

**THE RELIGIOUS IMPLICATIONS OF THE  
DECLARATION OF ZAMBIA AS A CHRISTIAN STATE**

**DAVID NJOVU**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

**in the subject**

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**at the**

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**SUPERVISOR:** **PROF. G.J.A. LUBEE**

**JOINT SUPERVISOR:** **DR. PETER J. HENRIOT**

**JANUARY 2002**

## **SUMMARY**

The study looked at the religious implications of declaring Zambia a Christian nation. The conclusion arrived at was that Zambia is not a Christian nation because of the following reasons:

- A nation cannot be Christian by proclamation, but by the life styles of individuals who call themselves Christians.
- Zambia's constitution guarantees freedom for all religions found in Zambia. Individuals have a freedom to have or adopt a religion or belief of their own choice without being coerced by any means.
- The declaration had no theological backing. The scriptures used in the declaration were out of context.
- The declaration was political as opposed to being religious. The supporters of the declaration argued that President Chiluba was appointed by God and whoever disagreed with him, disagreed with God.
- Zambian Christianity is diverse in the sense that there are different denominations with different doctrines and emphasis.

## SUMMARY

The study looked at the religious implications of declaring Zambia a Christian nation. The conclusion arrived at was that Zambia is not a Christian nation because of the following reasons:

- A nation cannot be Christian by proclamation, but by the life styles of individuals who call themselves Christians.
- Zambia's constitution guarantees freedom for all religions found in Zambia. Individuals have a freedom to have or adopt a religion or belief of their own choice without being coerced by any means.
- The declaration had no theological backing. The scriptures used in the declaration were out of context.
- The declaration was political as opposed to being religious. The supporters of the declaration argued that President Chiluba was appointed by God and whoever disagreed with him, disagreed with God.
- Zambian Christianity is diverse in the sense that there are different denominations with different doctrines and emphasis.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere thanks are due to Rev. Ignatius Mwebe, the General Secretary of Zambia Episcopal Conference; Rev. Thomas Lumba, Executive Director of the Evangelical Fellowship in Zambia; Most Rev. Bernard Amos Malango, Rt. Rev. Derrick Kamukwamba for availing me an opportunity to discuss the issue of declaring Zambia as a Christian nation.

I am also grateful to Mrs. Salome Anyoti who spent hours proof reading the text and for encouraging me when I almost gave up. I treasure her comments.

I thank Marja Hinfelaar and Dr. Sumaili for their comments.

To the Rt. Rev. John Osmers I say, you have been more than a father to me. I thank you for the encouragement and moral support you rendered to me. I will always remember you.

My special thanks go to Prof. Lubbe for his comments and direction.

To Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, I say many thanks for the accommodation and wonderful food that you gave me during my stay at your lodge, and your members of staff deserve a pat on the back.

My thanks go to Angela Anyoti and Hulda Marisa who typed this document.

Finally, I thank Noreen Njovu and my children Gift, Miriam, Paul and James, for their patience and support throughout the study.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Dedication</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Summary</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Table of contents</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1.0 CHAPTER 1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.2 Study Methodology	3
1.3 Objective of the study	5
1.4 Study limitations	5
1.5 Outline	5
<b>2.0 CHAPTER 2</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>7</b>
2.2 Biblical analysis of the state – religion relationship	9
2.3 Historical analysis of the state – religion relationship	13
2.4 Theological analysis of the state – religion relationship	16
2.4.1 Religion being against politics	17
2.4.2 Religion being in tension with politics	17
2.4.3 Religion being above politics	18
2.4.4 Religion embraces politics	18
2.4.5 Religion transforming politics	18
2.5 Political Analysis of the State Religion relationship	19
2.5.1 Religious freedom	19
2.5.2 Religious freedom in Africa	20
<b>3.0 CHAPTER 3</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>3.1 THE ZAMBIAN SITUATION</b>	<b>23</b>
3.2 Lenshina Uprising	27
3.3 The role of church in Zambia: 1963 –1991	29
3.3.1 The First Prime Minister	29
3.3.2 Jehovah's Witnesses	30
3.3.3 President Kenneth Kaunda's Religious Policy	32
3.3.4 The Church and Zambian Humanism – 1967	34

3.3.5 The Church and Scientific Socialism – 1969	37
3.3.6 The Role Christian Churches played in the downfall of Kaunda.	38
<b>4.0 CHAPTER 4</b>	
<b>4.1 CHRISTIAN NATION</b>	<b>43</b>
4.1.2 Background	43
4.1.3 Immediate reactions to the declaration.	46
4.1.4 Later Reactions to the declaration	48
4.1.5 Recent reactions to the declaration	48
<b>4.2 A brief analysis on the reactions of the respondents reflected in the boxes in appendix 2</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>5.0 CHAPTER 5</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>5.1 ANALYSIS</b>	<b>55</b>
5.1.1 Theological Issues	55
5.1.2 Political implications	58
5.1.3 Christianity vis-à-vis other religions	61
<b>6.0 CHAPTER 6</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>6.1 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>65</b>
6.1.1 Zambian Christianity	65
6.1.2 Theological basis	67
6.1.3 The declaration was political and not religious	67
6.1.4 The republican constitution guarantees the freedom of worship to every religion in Zambia	70
<b>6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>APPENDIXES</b>	<b>77</b>

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study seeks to explore the religious implication of declaring Zambia as a Christian nation. President Fredrick Chiluba (Speech by the pillar: 29 December 1991) declared Zambia a “Christian nation,” implying that Zambia was a

...Nation that would seek to be governed by the righteous principles of the word of God and which would seek for the righteousness and justice to prevail at all levels of authority and then we shall see the righteousness of God exalting Zambia.

Zambia as a country with its citizens was not prepared for this move. It took a lengthy debate and discussions in the public media, parliament, and churches to try and understand what this Declaration entails. For example, a Member of Parliament, Akashambatwa Mbikusita Lewanika in debating the Declaration, said:

President Fredrick Chiluba is trying to politicize Christianity and use it as a divisive campaign tool. He unconstitutionally declared Zambia as a Christian nation. Religious people can advance their faiths without being declared Christians and Moslems. (The Post 3 January 1995)

This study would hypothesize and will argue that Zambia is not in a position to be declared a Christian nation because

- of the presence of many religions in Zambia who hold different religious beliefs;
- the declaration has no theological basis;
- it is more political than religious; and
- the Republican Constitution guarantees the freedom of worship of every religion in Zambia.

This study is being undertaken to show that the sentiments expressed and the unpreparedness of Zambia are justifiable. Incidences of Nations and Presidents making similar Declarations as that made by Zambia abound.

Elizabeth Isichei (1995:347) noted that in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) Ian Smith, as the then Prime Minister, used Christian rhetoric to defend the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (U.D.I.) in 1965. The regime was said to preserve justice, civilisation and Christianity while, at the same time, it was a very oppressive system to the majority of the population who were black.

During the apartheid regime in South Africa, specific references were made to the Bible to vindicate the country's policies. According to Isichei (1995:347) the regime conceptualized afrikanerdom as not the work of men but the creation of God. The Dutch Reformed Church became "THE CHURCH", and was the only Church allowed to offer national prayers. Yet apartheid, or "separate development" as the National Party referred to it, was a heresy to some Dutch theologians.

In similar cases Isichei (1995:347) noted that President Samuel Doe of Liberia remained in power because of his manipulation of Christianity. His Liberian regime, like that which preceded it, was defended by the rhetoric of Christianity.

Similar sentiments have been experienced in Fiji. Fiji's indigenous rebel forces are using Christianity as a weapon in their fight for supremacy. (The Tablet, 24 June 2000:854-855). The rebels would like to see a ministry of religion in the new government. These expressions form part of a long-standing call to have Fiji officially declared a Christian State. The Methodist Church, which represents 80 percent of the indigenous people, seems to be supporting the rebels. (The Tablet, 24 June 2000:854-855).

On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church in Fiji does not share the sentiments of the Methodist Church in declaring Fiji a Christian State. The Catholics denounced the suggestion in the strongest terms:

we vehemently deplore calls for Fiji to be declared a Christian State. This anachronism has no place in the twenty first century and would only bring opprobrium and contempt [and make Fiji] the laughing stock of the world. (The Tablet, 24 June 2000:854-855).

It is with this background that this study attempts to find a biblical, theological and historical model, which might act as a paradigm or template for an understanding of the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation in covenant with God.

## 1.2 STUDY METHODOLOGY

This study is exploratory. In other words, it is a pilot study, paving the way for more comprehensive studies in the future. All the studies that are being carried out on this topic are still in their embryonic stage. They have not been published yet. This makes it difficult to find appropriate literature. In order to make a start the author used three methodological approaches, namely literature review, survey, and participant observation. The author also used extensively the daily and weekly newspaper reports. These are Times of Zambia and Daily Mail, which are government-controlled, The Post, a private independent tabloid, and the National Mirror, jointly owned by the Christian Council of Zambia and Zambia Episcopal Conference.

First, the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation is a new concept; there is not much literature on the subject. However, there is literature from other parts of the world. One such work that was reviewed is the one done by Jonathan Chaplin entitled “The Gospel and Politics: Five positions.” (Orientation 1995 Jan.-Dec. 75-78). These five positions would provide the framework for discussion on the relationship between the state and religion. These positions would be analysed in the Zambian context to see if

they can be applicable and whether they are able to highlight the implications of such a relationship.

Second is the survey carried out. The targets of the survey were the three Christian mother bodies, namely the Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ), the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) and the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC). The Christian Council of Zambia was represented by Anglican Archbishop Bernard Amos Malango, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia by the Executive Director, Reverend Thomas Lumba and the Zambia Episcopal Conference by its General Secretary, Father Ignatius Mwebe. Others interviewed were John Osmers, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Eastern Zambia; Derrick Kamukwamba, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Central Zambia; Patrick Mvunga, a lawyer who was chairperson of the Constitution Review Commission in 1990, and John Mwanakatwe, also a lawyer and chairperson of the Constitution Review Commission of 1995. The three Christian mother bodies represent a large number of mainline and independent churches in Zambia. From the non-Christian religions, people interviewed were Shabani Phiri, a Moslem Sheik, and David Simpson, an atheist.

Third, a checklist was developed to collect data (see Appendix 1) and the data collected from the above-mentioned people has helped in giving an insight into the topic under study. This data represents the recent reactions to the Declaration.

These three methodological approaches cover the topic in an exploratory way that leads to the conclusion and recommendations which the author draws up at the end of the study, that the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian State should be withdrawn.

The time frame for the study ended in December 2000. Since then a lot has happened that has a bearing on the relationship between the state and religion. For example, the President dissolved cabinet after massive pressure from the church and civil society for him not to stand as President for the third term of office. When he constituted a new cabinet, the “religious desk” at State House was left vacant and there has been no mention of it.

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study are to find out:

1. What constitutes a Christian nation?
2. Whether the Declaration politicises the religious issue
3. Whether the presence of other religions in Zambia makes it impossible for it to be a Christian nation.

### **1.4 STUDY LIMITATIONS**

Owing to the fact that the Declaration was a new concept in Zambia, the available literature was limited, and this led to a situation where most material had to be obtained from the public media.

The relevant books, which were used for secondary data, were not available locally. The time taken to complete the study was therefore prolonged.

The author comes from one of the mainland churches, where this concept is totally new; he therefore found it difficult to conceptualise and understand the purpose of the Declaration.

The Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs refused to be interviewed on the subject. He claimed to have been very busy with national affairs. As a result the responses to the checklist lack the government's perspective.

### **1.5 OUTLINE**

To be able to discuss the stated problem and to accomplish the aim of the study, we have to look at the issues that arise when State and Church are intertwined.

This study has taken the following format, in order to address the above objectives:

- Introduction
- Literature Review
  - 1. Biblical Analysis
  - 2. Historical Analysis
  - 3. Theological Analysis
- Zambian Situation
  - 1. Lenshina Uprising
  - 2. The role of the Church in the politics of Zambia 1963-1991
  - 3. The Church and Zambian Humanism
  - 4. The Church and Scientific Socialism
  - 5. Downfall of President Kenneth David Kaunda
- Christian Nation
  - 1. Background to the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation
  - 2. Reactions to the declaration
- Analysis
  - 1. Theological issues
  - 2. Political use of the declaration
  - 3. Christianity vis-à-vis other religions
- Conclusion and Recommendations.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

This study takes the definition of religion offered by James Cox (1992:15), which states that religion is a

...varied symbolic expression of that which people appropriately respond to as being of unrestricted value for them.

Religion is discussed here to refer to a set of theological beliefs held, and rituals performed, by members of a particular group, such as Buddhists, Christians or Muslims; or it may be discussed as beliefs, systems, and moral norms and values held by members of a society.

According to Margaret Peil (1977:218) a common religion can be very useful in holding together a group of people who would otherwise be competing socially, economically and politically. While religion can bring integration in society, it can also be responsible for deeper divisions within communities than from any other source of conflict.

Religious conflict is often related to a struggle for power which is an indication of the close relationship between religious institutions, as supporters of the values of the moral community, and political institutions, which use these values to organize the community for goal attainment. There are many examples of this in the struggle between followers of indigenous religions and of Christianity (seen as an incursion of European power), between Christians and Muslims, and between followers of various branches of Christianity and of Islam.

The argument being propounded here is that, since religion can be a source of conflict, there must be a separation between the State and religion. In the event of conflict

the state will not be seen to be siding with one particular religious group. As noted by Martin Luther (1523), the reformer,

It is out of question that there should be a common Christian government over the whole world, or indeed over a single country or any considerable body of people, for the wicked always outnumber the good.

This observation by Luther is very important in that, by having one religion as an official religion, other religions feel not wanted and can easily be the source of violence. As will be shown below, these sentiments were experienced when Zambia was declared a Christian nation.

In the history of religions, the Jews considered themselves as God-chosen even before they were established as a nation. When they became a nation, religion and political structure were intertwined in such a way that any religious offence was punished by civil laws.

In an Islamic State, sovereignty belongs to Allah, the exalted, and the people are trustees. It is not an idea, or metaphysical concept, but a practical way of regulating the relationship between individuals and the elected leadership. Since Allah is the creator, he has also the right to regulate human conduct. Man is supposed to exercise obligated authority; he is required to act within the purpose and limitation prescribed by the lawgiver.

Joseph Lecer (1966:6) notes that the most explicit references to general religious freedom among the Christian apologists are found in Tertullian and Lactantius:

...it is a matter of both human and natural law that every man can worship as he wishes...it is not in the nature of religion to impose itself by force. Nothing is so much a matter of free choice as religion: it disappears and becomes meaningless if sacrifice is offered against one's will.

## **2.2 BIBLICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STATE-RELIGION RELATIONSHIP**

The nation of Israel was religiously, politically and culturally “the people of the Lord”. The nation’s religion, which was constitutionally binding on all Israelites and all foreigners who came to live among them, and all the religious establishments, including the officials, the vestments they wore, the manner of conduct of their services, even prescriptions of their centres of worship: all these aspects were determined by God. The central feature of Israelite worship was the Ark of the Covenant, the seat of God in the midst of the nation. Its creation was ordered by God, and its specifications given by him (Exodus 35-39). The sacrifices were similarly determined (Leviticus 1-7,16).

In the period before the kings began to rule Israel, the nation was effectively a theocracy, led by God using, as his vice regents, certain prophets and judges like Moses, Joshua, Deborah and Samuel. The political institutions were theocratic in nature. Both the constitution and the laws of the land were the Word of God. The political institution of monarchy or kingship was foreign to Israel, who demanded a king in order to conform to the style of political leadership current in the nations around them (1 Samuel 8:5). Both Samuel, the then national ruler in his capacity as Judge and Prophet, and God, recognised the request as a form of disobedience. It was, effectively, a rejection of God’s leadership over the nation. But even so, the kingship itself functioned under theocracy. In God’s providence, the line of David became the line of descent of the Saviour of the world, Jesus, God’s son and the son of David (2 Samuel 7:14 – 16).

