

# **INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN ZIMBABWE TODAY: DECLINING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE**

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## **Introduction**

Developments in the Industrial Relations (IR) field in Zimbabwe is not a pleasant story to tell. Certainly, since colonization in 1890 and the inauguration of the capitalist enterprise, the country has never really enjoyed a free and sound or democratic industrial relations system. The colonial political economy certainly required a repressive labour regime. It would be intriguing to students of industrial relations or ordinary social scientists to learn of the fundamental thesis of this paper, which is that since independence in 1980, the Zimbabwean state has continued reproducing a repressive and authoritarian industrial relations regime which in many ways equates or even overtakes the crudity of the colonial one. It equates or overtakes the colonial one in so far as it is hypocritical and repressive. The colonial one was less hypocritical. It is more repressive in so far as it seems to care less about damage to the economy and human beings. The colonial one cared about its economy.

This paper will trace developments in the industrial relations scene since independence focusing on the changing role of the state and the responses of the labour movement. Such changes are discernible in the periods from independence in 1980 to 1990 with the inauguration of the economic reform programme; then from 1991 to 2000, the period of the economic reform, (first and second phases) and finally 2000 to today.

## **From a Colonial Labour Regime to a Post-Colonial One: The First Phase**

### **The Inheritance (1980-1985)**

The first five years of independence were characterized by what one can call a brief 'honeymoon'. This was the period of transition. Analysts have commented that this 'transition' was partial rather than complete because there were aspects reflecting colonial continuity (Sachikonye 1986, 2001, Sibanda 1985). The colonial labour regime repressed union rights, particularly the right to organize along union lines, in order to deny collective bargaining rights, and the right to strike in several sectors. The colonial political order did not only exclude blacks from the body politic but also denied them union rights. Black workers were not included in the category of employee, therefore they were not protected by the colonial labour legislation, the Industrial Conciliation Act (ICA) (1934). An Amended ICA in 1959 sought to confer some minimal protections in keeping with the racial partnership liberal ideology which allowed some black workers into white-led craft-based trade unions. In the absence of strong collective bargaining systems, the wages and conditions of black labour, as distinct from those of the white labour aristocracy, were very poor. The colonial labour regime cemented and reproduced a strong reserve army of cheap black labour necessary for the conditions for the extended reproduction of the colonial political economy.

It must be mentioned from this very onset that the new political dispensation assumed office in 1980 without an iota of a seriously understood and genuinely committed programme for demobilizing the colonial labour regime in favour of labour itself. In fact, labour itself had never been organized by the nationalists as a working-class strong element to be included in the leadership force for social transformation. To that extent, I have commented elsewhere that the often declared commitment to 'Marxism – Leninism' or scientific socialism was a gigantic hoax, (Sibanda 1988). That is why at independence, black labour organizations were divided and weak.

In fact, despite the trade union movement having been an undoubtedly strong base for the development of nationalism between the 1940s and early 1960s, the nationalists sought to marginalize the labour movement as tensions grew over the relationship between labour issues and nationalist politics. Raftopoulos points out that from this early period, the question of autonomy of the labour movement became central as nationalists sought to subordinate labour issues to the nationalist cause. The outcome of the struggles, says Raftopoulos, was a substantive subordination of the labour movement to nationalist parties (Raftopoulos 2001).

The subordination was total and by design rather than by default. Raftopoulos also notes that with the shift of the anti-colonial struggle from the urban-bases to the rural liberation war, the urban working-class became further sidelined. I hasten to add that although the rural sector hosted the liberation struggle, the rural social sectors were not in any substantive way in the leading sectors of it. They were not involved in the planning or decision-making roles. In a word, neither the urban working-class nor the rural peasant masses were involved as combatant 'classes' in the leadership and discourse of the national liberation struggle. Robert Mugabe himself acknowledges that his party woke up to the need for a popular mobilisation of workers, intellectuals, and other patriotic forces late in 1979, obviously preparing for the coming elections in April 1980! (Mugabe 1984). That is why neither the labour movement nor the peasantry played a significant role at the Conference on transition to majority rule at Lancaster House in 1979, in sharp contrast to the South African negotiations for the transition to democracy (Raftopoulos 2001).

Thus not properly organized, weak and divided into 6 labour centers the labour movement at independence faced the new state with divided loyalties, insecure social bases and little legitimacy in the eyes of the new state.

