# Good Governance in Africa

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## Introduction

Zimbabwe is in trouble having repeated the pattern of other post-independence African states. But consider this: The great castles of Britain were built only after the end of Roman colonization, when English war lords battled for supremacy, and kings murdered brothers, wives and others over the centuries to achieve the same end. Only painfully and slowly did the British people bridge the gap between tyrannical leaders and democratic ones to enjoy the democratic freedoms they and millions of immigrants from former colonies enjoy today. In Africa we are trying to bridge this gap in a few decades, and at a time when flaws in Western democracies are leading increasingly to environmental degradation that few would associate with their political systems. And yet they are closely linked.

**Until all people feel free, secure and well governed none are. Poor land leads inevitably to poor people, poverty, violence, political instability and genocide.** These two beliefs have dominated my adult life as a fourth-generation African scientist born in Zimbabwe. Such beliefs led me into political life briefly and then into exile. While the connection between the health of the land and political, social and economic stability was for years denied by most nations, it is now increasingly acknowledged. For Africa it is important to acknowledge that the health, stability and productivity of our land is as fundamental to stable government as is social justice.

As a former political ally of Mugabe, Nkomo, Tongogara, Zvobo, Edson Sithole, Dabengwa, Chinamano and many other leading Zimbabweans of all colours and tribes in our struggle for democracy and independence, I know our dreams have gone astray. I also know that when we worked together in Switzerland toward the final stages of our long war we were simply Zimbabweans regardless of colour or tribe with a common aim of gaining our independence as a proud and democratic nation. We have run our ship onto the rocks for many reasons, some of the major ones beyond our control as I explain in this paper. Now once more we have a common aim in working together to get our ship of state off the rocks, upright and proudly afloat. We are not a nation of beggars and we can provide leadership for Africa and beyond.

Although rich in resources, many African nations are so financially run down and dependent on foreign aid that they are hardly independent. While the political leaders and parties that led their nations to independence have generally been blamed I believe that blame is misplaced. When a similar fate has befallen most fledgling African democracies, and when changing the party in power has, at best, resulted in marginal improvement in people's lives with continued dependence on foreign aid, it suggests there might be a deeper cause for democracy's dismal performance in Africa. The fact that so many

countries have experienced the same problems, and that even the economic powerhouse of South Africa is heading down Zimbabwe's path, suggests there might be something wrong with the democratic system inherited by African nations. Blaming individuals or parties in power, rather than looking at the deeper causes is neither constructive nor likely to lead to good governance.

The views I express have been gestating over fifty years and especially in the last thirty years following my service in Parliament.  I am apolitical and entered Parliament in desperation to fight racism, environmentally-destructive policies, and to try to end an insane war. To the opposition party that I subsequently led, I consistently stressed that I was only a wartime leader and would withdraw from politics as soon as we could end the war and gain our independence. The reason for my refusal, despite requests, to continue in politics was simply that I knew that ensuring good governance was beyond my capacity or understanding.  It has taken the last thirty years for me to understand what prevents good governance in any nation and thus what could be done to achieve it.

In this paper, I outline new scientific insights that explain why it has proven so difficult for any government of any form to provide good governance. And I explain the shortcomings of Zimbabwe's inherited political belief system as well as the parliamentary and civil service structures that flow from it. These shortcomings made the troubles experienced in Africa's fledgling democracies inevitable – no matter who was leading them.  Zimbabwe cannot extricate itself from its troubles, no matter how well intentioned its present or future political leaders might be, unless Zimbabweans think afresh.

I sincerely believe that the suggestions I offer have the potential, in Zimbabwe's case, to quickly produce governance superior to that of older democracies, and from which they might learn. These suggestions could lead to a Zimbabwean internal solution in which there are mostly winners and few losers and that can be embraced by most of my countrymen and women. While focusing on my own country I am aware that other nations, such as South Africa and Namibia, which are moving down the same path as Zimbabwe, could also produce similar results.

The ideas I express are not intended to offend any individuals in any political party but are offered in the hope of encouraging open and fresh discussion to help lead us to a better future and to do so quickly.

While concerned with Africa, and in particular Zimbabwe, I draw parallels with the U.S. and other nations for the lessons we can learn. What is it that prevents even the best of well meaning politicians from providing consistently good governance in any nation and not just my own?

The level of environmental destruction evidenced in world wide desertification and now global climate change, combined with rising populations and aspirations will demand a greater need for good governance than any time in history.  I hope the ideas put forward here will encourage discussion and fresh thinking in countries other than Zimbabwe and among people other than politicians.  Just as the finest candle makers could never have

thought of, or developed, electric lighting, so too politicians are unlikely to see the solutions that ordinary people see with clarity.

# Section I.  Key Scientific Insights

Had I, as founder and leader of a political party, not been forced to develop policies in articulating a party platform, I never would have understood that the single greatest role of government is the formulation of policies.

While these policies impact all areas of our lives – citizenship, taxation, education, etc. – it is environmental policies that impact us most profoundly in the long term. Environmental policies directly affect the quality of life people experience, which in turn influences whether they live in peace or ultimately chaos and genocide.

Many policies lead to various kinds of development projects. Both policies and projects deal with addressing a problem in some manner and both need to be sound.

## I-A.    Government policies and projects fail to deal simultaneously with social, environmental and economic concerns

Governments form policies for one of two reasons – either to address a problem or to prevent a foreseeable problem. To successfully achieve its objective, any policy (or project) needs to not only address the cause of the problem but also to address its social, environmental and economic aspects simultaneously.

The massive rise in populations and degradation of land underlies most of the poverty and increasing violence being experienced in Africa.  Land degradation (desertification) inevitably leads to increased frequency and severity of floods and droughts, with no change in the weather.  And desertification leads to poverty, social breakdown, violence, political instability, and genocide.  In fact, desertification leads to most of the symptoms African governments, and development agencies assisting them, grapple with, and from which millions of people suffer and die.

## I-B.  Learning what caused desertification led to understanding why government policies cannot deal with complexity as needed.

My life's work as a scientist has been devoted to unraveling the mystery of desertification. This process of land degradation, beginning thousands of years ago, has defied our efforts to reverse it and has destroyed many societies and civilizations. What I discovered is that, contrary to mainstream views, desertification is not caused by the many things often blamed, such as overpopulation, overstocking and overgrazing, communal tenure of land and so on. The fact that entire states in the U.S., with low populations, no overstocking, and with privately owned land, are desertifying as badly as any parts of Africa, led me to the realization that we needed to look elsewhere. I believe I found that underlying cause in the way people through the ages have made decisions

about the land that supports them.  Although humans make millions of decisions in many ways, if stripped to the core, like peeling the layers off an onion, underlying even the most sophisticated decision making lies a basic framework.  Discovering the existence of this framework led me to understand that all governments, development agencies and NGO's use exactly this same framework when formulating policies and projects.  For simplicity, I call this the universal framework.

## I-C.   Universal framework used by all governments to formulate policies

Although there are today in business and academic institutions many sophisticated decision making processes, all these processes have the same universal framework underlying them.

Conscious, as opposed to instinctive, decisions, that deal with any problem in policy formation are made toward the achievement of an **objective**. The only tools with which to manage the environment at large considered in any government's (or development agency's) policies or projects fall under the categories of *technology*, *fire* or *rest.* (of the environment).  And all actions to achieve the objective are **based on one or more of many factors,** such as past experience, expert opinion, research results, public opinion, cost, compromise, expediency, cultural beliefs, intuition, peer pressure, fear, propaganda, cost, cash flow, profitability, and so on.

There is no exception to the use of this simple framework in conscious decision making; it's what a simple pastoralist family uses every day, and it's what the most sophisticated scientific team also uses to address desertification, global climate change or space exploration. All governments unwittingly use this framework when formulating resource management policies, and other policies as well.

## I-D.   Areas where the universal framework is successful.

The universal framework has proven successful in the development of technology—from Stone Age implements to the sophisticated machinery used for space travel. The staggering success of technology is overwhelming in improving people's lives through commercial industrial food production, health services, transport, many labour saving devices, and entertaining distractions like television.

While our technological successes are generally improving the lives of wealthy people this is not true for most people. Our remarkable technological successes are only successful in reality as long as we ignore their longer term effects on our environment and society. These effects are becoming increasingly serious and threaten the future well-being of all nations.

In systems science all the areas of success with technology are described as ***hard systems***. Briefly, this means they are designed by humans (a watch, cell phone or a computer are good examples) and they possess these features:

- They are complicated
- They do not work if parts are missing
- They possess emergent properties (meaning all the parts put together can do some planned thing like enable you to tell the time or phone someone)
- They do not exhibit unplanned emergent properties (they only do what they are designed to do)
- When problems arise, they are relatively easy to solve.