Culturally, the Israelites’ lives were regulated by the word of God, through their priests and prophets. Circumcision was not only an important religious duty, but also a significant item in the cultural identity of the whole community. The Book of Leviticus prescribes what foods the people could eat, and how they should prepare that food. One also finds regulation in God’s word to guide the Israelites in every aspect of their cultural lives. In every sense, they were the people of God.

Their relationship with Yahweh was captured in the concept of sonship. Israel as a nation was God's son (see Exodus 4:22; Hosea 11:1; Deut. 32:6,18, Jeremiah 31:9). What was the basis of this sonship? There were three considerations: the first, given emphasis in the scriptures cited above, is the fact that Israel was specially procreated as God's people. God did not look around the nations of the world in order to choose one from among them to be his special people; he actually created a whole new nation for himself. It was to this creative act, using two ninety-year-old people, that Israel owed its existence. John Wright (1997:18) argues that "Israel is the firstborn son of Yahweh for no other reason than that Yahweh brought them as a nation into existence, just as they are the people of God for no other reason than that he 'set his life upon' them and chose them for himself."

The second factor is the covenant. There are a number of covenants in the Bible, including the new covenant that Jeremiah spoke about (Jer. 31:31) by which we are united to God through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. The Sinai covenant (Exodus 19 – 24) is particularly significant, for it was the means through which God gave to Israel the instruments of government. The covenant had a list of conditions and obligations which, if upheld in the society, would lead to fulfilment of blessings (Deuteronomy 28:1 – 14). However, on the other side were fearful curses and punishments, which would result as consequences of disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15 – 68).

Although the said covenant, had significant symbolic value to Christians, it was made with the nation (Genesis 17: 10, Joshua 5:3). It was a peculiar covenant, with a particular significance to Israel only, and it cannot be repeated.

Thirdly, the relationship between Yahweh and Israel was seen in God's provision of land for the nation (Exodus 15:13 – 17). The land was given as a direct fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham (Genesis 12: 1). The land remained Yahweh's land. The Israelites' continued occupancy was conditioned by obedience to God's word. When the Israelites broke faith with God, they were punished by expulsion or occupation by foreigners (*cf* Deuteronomy 28: 58 – 64. See also Nehemiah 1:8 – 9). The examples shown above of special relationship bonded the nation of Israel to Yahweh. This was

demonstrated in passages such as Exodus 23: 21 –33, where the following features are discernible:

- a) Exhortation to obedience
- b) Dispossession of the nations
- c) Prohibition of idol worship
- d) Forbidding of contractual relations with the inhabitants of the land
- e) Being aware of the snare.

In the New Testament, the ways in which Jesus and others saw the composition of a religious nation was different. The power of God was supreme, and all rulers who formed the nations were not comparable to God. There was a complete separation between the supremacy of God and religion.

Jesus was born, lived and died under a pagan and foreign colonial power, the Roman Government (Luke 2:1 –5). He himself spoke about the Kingdom of God, which was near (Mark 1: 5), and the rule of the Kingdom, which was present in his ministry of driving out demons (Luke 11: 20). He was proclaimed the Messiah (Mark 8: 29), a concept full of militaristic and political aspirations; yet he did not give the impression that the Kingdom of God and the Empire of Caesar were in any sense antithetical. In fact, on the contrary, he endorsed the validity of the Roman Government in his answer concerning the paying of taxes to Caesar (Mark 12: 13 – 17). The Kingdom of God and empires of men exist side by side. Jesus did not endorse nor in any way support the violent means by which the Zealots wanted to inaugurate the era of the Kingdom of God. He spoke of the Kingdom of God as an event in the future which nevertheless was already present in his person and ministry (Luke 17: 20 – 21).

In political terms, the Kingdom of God is in the future, but in its essential character of the saving activity of God towards the individual, it is present in the person and the work of Jesus (Klappert, 1976: 388). There would be a time when the Kingdom

of God would not have competition from any worldly political realm, but that time is in the future. Before then, the Kingdom must go to the cross in order to fulfil all righteousness. Then Jesus would exercise political authority over all the kingdoms of the earth (Matthew 4: 8, 28:18).

In both Romans 13: 1 – 7 and 1 Peter 2: 13 – 17, the apostles teach the obligation the Christians have to obey the ruling authorities. The authorities themselves are said to be servants and ministers of God, clearly not references to clergy! The apostles are not endorsing the activities of every tyrant that has ever ruled any government, but they are identifying government and the exercise of political rule as a God-given task. The governments are instituted by God and should hold no terror to good conduct. Christians are even called upon to regularly and publicly pray for the ruling authorities (1 Timothy 2: 2 – 3).

It is clear that if the ruling authorities command what God has forbidden and forbid what God has commanded, the Christian is to disobey (Acts 4: 19). Yet that disobedience must not lead to the undermining of the concept of government and the promotion of chaos and disorder (by going to prison, a Christian who is compelled to disobey any ungodly command of a government is even then still upholding the rule of law, although having to pay for his convictions by accepting incarceration).

From this very brief survey of biblical material, the indications are that the Bible recognises that, although the Christian's attitude to the State would be formed by his or her faith and the values inherent therein, the form of government is determined by the culture of the people among whom the Christian lives.

It is in vain that we look to the Bible to find a form of Christian government. Christians may wish to inject Kingdom values into civil governments and their organs of State, but the form the government takes is culturally determined. The role the Church is expected to play is that which the prophets in the Old Testament performed.

The prophets were primarily concerned with what was happening at a particular time. They had to read the signs of the times. For example, when the Pharisees and Sadducees asked for a sign of the end of times from Jesus, He told them to “read the signs of the times”(Matthew 16:3), or “to interpret the times”(Luke 12:56). One would argue that, for a Church to play its role in a Christian nation, it has to know what is happening, analyse it and interpret it biblically.

The prophets criticised any situation that made the kings and their assistants accumulate wealth at the expense of the poor because it contradicted the intention of the covenant (Amos 5:10-11, Hosea 8:1,4,14).

Similarly Christians, like Old Testament prophets, are called upon to involve themselves in the transformation of this world. The New Testament demands the same high standards of social justice that are found in the Old Testament prophets (cf. Matthew 23:23; James 5:4). Jesus was the defender of the poor and the oppressed. He was on the side of those living on the margins of society (cf. Matthew 25:31-36). He built upon the tradition of the prophets and developed a critical attitude towards the civil and religious authorities of his time, an attitude that finally led to his death (cf. Matthew 26:2-4; John 11:46-53; Acts 4:25-27).

### **2.3 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STATE-RELIGION RELATIONSHIP**

In 312 AD with the coming of the Emperor Constantine, and with the issuing of the Edict of Milan in 313 AD, things changed. Christianity was no longer a persecuted religion. The edict by the Emperor made all religions free. According to Joseph Lecer (1966:6) the edict

suits the tranquillity which the empire enjoys that all our subjects be completely free to adore the god of their choice and that no cult be deprived of the respect that is due to it.

Although the edict brought freedom to all religions, Christianity was a favoured religion. Christianity had spread throughout the empire, which meant, if Christians were united, the empire would be united. Christianity was seen as cement for the empire.

Another pointer to religious freedom is seen in the protest of the early Church fathers, levelled against the intrusion of the State into the domain of religion, particularly when these intrusions were in favour of heresy. According to Joseph Lecer (1966:7), Ambrose of Milan said to Emperor Valentinian II who wanted to hand over the Porcian Basilica to the Arian Bishop Auxentius:

... don't imagine that you possess an imperial right over the things that are God's... the palaces belong to the Emperor, the Churches to the priest.

Such a clear distinction between the function of a Prince and that of the bishop could have led to freedom of worship. But this was not the case.

In 380 AD, Christianity became a State religion and paganism was outlawed. Gonzalez L. Justo (1970:268) noted that the outlawing of paganism was a great reversal of the early 300s when Christianity was a forbidden religion and paganism was a State religion. This great reversal gave Christian emperors powers to recover their traditional religious powers in the form of Caesaropapism.<sup>1</sup>

To the Christian emperors, religious unity was of paramount importance because it contributed to the unity of the empire. Unity was emphasized because of the threats of invasions. Justo (1970:272) noted that the preoccupation with unity led to the suppression of paganism and any form of confessional dissidence.

---

<sup>1</sup> Caesaropapism refers to a political system in which the head of the State is also the head of the Church and supreme judge in religious matters. The term is most frequently associated with the late Roman Empire. Most modern historians recognise that the legal Byzantine texts speak of interdependence between the imperial and ecclesiastical structures rather than of a unilateral dependence of the latter. Historians believe also that there was nothing in Byzantine understanding of the Christian faith that would recognize the emperor as either doctrinally infallible or invested with priestly powers.

The Middle Ages were different from the early Church fathers' age because it had a confessed policy. This can be seen in the word "Christendom", which appeared in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. According to J.W. Gladwin (1988:133) Christendom was a political system that was based on the unity of faith. Christendom gave the Church predominance in the temporal world. The Church was part of the State. The Pope was the head of State as well as the supreme guardian of the faith. The Church was able to use the State instruments to suppress heretics. For example, the death penalty spread during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries and became regular practice in the 13<sup>th</sup> century with the establishment of the inquisition.<sup>2</sup>

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century things changed. Christendom became divided along national lines in the temporal field, and was soon to break up, in the spiritual field, through the rise of the Protestant Churches and more radical sects. In both the States that remained Catholic and in the Protestant principalities, the principle still prevailed of a religion that was closely linked to the political set-up.

The difference with the Middle Ages is that it was the faith that imposed itself on the prince, and not the prince who imposed his faith on the State. In this new situation, the prince became the religious leader, and he was free to change his mind if he wanted to. Joseph Lecer (1966:13) noted that:

religious power became but an appendage to the prince's sovereignty over his territory. It became more intimately subject to the arbitrary decision of the monarch or magistrate. This legalism of the modern Nation—States only protracted for a long time the intolerance of the Middle Ages and that in an even intolerant manner.

<sup>2</sup> Inquisition means inquiry or investigation. Since the thirteenth century, when heresy was strong in southern France, all bishops had been required to maintain a regular inquisition, or court, which inquired into the faith of church members. The inquisition was directed toward Christians, not non-Christians, and inquired into their faith and practices.

Alan Thompson (1976:7) observed that during the Reformation, which was led by Martin Luther, the unity of the Church and its interference in the political affairs of the state was challenged. Luther and Calvin used biblical scriptures to question the temporal powers of the Pope. King Henry denounced the Pope's authority, and founded the Anglican Church.

The kings became absolute rulers. This raised the people's consciousness, and they began to resist absolute rule. They demanded tolerance and freedom. By the nineteenth century Europe had become more and more democratic in its institutions. Joseph Lecer (1966:19) noted that one thing that came out of the 16<sup>th</sup> century was the belief that

There can be no real and stable religious freedom, which is not based on the respect of the human person, on his conscience, on the autonomy of both Church and State and on the determination of government never to use temporal force in religious defence or for its elimination.

From the foregoing, which gives a historical perspective of the relationship between the State and the Church, it will be argued and demonstrated that the views and ideas of Martin Luther, as discussed above, are applicable to the Zambian situation.

## **2.4 THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STATE– RELIGION RELATIONSHIP**

The relationship between the state and religion has been grouped into five categories; namely, religion being against politics, religion being in tension with politics, religion being above politics, religion embracing politics and religion transforming politics. These categories are from Jonathan Chaplin (Orientation Jan-December, 1995 75-78).

#### **2.4.1 RELIGION BEING AGAINST POLITICS**

A branch of Christianity called the Anabaptists believed that submission to governmental authority, ordered by God, was important even though the State must not force the Christian community to compromise its allegiance to the way of the cross. (New Dictionary of Theology, 1988:18). The Anabaptist refused to be involved in government, military service or war because such involvement can compromise true discipleship. Arthur Gish (1979: 115) argued that the underlining reason for the refusal is that the secular government has its citizenship in this world, but the Christian's citizenship is in heaven.

A Christian's involvement in politics is likely to draw him into coercion, deception, manipulation and a host of other sins. The Church, instead of involving itself in politics, should devote itself to its essential mission which is evangelisation of non-Christians.

According to Jonathan Chaplin (1995:62) this position shows that there should be a clear distinction between religion and the State, and the two should not be put together because human politics has no place in God's redemptive purposes other than that of preserving the world from chaos in order that the Gospel might be preached.

#### **2.4.2. RELIGION BEING IN TENSION WITH POLITICS**

While the category described above calls for a separation between religion and the State, the second category believes that the Christian may be involved in politics. The aim should be that of upholding justice. The problem of Christians involving themselves in politics is that they find themselves in dual citizenship, that is the worldly and the spiritual. They have to live simultaneously in both realms. As has been stated above, politics is not part of the Church's mission; hence any Christian who involves himself in politics does so as an obligation of being a citizen but not as a Christian.

### **2.4.3 RELIGION BEING ABOVE POLITICS**

The two realms, spiritual and temporal, feature again in this category as in the second model where a Christian finds himself in both realms. Political life belongs to the temporal order while the Christian life belongs to the spiritual order. The effect of Christian order is to bring perfection on political order, for example by ensuring that there is justice in the political realm. Therefore religion provides guidance in political matters, especially where politics impinges upon justice, but the two realms should still be kept distinct.

### **2.4.4 RELIGION EMBRACES POLITICS**

From the above categories, one can deduce that the fear of “marrying” politics with religion is that religion would be distorted by politics, which is a lower order. Jonathan Chaplin (1995:62) cites the example of Apartheid South Africa where Afrikaners believed they were a chosen race, and the purpose of God was identified with the preservation of white racist civilization. Similarly, Farwell’s moral majority movement in the US was of the view that

God has raised America in these last days for the cause of world evangelisation and for the protection of his people the Jews. I don’t think America has any other right or reason for existence other than these two purposes... God has blessed America because we have blessed the Jews. God has blessed America because we have done more for the cause of world evangelisation than any other nation (Christianity Today, 4 Sep.1981).

### **2.4.5 RELIGION TRANSFORMING POLITICS**

This category attempts to combine the value of political life with a search for a distinctively Christian perspective. According to Chaplin (1995:70), this model looks at political life as being rooted in the created structures for the human community. The purpose of redemption is seen as the ultimate restoration of fallen creation. Redemption

does not leave creation behind; rather, it purges it of evil and transforms it into the kingdom of God. Since redemption reaches all of creation, Christians should seek Christian politics, motivated and directed by the redemptive purposes of God. In contrast to models two, three and four above, this model is of the view that Christians should develop a biblically inspired framework rather than seek a synthesis of Christian and other elements.

## **2.5 POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STATE-RELIGION RELATIONSHIP**

### **2.5.1 RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

A secular State as defined by John M. Swomley (1987:11), is

a state that is uncommitted to any religious institution or institutions or to religious beliefs and practices.

This is the definition which this study adopted.

The question that is cardinal to religious freedom is: "how can religious freedom be guaranteed in a State that has several religions?" Swomley argues that secular states can guarantee religious freedom, because each religious grouping would be considered equal. He outlines the advantages of a secular State. These are:

- (1) separation prevents the government from determining Church policy, whether directly or indirectly;
- (2) the Church would not seek for privileges from the government;
- (3) Churches would be fully responsible for financing and running their own programmes;
- (4) the Church would avoid the resentment of those who do not want contributions to the Church through government taxation;
- (5) it would be easy for the Church to criticise an unjust government without fearing the loss of funding;
- (6) the Church would be able to help both the rich and the poor people in society in terms of education and health provision.

- (7) though by constitution the government has nothing to do with religion, in practice the State has an obligation to meet. It has to ensure that the rights of conscience are protected. The Churches are left to decide on their own worship, doctrine, governance and procuring of resources.

Having discussed above what religion and politics entail, the author discusses the aspects of religious liberty by looking at Jay Newman's argument. Newman (1991:99) states that

Anyone who truly believes in the existence of a transcendent authority would necessarily regard the judgement of that authority (and its earthly agents) as over-ruling in some sense the judgements of even the most sophisticated and well-meaning secular functionaries.

The problem posed by Newman was the definition of Transcendent Authority, because the concept differs from one religion to another. This makes it difficult to have one religion superior to others. Every religion is superior in the eyes of the believer. Therefore it is wrong to make one religion superior to the others.

### **2.5.2 RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN AFRICA**

In 1948, the United Nations passed a Declaration on the Rights of Man. The declaration defines Religious Freedom as follows:

...everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom either alone or in community with others and in public or private to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance (*Article 18 of the Declaration of Human Rights adopted by General Assembly in 1948*).

This Declaration demands that human rights should be respected. It also recognises the rights guaranteeing religious freedom. While most African countries have ratified the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man, most of them have failed to honour the Declaration. For example Zambia, in 1997, detained more than 100 people in connection with a coup attempt. They were held in conditions amounting to cruel,

inhuman and degrading treatment; at least one detainee died in custody. Journalists and human rights defenders continued to face imprisonment for exercising their right to freedom of expression. Torture and ill-treatment, shootings and unlawful killings by police were widespread (Amnesty International Report 1998).

While the example above does not refer to abuse of religious freedom, there is no guarantee that African governments would respect the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Jay Newman (1991:112) noted that:

we must be vigilant to ensure that constitutional provisions for religious liberty are acknowledged in principle. In many nations they are ineffective and many leaders throughout the world who praised the policy of religious liberty have manifested little interest in seeing to it that that policy is more conscientiously put into practice.

As far as the issue of separation between Church and State is argued in this study, one would take the position as stipulated by Gerrie Lubbe (1997:38), in which he argues that

the state acts as an overarching structure, under cover of which all its citizens, regardless of culture or creed, live and operate. As such, it is responsible for the well-being of all and ought to promote its functions in an unbiased way.

In order to achieve this the state needs to be secular. Lubbe notes that the use of the term secular is problematic in the sense that people think of a secular state in which secularism is the dominant ideology and where the state demonstrates itself as unconcerned with, if not aloof from, religion as such. Similarly Albie Sachs (1990:45) is of the opinion that the separation between the State and religion should be absolute.

Sachs argues that

The State could continue to maintain legislation recognising

the authority of certain religious leaders to register marriage as marriage officers. It could encourage non-proselytising persons to offer religious comfort in hospitals and other State institutions. It could co-operate with schools, hospitals and other State institutions run largely or exclusively by religious organisations. It could discuss with religious leaders the circumstances in public life where prayers would be said or oaths taken. It could make appropriate arrangements for the broadcasting of religious services. It could permit non-denominational places of prayer at State institutions.

There are problems in implementing this approach in a country like Zambia, which has many religions. The phrase "certain leaders" used by Sachs segregates other leaders. In Zambia Christian leaders are easily recognised compared to those of other religions. Taking marriage officers as an example, Moslems, Hindus and Buddhists do not face problems marrying their people because they do not marry under Zambian law. The problem arises amongst Christian leaders. It would be difficult to come up with "certain leaders" to work in collaboration with the State without other leaders complaining of being sidelined.

## CHAPTER 3

### **3.1 THE ZAMBIAN SITUATION**

In order to ably discuss the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation, one would have to bring in the historical development of Zambia as far as the introduction of Christianity is concerned.

The relationship between the Church and the State in Zambia should be seen in the context of the pre-colonial set-up, since 1890. The colonial government did not want to participate directly in the administration of the territory; it instead opted to use private organisations that were granted protection. These organisations were given powers to acquire land on behalf of their masters. The acquired territories were rich in minerals such as copper and cobalt. The introduction of Christianity in Zambia ran concurrently with the discovery of the said minerals.

As noted by John Baur (1994:205), in 1878 the London Mission Society opened their first mission in Northern Rhodesia, which is now Zambia. The mainline Churches founded all the earlier mission stations.

The alliances of missionaries and the colonial administration consolidated the colonial rule. Oliver Anthony (1967:76-77) argues that most of the missionaries who came to Africa were not only interested in spreading the gospel but were also part and parcel of the colonial government. They were involved both directly and indirectly in politics, commerce and land disputes.

Ian M. Fletcher (1950) noted that David Livingstone in his letter to Professor Sedgewick of Cambridge University described the motives of his mission as more than what meets the eye. The motives were not merely exploratory, but also to find ways and means of benefiting both the African and the missionary's own countrymen...

In the Western Province of Zambia, for example, Francis Colliard of the Paris Evangelical Society was very instrumental in persuading Chief Lewanika of Northern Rhodesia to sign a treaty with the British South Africa Company, which controlled Northern Rhodesia in the 1890s. Oginga Odinga (1967:66) cited P.D. Snelson who noted that

There was another context in which some of the societies became politically involved. Cecil Rhodes encouraged the societies to cross the Limpopo river and to proceed into the two territories, which bore his name on the grounds that the missionaries contributed to the maintenance of law and order. "Missionaries", he once remarked, "are better than policemen, and cheaper." The work of evangelism could go forward only in peaceful conditions and the views of the missionaries, therefore, coincided with those of the Administration concerning the desirability of establishing and maintaining law and order...they heard cases and imposed punishment, flogging those whose offences, such as adultery or theft, were deemed to be serious.

Therefore, the direct collaboration between the colonisers, whose main motive was both political and economic, and the missionaries, assisted in determining the future politics of Zambia. Nevertheless, at most times the missionaries concentrated on spreading the gospel. They sided with the local people when need be, especially when serious threats from either tribal rivals or external forces were made.

As colonial rule expanded, so did the Church and its activities. Throughout the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and the process of amalgamation which took place in the 1950s, the Church got more involved in the politics and issues of governance in Zambia. In this period, the Churches got into establishing schools, hospitals and other institutions, which identified them as an entity.

The debate of amalgamation and later Federation profoundly affected the Church's opinion. It raised the issue of whether the Church should be involved in politics. In the 1930s early 1940s, the British missions in Northern Rhodesia used to oppose amalgamation, but many of them opted to remain neutral and take events as they came. After the Second World War, the Churches came under much heavier pressure than ever

before. The Church had to take a stand and that was to take an active part in the political and social emancipation of its African members if it had to survive as an active force amongst the more progressive Africans. In some cases this approach was met with resistance.

To the African who took up Christianity, the issue of Federation provided him with an opportunity to test the integrity of European Church leaders. It provided a chance for them to prove whether they were prepared to make common cause with the disfranchised African majority in defence of their interests, or support their stand with the rest of their own race. This was a big challenge to the missionaries.

Though the Church had opted for political neutrality in the matter of amalgamation and Federation, they shortly discovered that it was not that easy. Africans were taking positions of authority in society as teachers, storemen, and civil servants. Those who were attract to join the Church, advocated for the Church to take a stand on federation. Some of those who joined the Church regarded it as an agency of imperialism which had to be fought.

Christianity itself was regarded as an agency for weakening African resistance. John V. Taylor and Dorothea Lehmann (1961:154) cite the leader in the Roman Catholic congregation in the then Northern Rhodesia, who said:

Today Christianity is losing ground because of the imposition of the Federation on this territory. Many have so lost confidence in the Europeans that now we are wondering whether they only brought the word of God to try to blind us so as to take advantage of us and turn us into slaves.

As the Church started to rely on the emergent African intelligentsia, it became difficult for it to detach itself from political questions which occupied the minds of these Africans. It was also difficult for the Church to keep aloof because it was forced to strike a balance between the interests of its white and black adherents in matters affecting the common problem.

L.H. Gann (1964:419) noted that Churches became involved in the Federation issue, their reactions differing in various ways. The Dutch Reformed Church adopted a favourable outlook, while the Catholics remained neutral on what they considered a question open to legitimate political dispute; arguing that the Church should not interfere in political matters provided natural or revealed law was not being violated.

Gann further noted that the main opposition came from the Church of Scotland, who in 1952 issued a statement that Federation should not be imposed without the Africans' consent, and that a Royal Commission should go to Africa to discuss what steps should be taken to ensure the undoubted advantages of closer union without calling a halt to African advancement.

While the British Council of Churches advocated for partnership of whites and blacks, the Christian Council of Northern Rhodesia recognized that it was primarily the right of every Christian to hold his own views on the issue of Federation in the light of his own conscience. According to John Taylor (1961:163) the latter Council expressed deep concern that the government had found it necessary to proceed with Federation while African opinion remained so strongly opposed to it. The Council respectfully requested Government to issue such a declaration of rights for all men within the territory as would remove all doubt as to their future well-being within the State.

The outcome of events were as expected. In August 1953, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was imposed against the will of the majority of the Africans. Taylor (1961:163) notes that the Africans felt betrayed by their white Church leaders. On the other hand some missionaries were in a very difficult situation. They tried to persuade their missionary boards to lobby for the Africans but they never succeeded.

### 3.2 LENSHINA UPRIISING

Another notable event during this period (1950-1963) was the Lenshina uprising. According to L.W.F. Oger (1960) Lenshina was born around 1920. She was a member of the Church of Scotland Mission of Lubwa in northern Zambia. She was active in the Church and helped with the teaching of the catechumens. She did not have any formal education. From 1955 onwards, Lenshina propagated her message on her own behalf, thus founding an independent Church. By 1958, she had a following of about 50,000 people. Most of the mainline congregations lost about 14 percent of their members, 50 percent of these being catechumens. The Church of Scotland was practically swept away in Northern Province and parts of the Eastern Province where the sect was active.

The Church became known as Lumpa, which means, ‘excelling all others.’ W.M.J. Van Binsbergen (1979:405) observed that scores of Lumpa Churches were created throughout Zambia’s Northern Province, and some appeared along the line of rail. Lenshina registered her Church with the government, and it therefore had a legal existence in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

Lenshina’s new Church took a nationalistic character. Members changed from English names, to purely African names. Her Church was to be African, for Africans; and she gave her followers the feeling of belonging to their own Church in which they were expected to unite. W.M.J. Van Binsbergen (1979:405) noted that many believed Lenshina had political aims, hidden under the mantle of religion so as to obtain the protection of the law which protected all religions. The government kept an eye on her movement, for they feared that it might become a tool of African political agitation.

The probability that her movement was political was high. It was supported by the African National Congress (ANC), an African nationalist political party which was known to be anti-Roman Catholic. The Congress party supported Lenshina because her

movement was well rooted in the society. One would say that the reason for this support was more political than religious, in that the Roman Catholic church was a missionary church which had white missionaries who could not be trusted politically.

W.M.J. Van Binsbergen (1979:405) noted further that Lenshina followers caused schools to be closed or burned. The sect accused teachers and catechists of working for the Europeans; The sect also made trouble for government officials. By their manner of doing things, and the words they spoke, Lenshina's followers proved that they were indeed influenced by the ANC. When trouble arose in September 1956, Lenshina's people were in the forefront, ready to join in. For example, at Chinsali, they marched to the district administrative headquarters. Lenshina's husband attempted to kill the District Officer. He was tried and sentenced to two years' imprisonment.

It is argued that the ANC supported two religious sects, the Methodist and Lumpa Churches. The reason was that the Methodist Church was sympathetic to the nationalistic movements. It has continued to do so. Fiji is a case in point as has been shown in Chapter one.

The Lumpa Church did not only oppose white dominance, but it also opposed any structure which proved to have been a threat to its existence. The United National Independence Party (UNIP), which was a breakaway from the African National Congress, was not spared. Lenshina's view was that UNIP did not stand for an egalitarian society, which she was looking forward to, and therefore her Church had to resist the penetration of UNIP in areas where Lenshina held sway.

According to W.M.J. Van Binsbergen (1979:410) the set-up which Lenshina was trying to put in place made the nationalist leaders conclude that Lenshina's movement was taking a political line, as opposed to a religious line. This was made clear when the Lumpa implicitly denied the legitimacy of the colonial State and its post-colonial successor. It attempted to create a structure of control comparable to the State, at a much smaller scale geographically.

W.M.J. Van Binsbergen (1979:384) observed that the regrouping posed a threat to the new State because of their common faith and unity.

Sub-national threats to Zambia's unity and security are not only seen in tribalism, regionalism and other sectional interests, but also in-group loyalties like those of the Lumpa's and Watchtower sect. These religious groups are held to differ from others in that their behaviour and beliefs are "politically" perceived a challenge to the existing or desired authority of the party and government.

The threat became a reality as observed below when the government clashed with the Lumpa Church, leaving many dead and forcing others to flee the country.

### **3.3 THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN ZAMBIA: 1963 –1991**

As discussed above, the Church in Zambia was in a difficult position during the period of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The difficulty lay in terms of the stand taken by the Church on the question of Federation and how it affected its members. Some Church leaders sided with the Africans against the Federation while others were neutral.

Northern Rhodesia's right to secede from the Federation was granted in March 1963, and in the following months the country was involved in drafting a new Constitution.

#### **3.3.1 THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER**

On 22 January 1964 Kenneth Kaunda became the first black Prime Minister of Zambia. John Mwanakatwe (1994:41) notes that the activities of the Lumpa Church were embarrassing to the Kaunda regime, especially because he advocated non-violence. Kaunda attempted to solve the conflict with Lenshina and her followers through dialogue. He sent Grey Zulu and Simon Kapwepwe, senior officials in UNIP, to talk with Lenshina. The mission did not achieve much. Instead, Lumpa followers attacked and killed a European officer and an African sergeant with spears, axes, bows and arrows. Kaunda responded by sending his forces of law and order. According to Mwanakatwe

(1994:41) an open conflict broke out. It is estimated that more than one thousand people died in the conflict. Lenshina surrendered herself to the police while many of her followers fled into Zaire, now Democratic Republic of Congo.

Kaunda's regime saw the Lumpa Church as a threat because it was still trying to legitimise itself. The Lumpa Church did not recognise the newly formed State, and this was a direct challenge to the State. Mwanakatwe (1994:41) noted that Kaunda could not afford to ignore the challenge which was coming from the Lumpa Church. The threats to the newly formed government was exhibited when Lenshina forbade Lumpa adherents from joining UNIP, the then ruling political party: Lenshina publicly burned party cards, and made threats regarding the judgment in heaven of non-believers. The Lumpa Church in this case took the position of judging its followers.

### **3.3.2 JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES**

The Jehovah's Witnesses did not participate in the political activities and disturbances that took place during the transition period from Federation to independence. The confrontations occurred two years after independence. The Jehovah's Witnesses believed in the total separation of religion and State.

According to Sholto Cross (1978:308) the Jehovah's Witnesses do not agree with certain symbols of the State, such as the singing of the national anthem, the chanting of political slogans concerning national unity at public functions, and the display of the Zambian national flag at all schools. These symbols led the Jehovah's Witnesses to withdraw their children from schools. The government was not happy with the situation and they warned Jehovah's Witnesses that they could be banned. European officials of the Jehovah's Witnesses were expelled from Zambia in mid-1967, because they were considered instrumental in influencing the local Jehovah's Witnesses to disobey the government.

The police stepped in and began to harass members of Jehovah's Witnesses who refused to co-operate with the process of national registration, vaccination programmes, and saluting the national flag. According to Cross (1978:308) in a number of cases meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses were broken up. During 1968 the dispute escalated, with the role of government ministers and police being taken over by UNIP activists and senior politicians.

Cross (1978:309) argued that from being a neo-colonialist influence that hindered development policies and the legitimate extension of State control, the image of the Jehovah's Witnesses now changed to one of a profound political party that sought to withhold popular loyalty from UNIP and its government.

This conflict was taking place during the period when the President was attempting to establish a one-party system in Zambia. Any dissenting views were interpreted as resistance to the aims of UNIP and support for the opposition party, the African National Congress.

As noted by Cross, the position of the Jehovah's Witnesses was exacerbated by the fact that UNIP was losing voters. UNIP was putting the blame on the Jehovah's Witnesses who they claimed were discouraging their members from registering as voters. The support for the African National Congress was growing and there was growing discontent within UNIP, particularly in the Northern Province of Zambia. Members of the Jehovah's Witnesses who refused to buy party cards or register as voters provided a scapegoat for UNIP. In periodic outbursts of violence between July 1968 and January 1969, 45 Kingdom Halls (Jehovah's Witness Church buildings) were burnt, 469 houses destroyed, and looting of properties took place. Many Jehovah's Witnesses were killed. In some parts of the country, as in Luapula Province, Jehovah's Witnesses were forced to live in the bush. The fact that the Jehovah's Witnesses armed themselves with bows and arrows led to renewed fears that a confrontation would take place between UNIP and themselves.

It was at this point that President Kaunda took control. He called for a conference between the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Government. Cross (1978:310) observed that as a result of the President's intervention, the policy of religious tolerance was publicly reaffirmed. The ban on Jehovah's Witnesses and preventing them from entering markets and other public buildings and attending religious services was lifted. Criminal charges of assault and arson against members of the Jehovah's Witnesses were withdrawn.

The decision which the government of Zambia took was the most advisable one. It was realised that the Church should be left to run its own affairs without interference from the State except when the State was convinced that peace was being threatened.

Kaunda's action was to protect his citizens and to see that law and order was upheld. On the other hand, as Van Binsbergen (1979:384) argues and notes, the "UNIP government was not merely trying to enforce its monopoly of power, but also trying to underpin its own legitimacy in the eyes of the Zambian population by presenting itself as the supreme guardian of religion and morality". Van Binsbergen further notes that the Churches had achieved religious legitimacy because they were in existence long before UNIP. They had a large following, which commanded a considerable social power, and therefore was a threat to the government.

### **3.3.3 PRESIDENT KENNETH KAUNDA'S RELIGIOUS POLICY**

According to John Mwanakatwe (1994:219) Kenneth David Kaunda was born in 1924 in a Christian family. His father was a missionary. Kaunda himself confessed to have been brought up in a Christian home and his Christian beliefs were part of him. According to Thomas Patrick Melady (1964:41), "it was his habit to turn to God in prayer." Kaunda wished more Christian men and women could join in all political parties. But many Christians were prevented from joining them openly for fear of being blacklisted by their Churches.

Colin Morris (1966:11) described Kaunda as an intensely religious man. Kaunda had an open religious policy, which allowed every religion to practise its faith without being hindered. He was a syncretist who was concerned with the bridging of the gap between different religions, and who wished to incorporate into his experience the best elements of them all. This approach to religion brought him into conflict with Christian leaders particularly when he aligned himself with Ranganathan, an Eastern guru (Mirror 28 October – 3 November 1991:5). Meanwhile, President Kaunda (1966:11) described himself as a ‘Christian humanist’ who was at home in any of the worshipping centres be it in a cathedral, mosque, temple or synagogue, with an ease that made nonsense of religious divisions.

Zambia was a secular State not because President Kaunda undervalued the Christian contribution to national life, but because he saw Zambia as a meeting ground, not only of many races, but also of many religions. According to Colin Morris (1966:11) Kaunda was an advocate of the reunion of the Christian Church because he steadfastly refused to take seriously denominational differences.

From the incursions and disturbances caused by the Lumpa Church and Jehovah’s Witnesses described above, the government realised that there was a need to demonstrate the various roles and responsibilities of the Church and the State. Religious institutions needed to set moral and spiritual standards for both the government and the nation, which would be used to measure policies and action for development.

Kaunda (1966:92) argued that the Church had a more wonderful opportunity to be a relevant and effective spiritual and moral force in the newly established States by challenging development efforts.

In his early days in power, Kaunda used Christianity to legitimise the government. The mainline Churches had a large following, which meant that if Kaunda had the support of the Church his rule would be much easier. According to Gifford (1998:191), Kaunda

used Christian rhetoric to project an image of compassion, uprightness and integrity, and made political capital from his image as a Christian gentleman.

### **3.3.4 THE CHURCH AND ZAMBIAN HUMANISM – 1967**

The Christian virtues of compassion, uprightness and integrity became part of the ideology of President Kaunda called Humanism. According to Mwanakatwe (1994:49) in April 1967, during a UNIP National Council meeting President Kaunda officially introduced Zambian Humanism. He defined Humanism:

... as a political philosophy which endeavours to devise a social, political and economic order which is based on Man's truth rather than on Man's untruth. Success would largely depend on a reappraisal of the forces ranged against us, and their neutralisation by the State acting on behalf of the masses.

Humanism aimed at respecting Man as an individual in any given social system. Man has to be central in the four areas of human endeavour. These are economic, social and cultural, scientific and technological and defence and security.

There is no evidence that the existence of the Lumpa Church and Jehovah's Witnesses influenced Kaunda in coming up with the ideology of Humanism. Patrick Ollawa (1979:126) who was a senior lecturer in the Department of Political and Administrative studies at the University of Zambia, noted that the socio-economic inequalities between the urban and rural areas which were brought about by the colonial economic policies in the late 1920s had influenced Kaunda to come up with the ideology of Humanism. Kaunda needed to reverse the trend but it was not easy because many factors were at play, such as lack of Zambian skilled manpower, and the fact that the structure of the economy was dependent on foreign companies. According to Patrick Ollawa (1979:126) Kaunda needed an ideology through which he could come to grips with the objective challenges posed by the crisis of development.

C.J. Fredrich (1963:82) defines an ideology as

... an action-related system of ideas, cognitive and moral beliefs about man and society (i.e. ethical evaluations of the past, present and future) as well as the perceptions of the role of institutions on society, which provide specific guidance to members of society in the course of political and economic interaction.

An ideology is supposed to give an individual a unified and conscious worldview. Kenneth Kaunda (1967:4) argued that "There is no doubt at all that the greatest blessing bestowed on Africa, if one can generalize, is that we have always had a gift for Man enjoying the fellowship of Man simply because he is Man. This is out of our traditional culture."

Mwanakatwe (1994:49) noted that the major tenets of humanism were rooted in the traditional African society, which abhorred ostracising its members, whatever their circumstances in life. In traditional African society, inter-dependence among members was a common feature. The poor, the lame, the sick and the old relied upon stronger members of society for care and support.

Zambian humanism was in line with the best in tribal society. In humanism emphasis was placed on the equality of all men. Man was put at the centre of all activity. It was different from both capitalism and communism. It condemned the exploitation of man by man.

If Zambians accepted a worldview described by Kaunda it not only created in them a particular outlook about the traditional African way of life (namely, that of being man-centred), but it also helped structure their attitudes towards man in general. Zambian Humanism also helped to stimulate mass input mobilization. According to Patrick Ollawa (1979:126) most of the sets of ideas embodied in Zambian Humanism represented political addresses and declarations delivered by Kaunda at different times and sometimes to different audiences to announce, to explain or to defend particular choices of policies pursued by the party. This meant that Kaunda used Zambian Humanism,

which was coloured by Christian principles, to sell his ideas. The same principle would later be reflected in Chiluba's Declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation.

Despite what has been said above, Kaunda used Zambian Humanism to achieve his goals, which were not necessarily Christian goals. He was invited to address 200 Church leaders on Humanism. At the end of the seminar the Church leaders supported Zambian Humanism. These leaders were drawn from the three Christian mother bodies namely the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, the Christian Council of Zambia and the Zambia Episcopal Conference.

They suggested that:

... the Church adopt Zambian humanism as part of its programme of evangelisation; that they explain this to the people and develop it further in writing. (Church Leaders' Seminar on Humanism and Development "Christian Responses" Lusaka 18-19 March 1982)

The Christian mother bodies welcomed Zambian Humanism because its roots were in Zambian traditional values. It helped the Zambian people to rediscover their identity. It was person-centred but not materialistic. It fitted the idea of development as being a progress from what was less human to what was more human.

Zambian Humanism aimed at freeing people from all forms of exploitation and to fulfil human needs. It also gave the Church the chance to work together with the party and its Government for the development of the nation. The tenets of Humanism were attractive but its implementation was difficult. To facilitate the institutionalisation of Zambian Humanism, Kaunda issued notes in the form of a guide for its implementation. He instructed education authorities to teach Humanism as a subject in schools and colleges. All civil servants were required to be conversant with the principles of Zambian Humanism. Mwanakatwe (1994:50) notes that promotion to some key posts or positions in the teaching service or the civil service became dependent on candidates' performance in an examination on Zambian Humanism. A government ministry of 'National

'Guidance' was created specifically to teach the principles of Humanism to members of the public by organising seminars, workshops and conferences.

Reverend Joe Imakando, the Executive Director of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, (EFZ) attacked Humanism as a philosophy, which put man at the centre of society, instead of God, which was unacceptable. (Speech - The Role of the Church in the Democratic process in Zambia, 1992:3). EFZ was a signatory to the document referred to above in which the three mother bodies embraced Humanism. The turn-around can be attributed to the fact that Imakando has an American Evangelicalism orientation, which treats the word humanism with contempt.

### **3.3.5 THE CHURCH AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM – 1969**

As indicated above, the ideology of Humanism was aimed at reversing the economic trend that was put in place by the colonial masters. Kaunda wanted to ensure that there was equal distribution of income and national resources among both social groups and geographical areas, as well as equal sacrifice and participation by all members of the society toward the promotion of economic development.

Related to this was the desire to arrest the growth of an indigenous capitalist class and eliminate all forms of exploitation of man by man. Kaunda (1967:13) argued that to eliminate exploitation and to transform the economy he was going to use Scientific Socialism. Scientific Socialism represented the structural and organizational features of Kaunda's model of a communocratic State. Kaunda's Scientific Socialism differed from that of Marx who abhorred religion because it brought about false consciousness among workers. According to Patrick Ollawa (1979:142) Kaunda tried to combine Christianity and African Traditional Religion whose values were based on co-operation, non-antagonistic struggle and moral obligation toward fellow men and the community as a whole.

The Christian Church leaders argued that Socialism per se was in harmony with Christian beliefs, in so far as it meant a system which tried by public ownership of the means of production to make a nation's wealth serve all its members fairly. God intended the earth and all its contents to benefit every member of the human family. Therefore, created goods should flow fairly to all. Socialist ideals were very much in line with the message of Christ who came "to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to set the downtrodden free" (Luke 4:18).

Nevertheless the Christian Church leaders rejected Scientific Socialism with its offshoots such as atheism, agnosticism and its emphasis on evolution. They stated their uncompromising opposition to Scientific Socialism which was a follow-up to Humanism. The Church leaders believed that Scientific Socialism's anti-religious principles and practices would lead to de-humanisation. They also outlined the assets and the limitations of its economic performance. On the one hand, there was collective production, a solution to the unemployment problem, fixed salary scales and achievement of certain equality (ZEC, CCZ, and EFZ , Pastoral Letter August 1979). On the other hand, they pointed out the limitations of the systems of production based on a State monopoly. They also voiced their doubts about the quality of Scientific Socialist achievements in the realm of the equality of man. They further remarked that from the strictly socio-economic point of view, the introduction of Scientific Socialism would lead to disappointment (ZEC, CCZ, and EFZ , Pastoral Letter August 1979).

### **3.3.6 THE ROLE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES PLAYED IN THE DOWNFALL OF KAUNDA**

The Church in Zambia differed with Kaunda on his association with spiritual powers such as those claimed by Ranganathan. Ranganathan was a Guru (teacher) from an oriental religion. Kaunda's links with "occult spiritual powers" alarmed many 'born-again' Christians, who claimed that the devil had "mobilised his forces of darkness to fight against, and perhaps destroy, the nation of Zambia (National Mirror 6-13 October, 1990, 4).

Towards the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s the Church in Zambia became more involved in the politics of the nation. The Church was involved not in the sense of it turning into a political party but in speaking out on the evils of the day on behalf of the people who had no voice at all.

As the economic ills (poverty, lack of medicines in health institutions, poor educational facilities etc.) in Zambia deepened, a change of government became inevitable. The Church attributed the food riots of April 1987 and June 1990 and other national crises to the economic difficulties faced by many people who were increasingly facing hardships. The food riots pointed to deeper political problems related to the decision-making process and the democratic participation of the people themselves. These problems, in turn, revealed profound moral challenges which were set before the people of Zambia.

The Church in Zambia became a formidable force for change. On 22 July 1990 the Roman Catholic Bishops issued a Pastoral Statement, which noted that:

There was need for serious restructuring of the national economy in order that we may more efficiently and justly utilise our rich human and natural resources, the gift of our creator to all of us. The party and government are at this time clearly working under certain pressures from the international banks to take serious steps to remedy our economic problems.

What is not clear, however, is why a decision of such major importance – the raising of the price of a basic commodity – should have been imposed upon the people without any public discussion, and in a way which placed an intolerable burden upon those already struggling to survive. It is not only the health but also the very lives of so many people especially children, that have now been put at risk through the threat of malnourishment. We most honestly state that the delayed decision to assist people through an increase in the coupon system gives little hope of alleviation because of a well-known past record of bureaucratic delays, ineffective implementation, and abuse by the unscrupulous (Pastoral Statement of the Catholic Bishops of Zambia).

It was clear from the observation of the Bishops in the above-noted pastoral letter that the tumultuous times which Zambians were experiencing were caused by economic

problems, which in turn were caused by lack of accountability on the part of those in power.

The Church and Christians in Zambia challenged the government on the noted ills in the pastoral letter. The government defended itself. At an Ecumenical Conference in 1990 in Lusaka, while addressing Church leaders, President Kaunda expressed the following sentiments:

...He said he was shocked to see the collapse of the Christian spirit, especially in Zambia, which had enjoyed such good Church-State relations. The country was witnessing "for the first time messages of real hatred preached from the pulpits in Zambia. Spiritual leaders wrote messages of such anger and hatred as if they had never known what we stood for". He expressed his shock that Christian leaders could allow what was being published in *Icengelo* and the National Mirror, and referred with particular bitterness to the aftermath of an attempted coup (Times of Zambia, 31 October 1990, 4).

Despite what President Kaunda said, the Church maintained its stance. The government had to change its antagonistic approach to the Church and its leaders. In July 1991 President Kaunda resorted to preaching a message of love, which he considered to be more important than anything else (Times of Zambia, 29 July 1991, 1).

During the process leading to the elections, the Republican Constitution was amended on 17 December 1990. President Kaunda assented to the amended Constitution by deleting Article 4 which forbade formation of other political parties apart from UNIP. This necessitated the review of the Republican Constitution in order for it to allow the formation of other parties.

In the ensuing period of the Constitution review, the government, the opposition parties and the Church had an opportunity to reconcile their differences. In order to find a lasting solution, the Church, represented by the Christian Council of Zambia, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and the Zambia Episcopal Conference, met President Kaunda on 19 July 1991. Mwanakatwe (1994:219) noted that the emphasis of the

meeting was on the disagreement among political parties over the proposals for a new Constitution. The Church leaders believed that a proper handling of the constitutional crisis would end the suspicion about the politicians' intentions to re-introduce genuine multiparty politics. The Churches were anxious to explore ways and means by which it could promote reconciliation and peace.

Mwanakatwe (1994:220) further noted that the Church in Zambia argued that:

the national Constitution belonged to the nation as a whole and could not be considered the product or property of any one single party. The Church felt that the proposed Constitution required wider discussion and debate in order to build a truly national consensus. Moreover, a body more representative of the multiparty democracy, which Zambia was now enjoying, than the current National Assembly should approve the amended Constitution.

President Kaunda agreed to meet the opposition parties, in order to find a solution to the impasse. The meeting took place on 23 July 1991, at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, an Anglican Church, in Lusaka. Bishop Stephen Mumba chaired the meeting. President Kaunda and Fredrick Titus Jacob Chiluba who was representing the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD), attended it with their senior advisors. After the deliberations, it was agreed to give political parties more time to consider the Constitution and to submit possible amendments for debate in the National Assembly. It was also agreed that the National Assembly would continue to consider the Constitution in order to avoid the risk of postponing the elections which had been set for October 1991 and reduce tensions in the country based on the sentiments so far expressed. The agreement eased tension throughout the country.

This contribution of promoting political reconciliation by the Church was a landmark effort by the Church for a peaceful transition from the Second to the Third Republic. The Church formed a monitory group called Zambia Elections Monitoring Co-ordinating Committee (ZEMCC). ZEMCC trained the people at grass root level on how to monitor elections. The Church leaders also reminded all the Christians that:

- a. The right to govern came from God the Creator and it was given to the people. The will of the people was thus the basis of the authority of the Government. This was expressed in periodic and free elections. It was therefore a serious responsibility for all citizens to exercise this right to vote in the forthcoming elections.
- b. The credentials of a good candidate for any office should be the following: a person who fears God; a person who shows real ability in private and public life; a person of honesty and integrity; a person who has special care for the poor and the needy; a person who seeks not to be served but to serve (See Psalm 15: 2 – 5; Mark 10:45).
- c. In truly free and fair elections, all parties should accept the outcome of the election even if it was contrary to their expectations. This was a basic principle in a genuine democratic election. The candidates selected are the people's choice. As a consequence they are given the mandate to govern and to be accountable to the people during their term of office.
- d. The over-riding concern in the elections should be the common good, the general interests of the entire nation. Despite different political affiliation, we are all Zambians, sisters and brothers cast together in one destiny of nationhood (Christian Churches Monitoring Group, Letter to all Christians before 31 October Elections, 23 September 1991).

The elections process and the transition from UNIP to MMD governments went on peacefully. What one can note from the above is that the Church, speaking with one voice, achieved a lot in the history of Zambia. The Church had worked with the government from the time Zambia became independent. It maintained its role as a Church and disagreed with the government when it felt the need and it did so objectively.

## CHAPTER 4

### **4.1 CHRISTIAN NATION**

#### **4.1.2 BACKGROUND**

In September 1990 President Kaunda repealed Article 4 (1) of the 1972 Constitution of Zambia, which said, “There shall be one and only one political party or organisation in Zambia, namely, the United National Independence Party (in this Constitution referred to as “The Party”).” (Republican Constitution of Zambia). When President Kaunda repealed this Article he also appointed a Constitutional Review Commission headed by Professor Mvunga to gather views from members of the public on how Zambia should be governed in a multiparty system.

Rev. Joe Imakando was the Executive Director of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ). This was the umbrella body of all the Evangelical Churches in Zambia, which numbered about twenty-four. EFZ was a very influential group in Zambia particularly among the Pentecostals. Rev. Joe Imakando on behalf of EFZ made a submission to the Review Commission in which he requested that Zambia should be declared a Christian Nation (Times of Zambia, 24 February 1991). He did not amplify. The Review Commission did not recommend the submission for adoption because it was the only submission on the matter.

A statement followed this submission from Nevers Mumba, a pastor from Victory Ministries International (a member of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia). Pastor Mumba was a tele-evangelist who became popular with his programme “Zambia shall be saved.” He formed his Church in 1984 out of the converts of his crusades. He had a large following. He was the vanguard of the charismatic push in Zambia. He was able to organize big international conventions and had a high profile in the Christian nation debate. He strongly suggested that Zambia needed to be declared a Christian Nation because Muslims were planning to take over the country (Times of Zambia, 24 February

1991). Pastor Mumba turned politician in 1999 and was one of the presidential candidates in the presidential and general elections of 2001.

Charles Kachikoti was in charge of gathering information on the growth of Islam in Africa. The information gathered was used by Pastor Nevers Mumba to justify the declaring of Zambia as a Christian nation. Kachikoti suggested that Zambia must constitutionally be declared a Christian nation... Zambia's Christian leaders should arise and ensure that the Third Republic and all republics thereafter are constitutionally declared Christian (Times of Zambia, 9 March 1991).

When Chiluba assumed the chairmanship of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) in 1991 he was supported by the "born-again Christians". According to Paul Gifford (1998:193) Chiluba was a born-again Christian who had experienced conversion in 1981 while in prison. He claimed he received the gift of tongues in Malawi. His Christian beliefs were introduced to the political struggle.

By October 1991, the elections month, some Christians were openly campaigning for MMD. There were reports of some United Church of Zambia pastors campaigning from the pulpits (Mirror 23-29 September 1991,1).

Chiluba and MMD won the elections. Chiluba was anointed by Bishop Stephen Mumba, of the Anglican church, who charged him to "be strong, and show himself a man, and to keep the charge of the Lord, to walk in his ways, to keep in his statutes, his commandments, his precepts and his testimonies as it is written in the first and second testaments" (Mirror 23-29 11-17 November 1991,2).

The Chiluba's anointing in the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, the Anglican Church that had played a major role in the reconciliation process, boosted his impeccable credentials as a true spirit-filled believer. On 29 December 1991, seven weeks after being sworn into office, Chiluba declared Zambia a Christian Nation.

In his speech entitled "Speech by the pillar according to 2 Kings 23:3" Chiluba told the nation that he was convinced that the change which had been witnessed in Zambia was because of the grace of God (Speech by the Pillar, 29 December, 1991). According to Chiluba entering into covenant with God brings blessings on the nation. The opposite is also true. Any nation that turns its back on God and turns to idolatry and wickedness would come under the judgement of God and suffer.

Chiluba reminded the nation that when the people humble themselves and repent from their wicked ways God promises to forgive and heal the land (2 Chronicles 7:14). In order for Zambia to be healed, Chiluba offered a prayer to God on behalf of Zambia:

Dear God, as a nation we now come to your throne of grace, and we humble ourselves and admit our guilt. We repent from all our wicked ways of idolatry, witchcraft, the occult, immorality, injustice and corruption and all other sins that have violated your righteous laws. We turn away from all this and renounce it all in Jesus' name. We ask for forgiveness and cleansing through the blood of Jesus. Therefore we thank you that you would heal our land. We pray that you would send healing restoration, revival, blessing and prosperity to Zambia. Amen.  
 (Speech by the Pillar, 29 December, 1991).

After the prayer Chiluba entered into a covenant with the living God:

I declare today that, I submit myself as President to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. I, likewise, submit the Government and the entire nation of Zambia to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. I further declare that Zambia is a Christian Nation that would seek to be governed by the righteous principles of the word of God. Righteousness and justice must prevail in all levels of authority, and then we shall see the righteousness of God exalting Zambia.  
 My fellow Zambians, let this message reach all civil servants in all Government departments. The time of corruption and bribery is over. For too long these

wicked practices have been destroying and tearing down the nation (Speech by the Pillar, 29 December, 1991).

Chiluba further said:

Proverbs 29:4 declares that one who is greedy for bribes tears down a nation, but a just King, or a President, gives a country stability.

The book of Romans (13:11) urges us to understand the present time, as the hour has come for us to wake up from our slumber, because our salvation is near. The night is nearly over, and the day is almost here, so let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.

My fellow Zambians, a new dawn has come to Zambia. May God bless and help us all to live according to His righteous laws (Speech by the Pillar, 29 December, 1991).

#### **4.1.3. IMMEDIATE REACTIONS TO THE DECLARATION**

Reactions to the Declaration were twofold. First, there was euphoria among some of the ‘born-agains’. For example Chishala Kateka, a ‘born-again Christian,’ is quoted to have said, “Zambia has been declared a Christian Nation. We can only praise the Lord. Sunday December 29 shall go down in the history of the country as the day when the nation of Zambia entered into a covenant with God.” (Times of Zambia, 12 January 1992).

Second, there was discontent among some Church leaders who felt left out and betrayed. The Anglican Church felt that, after working on the reconciliation of the various parties during the period of elections, and after anointing the President later on, it should have been notified or involved in the processes leading to the Declaration (Mirror, 30 December 1991).

The three Christian mother bodies (CCZ, EFZ and ZEC) were careful in accepting the Declaration. They took time to analyse the Declaration and they concluded that a “nation could not be Christian by Declaration, but by deeds.” They regretted the lack of consultation with the Churches and lack of creating awareness in the nation. They also called upon the government to respect the provisions and guarantees of the Constitution of the Republic at all times. “The Church and State should continue to remain separate.” The Church leaders of the three mother bodies pledged that:

the Christian Church in Zambia would continue to collaborate and offer constructive criticism to the State where necessary as it is felt that Christian principles have had and should continue to have a positive impact on the development of the nation”

(Press Statement on the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation, 16 January 1992, Lusaka.).

Having said this, the Church leaders, on condition that the rights of those practising other religions would be respected, endorsed the President’s Declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation and accepted his challenge to rededicate themselves to the Glory of Almighty God.

A month after the mother bodies issued the press statement, Zambia Episcopal Conference issued a Pastoral letter in which they reiterated the statement which had been made by the three mother bodies, that a nation is not Christian by declaration but by deeds. The Pastoral letter further stated:

Zambia can be a “Christian nation” only if Zambian Christians follow Jesus in a life of love and respect for one another, a life of dedication, honesty and hard work. In particular we must follow the example of self-sacrifice, even unto death on the Cross (Philippians 2:8), which enabled Jesus to preach the Good News to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives, and lift up the oppressed (Luke 4:18-19). It would be in deeds of justice and concern for the poor that we would show the Christian character of our nation.

As the years progressed the negative reactions to the Declaration continued. In December 1994, the Cabinet Office organised a nation-wide “re-dedication” of this Declaration and invited Church representatives to attend and participate in various ways. Violet Sampa Bredt General Secretary of Christian Council of Zambia accused the government of getting involved in religious matters and inviting religious groups to legitimise the occasion (The Post 20 January 1995). Most Church leaders, particularly those from the three mother bodies, boycotted the celebrations.

#### **4.1.4 LATER REACTIONS**

In 1996 the government through a White Paper included the Declaration in the Preamble to the amended 1991 Constitution of the Republic of Zambia. The Preamble reads:

WE THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA by our representatives assembled in our Parliament, having solemnly resolved to maintain Zambia as a Sovereign Democratic Republic ... Declare the Republic a Christian nation while upholding the right of every person to enjoy that person's freedom of conscience or religion (The Constitution of the Republic of Zambia, Act 18 of 1996).

The leaders of the three mother bodies did not agree with Government's White Paper that the Preamble to the Constitution should state that Zambia is a Christian Nation. Rather, they accepted the position expressed by the report of the Mwanakatwe Commission that the rights of “Christianity or any other religion could be safely secured without any form of declaration” (Report of the Constitutional Review Commission, 16 June 1995). Zambia should not adopt a State religion or give Christianity a privileged constitutional recognition.

#### **4.1.5 RECENT REACTIONS**

From the above one could conclude that the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation led to a debate in the country. The reactions were different, ranging from

supporting the declaration to total rejection. The author decided to interview representatives from the three Christian mother bodies, Moslems, Lawyers and an Atheist as outlined in the methodology. A checklist was developed and a number of questions administered to the respondents (See Appendix 1). The reactions from the respondents are shown in Appendix 2.

## **4.2 A BRIEF ANALYSIS ON THE REACTIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS REFLECTED IN THE BOXES IN APPENDIX 2**

### **4.2.1. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY THE PHRASE “CHRISTIAN NATION?”**

There were divergent views on what constituted a Christian nation. Two respondents were of the view that a nation cannot be Christian. A nation is not only territorial boundaries but it includes people who live within the drawn boundaries. These people are homogenous but are different in terms of their culture and beliefs. In the case of Zambia, it is only a certain fraction of people who are Christians while others belong to other religions.

The majority of the respondents defined the concept ‘Christian nation’ as a nation which adopts Christianity as its religion. What this implies is that no other religions are allowed to exist in such a nation. As will be noted below, going by the said definition means that Zambia does not qualify to be called a Christian nation because all religions are allowed by the Republican Constitution to exist in Zambia.

One respondent said he did not understand what the phrase meant. The reason is that he was thinking in terms of the Constantine up to Theodorus period (311-380 AD) when the Church and the State were intertwined. But this is not the case in Zambia. The Church and the State are different entities.

These divergent views showed that people are confused on what the phrase ‘Christian nation’ means. In his address declaring Zambia a Christian nation, President Chiluba did not explicitly give a definition of the concept. It is an open-ended concept which allows individuals to interpret it in their own way, as the respondents have shown.

#### **4.2.2 WHAT MAKES A NATION CHRISTIAN?**

The majority agreed that a “nation” could not be made Christian. It is individuals who can become Christians. If the individual Christians uphold Christian principles, it will reflect in the whole nation.

One respondent said a nation could not be made Christian because doing so would make other religions be regarded as second-class. In the same vein another respondent said a nation could not be Christian as long as other religions were allowed to flourish. He was thinking in terms of Islamic nations where other religions are outlawed and whoever is found proselytising is charged with a serious offence.

Another respondent said the concept “Christian nation” is abstract; in this context the question one should ask is can a nation be “Christian”? Dell Gillette (1962:515) defines a nation as a body of people who feel they are united by several factors such as common ethnic origin, historical association, culture, language, religion and customs. From this definition a nation cannot be seen. What can be empirically observed are only the individuals who belong to a nation. Hence a nation is an abstraction from a number of individuals who have certain characteristics in common, and it is these characteristics that make them members of the same nation.

Besides being a member of a nation and thinking, feeling and acting in that capacity, an individual may belong to a Church, a social or economic class, a political party, or a family, and may think, feel and act in these capacities. Apart from being a member of all these social groups he is also a human being, pure and simple, and thinks, feels and acts in that capacity.

The consensus above is that it is individuals who make up Christianity. When we speak of a nation being Christian we are referring to certain individuals who belong to the same nation.

The declaration of a nation to be Christian does not involve all the individuals who belong to the nation. It however affects those individuals who support the declaration and who are prepared to work towards promoting it.

With this background one can conclude that a nation cannot be Christian. However, a nation can show Christian values by legislation that enhances life; such as the abolition of slavery, abolishing the death sentence. Some would ask for prohibition of abortion. Others would support affirmative action to help the poor and marginalized, especially HIV victims and their families, and refugees, prisoners, and those discriminated against because of gender, race or sexual preference, to control corruption, etc.

This is why statements by the churches, especially the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference, are valuable as they analyse social problems and thereby show both government and people a Christian way of life. These pastoral statements analyse both the social and moral insights from a biblical point of view.

What comes out from the majority responses is that Christianity is an individual experience that no one can impose on another. Christianity is a way of life. If these individuals uphold the Christian principles, virtues such as love, kindness and peace will flourish in society. These virtues are not peculiar to Christianity as they are found in most religions.

#### **4.2.3 WHAT IS THE IMPLICATION OF PUTTING THE DECLARATION IN THE PREAMBLE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF ZAMBIA?**

The majority said the preamble does not bind. It only expresses what the authors of the constitution intend to achieve. The presence of the declaration in the preamble has

no legal consequences. If the declaration was in the main body of the constitution, it would have raised a lot of legal and religious implications.