The party that assumed state power in 1980 did not fully understand the content of class struggles. Thus while it was campaigning to mobilize the popular sectors, the workers included, it promised that it would allow workers the right to strike, (Sibanda 1985). With pent-up feelings, long overdue scores to settle with management over wages and conditions of service, benefits, unfair and racist management practices, etc. the workers saw the post-independence changes coming too slowly and started implementing the ruling party's manifesto spontaneously! The implementation was seen in the first wave of strikes between March 1980 and October 1981, yet the party had no programme whatsoever for resolution of such issues of the class-based contradictions.

Saunders says that less than two weeks after independence elections in March 1980, the first series of strikes took place and quickly spread to a number of sectors throughout the country. Over 16 000 workers in 46 firms in a number of key sectors came out during this time. Hundreds of workers were summarily dismissed. Between March and June 1980, at least 172 000 working days were lost to strikes. In the next 18 months, several thousands of workers in public and private sectors came out in many forms of protest. It is estimated there were up to 200 strikes in the two-year period 1980 and 1981. This could be an understatement (Saunders 2001).

These strikes revealed many major shortcomings. First, they were spontaneous and not led by any national union or labour centre. Nor were they led by any political party. Secondly, they revealed the disaster caused by the authoritarian colonial labour regime which left capital or its management unschooled in dialogue or negotiation. Capital was used to the authoritarian colonial labour regime. In fact this problem was to linger on in the Zimbabwean IR system well into the late 1990s!

Worse still, the new state had no perception of an industrial relations system and the ruling party only woke up late to the need to end marginalisation of workers! Yet in spite of these major deficiencies, the working class had expectations which had to be met quickly or else the stability of the new state had no guarantees.

The potential of the working-class to pose real instability to the new order frightened the new state. In fact it appears the historical fact of the labour movement providing a social basis for opposition politics loomed large over the heads of the ruling nationalists already. The response of the state to working class militancy against capital in a telling way reveals this. We look at this response more closely.

### **The Early Rise and Fall of State Social Responsibility: State Paternalism Flanked by Repression**

“The strikes posed a direct challenge to the untested governing abilities of ZANU PF, and threatened to disrupt the fragile stability of the productive sector. The state’s immediate response was to appeal to workers not to disrupt the political economy, and to refrain from placing undue pressure on the new government. This was accompanied by a political position which dismissed labour militancy as a threat to nationalism and the gains of the nationalist struggle to which, ZANU PF alleged, the labour movement was marginal” (Saunders 2001, 136).

The state responded with a socially responsible and conciliatory tone on one hand, and a repressive one on the other, as the above quote indicates. In May 1980, a National Minimum Wage Bill with new minimum wage levels was announced to take effect as from July 1980. This signaled the start of annual wage-setting by the state which was to continue for almost the rest of the decade and beyond. The Bill became the Minimum Wages Act (1980).

Capital which had been largely to blame for the prevailing state of affairs, having been nourished on colonial authoritarianism, resisted the new public policy by retrenchment of workers. This prompted the state to further act as its legitimacy was at stake in the eyes of the new nation. Trade unions were weak and could not prevent wanton worker dismissals. The state intervened with employment security legislation. With the Employment Act (1980) the state restrained summary dismissals except where “it has otherwise been provided for in the contract concerned or in the relevant enactment”, (Sachikonye 1997, 111). Other legal instruments were the Employment (Conditions of Service) Regulations of 1981, also known as Statutory Instrument (SI) 894 which prohibited retrenchment of a worker from employment without prior written approval of the Minister of Labour. SI 894 prohibited employers from retrenching, laying off, suspending, dismissing from employment or penalizing an employee either on grounds of membership of a workers’ committee or trade union or for being pregnant. The power of capital to willy-nilly hire and fire were curbed as these became vested in the state. The state appeared to be socially responsible in conditions where workers’ unions were weak, capital stronger though with no skills in modern industrial relations management, and injustice overwhelming against labour.

Moreover, the state sought to create a communications system at the workplace. Liaison committees, later called 'workers' committees' were introduced by the Ministry of Labour in 1980 to improve communication between workers and management. All this was not really a post-independence innovation. Such committees were introduced by colonial capital long back as labour boards and works committees with the aim of not solving worker grievance but of controlling worker militancy, (Sibanda 1985, 2001).

But a key means of seeking to establish state hegemony over labour was the initiative to establish one labour centre, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, ZCTU in 1981. This national centre was not established as a spontaneous initiative of the labour unions themselves but as the initiative of the state with its corporatist interest. From the very beginning the questions of legitimacy, accountability and competence weighed heavily on the new national centre and sooner or later, the hidden agenda of the new ruling bloc would emerge.