## I-E.  Areas where the universal framework is less successful.

To better grasp the areas of our lives where the universal framework is less successful we need to look again to systems science, which also recognizes *soft systems* (e.g., human organizations) and *natural systems* (e.g., plants, animals, soils our environment).   Soft systems are designed by humans. Natural systems are not. Apart from this one difference soft and natural systems have the same features:
- They can be complicated, but are always complex, in that they have emergent properties but also unplanned or unexpected properties (e.g., an organization will do what it was planned to do but will also do unplanned or expected things).
- They are self-renewing
- They work with missing parts
- When problems arise, they are exceedingly difficult to solve.

It is in those areas of our lives that involve the complexity of soft and natural systems that, using as all do, the universal framework we are running into ever escalating problems and conflicts world wide.  Many are the apparent minor successes, but if looked at on the large scale and with honesty we are losing ground as populations rise and desertification and global climate change accelerate.  When whole nations, including the U.S., are exporting more eroding soil than all grain, meat, timber, commercial and military products, they are degrading rapidly. The recent estimate of 4 tons of eroding soil annually going down the world's rivers for every human alive tells us about the global scale of the problem of unsound resource management.

This digression into systems science, brief as it was, is essential to understanding the unplanned/unexpected emergent properties of civil service bureaucracies inherited by Zimbabwe and other African countries that render good governance impossible, as I explain in Section III.

## I-F.  Why current resource management policies are unsound.

For brevity, I mention only the two main flaws in the universal framework that generally lead to unsound policies and projects that attempt to address societal or natural resource problems.

1. **Shortcomings of objectives and goals.**  Objectives and goals (and through them the attainment of missions and visions) do not, and generally cannot, address the social, environmental and economic aspects of a situation simultaneously and

both short and long term.  While very often the objectives and goals of policies or projects are achieved, due to this inability to cater for complex systems we often encounter unexpected consequences and the need for ever escalating fixes of fixes. Whole books have been written on this problem, which I need not belabour.

2. **No tool with which to reverse desertification over most of the world.  W**hen looking at the three "tools" available to humans to manage our environment at large we note there are two (fire and rest) that promote desertification over the two thirds of the world's land surface subject to seasonal and or erratic rainfall. And we note there is no tool that can reverse desertification (even technology, on the scale required). Thus, it would have been a miracle if land had not been degrading over much of the world and deserts advancing throughout history. The general belief is that there are thousands of "tools" available to scientists and governments to deal with environmental problems.  In reality, train in any profession in any university in the world and unwittingly you will only be trained to use technology, fire or rest (of land) to deal with our environment at large. Consequently, most actions and policies involve the use of technology or fire (a major contributor to global climate change).

Thus for scientific reasons it is now understandable why no government, or development agency for that matter, has to date been able to produce what I would call holistically sound policies that are simultaneously economically, socially and environmentally sound short and long term.

*Note: There are minor cases in perennially humid environments where it is theoretically possible for governments to create holistically sound policies but in practice it is rare.*

## I-G.  Holistic decision making framework.

My quest to understand the desertification occurring in Zimbabwe beginning in the 1950's led me to develop a number of ideas that I was able to test in practice with land managers on four continents.  That quest also caused me to look at the work of other scientists in Zimbabwe, South Africa, France and the U.S. mainly, and to gradually develop a slightly improved decision making framework.  That new framework is described in *Holistic Management: A New Framework for Decision Making, Second Edition* (Island Press) 1999.

Briefly, the holistic framework enhances the universal one with three main additions:
- A *holisticgoal or holistic heading* that ties what people value most deeply in life to their life-supporting environment.
- The addition of two tools that make reversal of desertification possible in the world's seasonal rainfall environments – *grazing* and *animal impact* from large herbivores such as livestock.
- A set of filtering questions that ensure all decisions, policies, projects or actions are leading toward the future people desire.

Like all new innovations, Holistic Management has not been accepted or adopted rapidly, but today the book referenced above is in use in more than 20 universities, and land managers are beginning to reverse desertification on over 30 million acres in the U.S., Africa, Mexico, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and elsewhere.

## I-H.  The holisticgoal, direction or heading.

The holistic framework, which is essential to sound policy and project development, requires a holisticgoal, direction or heading to serve as a constant toward which to test objectives, and the actions to achieve them. While objectives, goals, and through their achievement, missions and visions are essential and desirable they have the flaws mentioned earlier: Objectives do not enable governments to address the complexity inherent in either society, our environment or any economy; and, differing objectives and goals, without reference to a holisticgoal, are one of the main catalysts for conflict at many levels of society and between societies.  It is difficult for people with different objectives not to come into conflict at some level at some stage.  The holisticgoal provides a constant reference point for all objectives. It lays out how people want their lives to be, based upon what they value most in life, tied to their life supporting environment. It works somewhat like magnetic north, guiding your life so that no matter what twists and deviations you have to make you remain generally on course to your desired destination.

The holistic framework can be used in any situation, from a single person his/her life, to a household, business or nation – just as the universal framework is used in any situation. While the holisticgoal is generally formed by the decision makers involved in management, at the national or international level this is not practical.  A generic holisticgoal is used in these cases to guide policies or projects.  A national generic holisticgoal would reflect what 99% of the people want and serves as the lighthouse guiding all policy objectives to safe harbour.

To enable me to make sure all the suggestions I make in this appeal for national discussion are holistically sound, I needed to work toward a national holisticgoal. Achieving good governance, is afterall, an objective. Many have tried and failed simply because an objective alone cannot deal with the complexity involved.  The holisticgoal that I have used is shown in Annexure A and should be read at this point so that readers know what reference point guides my suggestions.

## I-I.  Extent of unsound policy exposed by holistic framework.

As mentioned, the holistic framework was developed specifically to understand and reverse desertification practically and inexpensively. Only after its development was it discovered that the holistic framework could be used in areas other than management. In particular the holistic framework could be used to analyse policies and projects before implementation, or to design holistically sound policies and projects more likely to succeed. To do such an analysis is almost impossible using the universal framework.

For example, in the early 1980's some 2,000 scientists and land managers from U.S. government land management agencies and land grant universities were put through training in the use of the holistic framework, and they analyzed many of their own policies. All those policies, without exception, were found to be faulty with no chance of success. One such group in training made the unanimous statement that "they could now recognize that unsound resource management was universal in the United States." Similar training in India, Lesotho and Zimbabwe has resulted in similar findings. Despite the good intent of Environmental Impact Statements required by many authorities prior to policy or project acceptance, no EIS, because all use the universal framework, could detect the policy flaws. The problem is, I believe, universal but could be addressed by any government very rapidly and inexpensively through training, as both the American and Mexican governments are beginning to do.

Only when governments are capable of formulating or developing holistically sound policies or projects will good governance become more than simply an ideal or idea. However, other requirements must still be met before all feel secure and well governed.

## Section II. The Trouble with Political Parties

Knowing that one-party systems inevitably end in abuse of power, dictatorship (military or otherwise) and violence, the widespread belief in multi-party democracy is understandable, as is the desire of the Western world to thrust such beliefs on fledgling democracies in Africa. However, the belief that political parties themselves are essential to democratic government blocks creative thinking and I believe prevents the achievement of good governance. I am not the first to see the dangers of political parties to the stability of nations. George Washington, who declined to run for another term as President of the United States, in his Farewell Address to his nation in September 1796 conveyed this warning about political parties:

> *" Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind, (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight,) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.*
>
> *It [the party system] serves always to distract the Public Councils, and enfeeble the Public Administration. It agitates the Community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another, foments occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another."*

Although the English is of another age the message is clear. African leaders would be wise to heed this warning from George Washington, who led his nation to independence from Britain.

Based on my participation in political parties as candidate and/or leader, and based on my observations of the political scene in many countries, I have concluded that the existence of political parties leads to poor governance.

In many countries today people demonstrate their disgust, frustration and sense of hopelessness by not taking the trouble to vote.  Commonly I hear people say "What is the point of voting, it makes no difference."  Personally, I feel this way, too.  Deprived of my vote in my own nation, I am eligible to vote in the U.S. but often see little point other than to try to minimize the damage done to Americans by voting for their least damaging party, in terms of the policies that party promotes.

For reasons explained below, the party system is simply not working, especially in Africa, and probably never can provide good governance in any nation. In Section III, I outline suggestions for how a non-party democracy could form a government in a more genuinely democratic manner.

## II-A.  Fundamental belief required for party system to operate.

Essential to peaceful, civilized behaviour in party politics during elections is the need for both voters and candidates to believe deeply in the idea of a "loyal opposition." This concept, which only arose after centuries of struggle and conflict in Europe, is an idea people in Africa and elsewhere simply do not believe. The belief is rather that whichever party gets into power will enjoy the spoils, and had better remain in power at all cost because they will never again enjoy such easy access to wealth.

Commonly the party gaining power in the first post-independence African elections will not democratically relinquish power. When African nationalist parties fought for independence under the banner of democracy with the chant "One man, one vote," many people like myself, supported their aspirations in our hearts. However, in our minds we knew that what this probably meant was "one man, one vote, one time."  And history showed this to generally be the case.  Once the people had enjoyed their first and only vote, which brought the party of choice to power, that was the end of any semblance of democracy for years to come.

Only after much suffering generally is the party in power replaced with another and the cycle continues with successive parties doing all they can to remain in power by denying citizens any further democratic choice. All political parties when seeking power will profess to support democracy. However, parties like people should be judged not by their words but by their behaviour.

This political party behaviour should elicit no surprise where people do not believe in a loyal opposition. It would frankly be abnormal behaviour if there was no manipulation and violence to varying degrees by any incumbent political party.

Some democratic multi-party states, like Britain, exhibit their cultural belief in a loyal opposition through the behaviour of both government and electorate. Each contending party knows that if it does not win it will not be banned and its members beaten, killed or tortured. It will form an effective opposition and have a fair chance of winning at the next election. In such countries the party in power allows other parties to stand for election and the electorate to determine the outcome, as the British government did when the Communist Party sought election. Other countries such as the U.S. pay lip service to the concept of a loyal opposition as evidenced when they banned the Communist Party that emerged in the 1950s.  In America, unlike Britain, the electorate was not allowed to determine the outcome. The government banned the Communist Party and engaged in appalling witch hunts, destroying the lives of many citizens.

## II-B.  Parties put their nation first only in times of tragedy or war

Governments based on any party system only come close to national unity when political parties collaborate in the national interest under external threat, as in war. Wartime collaboration, however, still falls short of what is required for good governance, and the moment the war is over inevitably the parties are once more locked in power struggles to the detriment of the nation.

## II-C.  Loyalty of armed forces to party

In Africa, and elsewhere, parties in power regularly manipulate their nation's armed forces encouraging, even enforcing, loyalty to party above nation. As a soldier and politician, I lived and fought through Zimbabwe's long war for independence.   I and a handful of army officers were fully aware that the war could have been avoided had our generals abided by the oath of allegiance we swore on being commissioned. Our Oath of Allegiance was to our nation and not to a political party. On assuming power, the Rhodesian Front party led by Ian Smith soon replaced non-compliant generals. The newly appointed generals, supportive of RF racial policies, soon aligned the armed forces with Smith's racist political party. Almost immediately the party took control of media and the judiciary and overnight any criticism of Smith, or his party, was construed as disloyalty to the nation. Smith did not take long to change the constitution, creating 50 whites-only seats and 16 black "side bench" seats, effectively disenfranchising most Zimbabweans.  When, using commonsense, I said publicly that Smith should talk to Nkomo and Mugabe, Smith and a rabble of party stalwarts called for me to be tried for treason.  The subsequent protracted war and loss of life was inevitable as was my eventual exile.

That the armed forces of Zimbabwe after independence aligned themselves with Mugabe's party rather than the nation of Zimbabwe was in no manner unusual in Africa.

Nor was it unusual for officers showing blind allegiance to party above nation to be handsomely rewarded. These practices would not occur in any truly democratic nation.

## II-D.  Predetermined party policies cannot provide good governance

Had I not crossed the floor in Parliament and formed a political party from scratch once Smith had effectively destroyed all semblance of democracy in our country, I would never have grasped how party platforms infuse policy positions.

Parties seek election on the basis of their stated platform, which expresses the general beliefs of the people supporting that party and generally at least the broad outline of policies the party will pursue if elected. However, as explained in Section I, predetermined policies generally do not cater for the full complexity inherent in any country's social, environmental and economic complexity. More so when party electioneering platforms cater to short term emotional and economic voter appeal and are commonly reduced to emotive slogans. Thus it is no surprise that the winning party, representing the beliefs of its supporters, leaves those who backed other parties unhappy and doing their best to oppose such policies.

When later the inevitable policy complications and shortcomings cause anger and frustration, citizens start counting the days to the next election. Should another party assume power, the cycle repeats itself as it has over centuries of party power seeking.

## II-E.  Parties with policies based on "…. isms" fail to provide good governance.

Political parties world wide have as their fundamental policy foundation tried all manner of "…isms": capital**ism**, commun**ism**, social**ism**, racial**ism**, tribal**ism**, crony**ism** with corpora**tism** emerging currently. No party based on any such  "…ism" can provide good governance, for the reasons outlined in Section I, and also because there will always be a proportion of the electorate that does not share the beliefs, ideology or dogma of such parties and thus feels neither secure nor well governed.

## II-F.  Parties based on personalities or religion cannot provide good governance.

Parties based on personalities or religion tend to lead toward dictatorship or tyranny ending in violent overthrow at some stage either internally, or through invasion when their policies threaten neighbours of another persuasion. It is common for high profile leaders, or parties clinging to power, to create conflicts, even wars or other distractions in order to avoid dealing with problems at home. Although a land policy was long overdue in Zimbabwe, the sudden redistribution of land was undoubtedly such a distraction tactic at a time when unemployment, demand for jobs and other dissatisfaction had led to the formation of a meaningful opposition party. Like most political party distraction tactics this one has proven costly. I will return to the still much needed land policy that still does not exist.

Parties based on religious beliefs if they cause such distractions against others pose a great danger to not only themselves but also to others. Any party representing a religious group presents a further problem in that today's organized religions are themselves divided and often in conflict. For example 1,000 branches of Christianity alone, poses a problem with any party based on Christianity. Whichever branch should assume power, inevitably other branches resist as years of Catholic-Protestant conflict in Ireland have demonstrated.

Generally, all organized religions present the same problem as theoretically even if any one faith was absolutely united not all citizens of any nation are of one faith. An example is Bhutan which is striving for a democratic system and the measurement of progress by Gross National Happiness for most Bhutanese, who are Buddhists, while the Christian minority is reportedly suppressed.

## II-G.  Political parties prone to corruption.

Corruption takes many forms, one of which is undue influence on a government to follow policies more in the interest of special interest groups or corporations than of the people who elected the party to power. How else can one possibly explain governments going to war to protect corporate interests in direct conflict with the interests of their citizens? I often pondered why Americans who are so kind and generous (probably the most generous nation ever) not loved and appreciated world wide? To answer this question and how it is aligned to the ease with which political parties succumb to corruption we need to recall George Washington's warning about the dangers of political parties given to his people on gaining their independence.

Although I here use the example of the United States, Americans do not have a monopoly on bad governance. International anger against Americans is not hard to understand if one looks at America's foreign policy under either political party. General Smedley Butler one of the most celebrated Marine expeditionary leaders on retiring from the US Army had this to say *"I spent 33 years and 4 months in active military service... And during that period I spent most of my time as a high class muscle man for the Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism. Thus I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American Republics for the benefit of Wall Street.  I helped purify Nicaragua for the International Banking house of Brown Brothers in 1902 -1912.  I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras right for American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went on its way unmolested."*

Governments forming foreign policy to serve corporate interests rather than their citizens interests has become more, not less, pervasive since General Butler's time and again I stress this is not an American monopoly.

Thus, good and friendly people in many nations are prone to end in conflict and war based, not on the interests or wishes of their people but, on corporate interests corrupting party politics and foreign policy. Britain had eventually to rein in the East India Company but not until the company's army was larger than Britain's and the company had its own judges and was even passing death sentences. The Boston Tea Party, where people threw the East India Company's tea from their ships into the harbour, was one of the early steps leading to the American Revolution and independence.

The Founding Fathers of America attempted to ensure citizen interests would prevail in an independent people's republic. Remember Washington's warning about political parties "*the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.*" Ignoring his advice, the party system was adopted by Americans and corporate manipulation, with willing compliance by political parties and the American judiciary, over the years has led to corporate power virtually running America, regardless of which party is in power.