One respondent said the declaration has brought about freedom to the church leaders to work without fear of being victimised. The author is of the opinion that the freedom the respondent is referring to has nothing to do with the declaration but with the change of the political scenario in the country. During the second Republic there was only one political party (UNIP) and all citizens were expected to belong to this party. Any dissenting views were interpreted by the government of the day as mere opposition views. Hence the state machinery was at work in the church to find out what the church leaders were saying.

Today Zambia is under the multi-party system where people are allowed to belong to any party of their choice, and can express their views without fearing the presence of the Special Branch (a security unit). This has enabled church leaders to send pastoral letters to their members without fear of being arrested, not because of the declaration but because of the new political set-up.

#### **4.2.4 WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE NON-CHRISTIAN IN A CHRISTIAN NATION?**

The majority said that both the Christians and non-Christians are citizens of Zambia who are protected by the Constitution. The role of the non-Christians is the same as that of Christians. As has been shown above the presence of the declaration in the preamble does not make it mandatory that all Zambians should be Christians or that whoever is not Christian would be expected to perform certain roles that are performed by Christians. Doing that would be contradictory to the Constitution of Zambia that guarantees the freedom of conscience of every individual.

Two respondents said the role of non-Christians is to respect the declaration. As the author has indicated above, forcing non-Christians to respect the declaration which

they do not believe in would cause a serious conscience problems on their part. The declaration is not a law but a desire by the person who declared Zambia a Christian nation to see that Christian principles are followed in the nation.

Two respondents said the declaration must be removed from the preamble because it is meaningless and that it is misleading to people who may not understand it. For example, some churches think it is their right as this a Christian nation, to worship in government schools. This is not right and is abusing government property which is supposed to be enjoyed by all citizens.

#### **4.2.5 WHAT STATUS SHOULD BE ACCORDED TO CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN A CHRISTIAN NATION?**

Four respondents said that Christian churches should be accorded special privileges because it would show that the President and his government are serious about the declaration.

Six of the respondents said the Christian churches must not be given any special privileges because it would be discriminatory and that it would be against the constitution. They said all citizens of Zambia are equal regardless of religious affiliation.

If Christian churches are given special treatment, this would be a recipe for chaos, divisions and dissent in the country, for the non-Christians would want to fight for their rights.

#### **4.2.6 SHOULD THE CHURCH BE INVOLVED IN POLITICS?**

Nine respondents said Christian leaders must be involved in politics because it is the right of every citizen to participate in the running of the affairs of the nation. Christian leaders are cautioned not to involve in partisan politics because they are leading

members who are also members of different parties. As leaders, they should practise prophetic politics. These Christian leaders should be watchdogs for the majority of people with no voice.

One participant said Christian leaders should not participate in politics because they ought to be neutral for them to mediate during times of conflict. While this may be true, it would be wrong for a Christian leader to pay a blind eye to injustice, corruption, oppression, etc. The prophets of old approached the kings and rebuked them whenever they did something wrong. This has been discussed above.

#### **4.2.7 WHAT IS YOUR STAND ON THE PRESIDENTIAL FUND AS A CHURCH?**

The President has a fund which he disburses at his own discretion. This fund is approved by Parliament. The fund has brought a lot of debate and dissention. This is because it is used as coming from the President's personal pocket. The fund has come to be known as a slush fund. Some churches and Church institutions have benefited from this fund. The generosity of the fund has become questionable because it is given out in constituencies where by-elections are taking place. This is a brief background of the question under review.

Almost all the respondents expressed scepticism about the Fund. One respondent, however, was in favour of it. One is able to argue that this particular respondent did not want to be seen to be against the government by opposing the President. He is a foreigner who is cautious with what he says for fear of not having his work permit renewed. Whenever hot issues come up for discussion he does not allow his church to make statements. For example, when a debate on whether President Chiluba should stand for a third term started, he instructed his church not to say anything on the matter.

## CHAPTER 5

### **5.1 ANALYSIS**

The issues raised above form the background to the declaration and the declaration speech is analysed under the following headings:

#### **5.1.1 THEOLOGICAL ISSUES**

President Chiluba declared Zambia a Christian nation because of his belief that a nation is blessed whenever it enters into a covenant with God and obeys the word of God. He also believed that any nation that turns back against God and turns to idolatry and wickedness would come under the judgement of God and suffer (Speech by the Pillar 29 December 1991).

The scriptural foundation for the Declaration given by President Chiluba is Kings 23:3. This passage refers to King Josiah making a covenant with God. "The king stood by the pillar and renewed the covenant in the presence of the Lord." Pillars in the Temple were a special place for the coronation ceremony. Drawing a parallel between President Chiluba and King Josiah one comes up with the following observations:

When the contents of the Book of Law were read to Josiah (2 King 22:11), he wore his robes as a gesture of consternation. He demanded that the contents be verified as authentic and when the document was authenticated, Josiah summoned the people to the temple for a ceremony of covenant renewal. Similarly President Chiluba was convinced that Zambia had turned its back against God, hence his prayer on page 45 of this study.

Zambians were expected to join him in this repentance and make a covenant to follow God and be obedient to his commandments so that corruption and bribery could be got rid of from all Zambian departments.

Another similarity is that after cutting the covenant Josiah carried out a house cleansing by instructing the priests to remove from the temple all the articles made for

Baal and all the pagan priests (2 Kings 23: 4 -24). Similarly after President Chiluba declared Zambia a Christian State, the pastors who were present exorcised State House, which it was alleged was defiled by Eastern gurus such as Dr. Ranganathan whose practices, were seen to be from the devil (Speech by the Pillar 29 December 1991).

Thirdly, by rejecting pagan religion, Josiah was rejecting Assyrian influence upon Judah. On 25 December 1991, President Chiluba established diplomatic ties with Israel. Nine months after the Declaration the embassies of Iran and Iraq were closed. They were accused of causing political instability in the country.

Comparing President Chiluba to King Josiah has a consequence in that President Chiluba is seen to be endowed with a certain religious character as one “anointed” by the Lord to rule. In fact such anointing by the Church leaders took place after the inauguration of the President.

President Chiluba also referred to Proverbs 29:4 and Romans 13: 11. In the days of David and Solomon authority to govern Israel was highly centralized. It was virtually the King alone who determined the course of the nation. He established the standards for men’s conduct and saw to it that the law was enforced. Such is the case today in many parts of the world.

The chances that President Chiluba would not be any different are high. He has opted to use the Bible to establish his rule. In Proverbs (and the New Testament as well, cf.Rom.13: 1-7) the king was responsible before God to punish evildoers and to reward the righteous. It is not by coincidence that President Chiluba used Proverbs 29:4 which declares that one who is greedy for bribes tears down a nation, but by justice a king or President gives a country stability. He saw himself as a champion of justice and one to rid the nation of all bribes. President Chiluba considered Kaunda’s regime as dictatorial that never allowed other views apart from those it propounded. An example was a one-party policy that was in Zambia since 1972, which in Chiluba’s view was oppressive.

Romans 13:11 should not be seen or read in isolation. Romans 13 must be taken as a whole. This passage stipulates the obligations to the human government. These obligations should be underscored by the fact that Christians should be living as those who await the imminent coming of Jesus Christ to establish his kingdom on earth (11-14). Instruction in Romans 13 is direct and uncomplicated: “Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities”(Romans 13:1a). By this, it is clear that Christians are to be in subjection to their government because all authority comes from God (Romans 13: 1b).

One observation from the foregoing is that the basis on which a government should be acknowledged and obeyed is not by virtue of its character, whether it be democratic or autocratic. A government is not legitimate and duly constituted because of its form which precisely meets one’s preference, but a government is to be acknowledged and obeyed by virtue of its existence. What this means is that whoever resists authority is opposed to the ordinance of God. No Christian would want to oppose God. When the declaration was made, we noted above that there was euphoria on the part of the ‘born agains’. The ‘born agains’ accused the people who were not in support of the declaration as people who were against God. Vice President General Godfrey Miyanda equated the Declaration with faith in Jesus Christ and he explicitly stated that to attack the Declaration was to attack Jesus Christ (Icengelo March 1995).

The motivation to keep the Christian obligations to civil government is reflected in Romans 13:11 which is referred to by President Chiluba: “...this do knowing the time...” Paul’s interest in these verses was not explicitly outlining details of Christ’s coming, but rather to motivate the Christian to diligence and obedience by a reminder that the return of Christ is at hand. Therefore some politician like President Chiluba would like to remind Christians of their obligations to obey the authority that has been established by God for the sake of Christ. This works to his advantage in legitimising his authority.

Christians have no choice but to accept Chiluba as one who has been appointed by God. This notion became very clear when President Chiluba visited an inter-denominational conference for pastors in Lusaka. One Church leader said that the Church would back President Chiluba who he described as God-sent. He further said disrespect to President Chiluba was disrespect to God who put him there. Such sentiments made the President **untouchable**, because he is the ‘anointed one of God’.

The above scriptures cited by President Chiluba and the people who supported the Declaration did not offer any theological foundations to the Declaration. President Chiluba said what he said on the grounds of “piety”, a personal response by a committed Christian to honour Jesus as Lord. This gives rise to religious support of a political figure, a point mentioned below.

### **5.1.2 POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS**

According to the 1991 MMD Manifesto, the MMD was going to recognise and accept that Zambia is a Christian country which is tolerant of other religions. It also acknowledged the particular significance of churches and religious communities. The churches, mosques, and religious communities would be independent and not subject to State influence in their proclamation of faith in their spiritual and social welfare activities.

With the Declaration in 1991 of Zambia as a Christian nation, the Declaration became an agenda of one political party. In its 1996 Manifesto, MMD declared that it was going to give ethical meaning in the conduct of public affairs to the Declaration that Zambia is a Christian country which is tolerant of other religions.

The interpretation of the Declaration became the function of political officials. This made the Declaration to be seen as a party Declaration as opposed to a State Declaration. Ignatius Mwebe argued that a party manifesto is restricted to one particular party and must not be generalised (Interview with the author, Lusaka). The Declaration

was never discussed or debated upon either with the Church leaders or with the general public through such forums as Cabinet or Parliament. The ruling party did not see the need for the debate because the Declaration was in their manifesto. The fact that the majority of voters voted for MMD meant that the voters were in favour of its party's manifesto; this they believed gave them mandate to implement the manifesto.

This assertion is debatable. It is not everyone who voted for the ruling party who supported the Manifesto. In the 1991 general election people wanted change of government because of the misery the people perceived they had been subjected to. In 1996 the United National Independence Party, then the main opposition party, and other smaller parties boycotted the election.

Another political consequence of the Declaration has been the close association of the President with one sector of the Christian community, namely the Evangelical (Fundamentalist "born again") churches led mainly by evangelists from North America and Europe, lately a common feature in Zambia. The active participation of the President in these churches and the crusades they held had the political effect of identifying this brand of Christianity with political support for the President. On the other hand, leaders from mainline Churches that have been against the Declaration are perceived by the "born agains" as leaders opposing the President. This came out clearly in the government media's attack on some Church leaders, accusing them of casting aside religious robes and initiating an unprecedented but orchestrated inter-denominational onslaught on the three-year-old MMD government.

One of the Evangelists invited by President Chiluba was Ernest Angley, who described President Chiluba as "the dearest man I have ever met in the world of politics; in him Zambians have not only a remarkable President, but a God-fearing preacher as well. I know that you are chosen by God, ordained by God to lead this great nation. This is just the beginning. God is going to bless this nation." Another American evangelist, Benny Hinn, visited Zambia and pledged to raise money and campaign for President Chiluba's re-election.

This political-religious alliance was only helping President Chiluba to promote his political ambitions at the risk of dividing the Church. The division was not only between the mainline Churches and the “born agains” but also among the “born agains” themselves. The established “born again” pastors felt the group which had President Chiluba’s ear was ignoring them. Another reason for the split within the “born agains” had to do with the roles some pastors wanted to play in the government. They felt because the President owed them a favour for having supported his campaign they should be nominated Members of Parliament or be allowed unlimited access to State House and the President accept their Christian advice.

The danger of such a demand is that the independence of the Church and its prophetic stance was affected negatively. The Church must be neither the master nor the servant of the State. It should not be used to promote propaganda for the State, but should be free to criticise, to propose and to raise its voice in support of minorities and the oppressed.

The MMD Manifesto promised to uphold the separation of the State from the Church. With the Declaration, the MMD, through the state machinery, was seen to be interfering in religious matters. The first interference was the Declaration itself, which was done without consultation with religious groups. In December 1992 Cabinet Office and the Provincial officers organised a ‘rededication’ ceremony and instructed Churches to send delegates who were expected to take up different roles in the celebrations. One would ask, was it proper for the State to dictate the tone, style and content of religious celebrations? The organising of such events was the role of the Churches and not the State. Violet Sampa-Bredt, General Secretary of the Christian Council of Zambia, accused the State of getting involved in religious matters by organising religious ceremonies and inviting the religious groups to legitimise the occasion.

### **5.1.3 CHRISTIANITY VIS-À-VIS OTHER RELIGIONS**

The MMD Manifesto claimed that Zambia was a Christian country because the majority of its nationals were Christians. It was very difficult to justify this statement because there were no official figures from the Central Statistics office, which is a government department. Most Churches and other religious groups do not have correct figures of their members. The fact that the Declaration was made on the assumption that Christians are in the majority put the minority religions in a subservient position.

As noted above, CCZ, ZEC and EFZ endorsed the Declaration on condition that other religions would not be discriminated against. The government is duty bound to protect all forms of religions and charitable institutions which are religious in nature. On the other hand, the government would not tolerate, much less protect, a religion which requires human sacrifices, or which sanctions licentious rites, or any other institution inconsistent with the laws and customs of the land and subversive of the foundation of the State and the order of Christian civilisation.

Other religious groups in the country such as Moslems had cause to be concerned about the Declaration because they were not sure whether they would be tolerated, especially when the defendants of the Declaration were saying that some countries declare themselves ‘Islamic nations’: “Why shouldn’t Zambia declare itself a Christian nation” ? they asked. The concern became a reality in October 1995 when a Muslim Mosque and a Hindu temple were attacked during some riots in Livingstone. The riots were sparked by ritual killings which were experienced in the city. The desecration of religious sites, as well as the targeting of innocent victims among those suspected of the crimes, was supposed to be unambiguously condemned by Christian Churches. This never happened. One would conclude that the Christian Churches did not condemn the act because it was the Moslems and the Hindus who were affected. If the reverse had happened, the Christians would have demanded that the Moslems be banned and deported.

Another example is that of Rev. Stan Kristafor, Minister of Information and Broadcasting, who immediately after the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation banned Muslim programmes on radio. The Vice President, Levy Mwanawasa, who was a lawyer, lifted the ban, arguing that Muslims had freedom of worship by the constitution.

Zambia's population is diverse; therefore, it is not wise to raise one religion to a privileged status. The Constitutional Review Commission of 1993, headed by John Mwanakatwe, recommended that Christianity or any other religion could be safely secured without any form of declaration; therefore Zambia should not adopt a State religion, but should remain a secular State. The Commission recommended that the secular character of the State should be maintained in the Constitution (Report of the Constitutional Review Commission, Lusaka 1995). The government did not accept the recommendation and went ahead and inserted the Declaration in the Preamble.

While the introduction of the Declaration in the Preamble is not part of a law and has no force whatever, it can be seen as an unnumbered article of the Constitution. Furthermore, the Declaration constituted a policy on religion for the ruling government.

One would agree with assertions that a policy on religion contains more than a clause in the Constitution concerning religious liberty, important though this may be. Carl F. Hallencreutz (1988:2) identifies two types of liberty, individual and corporate, and makes a distinction between the two, which he defines as follows:

Individual liberty is the guaranteed freedom for an adherent of any religious tradition to practise his/her religion according to his/her own preference. Corporate religious liberty on the other hand is guaranteed freedom for any religious group to pursue its practices in the form of corporate worship, social or political programmes and the proclamation of its message to its fold.

By putting the Declaration in the Preamble, Christianity was elevated to a privileged position. The other religions, though tolerated in the society, felt threatened, and the incident in Livingstone referred to above was justified by their uncertainty.

As freedom of religion is guaranteed in the Constitution of Zambia, the State has to be excluded from any interference in the freedom of belief, the freedom of religious activities or the freedom of religious association. However, this alone is not sufficient. If the State were to have any connection with a specific religion, this could give rise to coercion of, or interference with, other religions or people who belong to no religion.

Since the Declaration, coercion or interference of other religions has not been experienced. The State is not funding the Christian church directly, which would have meant that the non-Christians were being forced through taxes to support the running of Christian churches. Indirectly, the Christian church has benefited from the Presidential fund, which is a public fund, through donations for building churches particularly in the remote areas of Zambia.

The principle of the separation of religion and the State is a legal measure that is aimed at the State itself, not at religions or religious organisations. Religious belief is not something that is limited to the way you feel in your heart. It is perfectly natural for people to want to apply their beliefs and teachings in society at large. To state that because something is a religion it must therefore be denied the right to take part in political activities is a short-sighted view with an ulterior motive.

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.

Religious freedom cannot be seen in isolation from general human rights. Lubbe (1997:27) argues that “because religious freedom can be placed on a different level to other human rights does not imply that religion should be granted special privileges.” In other words, religious freedom should not be an excuse for violating the freedoms of others. Therefore inserting the Declaration in the Preamble of the Constitution of Zambia

was not a wise decision. It gives a constitutional legitimacy to what is a political preference of one party, indeed of a specific religiously affiliated group within the ruling party.

## CHAPTER 6

### **6.1 CONCLUSION**

At the beginning of the study the author hypothesized that Zambia is not in a position to be called a Christian nation because of the diversity of Zambian Christianity, and also because of the presence of many religions in Zambia which hold different religious beliefs.

#### **6.1.1 ZAMBIAN CHRISTIANITY**

The phrase “Zambian Christianity” as it stands contains contradictions which impede both identity and meaningful development. For what passes for Zambian Christianity is often both culturally and biblically alien. From the discussion above, one sees that a Church can be both a unifying and a separating power in the community.

African attitudes towards Church union have been complex. In the nineteenth century, nationalist Churchmen made an effort to create an African Church, expressing African spirituality. For example, the leadership in the African Reformed Church whose leadership was basically African considered the Church union project an expatriate affair. On the other hand, the leadership in the Anglican Church was expatriate. The African Reformed Church refused to negotiate with the United Church of Zambia (UCZ) if UCZ negotiated with Anglicans. However, since both the UCZ and Anglicans had expatriate leadership they were able to talk. The Anglicans wanted to include the Roman Catholics in the talks but the UCZ considered it to be unrealistic; hence their enthusiasm was damped.

As noted above, there are problems on how the Church relates to the concepts of nation and Christianity. Similarly, the same problems arise when one looks at the doctrine of the Church. On doctrinal matters Churches have the assumption that the truth as they understand it from the Bible is the whole truth, and there is nothing else outside that which has any claim to truthfulness. This makes it difficult to examine the claims of

other ecclesiastical systems in order to discern what truth they may contain. Individual Churches seem to have no interest in any common factors which might bring unity. Instead the Churches emphasize the barriers that keep them apart. For example evangelicals view ecclesiastical autonomy as indispensable. They are very suspicious of episcopacy and the centralizing effects of its forms of governance.

One example of the differences in doctrinal perception is when Zambia was declared a Christian nation. One leader of a Ministry said, "Zambia has been declared a Christian Nation. We can only praise the Lord!" (Times of Zambia 12 January 1992). This view is in line with the Calvinistic view, which states that God is Lord of all; therefore there ought to be a theocratic system of government. "Whenever they are faced with a problem in society, they cry 'make laws to ban it.' They would prefer to establish a 'Holy' nation in which Christian ethics are enforced by State law." They hold the view that all those not for us are against us, so we share no part with them. On the other hand you have Churches which call for total separation between Church and State.

One thus concludes that Zambians' Christianity is plural in nature, in its beliefs, worship and expression. It becomes very difficult for people interpreting it because its meaning is not obvious. One would like to agree with what Desmond Tutu said in reference to South African Christianity: "If the meaning is so idiosyncratic, is there any useful purpose being served by using such a confusing description?" (The Secular State and Religions – unpublished).

In South Africa, during the apartheid era, the credibility of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was brought into question by the apartheid's evil system (The Secular State and Religions – unpublished). One sees a similar situation obtaining in Zambia. Corruption levels are high, crime is rising, the poor are becoming poorer and have no one to speak for them.

In such a situation such as Zambia's, where some Churches have compromised their stand by embracing the Declaration, the message of love, peace and justice is not heard for fear of losing favour with the State.

### **6.1.2 THEOLOGICAL BASIS**

The author also hypothesized that the Declaration has no theological basis. It has been argued above that both the Old and New Testaments offer no justification for such a declaration. The Bible passages that President Chiluba used as a basis for the declaration were used out of context.

### **6.1.3 THE DECLARATION WAS POLITICAL AND NOT RELIGIOUS**

It is interesting to note, as observed above, that President Kaunda came up with the philosophy of Humanism to help him transform the social, economic and political scenario of the nation. President Kaunda established the Institute of Human Relations at the University of Zambia, which acted at a national level as a watchdog to see how Humanism was faring, while at the international level it explored the possibilities of better understanding of the philosophy. He also established the Ministry of National Guidance which the author has referred to before. When Kaunda was voted out of office in 1991, Humanism as an ideology, the Institute of Human Relations at the University of Zambia, and the Ministry of National Guidance came to an end.

President Chiluba established a Religious Desk at State House. The difference with the Ministry of National Guidance was that the former was not led by a Cabinet Minister but a Deputy Minister.

Initially the Desk was called a Religious Desk, but when the Declaration was enshrined in the Preamble to the Constitution, the desk was changed to Christian and Religious Affairs. The emphasis was on legitimising the Declaration. The Desk did not have any terms of reference when it was put in place. Hence there were concerns raised by religious groups. Religious bodies as well as ordinary members were concerned that the Office of the Deputy Minister might be used to:

- control religious activities;

- co-opt from the religious bodies political support for the ruling party of the day;
- favour certain religious bodies over others in matters that have political overtones; and/or
- restrict access of religious bodies to higher government officials.

The Desk suffered a setback when some MMD party cadres advocated that President Chiluba should run for the third term as President of Zambia. This meant that the Republican Constitution needed to be amended. The civil society and the Church opposed the idea of amending the constitution in order to suit one person. The opposition culminated into a Forum comprising the Law Association of Zambia (LAZ), the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC), The Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ), The Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) and the Non-Governmental Organisations Co-ordinating Committee (NGOCC). This Forum was joined by high-ranking politicians from MMD who ended up being expelled from the party. This led the President to dissolve Cabinet. When the President reconstituted Cabinet, the Religious Desk was left out. It is believed that the President left out this portfolio because of the role the Church had played in preventing the amendment of the constitution to allow him to contest for the third term. Since then, the President does not refer to “Christian nation”. The concept has remained in some Independent Churches, which still need help from the President.

Most of the Evangelicals who supported the Declaration expressed their embarrassment at the so-called “Christian government” because scorn for the “Christian government” was extended to them. All the talk about corruption in government led to the accusation that the government was “putting on the veil of religion to hide its misdeeds” (Post 3 January 1995,3).

The author believes that this is the end of the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation and that the scrapping of the Religious Desk is final.

At the time of this study it was not clear who was to succeed President Chiluba. It was difficult to know whether the successor was going to bring another philosophy. Most of the political parties that have been formed have come out of the MMD. If any of the breakaways assume the office of president, it is most likely that they would come up with their own philosophy. The aim behind the philosophies that most African leaders have come up with is to win support of the majority in a nation. Presidents Kaunda and Chiluba are no exception.

It has been established in this study that Kaunda's Humanism was directed at changing the economic set up of the country from a capitalistic economy to a more communalistic type of economy. Moreover, Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) had had its share of colour-bar and the black African was the victim. In Humanism the centrality of Man was encouraged. Every human being was equal regardless of race. The idea was to promote the race which was seen to have been inferior. In Christianity all human beings are equal before God regardless of their status in society.

President Chiluba was partly supported by the Church during the campaign of 1991 which saw Chiluba defeating Kaunda in the election. This study has established that President Chiluba felt obliged to pay back the Church for its support. But more than that was the fact that President Chiluba was a 'born-again' Christian who was surrounded by other 'born-agains' who felt that the peaceful transition from the Second Republic to the Third Republic was due to divine intervention. Therefore to show appreciation of the Christians to God Zambia was to be declared a Christian nation.

Declaring Zambia as a Christian nation had nothing to do with Humanism because if it was meant to counteract Humanism the Religious Desk would have had specific terms of reference. President Chiluba, like President Kaunda, adopted Christianity to help him rule the nation, and he created a Religious Desk at State House to ensure that it promotes the Declaration.

#### **6.1.4 THE REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES THE FREEDOM OF WORSHIP TO EVERY RELIGION IN ZAMBIA**

A country's constitution is the most important instrument for protecting the rights of its entire people; upholding the constitution and constantly amending it for the benefit of all of the people is crucial. Nevertheless, politicians are in a privileged position to debate and bring about changes in constitutional issues. Decisions about people are always moral decisions and the key moral value which is meant to guide politicians, is the common good of all of the people. Politicians are therefore expected to debate issues with a focus on the common good and not on personal aggrandizement.

The guideline for the Christian politicians is that of service rather than opportunism and domination. Serving God by striving for the betterment and human development of their people is the special calling of Christian politicians.

In an ideal situation one could conclude that religious freedom is guaranteed in a secular State. But in reality it is difficult to say so. It is difficult in the sense that there is no absolute secular State. Even those countries that claim to be secular at one time or another get involved in religious matters. For example, it is common to hear politicians say that the Church should not be involved in politics. They say so when the Church tries to be prophetic. Some Church leaders have been detained under the pretext of preserving public safety, or for the purpose of protecting the rights and freedoms of other persons.

One notes that religious freedom is guaranteed in secular States only when the human rights of individuals are respected. It is noted in the discussion above that religious freedom is enshrined in the human rights. It is common knowledge that most African States do not fully observe human rights; therefore it is difficult to say precisely that religious freedom can be guaranteed.

It is clear that religious bodies and the State are clearly distinct entities. The State is there to protect and enhance the common good of its entire people, irrespective of the

different beliefs and values of diverse religious bodies as in the case of Lumpa and Jehovah's Witnesses discussed earlier.

The author would like to conclude by saying that the leaders of the ruling party that declared Zambia a Christian nation have failed to live by the principles and ideals propagated by the gospel of Jesus. In his prayer quoted above President Chiluba on behalf of the nation repented of corruption. By mid-1994 cases of high corruption in government were reported. In 1995 the total number of corruption complaints received was 633 and in 1999 the number had swelled to 1325 (Anti-Corruption Commission: Annual Reports for 1995 and 1999). A well-documented case (*Economist*, 16 July 1994:56; *Guardian*, 30 August 1994:8) demanded that some ministers should resign before the donor community could release the much-needed foreign exchange for the balance of payment. Few ministers resigned on these allegations.

What is obtaining today in Zambia is the opposite of what is supposed to be happening in a Christian nation. The politicians are enriching themselves while the ordinary people are becoming desperate. The crime rate is high and children are dying of malnutrition, and the implications are great.

## 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the overall study and the conclusions drawn above, it is recommended that the Declaration should be withdrawn. Politicians should desist from the temptation of using Christianity to further their political ambitions. Using Christianity for political gain divides the religious groups, for there are groups that would opt to remain neutral as far as political issues are concerned while others would want to side with the political powers. There is also the group that would want to exercise a prophetic role.

At independence in October 1964 there were less than one hundred graduates, but now the country has thousands of graduates and many others who have attained at least

grade twelve of schooling. These people are mature and are capable of reasoning on their own without being coerced through a philosophy. Recent results in by-elections, before which people were promised houses at a cheaper rate in Kabwata township in Lusaka, proved that people in Zambia cannot be easily misled; they are able to judge for themselves as to what to support and not to support. The people decided to vote for an opposition party.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anthony R.O. 1967, Africa since 1800  
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Baur J. 1994 2000 years of Christianity in Africa  
(Nairobi: Paulines Publications)

Cox L. J. 1992 Expressing the Sacred,  
(Gweru: Mambo Press)

Cross S. 1978 "Independent Churches and Independent States: Jehovah's Witnesses in East and Central Africa" in Fashole-Luke E., Gray R., Hastings A. and Taise G. (eds) Christianity in Independent Africa  
(London: Rex Collings)

Friedrich C.J. 1963 Man and his Government: An Empirical Theory of politics  
(New York: McGraw Hill)

Gann H.L. 1964 A history of Northern Rhodesia: Early days to 1953  
(London: Chatto & Windus)

Gifford P. 1990 "Zambia" in African Christianity its Public Role,  
(London: Hust and Company)

Gladwin J.W. 1988 "Christendom" in New Dictionary of theology  
(Leicester: Inter-varsity Press)

Gonzalez J.L. 1970 A history of Christian Thought Vol.1  
(Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press)

Hallencreutz C.F. 1988 "Policy of Religion: The new framework" in Hallencreutz C.F. and Moyo A. (eds) Church and State in Zimbabwe  
(Gweru: Mambo Press)

Hitchner G.D. & Wouldiam H.H. 1962 Modern Government  
(New York: Dodd, Mead and Co.)

Isichei E. 1995 A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the present  
(London: SPCK)

Kaunda K. 1974 Humanism in Zambia and guide to its implementation Part 1&2  
(Lusaka: Zambia Information Services)

Kaunda K. & Colin M. M. 1966 Humanist in Africa: Letters to Colin M. Morris from Kenneth D. Kaunda  
(Lusaka: Veritas)

Lecer J. 1966, "Religious Freedom: An Historical Survey" in Edelby N., Jimenez-urresti T. (eds) Religious Freedom,  
(New York: Paulist Press)

- Lubbe G. 1997 Religious Context (Pretoria: UNISA)
- Luther M. 1523 "Temporal Authority: To what extent should it be obeyed" in Basic Theological Writings, edited by Timothy F. Lull, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press)
- Melady P. T. (ed) 1964 Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia- Selections from his writings. (London: Fredrick A. Praeger)
- Mwanakatwe J. 1994 End of Kaunda Era, (Lusaka: Multimedia Publication)
- Newman J. 1991, On Religious Freedom, (Ottawa: University of Ottawa)
- Odinga O. 1967 Not yet Uhuru (Nairobi: Heinemann),
- Ollawa P. 1979 Participatory Democracy in Zambia: The political Economy of National Development (Devon: Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd.)
- Peil M. 1977 Consensus and conflict in African Societies: An introduction to Sociology (Essex: Longman Group Limited)
- Sachs A. 1990, Protecting Human Rights in a New South Africa, (Cape Town: Oxford University Press)
- Swomley M. J. 1987, Religious Liberty and Secular State, (New York: Prometheus)
- Thomson A. 1976 New Movements (London: SPCK)
- Taylor V. J. & Lehmann D. 1961 Christians of the Copperbelt (London: SCM Press Ltd)
- van Binsbergen W.M.J. 1979 Religious change in Zambia, (London: Kegan Paul International)
- Wright C.H.J. 1997 God's people in God's land (Carlyle, Paternoster Press)

## PERIODICAL

Christianity Today, 4 Sept. 1981

## JOURNALS

Chaplin J. 1995 "The Gospel and Politics: Five positions" Orientation Jan-Dec. 75-78

Economist, 16 Jul. 1994:56

Guardian, 30 Aug. 1994:8

Lubbe G. "Declaration on Religious Rights and Responsibilities: the South African Context" Areopagus Easter 1995. (Aarhus: Dialog Center-International & Hong Kong)

## NEWSPAPERS

National Mirror, 23-29 September 1991,  
National Mirror, 6-13 October 1991,  
National Mirror, 28 October – 3 November 1991,  
National Mirror, 11-17 November 1991,  
National Mirror, 30 December 1991  
The Post 3 January 1995  
The Post 20 January 1995  
Times of Zambia, 31 October 1990,  
Times of Zambia, 29 July 1991  
Times of Zambia, 24 February 1991.  
Times of Zambia, 9 March 1991  
Times of Zambia, 12 January 1992

## UNPUBLISHED ARTICLES

Christian Churches Monitoring Group, "Letter to all Christians before 31 October Elections", 23 September 1991

Church Leaders' Seminar on Humanism and Development "Christian Responses" Lusaka 18-19 March 1982.

Tutu D.M. 1992 "The Secular State and Religions." ACB Stephen Naidoo Memorial Lecture.

Fletcher I. M. 1950 "David Livingstone; A short portrait of the great Missionary – explorer" Paper No. 9 in the occasional papers of Rhodes-Livingstone Museum.

Imakando J. 'The Role of the Church in the Democratic process in Zambia in Civil Society and the consolidation of Democracy in Zambia'. Lusaka: Foundation for Democratic Process, 1992,

Oger L.W.F. 1960 "Lumpa Church: A study of the Lenshina Movement" University of Zambia Library

A letter from the leaders of the Christian Churches in Zambia to all their members about Scientific Socialism entitled "Marxism, Humanism and Christianity" August, 1979 in Lusaka.

Catholic Bishops of Zambia, Pastoral Statement "Economics, Politics and Justice" 22 July 1990, Lusaka.

Chiluba F.T.J., Speech by the Pillar according to 2 King 23:3 held at State House in Lusaka on Sunday, 29 December, 1991

## **ARTICLES**

**Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948**

**Press Statement on the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation, 16 January 1992, Lusaka.**

**Report of the Constitutional Review Commission, 16 June 1995**

**The Constitution of the Republic of Zambia, Act 18 of 1996**

**Zambia Episcopal Conference, "The future is ours" February 1992**

**Anti-Corruption Commission Annual Report for the years 1995 and 1999**

## Appendix 1

### CHECK-LIST

1. What do you understand by the phrase “Christian Nation”?
2. What makes a Nation Christian?
3. What is the implication of putting the declaration in the preamble, of the Constitution of Zambia?
4. In your view, by putting the declaration in the preamble does it make Zambia a Christian Nation?
5. In your opinion what should be the role of the non-Christian in a Christian Nation?
6. What status should be accorded to Christian Churches in a Christian nation?
7. With the declaration, can the church be involved in politics?
8. What is your stand on the Presidential Fund as a Church?

## Appendix 2

### Responses

1. What do you understand by the phrase “Christian nation?”

#### **Christian Council of Zambia**

**John Osmers** was of the view that the concept of “Christian nation” is non-existent but it was a construction of Chiluba’s mind with the help of “born-agains” in his cabinet and the party.

**Bernard Amos Malango** viewed a Christian nation as a nation where people are Christians.

**Derrick Kamukwamba** defines a Christian nation as a nation that has taken up Christian principles to be its guiding force.

**Edwin Zulu** says the concept “Christian nation” is abstract. A nation cannot be Christian. It is only individuals who can be Christians.

#### **Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia**

**Thomas Lumba** defined the concept “Christian nation” as a nation which has Christianity as its main ideology.

#### **Zambia Episcopal Conference**

**Ignatius Mwebe** defined “Christian nation” as a nation that believes and has faith in Jesus Christ and lives by Christian principles.

#### **Atheist**

**David Simpson** said the concept “Christian nation” seemed to reflect what the President thought was the case, with some statistical reviews claiming that 80 percent of the Zambian population was Christian.

#### **Lawyers**

**Patrick Mvunga** started by referring to the year 380 AD when the Church and the State were one. It was the time of Emperor Theodosius. The church was Christian; therefore the nation was also Christian. He further said in the present context he did not understand what the concept meant.

**John Mwanakatwe** understood the concept “Christian nation” to mean that whatever religion people may wish to pursue the recognised and official religion is Christianity and it must be encouraged, developed and taught in schools, training colleges and universities.

### **Moslem**

**Shabani Phiri** defined the concept “Christian nation” by contrasting it with Islam. An Islamic nation is one where the Koran is the Constitution of the nation. A Christian nation therefore is a nation which adopts the Christian Bible as its Constitution and follows its teachings.

### **2. What makes a nation Christian?**

#### **Christian Council of Zambia**

**John Osmers** said a nation cannot be made “Christian”. He thinks people use the term to distinguish between a nation which has a predominance of Christian believers compared to a nation which has a predominance of Moslems, Hindus, Buddhists etc. A Nation may show Christian values by legislation that enhances life such as the abolition of slavery, abolishing the death sentence, affirmative action that can help the poor and marginalised, control of corruption, etc.

**Edwin Zulu** notes that it is individuals who form a nation.

**Derrick Kamukwamba** says that it is nationals who live by Christian values and principles. **Bernard Malango** says a nation can be Christian when people decides to be for Christ and when there is religious freedom that allows individuals, groups or communities to practise their Christian faith without hindrance.

#### **Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia**

**Thomas Lumba** starts by defining what the concept “nation” means. He notes that “nation” is not only geographical boundaries but also refers to the people who live in certain territorial boundaries. Therefore Christians in a nation makes it a Christian nation.

#### **Zambia Episcopal Conference**

**Ignatius Mwebe** says a nation cannot be made Christian because for individuals to become Christians they have to be prepared through teaching, which ends up with baptism. A nation cannot be taught and it cannot be baptised.

#### **Atheist**

**David Simpson** thinks a nation cannot be made Christian. Trying to do so inhibits freedom of conscience.

#### **Lawyers**

**Patrick Mvunga** is of the opinion that a nation cannot be Christian because a nation is comprised of people with different religions.

**John Mwanakatwe** also thinks a nation can be made Christian by the existence of men and women at various levels of society or leadership who do not only know about Christianity but who demonstrate in their own lives the values and precepts of Christianity.

#### **Moslem**

**Shabani Phiri** says that as long as other religions are allowed to flourish a nation cannot be Christian.

### **3. What is the implication of putting the Declaration in the Preamble of the Constitution of Zambia?**

#### **Christian Council of Zambia**

**John Osmers** said the introduction of the Declaration into the Preamble of the Constitution only shows the mistaken belief of the President that the MMD as a party can make pronouncement of God’s world for Zambia. The implication of the Declaration in the Preamble is that Zambia is not a multi-faith or multicultural nation. It is therefore oppressive of minority groups. It could also encourage intolerance that considers any opposition to be not only “non-Christian” but even demonic.

**Edwin Zulu** said the Preamble is not binding. It is an intention of what an individual hopes to achieve. Therefore the inclusion of the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation in the Preamble has no effect on the Constitution and on the citizens of Zambia.

**Derrick Kamukwamba** said the only implication is that the Declaration is on paper and one can turn to it and say it is in the Constitution that Zambia is a Christian nation.

**Bernard Malango** said that the inclusion of the Declaration in the Constitution works to the advantage of Christians to propagate the gospel without harassment, without being followed up by the Special Branch of the State.

**Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia**

**Thomas Lumba** said the Preamble is an introduction and not a statute. It cannot be enforced.

**Zambia Episcopal Conference**

**Ignatius Mwebe** said the Declaration being in the Preamble has no effect on the Constitution. It gives the reader of the Constitution an idea of what the government wishes to achieve.

**Atheist**

**David Simpson** said putting the Declaration in the Constitution does no more than make Zambia a laughing stock since the performance of the leaders of this nation is so much at variance with Christian principles.

**Lawyers**

**Patrick Mvunga** said the Preamble does not speak for the Constitution; it is a recital of certain events or facts. He thinks the inclusion of the Declaration in the preamble of the Constitution is more political than legal.

**John Mwanakatwe** said anything in the Preamble is not binding; therefore the declaration has no effect on the citizens of Zambia.

**Moslem**

**Shabani Phiri** said as long as they are allowed to practise their religion they do not see any implications of the Declaration being put in the Preamble.

#### 4. What is the role of the non-Christian in a Christian nation?

**Christian Council of Zambia**

**John Osmers:** Non-Christians should object to the concept as being exclusive and discriminatory. They should advocate that the Declaration should be removed. Apart from that they should continue to follow their own consciences as regards religious affiliation.

**Edwin Zulu** is of the opinion that whether Zambia is a Christian nation or not, the non-Christians have a role to play in the affairs of the nation by virtue of them being Zambians.

**Derrick Kamukwamba** says Christianity is a tolerant religion and it accommodates them; hence other religions still have a role to play in the development of Zambia as a nation.

**Bernard Malango:** Non-Christians like Christians should respect the law of the land.

**Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia**

**Thomas Lumba:** Non-Christians like Christians should respect the law of the land. Zambia has been declared a Christian nation and the non-Christians should respect the Declaration.

**Zambia Episcopal Conference**

**Ignatius Mwebe** said the Declaration is not operative and it is not practicable. If the Declaration were effective, non-Christians would have to respect and accept the Declaration.

**Atheist**

**David Simpson:** Non-Christians in a Christian nation should advocate for the Declaration to be removed. Apart from that they should continue to follow their own consciences as regards religious affiliation, and protest at any apparent discrimination against them, or in favour of Christian groups (for example in issue of diplomatic passports, or permission to use school buildings for services, etc).

**Lawyers**

**Patrick Mvunga:** The non-Christians are also citizens and they are entitled to full rights and freedoms that every citizen is supposed to enjoy without hindrance of any nature. If hindered they have the right to advocate the removal of such laws.

**John Mwanakatwe:** If the Declaration was binding, their role would have been to fight for religious freedom.

**Moslem**

**Shabani Phiri:** As long as the Declaration does not stop other faiths to practise their faith, the non-Christians would have to support it.

#### 5. What status should be accorded to Christian Churches in a Christian nation?

**Christian Council of Zambia**

**John Osmers**, says Christian Churches should not be given any privileges by the State that are not available to other faith communities.

**Derrick Kamukwamba** says despite acknowledging the presence of other religions, there should be a deliberate policy to promote Christian values and mission. Christianity should be allowed to play the role of Old Testament prophets without hindrance and the government should listen to the advice of the Church.

**Bernard Malango**: Since Zambia is a Christian nation, Christians should be accorded the privileges that would show that the government does recognize the importance of Christianity.

**Edwin Zulu**: Though other religions have been allowed to continue in Zambia, there must be a deliberate policy to build up Christianity.

#### **Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia**

**Thomas Lumba**: Christian Churches that are involved in social services such as education and health should be exempted from paying tax.

#### **Zambia Episcopal Conference**

**Ignatius Mwebe**: The Constitution should determine how its citizens should be treated and not whether they are Christians or not.

#### **Atheist**

**David Simpson**: Christian Churches in a Christian nation would probably receive some special status (diplomatic passports for leaders; handouts from the Presidential Discretionary Fund, etc). These are not acceptable. The first aim should be to reverse the Declaration, and then accord no special status to any group.

#### **Lawyers**

**Patrick Mvunga**: No one should have special treatment because he/she belongs to a favoured religion.

**John Mwanakatwe**: Discrimination is not allowed by the Constitution. All citizens despite their religious affiliation are equal.

#### **Moslem**

**Shabani Phiri**: Status of every religion is given by God; therefore no one should declare one religion to be holier than or superior to the others. Doing so infringes on the rights of others.

## 6.

### **Should the Church be involved in politics?**

#### **Christian Council of Zambia**

**John Osmers**: The government has an ambivalent attitude to the Churches. I think Mr Chiluba, by the Declaration of Zambia as "Christian" expects Churches to support the "Christian" MMD government which has been "anointed" by God. Government leaders may therefore take any criticism to be "political", and accuse the Church leaders who criticise them of "meddling in politics". The government has failed to take seriously many pronouncements of the main-line Churches. On the other hand when some Churches, especially the Pentecostal Churches, openly support the government, this is not regarded as "political", but "God's word for the nation."

**Derrick Kamukwamba**: Christianity is all about promoting the welfare of people; so is politics. Every individual is political, therefore Christians cannot be excluded from taking part in politics. For Church leaders they should not participate in partisan politics because their followers belong to different political groups

**Bernard Malango**: Christian leaders should not be involved in politics because politicians should look to Christians for direction. If Christians involve themselves in politics there would be no one to mediate in times of conflict.

#### **Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia**

**Thomas Lumba**: The Church should be involved in politics and Church leaders should exercise their prophetic role.

#### **Zambia Episcopal Conference**

**Ignatius Mwebe**: It is only in developing countries like ours where it is a problem for Church leaders to speak on issues that affect the nation. Church leaders cannot ignore how the people of God are being administered. The people of God are both political and spiritual; therefore the approach to meet their needs has to be an integrated one.

#### **Atheist**

**David Simpson:** My personal view as an unbeliever is that the work being done by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection is far more valuable than the Church's insistence on prayer and faith, neither of which I consider to be of any real value; the comfort that faith and prayer may provide to some is merely shielding them from reality.

**Lawyers**

**Patrick Mvunga:** It is the right of every citizen to participate in politics whether one is Christian or not.

**John Mwanakatwe:** Christian leaders like the prophets of old have a very important role to play in a nation. They are the voice of the voiceless.

**Moslem**

**Shabani Phiri:** Whether one is a Christian or not they have a right to be involved in politics.

**7. What is your stand on the Presidential Fund as a Church?**

**Christian Council of Zambia**

**John Osmers** maintained that the Presidential Fund is a blatant attempt to co-opt the Churches. The various Ministries according to need should allocate government funds. This diocese would not support any application to the fund, though some people in Lusaka appealed successfully for help for Msoro Cathedral, and St Francis Hospital in the Eastern Province of Zambia. The Msoro Cathedral donation was applied for by the local (Anglican) MMD politicians clearly to gain party support.

**Derrick Kamukwamba, and Edwin Zulu,** believe that the funds should be channelled through established Ministries, then the recipients would not feel that they are indebted to the giver in this case the President.

**Bernard Malango** supports the Presidential Fund because the Church does not have enough funds. His Church has benefited from this fund.

**Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia**

Thomas Lumba said that the fund is not good. It divides the people particularly for those who have no access to it.

**Zambia Episcopal Conference**

**Ignatius Mwebe** feels categorically and objectively that the Presidential fund is not good. Any ordinary person thinks the money comes from the President's own pocket and he is like a godfather to all those who are obedient to him.

**Atheist**

**David Simpson** thinks the President is using the fund to subvert society and democracy in order to gain political support from the electorate. He thinks Churches that accept this fund compromise themselves such that they are not able to speak out when the government does something wrong.

**Lawyers**

**Patrick Mvunga** says the practice is inconsistent with normal government administration.

**John Mwanakatwe** regrets that the fund is being administered as if the funds are from his own pocket and it is usually misunderstood that the funds are being used to win support and it can cause problems. Accountability is difficult on the part of the recipients as there is no system put in place to account for the funds.

**Moslem**

**Shabani Phiri** feels the Presidential Fund has no effect on the Moslems, because Moslems have their inbuilt mechanism of receiving assistance. He was referring to Alms-Giving, which is one of the five pillars of Islam. It is not anybody who can give money to the Moslem institutions because alms-giving is part of his or her faith. The President has not offered them any funds and he thinks they would not receive it because he is not a Moslem.