State paternalism towards labour was a convenient yet contradictory trajectory of state hegemony. It is noted that the workers' committees were infiltrated by political party elements which sought to woo workers away from class interests into ZANUISM. Maphosa (1992) and Rutherford (2001) underline the importance of this strategy of entry of nationalist politics into the realm of labour relations and to attempt to resolve labour disputes but without the professional skill to do so. In discoursing the destabilization of what he calls 'domestic government' on the farms, Rutherford says ZANU PF set up party calls or village committees which assigned themselves significant roles. "On many farms during the early 1980s, the village committees tried to resolve labour disputes, mediate problems between workers living together in the compound, and even in the exceptional occasions, direct production decisions". These structures, continues Rutherford "faced much resistance from farmers, some workers, and bureaucrats, but the power of these cells was based both on the threat or realization of violence and the support of upper echelons of the party and government" (Rutherford 2001, 5).

This scenario would be replayed by the state in 2000-2001 when its crisis of legitimacy ascended to critical levels. The intervention by the state, though appearing socially responsible, in fact was an attack on the potential for the protagonism of the working class. Legislating minimum wages without a state programme to build, over time, a collective bargaining capacity and skill, was a ploy to capture, weaken and control the working class which had long historically established itself as a potential basis for opposition politics.

In May 1980, the then Minister of Labour, Kumbirai Kangai, sent in police to break up 1 000 striking transport workers after issuing his warning that:

"I will crack my whip if they do not go back to work ----- If this appeal is not heeded and the workers persist in continuing the strikes, then government ----- will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the country as a whole does not suffer", (Saunders 2001, 137).

At the same time, government sent police and troops to Wankie Colliery where some 4 000 striking workers had rejected Kangai's appeal. Kangai's boss, Robert Mugabe, joined the state's onslaught against labour declaring thus:

"Democracy is never mob rule ---- Our independence must thus not be construed as an instrument vesting individuals or groups of individuals with the right to harass and intimidate others into acting against their will" (ibid).

This of course was tongue-in-cheek because Mugabe's party activists were doing so in the village committees on farms and around the country as Rutherford has indicated.

The hypocrisy of the ruling bloc is seen in that labour made very little gains with this intervention. Saunders notes that by late 1980 government had authorized the dismissal of hundreds of strikers. Strikers in so-called "essential services" were particularly targeted. In October 1981, striking teachers and nurses in Harare were detained, 200 suspended and 80 teachers dismissed (ibid).

The state faced practical management problems, inadequately trained and inexperienced officials fell to bribes from capital and intimidation by political party functionaries. This weakness of the state "left considerable space for opportunistic interventions in day-to-day labour relations by ruling party officials and others who had no legally-sanctioned role in the labour dispute process" (ibid). In such confusion and chaos, labour continued with the strike wave. The new national labour centre was tasked to stem the tide of working class militancy. The first Secretary-General of the ZCTU, Robert Mugabe's late brother, Albert Mugabe, warned thus in 1981:

"Strikes do more harm than good. We don't need to retard economic progress by arranging strikes. ---- There are some bad eggs in the union movement ---- There are some people in the movement who go out looking for difficulties, and try to be difficult. We will watch them closely and discourage striking as much as we can" (Saunders op cit 139).

This shocking statement from a would-be trade unionist reveals the strong ideological convergence of the ruling bloc and the state-imposed labour leadership. The attack on the fundamental weapon of the workers, the strike, by both state and labour leadership reveals the real dimensions of the class character of the state. It was against the working class. This would certainly drive further any existing wedge between the workers and their supposed leadership.

The legal provisions enacted at independence in 1980 and 1981 supposedly to protect labour were incorporated into the new Labour Relations Act (LRA) (1985) which repealed the ICA as amended, the Masters and Servants Act (1901) which governed black labour in colonial times and the post-independence legislation already referred to. The LRA (1985) was hailed by government as a workers' charter and a piece of legislation in-keeping with the government's commitment to Marxism-Lennism.

However, the 'workers' charter' was never a charter for the workers nor for the employers. At best it was a charter for a ruling clique seeking ways of primitive capital accumulation through labour repression as the colonial political economy had done. I have indicated elsewhere the serious negative aspects of this workers' charter with respect to labour especially. While it conferred the right to form trade unions and the right to strike (so-called collective job action), such rights were given with one hand and taken with the other (Sibanda 1985, 2001).

The LRA (1985) spelt out various restrictive measures whose aim was to control collective action by workers. The workers were divided into private and public sectors each governed by their own laws and industrial relations procedures. The private sector and non-public service public sector workers were governed by the LRA (1985). The Public Service workers were governed by the Constitution and later the Public Service Act (1995). Trade union rights, the right to strike and collective bargaining were not accorded to the public service. