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PROSPECTS
FOR THE
1991 ELECTIONS
IN ZAMBIA

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PROSPECTS FOR THE 1991 ELECTIONS IN ZAMBIA

I thought I would start the discussion this evening by a prognosis about what might happen if indeed there is a change of government in Zambia after October this year and what might happen if there is a government led by Frederick Chiluba, the current head of the Movement for Multi-party Democracy. There would be quite a different government to what currently pertains in Zambia.

First of all I would like to give you some background about Frederick Chiluba. The name is spelt CHILUBA, but in fact the 'b' is a silent or slurred 'b', so if he does become the next president of Zambia, then the correct pronunciation is Chilua. He is a trade unionist, not a technocrat at all, but somebody with a firebrand past. A lot of this firebrand image has now been very well contained, because most of the other senior members of the Movement for Multi-party Democracy are highly qualified technocrats. A high number of businessmen are in the upper party echelons and also a surprising number of very fine constitutional lawyers. In fact, this representation of constitutional lawyers in the MMD has been responsible, to a very large extent, for the success of its campaigns so far. What has happened in the campaign is that the Kaunda party, the ruling party, has tried its best to throw all kinds of impediments in the way of free campaigning; one by one the impediments have been challenged in the courts and have been defeated and this has been made possible by the strong legal presence already mentioned.

Although Chiluba with his firebrand image is leading the opposition party, he is very well advised and has a technocratically orientated and well run opposition party and I think it could be a reasonably well run government. Chiluba himself has a popular base in Zambia, not only amongst his own Bemba people and the mining community of which he was a major trade union leader, but in the community as a whole. He is a very short person, so there is a very great physical contrast between himself and Kaunda. Kaunda as you know is a very large person who is physically very imposing. At one point in the early 1980s, when I was living in Zambia, there was a contretemps between Kaunda and Chiluba. At that point the President tried to demean Chiluba by referring to the fact that he is so small. He only just clears about 5 ft. and at that point the President tried to insult him by asking how a man who is only 4 ft.2. could aspire to lead a country like Zambia. This was followed immediately by major demonstrations in the streets with people chanting slogans and carrying placards saying '6 ft.4 out; 4 ft.2 in'. These things were turned to advantage by an even then embryonic opposition movement.

What I want to talk about this evening is to give a history of how the opposition movement grew; how suddenly it took off, really only about a year ago, in six very packed months.

I will say a few things about what it means for the region and then give my prognosis as to what is going to happen in the election. Should an MMD government come to power, I think the immediate effect, as far as this country is concerned, would be a vast loosening of what have been difficulties in terms of trade and other economic interchange. There will be a very great and very urgently felt demand for high investment levels, for liquidity inputs. I think that you will find South Africa being very positively and enthusiastically courted by a new government – it would be very anxious indeed for investment and I will say more about that in due course.

If there is a new government composed of businessmen, people who believe in a free market, people who populate a very small, but highly specialized, private sector in Zambia – if these people become government, there will be a significant change from the sort of relationships South Africa has had with Zambia in the past. If you look at past relationships – and this has been one not only of confrontation and rhetorical condemnation on the part of President Kaunda towards South African governments – you have also had, I think, a fairly well structured intellectual conception of what foreign policy should be. In other words, if you were looking at the region from a Zambian point of view, then the Zambians viewed the region as if some form of balance of power held sway – a balance of power in which there were two poles of power – the South Africans very obviously being one, but also the Zambians acting as a counter-weight, a countervailing pole of power in the region.

At first glance this seems ridiculous, because South Africa is clearly an economic and military giant and alongside that Zambia is puny. The concept as far as the Zambians were concerned was that you did indeed have a pole of economic and military power here in South Africa, but what Kaunda and the Zambians tried to confront that with was an opposite pole of legitimacy – in particular, moral legitimacy. This is what lay behind the President's constant talking about man's inherent goodness; about Christian and humanist approaches to international relations; and lay behind his international image, which he assiduously cultivated, of being a peace-maker, a mediator and a negotiator. Everywhere he went, he portrayed this very carefully calculated image of himself as a peaceful man interested in talk rather than war. It was carefully cultivated not just as an image in its own right and for its own sake, but to contrast with what he tried to portray as a bellicose, unreasonable foreign policy emanating from South Africa. He tried to emphasise Zambia as a moral counter-weight to a militaristic and an economic heavy-weight power here in South Africa.

It was with that sort of balance in mind that he became the only Front-line President ever to hold direct, face-to-face talks with South African leaders and there have been three such Summit meetings in the history of the relationships between the two countries. If you consider the last four leaders there has been a relationship of one sort or another. Even under the Verwoerd government, although there was never any formal meeting between the two leaders, there was a very great deal of correspondence.

The Zambian point of view was one of opposition to apartheid in this country, but also one where communication and perhaps negotiation could be possible. So when Prime Minister Vorster took office, there was a very concerted movement on his part to try and open up some sort of dialogue with Kaunda. There were several on-off, start-stop attempts to make these talks work, until finally in 1975 there was the famous meeting between the two men and Ian Smith along with the nationalist leaders of Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, on the Victoria Falls bridge. That was the first Summit meeting between a Zambian leader and a South African leader – a meeting that was not exactly approved by other members of the southern African community. There were various limitations placed upon Kaunda. President Nyerere of Tanzania had firm words to say on just how far Kaunda could go in these talks – how much he could concede and how much he could not concede.

After the independence of Zimbabwe, there was another Summit meeting, this time in Botswana between President Kaunda and Prime Minister Botha. The meeting discussed all kinds of regional issues. Although the Zambian President has half-heartedly in his press releases tried to claim credit for instigating the train of thought that led to the Nkomati Accord and the Lusaka Accord of 1984, they probably were not discussed in formal terms at the time. It was very much an attempt to establish common ground for negotiation instead of bloodshed in the region. Prime Minister Botha went to that meeting very well briefed as to Kaunda's predilections and his own approach to negotiations. It was Botha himself who asked Kaunda, since he was meant to be a peaceful and religious man, to open those talks with prayer. In other words, this view of Kaunda as a person wearing his moral heart on his sleeve was something that the South African Prime Minister was well briefed about and that he sought to exploit.

I want to come back to this idea of being well briefed about Kaunda and to contrast that with how Kaunda prepares for Summit meetings himself. Of course, what you have had in more recent times, in fact very shortly after President de Klerk took office as State President, was a meeting at Victoria Falls between Presidents de Klerk and Kaunda. Again, I will come back to that to illustrate my point about briefing and preparation.

What has happened in the last decade and a half is that various contacts were made between the Zambians and the South Africans. These were contacts that Kaunda and Zambia were able to make because there was no countering force within the Front-line States saying that he could not make them. Nyerere could try to impose limits, but effectively, in geographic terms, Tanzania was not really a member of the Front-line. Zambia was directly in the front-line. There was nobody of comparable stature to put really effective limitations on what Kaunda might try to do by way of foreign policy.

All of that changed after 1980. With the advent of an independent Zimbabwe, what you had – and this is quoting the last American ambassador to Harare, when I was speaking to him there a couple of years ago – was "that what Mugabe has is a real state, he has a real economy, he has got a real army" – in other words if you look at the region since 1980 then a state with some muscle had arrived. This was muscle that Kaunda never had. He knew he never had it, which is why he always tried to contrive a moral image in place of the sort of muscle that Zimbabwe was later able to have. If you have two states in the region trying to mount some sort of challenge to Pretoria and with different bases of strength – in Zimbabwe's case a real economic infrastructure, then what is going to happen is a competition between two of the front-line states. That is precisely what happened – a great rivalry developed between Kaunda and Mugabe. On the surface they went out of their way to portray a united front-line approach to the region and its problems; underneath the surface a great deal of rivalry, sometimes a bitter rivalry, developed. Now, I think that the situation is starting to change again, because with the recent independence of Namibia, with the prospects for the winding-down of conflict and elections next year in Angola – what you are going to have if you take Zimbabwe and Namibia and Angola – will be three regional states with genuine economic and resource bases. In other words, if you draw a map of the poles of power – even of economic power – in the southern African region in the year 2000, then what southern Africa is going to look like is very different indeed from what it looks like now.

Even if Kaunda survives the forthcoming elections, what it means is that the region is becoming more and more populated with serious actors and he can no longer count on being accepted as spokesperson for the region. Over the last ten years, since Zimbabwe's independence, this position of spokesperson has been under heavy challenge. The Zimbabweans want very much to play a leading role in the region.

The distrust between Zimbabwe and Zambia I will come back to in the context of the preparations that Kaunda made to meet with de Klerk, shortly after

de Klerk became State President. I would like to say just a few words about how Kaunda currently stands, not just amongst the Front-line States, but amongst the great powers. I think that if you look, for instance, at the relationship that now pertains between Zambia and the United States, it is a strange relationship indeed. Coming back to the Front-line States, if there is one of their members in good books with the United States right now, then it is Zimbabwe. The U.S. was very happy indeed with the Zimbabwean chairmanship of the Security Council and how helpful they were over the Gulf crisis: when the Iraq conflict blew up and there was a need to build a United Nations-based coalition to confront what was happening in the Gulf area, the Zimbabweans were having their turn as President of the Security Council and they did everything that the Americans wanted them to do. They delivered and the Americans were extremely happy. If, in future years, you find that the Americans are supporting their Minister of Finance, Bernard Chidzero for the Secretary-Generalship at the United Nations, then that is the pay-off for the constructive help that the Zimbabweans gave. Conversely the Americans were furious with Kaunda. You might remember seeing on CNN News that the last statesman to get to Baghdad before the bombs fell was Kaunda. Ostensibly he was on a peace-keeping, mediating mission. But it certainly didn't come across as such. He was seen walking down Baghdad streets arm-in-arm with President Saddam. When that happened, apparently, the telephone lines, the telex lines, the fax lines were burning red-hot between Washington and the American Embassy in Lusaka. I am not sure I can repeat exactly what these cables said in polite company, but I can give you some indication – they went along the lines of "What the ... is this ... doing walking down a Baghdad street with Saddam?" Apparently for something like 18 hours this constant bombardment of enquiries from Washington was bouncing off the desks of the harassed American Embassy staff in Lusaka, who could only reply: "We don't know what he is doing there. No one knows what he is doing there."

'No one knows what Kaunda is doing there': that is a theme I would like to have a look at right now. I said I would refer briefly to Kaunda and the Front-line States in the context of the de Klerk meeting. I was in Zambia at the time this happened and I know for a fact that the Foreign Minister didn't know that Kaunda was going to meet de Klerk; the Deputy Foreign Minister didn't know that he was going to meet de Klerk; nobody in the Cabinet knew that he was going to meet with de Klerk; the entire Foreign Service – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – didn't know that he was going to meet de Klerk; nobody in the Central Committee of the ruling party knew that he was going to meet de Klerk – until just shortly before it all happened! It was announced in the papers and of course you know the consequences of what happened here in terms of the power struggle between Botha and de Klerk. What happened in Zambia is that everybody just sat around with

their mouths open, saying (in effect) "Well we didn't know that he was going to meet de Klerk!" Afterwards I spoke to some of his senior people and asked: 'How did Kaunda prepare for his meeting with de Klerk?' and they said 'Well we understand that de Klerk was probably briefed every hour on the hour about Kaunda, but Kaunda asked for no briefing at all.' Then I went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and asked the people there "Can I see your file, your profile, your background material on de Klerk?" and they said "We don't have a file on de Klerk. He was the last man on earth we expected to become the State President of South Africa. In any case, even if we had a file on de Klerk, it would never have been requested by State House. We do what State House, what the President asks us to do. We don't make inputs of this sort. We don't have a policy role. If he had even told us that he was going to meet with de Klerk, he wouldn't have asked us for assistance in that particular meeting."

If you take the question of consultation on how to act outside Zambia and you discuss how Kaunda approached the Front-line States on this particular matter, apparently there was a Front-line Summit shortly before this meeting – all of the Presidents of the Front-line States got together in Harare for one of their regular summits – and I talked to Zimbabwean Foreign Affairs people who were present as aides to President Mugabe at this particular summit – their recollection was very much that right at the end of the meeting, under 'any other business' Kaunda suddenly announced – it wasn't a consultation – 'Incidentally I propose to meet with de Klerk in about two weeks from now.' As you can imagine, there was consternation among the other Front-Line Presidents – 'How can you do this; why are you not consulting us, why are you just telling us?' The upshot of that was that they decided to rein in Kaunda saying that he could go and meet de Klerk, as President of Zambia, but in no way as a representative of the Front-line. So the Front-line disassociated itself from that particular meeting – it became solely a President to President summit.

What I am trying to get at here is the way that he makes policy. It is very much spur-of-the-moment; it is often crisis-driven, in other words he likes nothing better than a crisis to respond to. If you are thinking in terms of long-term forward or strategic planning, then there is very little of that in Foreign Affairs. If he divines that a moment is right for a certain action, he will follow that intuition. What all this is getting to is that if he behaves this way in foreign policy, does he behave exactly in this way when it comes to domestic policy? The answer is: 'Yes, he does'. Because he behaves this way in domestic policy, it goes some way towards explaining the chronic economic and social mess that Zambia is in right now.

I want to draw a very firm distinction between Kaunda's idiosyncratic behaviour and the expertise that is available in Zambia. In other words if the civil service had been called upon to assist in policy making, if the technocratic community or the academic community had been called upon to assist with policy making, then you would see a very different policy coming out of Lusaka. But because this assistance is not built in to the Zambian governing structure, because everything comes out of State House on an intuitive, spur-of-the-moment basis, a great deal of confusion exists in Zambian domestic policy. There are competing factions within the Zambian Civil Service, particularly on economic matters, but because the President is not himself an economist and doesn't actually understand economic matters very well, this means first that he is not able to arbitrate effectively between the different approaches to the country's economic problems and secondly it means that he is not able to take a coherent and cogent lead in economic matters - "Here is a crisis, let's try to grapple with that crisis only in terms of that crisis and not in terms of its deeper implications and certainly not in terms of the long-term problems of Zambia, its future development and debt repayments. None of this is properly addressed; none of it has a strategic planning base.

What this has meant over the years is that Zambia has drifted from economic crisis to economic crisis, creating certain difficulties in the Zambian position with regard to the international donor community. There are something like eight million people in Zambia officially. I think that is an under-estimate, the number is closer to ten million, but the debt is to the tune of seven billion US dollars. Even if you take ten million people as a base, this makes it the largest indebted nation in the world on a per capita basis. In other words, nowhere else in the world do people owe more money per head than in Zambia. When you look at this figure of seven billion, there are two obvious comments. The first is that the debt figure hasn't actually risen very much in the last ten years - what has declined is Zambia's capacity to keep up its payments - so that is where the crisis stems from, an incapacity to keep up payments, not a gigantic increase in debt. The second comment is that it reflects only the official debt. If you calculate in also the unofficial debt - and by that I mean items not co-ordinated in terms either of the Ministry of Finance or the Reserve Bank of Zambia, but individual, independent deals and arrangements made by individual industries, government parastatals, etc., then that figure is probably considerably larger. No one knows how to start calculating exactly what that debt would be, but even at the total official debt of seven billion, there is no real prospect of being able to pay it or even being able to keep up the service payments.

This means all kinds of dislocations – not only in economic planning but in terms of services and infrastructure provisions for the citizens of Zambia. Nothing works right now – the hospital is rationed to 2 hours of water a day – this is the major hospital and the university teaching hospital. Running a very large medical enterprise like that with 2 hours of running water a day – you can imagine how horrific the situation is. The families of the patients there not only have to bring in food for their relatives, but in fact have to scour the black market themselves for medical supplies, even down to dressings and bandages, never mind drugs. The situation is desperate. As you know, there is a cholera epidemic, again related to this question of a lack of water supply, and in fact the water hasn't been treated for something like six years. All of these years of neglect are catching up with the country because there is no infrastructural input. There is no money by which infrastructural input can be afforded. Because of the inability to meet payments on time, and to service the international debt, the donor countries have become more and more reluctant to advance credit or to give money to Zambia.

All of this has had repercussions in terms of the electorate. I have monitored three Zambian elections and have always been very surprised by the sophistication of the Zambian electorate. If it was possible to do a formal opinion survey, to do a poll in Zambia – it is not possible, but if it were – then I would suspect that you would get a large number of extremely intelligent replies from the electorate at large, even on a completely random basis. In the election coming up, I think that they know what they are voting for and I don't think that they are so naive as to think that any problems that they might have can be addressed overnight – that there are going to be any sudden improvements in their standard of living, because manifestly this is not going to be the case with all kinds of deeply imbedded structural problems which have to be sorted out. But I think that the Zambians will know that what they are voting for is the concept of change and the constitutional guarantee of change. I think that they are going to exercise that electoral right to impose change in terms of the government of their own destinies.

The history of it all really is only a year and a bit old. In March last year, Kaunda – and here is an example of how out of touch he was with his electorate – in March last year he proposed 14 constitutional amendments to Parliament. These constitutional amendments – all 14 of them – were designed to increase his power as President and to increase the power of the single party, the single party state. Already by this time there was significant dissatisfaction, not only within the electorate, but within the ruling party itself. Kaunda was unable to muster the 2/3 majority that was needed in parliament to pass these constitutional amendments. In fact not only was he unable to muster the 2/3 majority in parliament that he needed, what the introduction of the fourteen constitutional amendments did was

to foment a back-bench revolt. This back-bench revolt came to a head at the fifth national convention of the ruling party.

For the first time at one of these major party gatherings, something which had the same importance for the ruling party as for instance the ANC congress in Durban had for South African politics here, people got up and made speeches opposing government policy and opposing what the president was trying to do. This was a significant breakthrough.

What this did was to put Kaunda into a panic, so that by May 1990, under pressure, he suddenly announced that there was going to be a referendum the following August. It was to be on the possibility of a multi-party state in Zambia. In other words, after his misjudgment over constitutional amendments and all the furore within his own party that this occasioned, he suddenly conceded the principle of pluralism and said that there was going to be a referendum – in August 1990 – in which the multi-party state became a possibility. What happened however was that by the time he got around to June of 1990, under pressure from the IMF, Kaunda decided to remove subsidy levels from the basic food of the Zambian people. This meant was that something in the order of 100% and 140% rises in the price of mealies was occasioned. This caused riots in the streets of Lusaka. These riots quickly involved not only the ordinary citizens of Lusaka, but also the university students and, within 24 hours it also involved the armed forces in Zambia. The armed forces at this time had not planned a coup. It was very much a spontaneous, an extemporaneous approach to replace the government. Although the official Zambian position was that it was just a single deranged signal lieutenant, who single-handedly occupied the broadcasting complex in Lusaka, I think that one doesn't have to dig very deeply to find out that it was a significant, very hastily, but a significant hastily organised coup attempt on the part of a number of junior officers.

When I was giving an interview on Radio South Africa the number of security checks that we had to go through before we actually reached the studio, was quite impressive. You have to do the same sort of thing to get into the Zambian broadcasting network, so that the idea of one lieutenant, which is the official Zambian line, storming the broadcasting complex by himself, holding himself on the air, ordering everybody at bay on his own and then broadcasting without a technician or any technical support while keeping all the support and electrical services operating, is obviously far fetched. In fact the fire-fight that followed when loyal government forces retook the station left something like 19 soldiers dead. There were at least two or three platoons of supporting soldiers

holding out with that particular lieutenant, enough to hold the station for several hours.

People were in the streets celebrating, several Land-Rovers of soldiers were in the suburbs announcing that Kaunda had fallen and now was the time to rejoice and people did indeed rejoice and dance in the streets. Kaunda put down this particular revolt. He put down this particular coup attempt because it had been so hastily organised. He put it down, but he realised by this stage that public opinion was very much against him. He tried to mollify public opinion by a number of measures and the subsidies went back on the maize staple food very quickly; everybody involved in that particular coup attempt was pardoned in the next month; all of the protagonists of the last two coup attempts before then were also pardoned.

He still needed a breathing space and he realised that if he went to the nation in August with a referendum for a multi-party state, the people would probably say "Okay, let's have a multi-party state and let's have elections right away." The breathing space Kaunda wanted was considerably longer. In July he postponed the referendum and in September said that there was not going to be any referendum at all and in one year's time – this October – without there being any referendum, there would be direct elections. Any party would be able to contest the elections. In other words he conceded that there had to be a multi-party state, he didn't bother to go through a referendum process. What he wanted was one year to prepare himself and his party to be competitive if an election took place. What has happened in that year, as I have said, is that the government has tried to put every impediment possible in the path of the opposition. But the opposition because of its legal expertise, has been able to challenge these impediments in the courts and has won a string of victories through the legal process. Their rallies are particularly well attended and if you were to do a head count comparison between the sort of numbers that Kaunda and his members get on the hustings and the sort of numbers that the multi-party movement is getting, then it is the MMD that is leading right now.

The major card that Kaunda is playing however, is the very suspect background of some of these leading lights in the multi-party movement. If you are going to try and sustain yourself as a business man in Zambia's economic climate, then what you need to do in order to survive as a business man is to behave in ways sometimes not entirely lawful and indeed a great deal of the venture capital which these people have succeeded in raising to put into their legitimate businesses has come through illegitimate means. (Since this meeting is on the record, I won't say who is involved, but it has its own Johannesburg

connection. You might be worried by the drug market in this city, particularly in the barbiturate drugs, which has a sort of qualude effect, I think you call it Mandrax down here. It is available in lots of the discotheques and drinking parlours in the city. Most of the Mandrax which finds its way into Johannesburg is manufactured, in the first place, in India, in third world chemical laboratories, and Lusaka is the major trans-shipment point.)

When it suits government, it keeps quiet about these things, but because it now sues them to try and expose the murky backgrounds of some of these businessmen who are leading the movement for multi-party democracy, a lot of this is now being brought out into the open. There is a great deal of mud-slinging, of accusations – that "they are more corrupt than we are, etc., etc." – not "we are more honest than they are" – that has long gone by the wayside in Zambian electoral politics – but: "Yes they have uncovered evidence that we have got Swiss bank accounts, but their bank accounts are larger than ours". This is the sort of back-biting, the sort of dirty trickery that is now taking place in Zambian electoral politics, which makes it very interesting. If you want to compile a dossier with which to blackmail your future business partners from that country you only have to spend a month or so in Zambia and listen to the electoral hustings. I won't make any further comment about that.

Let me give you some international opinions about what is going to happen and then close by saying what I think is going to happen in these elections. I should point out that there are going to be two elections. One for Parliament and one for the Presidency. The Americans at this stage think that Kaunda could just shade the Presidency – maybe just win the election – but he would have to deal with a parliament very firmly in control of the MMD. In other words, the current opposition will control Parliament, but with Kaunda still as President.

Kaunda, from my information, is prepared to accept a situation like that. Because what he has been angling for is a new constitutional base, very much along French lines, which gives the President power over and above what parliament can do. It may mean ditching all of his lieutenants and supporters in his UNIP party but he is prepared to do that, if it means that he is able to hang onto personal power. The Americans think that this is a possibility, that there could be this division of power in Zambia. The Americans are not alone in this particular point of view but the British are hedging their bets in true British fashion. They see the American view is possible but tend to the view that it could be a clean sweep both for Presidency and Parliament by the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy. They are beginning to predict a victory for what is now the opposition. The Japanese, whom you will of course understand are setting themselves up to be

major players, not only in South Africa, but in the region as a whole (and if you are worried about their investment patterns in South Africa, then you need to look at their investment patterns in the region where they want to achieve economic dominance). They would like Kaunda to stay in power, but because they are very careful, pragmatic, they are hedging their bets with a fair degree of contact – with both the ruling government party and the opposition party. I feel the Japanese would like to see Kaunda remain as President, because they have a very good working relationship with him, but at the same time, the Japanese know that if investments are going to mean anything in the future, then there has to be a technocratic structure running the essential ministries in government, otherwise their investment patterns just aren't going to work. They would probably favour a split, as the Americans foresee, with Kaunda as President and the Opposition in control of Parliament.

What do I think are the prospects for October 1991? – the prospect is certainly somewhat enigmatic. The constitutional base in terms of which this is meant to be happening is still in the process of being argued. The actual date for the elections still hasn't been called and Kaunda will probably want to call that at the last possible moment, although he has promised October and I think that he will be in a great deal of political difficulty if he tries to postpone it much further. It will probably be in October, after the Commonwealth Summit in Harare, because one suspects that he has in mind one last triumphal entrance at probably his last Commonwealth Summit before disappearing into the political wilderness. With that comment, I think I have made clear my own prognosis: he is going to lose and by a significant margin. The Americans and British are both wrong in thinking that it is going to be a close run affair. My own opinion is that it is going to be quite a decisive defeat – but this is based only on my own intuitive appreciation of the politics of that country. There is no way to conduct a public opinion poll in Zambia. Although on paper it would be legal, it is politically unable to be accomplished. There would be so much trouble with ruling party vigilantes if you tried to do it. My views are gleaned entirely from informal soundings taken among not only the educated Zambians but also in frequent travels into the rural areas and into the township areas and also from soundings from within the armed services as well, who have their own contingency plans. One way or the other I don't think that by this time next year President Kaunda will be able to call himself President any more, except very much as a courtesy retirement title. I must repeat: there is no formal evidence for this crystal ball gazing but as I said right at the outset of this talk, if there is a change of government and if the MMD people do come into power, then I would see a significant and immediate overture towards this country for economic liberalization in terms of trading links. This is not going to please the other Front-line States, who have in their own minds a fear that after a political

settlement of one sort or another in this country – and although it may look rather distant now, most sane people contemplate an eventual settlement – there is the fear amongst the Front-line States that military destabilisation will be followed by an era in which there is a South African-led economic hegemony of the region. What they fear is that they will then owe everything economically to a financial and economic engine driven by this country, which will effectively overwhelm the economic structures of the Front-line States.

The reason why Namibia, and particularly Angola, are important to the Front-line States is because they see them in the long term as alternative economic poles to South Africa. While they are contemplating this vague possibility projected for a date in the future, their last wish, in the short term, is to see their allies and fellow-members deserting piece-meal to the enemy, as it were. If Zambia changes government, if its technocrats and businessmen take over and immediately start making trading and financial overtures to this country, this would be seen stepping out of line from what is at present a rather sketchy Front-line economic platform. Consequently there is unlikely to be too much enthusiasm among the Front-line States over the likely outcome of the 1991 Zambian elections.