Many corporations operate legitimately in the public interest as intended, but as with political power, too much wealth and power corrupts. There is a justifiable fear today that transnational corporations, with budgets greater than many nations and answerable to no electorate, are taking over where colonialism left off. What's more, these corporations are assisted by the governments of powerful nations and international agencies formed by them, such as the World Bank, IMF and others. The threat to African nations from this new form of colonialism is grave indeed as China and other nations serve their own interests through African political party leaders. African nations, just like the U.S., have not heeded George Washington's warning about the political party system: "*It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.*"

Much evidence suggests that political parties are so prone to corruption in many forms that they do little to prevent it. While this is not always so, it is common enough to believe that governments would be less corrupt without political parties.

If governments genuinely wanted to prevent corruption, particularly at a government level, they could do so. A poll of citizens in the U.S., Britain, France, Italy and Russia would almost certainly indicate the majority are not in favour of the international arms trade. Despite this lack of citizen support, the international arms trade is one of the largest businesses in the world, dominated by the U.S., Britain, France, Italy and Russia and sustaining endless conflicts, suffering and slaughter of people and wildlife. As I write, the British government is embroiled in a massive high profile scandal over arms dealing with the Saudi royal family.

That political parties have generally been at the forefront of corruption in Africa should elicit no surprise. The main difference between our African party corruption and that of the countries mentioned lies only in the level of blatant official corruption and the lack of sophistication. It is hardly secret that many African politicians and officials have since

independence become obscenely wealthy while their people have been forced to emigrate or fallen into poverty and hopelessness. Only through good governance can such abuse be prevented.

## II-H.  Political parties focus more on staying in power than governance.

Rather than maintaining a long-term focus on governance, political parties inevitably exhibit a short term obsession with retaining power at the next election. Good governance demands long term planning and continuity, which is not the forte of parties facing elections every few years. Neither is long term thinking the forte of the corporations that control or influence political parties. Afterall, CEOs of public corporations are legally bound to provide quarterly reports and profits for shareholders and are not answerable to any nation's electorate.

## II-I.  Party manipulation and control of Judiciary and the media

All too often parties in power appoint judges sympathetic to their beliefs, making a mockery of the idea of a truly impartial and independent judiciary, which is essential to good governance and justice.

Seldom do parties obsessed with retaining power stop at influencing the judiciary. All too often they also manipulate the media and commonly ban independent media organizations. Even in nations where politicians cannot get away with control of the media, collusion with corporations controlling the media is barely disguised. I grew up during the Second World War believing in the independence and impartiality of the BBC, but then witnessed Margaret Thatcher's attempts to control the BBC during the Falklands War. Fortunately, British democracy was mature enough that she did not get away with it. The judiciary and the media are especial targets because any party controlling or influencing them both sufficiently is almost guaranteed success at the poles. This so because the evenness or unevenness of the playing field at elections is not determined on election day but over the months and years before elections where the people's interests are only protected by these institutions.

We Zimbabweans should have learned this lesson. So unobservant are most people of the daily effects of party control of media that to this day most former white Zimbabweans are unaware that Ian Smith never even risked facing a democratic election as party leader. Most people had never heard of Smith when he assumed the leadership of a legitimately elected party through an internal party coup. Overnight Smith was Prime Minister, but before ever facing endorsement by the electorate as party leader, he had taken control of the newspapers, radio, television, army and judiciary making a mockery of democracy and fools of most whites. Both black and white Zimbabweans opposed to racialism were left no alternative but war to remove Smith and his party. Having trampled on any semblance of democracy, Smith never lost a single seat in any elections as the success of his party was guaranteed by media control long before elections. The only seat he did not control in a 50-seat Parliament was the seat for a time held by myself because,

understanding what Smith had done, I secretly penetrated his party to gain a seat and then crossed the floor to form an opposition. So secret had my move to be that only Pat Bashford, leader of the destroyed multi-racial Centre Party knew of it beforehand.

In summary, I believe I have given sufficient reason to show that the very existence of the political party system inherited by Zimbabwe and other African nations precludes good governance. Further, it is leading to needless violence at elections and opening our nations to corruption and the possibility of a new and sinister form of colonialism. Already textile workers are idle and without jobs in neighbouring Zambia and South Africa as Chinese corporatism moves in supported by the parties in power.  That being the case, let me suggest how Zimbabwe or other countries could form a more honestly democratic non-party democracy in which all Zimbabweans could feel free, secure and well governed.

# Section III.  A Non-Party Democracy and Good Governance

My observations and experience have convinced me that political parties need to give way to non-party democracy if people are ever to experience good governance. Until non-party democracy comes about good governance will remain an idea only and never a reality people can enjoy.

## III-A.  Electing Members of Parliament.

In a non-party democracy there would obviously be a need to elect Members of Parliament from amongst whom a government would be formed. Below I outline *one* way the people could elect their representatives to Parliament. It is only a suggestion to encourage discussion. It is certainly not the only way, nor likely the best way to organize such elections.

The country would be divided into electoral districts or constituencies much as today but with the district boundaries determined by the Judiciary and not politicians. The aim would be to prevent manipulation of the voter's roles, constituency boundaries and more by the political parties in power.  Any individuals could stand for election if their application to do so was supported by a certain number of signatures of people resident in that constituency (assume 2,000 for illustrative purposes).   These individuals would appeal for the vote in their area on the basis of their character, reputation and record in the community and their desire to serve their community and nation in this capacity. They would raise their own funds from supporters and stand on their merit.  Any candidate for Parliament found to be financially supported by any corporation or special interest group would be disqualified and never again allowed to stand for public office.

Given an election in which individuals stand on their merit rather than political party dogma on issues or prefabricated policies, renders it hard for the armed forces to support anything but the state as they are constitutionally sworn to do. There is a world of difference between a candidate standing for a party, regurgitating party policy, deriving support from a party leader who vouches for his/her character, enjoying an expense

account covered by corporations or party funds, and a candidate who funds him or herself while appealing for support on the basis of his/her ability, reputation and standing in the community.

The funds required to seek election by an individual in his or her constituency are miniscule compared with the funds required for political parties facing elections. This alone removes a major source of corruption, one form of which is special interest groups that fund political parties to influence elections in their favour. Having people face election on their merits in their own constituencies would also discourage the trend toward fighting elections through television advertising, which tends to favour appearance over substance. There is no known link between wealth and the wisdom, experience, balanced personalities and intelligence required to run for political office.

Such a non-party system of elections in Africa removes the emotional mayhem that results when large masses wearing party T shirts, mouthing emotive slogans, and supported by the police and army, demand destruction of the opposition and victory at any cost. The present need for vote rigging, vote buying, manipulation of constituency boundaries, character assassination, intimidation, murder and torture disappears with the lack of any party to support or condone such actions. And of course such political party behaviour severely discourages confidence in public capital investment resulting in later financial loss of independence and vulnerability to the emerging danger of the new corporate colonialism.

A further benefit of such non-party elections is that they do away with the damaging delays and violence that occur when defeated political parties demand recounts and recourse to the courts. If there were to be a request from an individual for a vote recount in his or her constituency there would be no emotionally charged delay in forming a government. Because the government is not being formed from any one party there is no need for a majority in Parliament – the cause of so much violence at elections.

An election of individuals of character in this manner makes it hard for special interest groups or corporations to bribe, fund parties or otherwise tamper with elections. While this is true in principle, superpower corporations and special interest groups are not going to disappear overnight. Like tobacco companies have done, and oil and coal companies as well as agri-chemical companies continue to do, they will persist in their drive for short term profit while leaving society to bear the true environmental, economic and social costs. Owing to the desire of powerful transnational corporations to control the resources of undeveloped countries in the new form of colonialism, we can expect continued massive campaigns of disinformation from such companies. Power hungry corporations, like the leopard that does not change its spots, will simply change tactics. Thus, there is a need for a living constitution to respond to changing special interest tactics.

## III-B.  Forming a government

I use arbitrary numbers for ease and illustration only. Assume a state like Zimbabwe was divided into 200 constituencies based on population distribution, with the

boundaries determined by the judiciary. At elections, held every five years, there would be 200 Members of Parliament elected as representatives of the people in their constituencies. These Members of Parliament would then form an "electoral college" to elect a Prime Minister to form a government. The members aspiring to lead and form a government would speak to all MP's and, after discussion, the members would vote for the person they felt most capable and suitable to assume the position. The person so elected as Prime Minister would then proceed to nominate the people he or she selected as cabinet ministers from amongst the remaining 199 MPs. Each of the Prime Minister's cabinet choices are discussed and approved by a 90% vote of all Members of Parliament and thus a government is formed. Requiring a high percentage of support from MPs is suggested in cases such as Zimbabwe because it would make it difficult for any Prime Minister to form a tribal cabinet.

The remaining people's representatives in Parliament constitute back benchers who can be drawn upon for the many committees required and who will naturally participate in debates and approval or rejection of government policies. Unlike party selections, this serves to prevent committees of Parliament being selected on any pre-determined party basis, which can lead to conflict and result in people being selected for reasons other than competence.

Human nature being as it is we can always anticipate people trying to manipulate the process and to form cliques of supporters both inside and outside Parliament, but in a system such as outlined this does not take on the proportions or dangers inherent in the political party system.

Term limits would be applied to any Prime Minister, with terms only extended with some constitutionally-specified very high approval; for example, 80% of sitting Members of Parliament.

## III-C.  Removal of an incompetent government

In the event that a particular government should prove incompetent all that would be required for its removal would be a simple vote of no confidence carried by the majority of Members of Parliament. The incompetent government would have no ability to undertake any of the controlling and manipulative actions that governments routinely do today to remain in power at any cost.

If an incompetent government was removed there would be no need to return to nation-wide elections following lengthy delay. The people's representatives in Parliament would elect a new Prime Minister to form a new government from amongst their ranks, avoiding high cost and damage to the nation that changing any government results in today.

## III-D.  Removal of an incompetent Member of Parliament.

With the party system many a Member of Parliament draws a high salary despite non-performance and obvious disinterest in the people of their constituencies (other than

when appealing for votes). Commonly, many MPs simply follow the party whip, and when not required to rubberstamp party policy can be found in the Parliamentary bar. In a non-party democracy all MPs would have to perform and pay attention to their constituents because they could be removed at any time by a petition signed by a significant number of people in the constituency (5,000 for example – high number so that such action is not frivolous). That worthless MP would then be removed and free, if he or she desired, to face others in a fresh election in that constituency.

## III-E.  Preventing issues being decided in secret without open debate.

A non-party democracy as suggested removes another evil of the party system. That is deciding on important issues in the dark of secret party caucus meetings with fear of losing party position and privileges foremost in many minds. Only when decisions have been made in this manner, which kills any intelligent debate, are such matters put to the floor of Parliament for a sham debate followed by rubberstamping by party MPs. Having sat through many such weekly secret meetings after penetrating the party in power as I did, I am very aware of just how antagonistic and counter to democratic principle such party behaviour is. There is no substitute for debate in the open light of day to preserve people's interests and ensure good governance.

Now let me turn to other structural adjustments that would need to become entrenched in a non-party democracy's constitution to address the current failings of party states.

## III-F.  Independent judiciary

The need for an independent judiciary is widely recognized, although often violated either subtly or brazenly by many a political party in power. Anyone doubting the ability of the party system to defeat the best of plans has only to read *Gangs of America,* by Ted Nace (Berrett-Koehler, 2005), in which he outlines how, despite the best efforts of America's Founding Fathers to ensure the survival of a people's republic, the will of powerful corporations ultimately prevailed through using the political parties and Supreme Court appointees over time. Had the Founding Fathers constitutionally banned political parties instead of trying to curb their excesses through three arms of government, perhaps many of America's invasions of neighbouring countries could have been avoided.

Again, the U.S. is not alone, because human nature is somewhat predictable. Examples of political parties coming to power and soon thereafter controlling the judiciary abound in Africa. In my life I have experienced such behaviour twice in Zimbabwe, under two entirely different parties, one pre- and the other post-independence. Various mechanisms could ensure an independent judiciary but without parties to manipulate the selection of judicial representatives there is more chance of sustaining this ideal.

Likewise, with no party to confuse loyalty between party and state, the armed forces could more readily be relied upon to defend the constitution and the independence of judiciary and press.

## III-G.  Dealing with corruption in a non-party democracy

Corruption comes in many forms from minor bribes to low-level officials through to major bribes paid by corporations in the form of kickbacks to high-level officials who can influence government policy or award contracts.  Corruption at some level will unfortunately be around for years to come in any society.  However, major corruption by special interest groups, corporations and governments that is not reined in poses danger to entire economies, can lead to war and causes mass suffering that runs counter to good governance. Argentina, once ranked amongst the wealthiest countries, was reduced to almost so-called third world status by appalling official corruption. U.S. government policies, polluted by special interest groups, are fueling war in the volatile Middle East. Zimbabwe's economy will continue to slide downward as long as Zimbabwe remains one of the most corrupt countries in the world. The measures that follow could help ensure strict controls on the most damaging official corruption.

A non-party democracy's constitution would provide for a permanent Ombudsman's Office under judicial control. Such office would provide for the concerns of any citizen suffering unjust treatment to be legally and affordably addressed. This office would also be charged with investigation and prosecution in all cases of possible corruption with severe mandatory penalties.  Harsh penalties would be imposed on foreign corporations convicted of corruption, lobbying or funding of parliamentary candidates. They might, for instance, automatically having their license to operate in the country withdrawn, and the local officials involved would serve jail terms. Local corporations so convicted would automatically have their corporate license revoked and officials jailed until all money involved in the corruption is recovered. Any citizen convicted of corruption would automatically be barred for life from holding public office and also jailed until all money involved is recovered, returned to rightful owners or forfeited to the state. To deal with corruption is not difficult if political parties benefiting from corruption are themselves rendered constitutionally illegal in a non-party democracy.

Unfortunately most African countries moving to a non-party democracy would carry with them a backlog of government and corporate corruption, which the new government would have to address. The key to dealing with this backlog lies in the fact that it always takes at least two people to engage in any corrupt act. Knowing that, a way to initiate the change is to allow a six month grace period in which either party to any corrupt act can report to the Ombudsman and provide details in confidence. Following the grace period, during which no one would be aware of who had reported corruption, prosecutions would follow. Those reporting the corruption and providing evidence would be free from prosecution, although required to return the money gained through their involvement. If the other party to the corruption did not make a report, that party would face full penalties. In this manner many a confession would be made, easing investigation, prosecution, clearing the backlog and recovery of stolen funds. In any country where current corruption is both official and rampant and few businesses or families can keep afloat without at least minor acts of bribery, the initial reporting requirement in the grace period would have to be pegged at a high enough level to avoid clogging the system with petty acts of corruption.

Having grown up in an amazingly crime- and corruption-free country and then watched it become one of the most officially corrupt nations in the world, I do understand how devastating it is for most citizens. In Zimbabwe, corruption and inflation has siphoned wealth to a few, while destroying the wealth, including pensions, of most of the people. I also learned that the party system, combined with civil service incompetence, virtually forced corporations and entrepreneurs to engage in corruption as the only way in which they could get any business done at all.  Doing away with the party system as well as providing good governance, through the civil service mechanisms to be described in Section IV, would go far toward removing much of the reason for people to engage in corruption. An adequately paid and professional police force loyal to the nation and constitution rather than a political party would also go far to address corruption.  As long as party government persists the will to prevent official corruption is simply lacking as political parties and corporations both have much to gain from supporting one another under the table. That's why when a new party is voted into office the corruption is generally sustained. I see little difference in the prevailing corruption in Western nations and African nations under the party system, other than the degree of sophistication.

## III-H.  Local Government

In a non-party democracy it would be necessary to ensure that what applied at the national level also applied at local government level.  In many African countries this would not only apply to local government in cities and towns but also to rural traditional governments headed by Chiefs. Currently in all African countries I am aware of the party system, post independence, has continued the colonial practice of disempowering the chiefs in favour of central government and political party control. This practice, combined with the natural resource policies implemented by governments and development agencies, is helping to destroy the culture and livelihoods of rural populations, encouraging further migration to overcrowded city slums.

While some African chiefs struggle to sustain order and culture through their traditional courts, the party system and the degree of centralized control have helped to corrupt many chiefs as seriously as it has politicians.  Thus, chiefs should not be immune from prosecution through the Ombudsman's Office.

## III-I.  Position of President.

Many African countries want to include position of president, even if it is only ceremonial, and there is no reason why it couldn't be maintained in a non-party democracy.  However, the person holding the office would be subject to all the laws applying to any citizen.  Any such President could be appointed jointly by Parliament, the judiciary and heads of the armed forces for life (or until retirement) and could perform many useful functions, making this a worthwhile position.

## III-J.  Honouring political parties that gained independence.

Following a long war to gain independence, as in the case of Zimbabwe, Namibia or South Africa, it is understandable that people should feel loyalty to any party that played a major role in winning independence.  For such a party to lose the support of the people through the inevitable inability to provide good governance, and to then face losing an election, seems to many to show a lack of loyalty to the party.

Fortunately any country forming a non-party democracy, and thus ending the life of all political parties, never need face the possibility of defeat at the polls of the party that gained independence.  Even better is the situation that would emerge if the party in power itself played a major role in drawing up a non-party democracy constitution with other parties and civil society organizations. In such a situation the party that gained independence would historically be honoured and never subjected to defeat. The party having served its purpose in the eyes of the people could be honourably retired, much like retiring a battleship that has served well at war after the need for it is no longer present.  I believe the greatest service to my nation that those of my vintage who were leaders in our long and bitter war for independence could perform, would be to lead a movement ushering in a non-party democracy for the genuine freedom, democracy and independence for which so many Zimbabweans gave their lives.

Assuming that we had fully understood the requirement for good governance to have a government capable of dealing with social, environmental and economic complexity in forming policies. Assuming that a non-party democracy was to be formed somewhat along the lines described in this section, could we then expect good governance?  A country in which all people feel free, secure and well governed.  The answer in No.

There is another sector of government that currently precludes good governance: the civil service created to support a government.

# Section IV.  The Civil Service

Shortly after assuming power, President Mugabe made an astute appeal in one of his public addresses, in which he appealed to scientists to come up with solutions to the many problems his government faced because as he said, the politicians could only act on the advice of their scientific advisors. And when things went wrong it was the politicians and not their advisors who took the blame. What Mugabe did not realize is that while this is true of scientists, *it is likewise true of the civil service.*

Section I outlined the new scientific insights that explain why scientists, including myself, could not advise or assist policy makers to deal with the complexity involved in any policy dealing with resource management. Due to the universal decision making framework we were using, we could only advise government on how to deal with the many symptoms of desertification in Africa – increasing droughts, floods, poverty, social breakdown and violence – but never with the root cause of desertification itself.

Now let me go back to systems science to show what it tells us about how any civil service functions.  Section I talked about soft systems (human organizations) being

complex and self-renewing. Unplanned and unexpected properties also emerge that lead to problems that are extremely difficult to solve. Years of experience, backed by research, has taught us much about the unexpected emergent properties of civil service bureaucracies that prevent us from achieving good governance.

Most countries today have a permanent civil service running their day-to-day affairs. In some countries the entire civil service remains intact following elections. In others, senior members of the civil service are automatically replaced by the incoming party, which appoints people based on their party loyalty, financial support, or simply nepotism, rather than competence.

President Mugabe, on assuming power, was served by a reasonably competent civil service composed of both black and white Zimbabweans, and for a while all went well. The bulk of these civil servants had served the previous government with enough efficiency to have the Zimbabwean dollar equal in value to the US dollar after many years of world economic sanctions. People's memories are short but Zimbabwe was hailed as an African success story due to the efforts of Mugabe's government in education and other fields. Then his party took the step so many African countries do, and South Africa is doing, of "Africanizing" the civil service. This means appointing people to civil service positions on the basis of race, tribe, family and party loyalty. Good people in Zimbabwe, commonly with no training, experience or culture of service, took over positions replacing, or superseding, experienced civil servants. Lacking competence in the civil service the ripples soon flowed throughout the economy leading to a loss of investor confidence (it could take over a year to get an answer to a business letter) and severe job losses, followed by the inevitable rise of an opposition party. Not holding the belief in the concept of a loyal opposition all the tragedy that has followed and that I need not outline was almost inevitable.

While publicly we blame individuals at the helm, this downhill progression was inevitable given the rapid lowering of quality and efficiency within the civil service. We risk repeating this cycle if political parties continue to reward supporters with civil service positions.

## IV-A. Ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in the Civil Service to sustain good governance.

The ideal of a predominantly permanent civil service arose for good reason and it should remain. Bureaucracies such as the civil service were developed in Napoleon's time to ensure efficiency. They aimed to enhance efficiency by engaging suitably qualified and educated professional people to fill positions. The intent was to end past practices that had led to massive blunders where people, rather than earning their positions, inherited or bought them.

It is the unplanned emergent properties of human organizations (soft systems), including government bureaucracies, that constitute a serious problem for all nations. While such bureaucracies do achieve efficiency as intended, their unplanned emergent properties

commonly lead to the downfall of the government they are supposed to serve, as in the case of Zimbabwe.

In *Voltaire's Bastards,* John Ralston Saul, who studied bureaucracies throughout history, notes that no matter how qualified, brilliant or well intended the individuals in any bureaucracy, they will produce outcomes that lack common sense and humanity, and they will be watertight to new knowledge.

- **Emergent properties:  lack of common sense and humanity.**  It follows that the policies developed and implemented by the civil service will likewise lack humanity and commonsense, and this in turn ensures poor governance. Inevitably the party in power, rather than the civil service, is blamed.

The examples of civil service policies lacking common sense and humanity are many. For instance, from a civil service full of highly educated competent caring people, immediately after planes were flown into the Twin Towers on September11th, the U.S Federal Aviation Administration issued a rule that private pilots in America could not fly within 10 miles of any nuclear facility. This is a reasonable and understandable action. What lacked commonsense was that the FAA refused, despite requests, to tell pilots where such facilities were because that was secret information involving national security.  This lack of commonsense was compounded when the pilot's association located all sites on the internet. Again, the U.S. civil service is not alone. Books could be written filled with examples from Zimbabwe and other countries of rules and regulations that lack both humanity and common sense.

- **Emergent properties: watertight to new knowledge.**  When new knowledge conflicts with prevailing beliefs, bureaucracies will resist it. Individuals within any bureaucracy (university, government agency, non-profit organization) can no more change this emergent property than can any outsider. An oft-quoted case is that of the Royal Navy taking almost 200 years, after it was first demonstrated, to accept that lemon juice would prevent and even cure scurvy despite the fact that Britain lost hundreds of sailors to the disease every year. The Merchant Navy, also headed by brilliant and dedicated officers, took a further 70 years to accept this vital knowledge.

A more devastating example is overgrazing by livestock.  Fifty years ago a French researcher, published in five major languages, established that overgrazing was a function of timing and not animal numbers. Vital to reversing desertification, and the lives of thousands of people dying in desperate wars and genocide, this new knowledge has yet to be institutionally accepted by any bureaucracy (government, university, NGO or international agency). Thousands of individuals in such bureaucracies have accepted that overgrazing is not due to animal numbers, but they are powerless to change the resistance to new knowledge of their bureaucracies.

On the other hand, bureaucracies, including the civil service, can be amongst the first to adopt new thinking when it does not conflict with prevailing beliefs.  They're very quick to adopt the latest computers or electronic gadgets.

Because unplanned emergent properties are almost impossible to foresee, those discussed here have not been overcome by any nation's civil service. However, good governance requires that, while we may not be able to solve such problems, we should and can develop structures to minimize them in otherwise efficient organizations. Below I suggest structural changes that, if implemented, might do just that. However, before continuing with remedies, there are a couple of additional challenges to address within the civil service.

## IV-B. Negative selection process in a permanent civil service.

A major problem is the process of negative selection as people rise in the service. I come from a civil service family and also spent time serving in both the Colonial Office in Northern Rhodesian and later the Game Department of Southern Rhodesian. In my father's time and mine, opinions that dissented from a superior's were not encouraged. Some brilliant and very committed people did rise to head departments, but this was the exception rather than the rule. Generally people who did not rock the boat rose, while those who did were forced out or departed in frustration. Working with a number of departments and agencies over subsequent years in America, Australia, India, Canada, Pakistan, South Africa and other countries I have come to understand that what I experienced in the Colonial Office and Zimbabwe is too common to ignore if any civil service is to serve as it should.

## IV-C. Laws giving power to regulations obstructing good governance.

When politicians pass new laws it is common to empower the appropriate Minister to have the civil service draw up the regulations that will guide its enforcement. While the law is rightly debated in Parliament, the regulations drawn up by the civil service seldom face such public scrutiny. With the civil service, no matter how brilliant the individuals within it, incapable of avoiding outcomes lacking common sense and humanity, it is no surprise that the plethora of regulations issued in Zimbabwe today have led to human suffering.

Once more the politicians shoulder the blame for subsequent bad governance and not the civil service.

## IV-D. Who develops policy – politicians or civil servants?

Politicians come and go while the civil service provides continuity. Theoretically, politicians form policies and the civil service carries out those policies. In reality the politician heading a portfolio relies on the professionals in that department or agency for technical advice. Even in cases where public input or outside expertise is sought, it is all handled through the civil service. In this way it is common for the Cabinet member in charge of say education, health or agriculture to have as his or her principal advisor the head of the civil service in that department. This person has generally risen to the position

through negative selection – not offending anyone or rocking the boat, etc. And that person heads an advisory and implementing bureaucracy that can lag anywhere from a fifty to a hundred years behind new knowledge available in that field. The consequences to any policy developed by that Minister are inevitable, and the subsequent anger of the electorate is once again vented on the politicians and not the civil service. In multi-party states with democratic elections this pattern results in constantly changing parties in the belief that next time it will be better. It rarely is.

Some years ago I ran a ten day training in Holistic Management for the senior civil servants in the Ministry of Agriculture of Lesotho. Once they understood how to analyse policy with the holistic framework I had them work on the soil conservation policy of Lesotho. They concluded their policy would increase soil erosion and thus endanger the rivers and dams in nearby South Africa. I then posed the question "Who was responsible for producing this policy?" After blaming politicians, media and the public one woman finally made a telling statement. She said to the group "The politicians come and go. Look around the room. We have all the senior people here. We are the government. It is we who produce such policies for the politicians to approve, and so we are responsible." Because of the unplanned emergent properties mentioned, Lesotho continues to erode at an alarming level, endangering South African dams and more.

I believe we could minimize these emergent properties through structuring government in a manner different from that inherited at independence, and we must, because the role of the civil service is so crucial to good governance.

One way to achieve what is required is to constitutionally entrench the structure required to maintain the efficient roles of the civil service, while overcoming those aspects I have outlined that present problems. The structure I would suggest follows and is guided by the national holisticgoal for Zimbabwe in Annexure A.

## IV-E. Ministerial Advisory Councils

Each government portfolio is headed by the Cabinet Minister appointed by the Prime Minister. Each Minister, on assuming office, will form a Ministerial Advisory Council. The Advisory Council is chaired by the Minister who is required to appoint no less than 3 and no more than 5 (for example) advisors from outside the civil service to his or her council. Three Council members are to be selected for their knowledge and experience in that field and two without specialized knowledge in that field but with good liberal arts education. And appointments can be made from outside the country if needed. As mentioned earlier, the finest candle makers could never have thought up or developed electric lights, hence the need to have at least two people with a broad and good liberal arts education on any technical Ministerial Advisory Council.

 Without party platforms to bias selection of people, from whatever source, merit alone qualifies such ministerial advisors. The senior civil servant of the department serving that portfolio participates as an equal in the council as it is his or her role to subsequently implement any policies or projects emanating from the ministry. In this way the civil

service is represented in an advisory capacity but cannot block new knowledge being made available to the Minister, nor dominate the Minister. The latter is fairly common because the Minister is a lay person and the civil servants are generally professionals.

## IV-F.  Policy and project coordination.

Because policy formulation and project development are such an important government role, all policies and projects need to be holistically coordinated by government. What does this mean?  Holistic coordination means that policies and projects are coordinated economically, socially and environmentally.  Such coordination does not exist in any nation today. Currently governments using, as all do, the universal framework for policy formulation coordinate policies and projects at two levels – political coordination in line with party dogma and beliefs, and economic coordination through the budgetary process. Most, if not all, debate concerns the cost and objective of any policy or project while in party caucus sessions the policy is aligned with the party's political ideology.

The examples abound from any nation of policies and projects achieving their objective but causing endless additional problems because the complexity involved was not addressed.  American Farm Policy is a well known case leading unintentionally to destroying the livelihoods of thousands of farmers not only in the U.S. but in other countries. Zimbabwe's land policy aimed at the objective of redistributing land contributing greatly to the collapse of many urban businesses and the national economy which clearly those designing the policy did not intend.

Ideally any government should want not only to know the cost, but also that all policies and projects were simultaneously economically, socially and environmentally sound short and long term, and thus likely to deal with the complexity of intertwined social, environmental and economic reality, leading toward the national holisticgoal.  One way this necessary coordination could be achieved is through forming a coordinating council as follows.

## IV-G.  National Holistic Policy Coordinating Council.

In a non-party democracy, policy and project coordination would be holistically more comprehensive through a constitutionally entrenched system.  Coordination of all prospective government policies or projects would be the responsibility of a specific minister supported by constitutionally mandated Holistic Policy Coordinating Council formed like a Ministerial Advisory Council but staffed with a team of people trained in the full functioning of the holistic framework. This Ministry would be responsible for analyzing any policy or project drafts using the holistic framework and national holisticgoal.  No budgetary debate would go forward without a supporting report to ensure MPs were fully aware of likely social, environmental and economic consequences.

**Developing a Sound Policy or Project**

Because sound policies and projects are so vital to good governance, I'd like to give an example of project proposed for Zimbabwe and show how it would be analyzed conventionally and holistically. While forming holistically sound policy or projects is almost impossible today, using the holistic framework it becomes relatively simple. African, Indian and American government officials have been able to do so with as little as ten days training.

Remember the common characteristic or both policy and projects is that they always have an objective designed to deal with a problem or address a foreseeable problem.

## How the policy or project would be formulated/developed conventionally

In Zimbabwe the second largest city, Bulawayo, is running out of water. Government has become aware of the problem and officials in the civil service tasked to respond with a policy or project proposal. The project that emerged has an objective, which in this instance is to provide water to the city. In a difficult situation such as this, it is generally practice for governments to engage consultants (the World Bank commonly becomes involved) to work with the Ministry concerned   Between consultants and civil servants the proposal is to build a large holding dam as the first stage at a cost of over £500 million. Subsequently they propose that water be piped to the dam from the distant Zambezi River, requiring considerable energy and expense to pump the water. The project, as always, will clearly meet the objective by providing more water.  Debate now focuses mainly on the budgetary aspects and ability to borrow the necessary funds. Contractors and suppliers circle like vultures over a carcass and bribes flow to influence officials and politicians and the dam is eventually built, providing the city with additional water.  Objective accomplished.

Because we are dealing with complexity, inevitably further problems are thrown up – social disruption, loss of agricultural land, increase in disease (schistosomiasis and malaria), disruption of river flow, silting, increased urban migration and demand for water, loss of scenic assets and species for example and later the problems associated with interference of the water flow of an international river. Subsequent policies will be developed endlessly to deal with problems arising as they will surely do in a pattern by now familiar to the world. This outline is not oversimplified or exaggerated as the analysis of hundreds of policies and projects of governments, World Bank and other international agencies and NGOs has shown, and whole books have been written about such unintended consequences. Thus deserts continue to advance, international aid all too often does more damage than good, biodiversity continues to decrease, weeds continue to invade, floods and droughts increase without climate change, soil erosion increases while poverty, violence and disappointment in those governing continues.

## How the policy or project would be formulated/developed in a non party state governing toward a national holisticgoal

In this case, when the government becomes aware of the problem that Bulawayo is running out of water, the Minister of Water Development (or current portfolio name)

tasks his or her Ministerial Advisory Council with advising on possible solutions. The Ministerial Advisory Council using the holistic framework first determines the cause of the problem.

No problem can be permanently resolved by any policy or project without addressing its root cause. Diagnosing the cause of the problem is always the first step when using the holistic framework. In this case the Ministerial Advisory Council realizes the city is running out of water because of the extent and rate of desertification in this region of Zimbabwe. Desertification leads to very high losses of water through two ways: massive flash flooding as a result of bare ground (the water simply runs off); and evaporation (up to 80% on bare, as exposed to covered, ground.)

Annual losses of the rainfall received in this region of Zimbabwe, depending on season, can exceed 80 or 90%, which reflects trillions of liters more than the city could ever use. That the city is running out of water is thus neither surprising nor a problem – it is simply a symptom of serious desertification.

As a result of this diagnosis the Ministerial Advisory Council realize that building the dam will not solve the problem. Not only will it not solve the problem but it will lead to further problems as all the present dams fill with silt. The Council understands that building the dams would be a short term costly Bandaid, aggravating an already serious situation and further endangering the city while loading the nation with unnecessary debt. Building the dam will leave the country and city with added debt and an unsolved problem as well as problems associated with tampering with an international river. They also realize from this analysis that there will be other adverse social and environmental costs associated with the dam that is neither necessary nor required.

With this knowledge the Ministerial Advisory Council would work out a policy that would reverse desertification and improve the effectiveness of the water cycle over the entire region of the country in which the catchment of the city lies. Reversing desertification and improving the effectiveness of the water cycle on this vast area would not only save the present dams from continued silting, it would also ensure replenished underground aquifers and more permanent flow in the rivers. Together this would amount to new water every year exceeding many dams the size of the proposed dam with no need to interfere with the flow of the international Zambezi River. Further it would improve the welfare and prosperity of all the people in the entire catchment and the city while providing a permanent solution because the problem, rather than a symptom, has been dealt with. The cost of reversing the desertification/improving the water cycle would be a small fraction of the cost of the proposed project, and it would not require borrowing, debt servicing, or additional taxation of the people to eventually pay for the folly.

At this point the Ministerial Advisory Council would switch to a policy to deal with reversing the desertification. Everything that the country requires to reverse desertification is already available in the country. The knowledge to do this was not only developed in the country but has been available for over thirty years although blocked from ever becoming policy by the civil service adhering to old beliefs not supported by

advancing science. The policy to outline the actions required from the current educational and extension services would require no more than a week. This is a very straightforward case involving curbing the use of fire and training people to run increasing numbers of livestock in a manner that minimizes overgrazing of plants while covering soil and thus reversing desertification. As I write, figures have come in from one piece of land in North Dakota following such practices where water infiltration on the upper catchment soils has increased by 775% (from 20.32 mm per hour to 157.48 mm per hour rate of rainfall infiltration).

The policy framework developed would now be passed to the Holistic Coordinating Council for an independent assessment and report before moving to government to present to Parliament for debate prior to implementation. Both Ministerial Advisory Council and Holistic Coordinating Council have ensured that the policy and all actions it embodies are in line with the national holisticgoal and thus simultaneously economically, socially and environmentally sound short and long term. Subsequent debate would focus on the merits, costs and benefits of the policy without any influence from party politics or corporate contractors having bribed officials. Such a policy would be above party politics and long term as all should be but today few are.

While what I am describing may seem drawn out, in reality analyzing and forming policies or projects using the holistic framework is faster than the conventional way using the universal framework. In India, Forestry officials after one week of training were able to analyse 12 of their present and planned policies and projects in less than thirty minutes and conclude all would damage India's forests and thus increase social, economic and political problems. Nothing changed in the Indian Forest Service because of the emergent properties that characterize such bureaucracies.

## IV-H. Land policy

Until any nation has a holistically sound land policy, long term good governance is unachievable because of the connection of the health of the land to the economy, frequency and severity of both droughts and floods, poverty, social stability, violence and ultimate fate of the nation.

Zimbabwe has redistributed land and other nearby African nations are being adversely influenced by this action so it would be wise to look at it briefly.

At the time that the Zimbabwe government moved to redistribute land (in response to massive unemployment and the rise of a political opposition) everyone, including the commercial farmers and British government supported the need. Like the Bulawayo water problem described, Zimbabwe's land redistribution policy was directed toward an objective – redistributing land. Few would not recognize that the result has been catastrophic economically, socially, politically and environmentally. This result was inevitable simply because such complexity cannot be dealt with successfully by any government toward the achievement of an objective. Had the displaced commercial farmers or the British, or any other government, formed the policy toward the objective

of redistributing land the result, although less immediate and violent, would in the end have been essentially the same.

In September 1996 I wrote to President Mugabe urging him to move forward with our land policy and when finally the Zimbabwe government announced it was going ahead a group of Zimbabweans in Harare participated in workshops which civil servants declined to attend. In these workshops we first sought to see what sort of land policy would emerge from redistributing land as an objective. It was quickly clear to all that this would lead to ever mounting disaster. Next we used the national holisticgoal appearing in Annexure A to see whether the framework of a policy could be developed. What emerged was enlightening in that is showed us that a policy could be developed that had different results, and how civil society should and could be quickly involved to gain broad national support in implementing the policy. Policy formed in this manner would have resulted in greatly increased employment, the settling of two or three million people on the land, not losing a single farmer, increasing the tax base of government and the reversal of desertification on the farms and ranches (which is serious on even the best) as well as increased food production.

Seldom is anything genuinely too late. Even now, although much damage has been done to Zimbabwean agriculture and society through the land redistribution policy, one of the immediate things that any non-party government would have to attend to would be the land policy. And African governments generally would be wise to consider forming such policies holistically because violence induced by land degradation and rising populations is on the increase throughout Africa.

## IV-I. Policies damaging African nations

For brevity I have not dealt with other policies but mention that Zimbabwe and other countries have current policies involving such things as not allowing citizens outside the country to vote and not allowing dual citizenship. While such policies are clearly designed to achieve the political objectives of the parties in power, viewed holistically with a national holisticgoal as the guide, they are soon seen to lack common sense and humanity. Such policies can only be detrimental to capital investment and to retaining skilled people and thus detrimental to the economy. Every skilled person retained tends to create jobs and expand an economy while, conversely, loss of skilled people leads to job losses and greater poverty for all.

## IV-J. International Aid assessment

African countries receiving assistance from the many development agencies, church groups and major environmental organizations, need to ensure such aid does not interfere with good governance. Having analyzed many aid projects I recognize that although well-meant and often meeting immediate humanitarian needs, the overall result long term is disappointing to donors and recipients. For this no one is to blame as all such aid projects are designed using the universal framework that we have known for some

years is faulty when dealing with such complexity. The overall unsound nature of aid is no different than the American professionals concluding that unsound resource management is universal in the U.S., as mentioned earlier.

Increasingly people are beginning to realize that despite many projects and millions of dollars things are not getting better.  In fact evidence suggests aid is currently doing more harm than good which clearly was never the intent.  As soon as any non-party government has a cabinet level Holistic Coordinating Council one of its functions should be the assessment of all foreign assistance to ensure it is holistically sound and in line with the national holisticgoal.  Rather than rejecting foreign aid this would result in modifications to meet the desired intent of both parties.

Surveillance of aid in the manner suggested, combined with the measures suggested to curb official corruption, would go far to avoid millions of dollars of Western aid finding its way into private Swiss accounts of African officials, as is occurring currently.

## Conclusion

I believe most people, including politicians of high motive in my country, aspire to lives as expressed in the national holisticgoal and would support the ideal of better governance through a non-party democracy.  Inevitably, a minority in power, or aspiring to power and easy wealth through the party system, will oppose constitutionally forming a non-party democracy.

As I write only those involved in political parties in Zimbabwe are vying for position and power through various means including the likely negotiation of a new constitution based on the party system.  Civil society that has an equal if not greater moral right to be deeply involved in the drawing up of any new constitution, is being sidelined as in the past. With swords drawn and many past hurts still palpable, intelligent debate is difficult and many are calling for international intervention, headed by South Africa. But is a country that is itself clearly going down the same path as post independent Zimbabwe, a wise choice?

No solution imposed from outside will last and I firmly believe we Zimbabweans of all races, tribes, genders, cultures and beliefs should fashion our own salvation. I hope that what I have written and suggested here brings about more open discussion and does not cause offence to any individual or party, which has not been my intent.

As a non-political person, but a passionately patriotic and loyal Zimbabwean, I can only wish my people success in the years ahead, which I will not live to see.  And I sincerely hope discussion emanating from these ideas helps other nations seeking good governance.

Annexure A.

# National Holisticgoal for Zimbabwe.

**Quality of Life: (What we want our lives to be based on what we value most in life)**

We want to live in peace and harmony with ourselves and neighbouring countries. We want prosperity, physical and financial security. Good education for our children at all levels. Freedom to pursue our own cultural, religious and spiritual beliefs. Good housing and amenities in our towns and cities. Stable families with adequate food security, safe and healthy food and abundant clean water. To live in balance with our resources with balance between urban and rural populations so that all can live in peace and prosperity. Fair and equitable access to resources. Freedom from racial, tribal, sexual or any other bigotry with justice available and affordable by all.   Pride in ourselves our country and its achievements. International respect.  Playing our part as a nation in international affairs as respected equals.

**Forms of Production: (what has to be produced for our citizens to live such lives)**
Open society with freedom of expression.
Affordable high quality education opportunity at all levels.
Armed services loyal to our constitution and holisticgoal ideals for their families.
Independent professional judiciary media and press.
Stable economy measured in social and environmental as well as economic ways encouraging entrepreneurship and investment.
Access to justice for all in an inexpensive and speedy manner.
Policies that always address social, economic and environmental aspects.
Abundant internally produced clean & healthy food and water.
City populations in balance with our environment and rural population.
Modern amenities throughout our small towns and rural environment.
A corruption and crime free society led by government example.
A society that is free from racialism, tribalism and gender inequality.
Education and empowerment of women throughout society.
Level playing field for all Zimbabweans.

**Future resource base: (How we have to behave and what our land has to be like a thousand years from now to sustain successive generations living such lives)**
**Behaviour:**  As a nation we have to be honest, fair, friendly and open with a good attitude to outsiders and other nations.
**Land:** Our soils on croplands and rangelands have to permanently covered and building, retaining water and converting solar energy to wealth and life. Rivers have to be running perennially.