Reactions to Edwin Lubosi’s Negotiating Team—It is a feast of frogs!

by Mampi Ŋundamai

We are confident that no Mulozi worth his/her salt can be so demeaned as to allow a situation where they are used as pawns in this EdgarChagwa Lungu/Barotse Royal Establishment deceit over the restoration of a dead and buried Barotseland Agreement 1964 (BA’64). Not for thirty pieces or even three hundred pieces of silver. Let all Barotse people stand firm and united behind their 27th March 2012 Barotse National Council Resolutions (BNC).

It has turned out that most of the people listed on the so called BA’64 negotiating team have denied any knowledge of being part of it with some of them describing it as ‘a feast of frogs’ – Mukiti wa limbotwe. The team was handpicked by embattled and beleaguered Litunga Edwin Lubosi Imwiko II. Since the list was leaked and published by most online media houses, we tried to contact a number of them and we are yet to come across anyone who had knowledge of the existence of the team, let alone being part of it or even having been approached and accepting to be part of it.

Hon. Lioko Mbaimbai speaking by phone from his farm in Lusaka west denied any knowledge of such a thing. He could only speculate that those who associate his name to such a grouping may be doing so in recognition of his vast knowledge of issues surrounding the BA’64 as he was a senior civil servant working for the department of Native Affairs at the time the BA’64 was negotiated and signed. He was actually privileged to be the one who escorted the Litunga, Sir Mwanawina III, from the then Ridgeway Hotel to the city airport where he (the Litunga) boarded the airplane to London. It was that trip that ended up in the signing of the BA’64. Otherwise he knew nothing about the negotiating team. "Besides there is nothing to negotiate because the BA’64 is no longer in existence and the Zambian regime must first bring it back to life by enacting the appropriate legislation before it can be tabled for discussion and negotiations”, said Hon. Mbaimbai.

Mutompehi Mutete Kashimani, the former Barotse Cultural Association National Secretary and former Induna Muleta, laughed at the suggestion that he is part and parcel of the Litunga’s BA’64 Negotiating Team. This is not only because he knows completely nothing about the existence of such a team but also that the whole idea is completely farfetched because you do not negotiate a non existent agreement. “Ki mukiti wa limbotwe (It is a feast of frogs!) Anyone who has any inkling of knowledge about me and knows anything about my background will know for sure that I cannot be part to that. Of course, like Nelson Mandela said ‘every man has his price’. My price and indeed pride is Barotseland: a free and self governing Barotseland and I cannot be part to anything that is counterproductive to that cause”, said Mutompehi Kashimani.

It is clear that anyone whose integrity and credibility is worth anything at all cannot be part to this bogus team of negotiators. We know that some Indunas are on record as having said on Oblate Radio Liseli that a team of negotiators has been put together but could not disclose their names for fear that they would be interfered with.
Lubosi and his bogus team are clearly acting outside the mandate of the people of Barotseland. The issue of the Barotseland Agreement 1964 belongs to the people of Barotseland as a whole. If there is need for negotiating anything at all, the people must be involved from A to Z. The starting point of course is the 27th March 2012 BNC Resolutions. There can be no departure from the lofty ideals set therein. Secondly, the deceit by one, Edgar Chagwa Lungu (ECL), to deal justly with the issue of the BA’64 is nothing but the last kicks of a dying horse. ECL had a whole year plus four months since the BNFA wrote him a letter—a day after he was sworn into office as Republican President—to do something about the issue. Clearly, his timing is calculated to be cheap electioneering. Unfortunately, for him the gimmick has been overused by successive Zambian Presidents and politicians. The monotony is so deafening and it is mind boggling that any right thinking politician can still count on it to work, not at all!

* Tukuongote shaa, wa mwana nongolo! Litunga ni iyetu. *