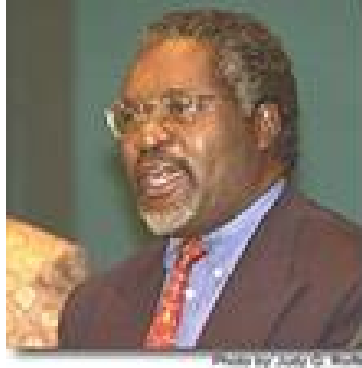


No Outside Political Messiah for Barotseland— Insists Prince Aka as he responds to the open letter

by Akashambatwa Mbikusita



The subject 'Open Letter' neither addresses nor disagrees with any of the issues I actually raised. Instead, it restates the usual personal attacks, and does so with the usual selectivity, inaccuracies and unwarranted vengeance. Fortunately, in this case, the motivation and sore point is clear – it is to do with campaign for the Zambian state presidency and party politics – which are not the concern of my statement.

I am not a stranger to such reactions, but I welcome them because they keep me reviewing and correcting myself as well as repeating and clarifying the usual misrepresentations. Least there is derailment of debate started by Mbinji, and before I respond to the personal attacks, let me restate where I stand. I raised six (6) issue areas in the debate:

1. I pray that we shall not continue to entertain campaigners for personal or partisan political offices to playing and cheating over Barotseland. Aka or no aka, someone has responded that “Barotseland should not be used as a doormat for entry into Zambia’s state house.”--- This is my prayer; I cannot and do not purport to command how/whether it is the answer. I leave it to the Barotse people, authorities and organizations, all of who have their own representatives, and among whom I do not count myself.
2. During the run up to KK (Kenneth Kaunda) taking over the prime minister-cum-president position(s) and UNIP forming government, they signed the Barotseland agreement.... Only to unilaterally abrogate it and dishonestly condemn it. ----Aka or no aka:
 - (1.) This is a statement of fact, and proof of it is available and can be availed to any doubting Thomases; and
 - (2.) This is condemnable! Therefore, I stand by it.
3. During 1991 presidential and parliamentary election campaigns, President Kaunda promised to solve the Barotseland issue and even pay for Barotse government lawyers in a formal letter to the Litunga of Barotseland! Only to continue criminalizing the Barotseland Agreement and even speaking about it ----Aka or no Aka:
 - (1.) This is a statement of fact, and proof of it is available and can be availed to any doubting Thomases; and
 - (2.) This is condemnable! Therefore, I stand by it.
4. During the 2011 elections President Sata promised to restore the Barotseland Agreement at a public rally and in the mass media, only to contemptuously renegade and turn Barotseland

into an armed police state with never ending arrests and judicial terrorism against even children----Aka or no Aka:

- (1.) This is a statement of fact, and proof of it is available and can be availed to any doubting Thomases; and
 - (2.) This is condemnable! Therefore, I stand by it.
5. Now, during the already set electioneering and in the midst of chaos caused by taxi drivers offered free fuel by a campaigning presidential candidate and his political party, it is reported that there is campaign promise to solve the Barotseland issue!! Of this statement:
- (1.) It is a self-evident that electioneering for the Zambian presidential and general election being anticipated any time between now and late 2016 has already begun;
 - (2.) I personally witnessed and got caught up in the chaos, and was informed by some of those pressing to benefit that it was all about K100's worth of fuel that was being availed to Mongu taxi drivers – fortunately, it did not last long because the availed supply was soon outstripped by the high demand and raised expectations – which, indeed is a sign of how far down we have fallen into a culture of indignity, greed and desperation; and
 - (3.) It was reported, subject to confirmation, that a presidential candidate and his political party, it is reported that there is campaign promise to solve the Barotseland issue! – I did not in my statement name the presidential candidate or the political party – because there was a possibility that the reports may not have been accurate.

Now, the Barotse Post have since posted that “Zambia’s United Party for National Development president Hakainde Hichilema is reported to have yesterday arrived in Mongu to a thunderous welcome, and promised to find a lasting solution to the Barotseland question when UPND forms government in 2016 if elected in the Zambian presidential and general election”.

And the open letter addressed to me has stated that “there is nothing wrong with Mr. Hichilema stating that a long lasting solution should be found for the people of western province”.

I agree that “there is nothing wrong with Mr. Hichilema stating that a long lasting solution should be found for the people of (Barotseland which you significantly insist on referring to as) Western province”.

Just as I agree with anyone stating that a long lasting solution should be found for the people of Palestine or for people living with cancer.

My concern is with the reported statement that this lasting solution is for “when UPND forms government in 2016 if elected in the Zambian presidential and general election.”

On my part, the statement is OK, if it is honestly not tied to anyone being voted to form government or winning election. If, however, the statement is along the lines delivered by Zambia’s first president and Zambia’s Man of Action, who made statements over Barotseland for dishonourable election purposes, then truly, “It is so insulting!”

And I earnestly pray that we do not continue to accommodate such insults. We, including myself, have done so in the past but now, let us instead get on with self-reliantly and courageously rendering the permanent solution to our situation – and, indeed, now is the time.

6. In any case, only Barotse people will free Barotseland from being a cheap political football....and from being governed under police and judicial terrorism and outside an agreed legal teamwork. Barotseland cannot and must not be a subject of Zambian political campaigns by anybody. The issue is now in the hands of the Barotse people, Barotse government and Barotse organizations. This is a statement of universal truth that all genuine and lasting national liberation is self-determined, self-enacted and self-defended – Barotseland is no exception – THERE IS NO OUTSIDE POLITICAL MESSIAH.