One Nation' – A Symbol of African Unity

Though the national motto is seen as a reaction to tribalism (Marten and Kula, 2007), it was formed essentially on economic and political emancipation, especially on foreign policy lines. This was reflected in his political life and ideology of love your neighbor as yourself. For instance, in a speech by H. E Patricia Scotland (Commonwealth Secretary General) at his funeral, quoted KK saying;

'The Commonwealth has become of age, today more than ever before man is in desperate need of peace. Peace is a priceless commodity, we must build peace where it has been destroyed.'

According to the President of South Africa – Cyril Ramaphosa, in a farewell speech to KK (as was affectionately referred to) on 2nd July, 2021, President Kaunda dedicated his after life to the liberation and service to the people of Zambia and Africa. He devoted himself and to the people of Zambia to supporting liberation movements around our region and beyond. It was clear that his ideology of Humanism which placed man at the centre of everything was to see Africa being liberated from the colonial masters and it was in this vein that he provided refuge, care and support to liberation fighters who were forced out of their countries. According to Kanu (2014), KK emphasized economic and social development at home, but he insisted on aiding African fighting the white-dominated government in Rhodesia, even at the cost of military and economic reprisal against Zambia. He (KK) demonstrated this in a song he liked most and sung '*tiyende pamozi ndi mutima umozi*' (We move together with one heart). Here we see his ideology and vision being extended to Africa as a whole. The eulogized former head of state represented Africa with passion at international forums, however, Africa has today remained underdeveloped.

c. One Zambia One nation and Post-independence Industrialization

The One Zambia One nation motto was not just a statement of belief or a political gimmick for Dr. Kaunda, but it permeated every aspect of his leadership. As the head government and head of the ruling party, Dr. Kaunda 'occupied a central and

powerful position in all policy and decision making (Simson, 1985).' He used these two powers prudently to unite the multicultural society he presided over.

Simson (1985) further observes that Dr. Kaunda sought to maintain regional balance in allocating posts to UNIP leaders to ensure that no part of the country or ethnic group felt neglected. Frequent reshuffles and reorganization in the party and government are said to be a reflection of his healthy respect for the electorate to show that remedial action was being taken to address prevailing economic challenges of that time. It should be noted that the allocation of posts to UNIP leaders to run parastatal companies from 1973, led to inefficiencies because some of the leaders did not have the capacity to run them apart from the loyalty to UNIP. This eventually led to the collapse of these parastatals which resurfaced through the many economic hardships.

One other area, Dr. Kaunda's One Zambia One Nation motto is clearly evident in a practical way in his distribution of industries that were set up in the first few decades after independence. Having inherited a nation whose rural areas were largely undeveloped, Dr. Kaunda set out to develop these rural areas and to slow down the urban drift that had already started. True to his motto and desire to move the multicultural Zambia forward together as his well-known and well-loved song: '*tiyende pamozi ndi mutima umo zi*', he set up processing and manufacturing industries in nearly every province. In this, he considered an area with a raw material of comparative advantage in each province to establish a project or/and factory. In North Western province he set up a Pineapple factory in Mwinilunga where soils favour the growing of pineapple and local people produce them in abundance. In Luapula province where conditions are conducive for the growing of tea, he set up Kawambwa tea factory that bought most of the local farmers' produce. The presence of cobalt in Mansa saw the establishment of Mansa battery making factory. Mulungushi textiles in Kabwe and Kafue textiles in Kafue thrived on the cotton growing areas around them within Central province. Kapiri glass factory utilized the readily available sands. The Ginnery in Gwembe catered for the cotton growing area in its vicinity, while the blanket making factory and motor vehicle assembly factory in Livingstone served the vast Southern province. Western province saw the cashew nut project and rice growing project serving the local people around Mongu. These are some of the projects and factories Dr. Kaunda's government scattered around the country to stimulate balanced development of rural areas across cultural divides in the country. These industries did not only provide employment for local people and market for local produce but they also helped stimulate infrastructural development. However, there is need today to replicate KK's vision through the stabilization and strong growth of all sectors through industrialization.

d. One Zambia One Nation Motto – Religious Perspective

Every country or state has some form of relationship with religion. Taking a closer look at Zambia's history, records will show that the church-state relationship is quite long and interesting. This relationship cannot be complete without the mention of Dr. Kenneth Kaunda who was instrumental in Church-State affairs. Kenneth Kaunda's legacy embraces various aspects of multicultural significance in Zambia, and religion is one of them.

The African Indigenous Churches (AICs) in Zambia, as elsewhere in Africa, from their very beginning formed a protest movement against the cultural imperialism undertaken by the missionary representatives of the historic mission churches and also played an important role in the anti-colonial political struggles (Mildnerova, 2014). In most cases, churches remained "zones of freedom" and in some cases, churches are more or less a "state within a state." They tend to take up the political functions of the repressed organisations. This leads to direct confrontations with the state (Phiri, 1999). During Kaunda's rule, many indigenous churches in Zambia perceived the state as an opposing front. One such good case point is the Lumpa Church of Lenshina.

Alice Lenshina was born in the 1920s in Chinsali District of the then Northern Rhodesia. When she began her church, the politicians saw the Lenshina, or 'Lumpa' movement, as a threat to their authority, and so accusations were quickly made against them, often without foundation, and from this it was only a short step for clashes to occur, frequently resulting in fatal casualties.

The Lenshina supporters were beginning to feel threatened and so started building their own villages, in many cases either putting up a stockade around them or making access to them very difficult. These settlements were being built without the Chiefs' permission, and because they felt that no support against UNIP was being given by the government, the Lenshina followers were refusing to pay their taxes. There were frequent occasions when they too would attack UNIP supporters (Hanna, 2021). This did not sit well with the aspirations of Kenneth Kaunda to unite everyone under the 'One Zambia, One Nation' motto. Often times these indigenous churches were suppressed as in the case of the Lumpa Church where hundreds were killed defending their cause.

The political liberation of Zambia also saw churches come into union through the motto "One Zambia, One Nation" coined by the first republican president, Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda. The United Church of Zambia is a church that has membership across the country. On the 16th of January 1965, the United Church of Zambia was formed. Four mainline separate missions came into union representing different Christian traditions namely; the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society (PEMS), The London Missionary Society (LMS), the synod of the Primitive and the Wesleyan Methodists, and the fourth mission to come into the union was

the Church of Scotland (the Presbyterians), (UCZ Synod, 2013).

As opposed to the indigenous churches, Kaunda was close to the mainline churches in Zambia. Kaunda's closeness to the church spans from his early childhood having had a father who was a reverend. In many respects, Kaunda encouraged freedom of worship during his reign. He associated with all mainline denominations in the country. This is supported by Samaumo (2021) who states that Kaunda generally enjoyed harmonious relations with various denominations in the country. His government introduced the philosophy of Humanism which promoted the centrality of the human person in all activities. Kaunda's philosophy of Humanism for Zambia, tinged with socialism, was initially well received by the citizens, but as the country's economy nosedived, humanism was abandoned when Kaunda lost power in 1991." Clearly, in every aspect of the religious sphere, Kaunda's involvement was significant in the realisation of the One Zambia, One Nation motto.

e. Implication of One Zambia One Nation Motto on Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is a complex and debatable theory. On this front, it is worthwhile to note that multiculturalism varies depending on the form of multicultural diversity and the type of claims that are present in a state (Levrav and Loobuyck, 2018). This is clearly reflected in the motto 'One Zambia One Nation.' As such, it is only reasonable to highlight and make recourse to those aspects of this theory that are pertinent to the Zambian situation.

Generally however, the notion of multiculturalism refers to integration of diverse cultures into society as opposed to assimilation of minority ones into dominant cultures. As such, it revolves around the questions as to "how to understand and respond to the challenges associated with cultural diversity based on ethnic, national, and religious differences" (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020). It calls for inclusion, tolerance and eradication of any form of marginalization of groups of people. According to Levrav and Loobuyck (2018), multiculturalism defends the idea that the societal institutions need to provide the same degree of respect, recognition and accommodation to the identities and practices of ethnocultural minority groups as they traditionally have to the identities and practices of the majority group. As such, it holds massive potential serving as a panacea for economic and political setbacks that people suffer due to their marginalized group identities.

The fundamental justification of openness to multiculturalism finds leverage in the conception of the human person whose existence is essentially a communal one. John XIII asserted to this effect:

Because of the closer bonds of human interdependence and their spread over the whole world, we are today witnessing a widening of the role of the common good, which is the sum

total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily. The whole human race is consequently involved with regard to the rights and obligations which result. Every group must take into account the needs and legitimate aspirations of every other group, and still more of the human family as a whole (John XIII, 1961, 417).

On this basis, it thus follows that attainment of human fulfillment as individuals or groups of tribes requires solidarity either with other individuals or with tribal grouping as in the case of Zambia. Multiculturalism calls for building a community consisting of various cultures.

The paradigm of multiculturalism has recently been associated with interculturalism, which is incidentally its outgrowth. Arguably, interculturalism is representative of a particular strand of multicultural theory whose unique emphasis is on these elements of multiculturalism:

1. A common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
2. Appreciation and positively valued diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances
3. Availability of similar life opportunities for people from different backgrounds; and
4. Presence of strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighborhoods (Cantle 2001).

When these factors are in play, cohesiveness in society is very likely to be guaranteed as certain prejudices, stereotypes and misconceptions could be assuaged. In this sense, the motto has encouraged intermarriages among people of different ethnic groups and cultural orientations. This has helped to promote peace and unity. During sad and happy moments, oneness has been seen when people from different cultures gather to mourn or show sympathy and during happy moments, people celebrate together as people belonging to the same nation and sharing a cultural heritage. For Instance, when Zambia won the African Cup Football tournament in 2012, all the Zambians went to the street to celebrate this achievement.

The motto is also seen in work places, institutions, markets and industries where people from different ethnic groups work together in order to bring about development. Despite having coming from different ethnic groupings, everyone is free to contribute to the economy of the country in one way or another.

The diversity of political parties is an indication that people of Zambia understand that this country is for everyone this is despite some politicians trying to divide the country on political lines resulting to pockets of political violence. However, the bigger picture is that every Zambian is free to form and belong to a political party of their choice. In the same vein, the clergy counsel the politicians on different matters of national unity.

II. CONCLUSION

Dr. Kaunda through his legacy preaches about love your neighbor as you live yourself. This coincided with cultural practices, it helped seek forgiveness, reconciliation and harmony among Zambians. Through this motto, he made Zambia a united Zambia, a United Nation. Therefore, the legacy of the 'One Zambia One Nation' motto coined by Dr. Kaunda is that Zambia people had a feeling of belonging anywhere, felt at home anywhere in Zambia, which is a very important aspect of multiculturalism and a basic principle of nation building. It was a way of eliminating ethnic, political and economic isolation.

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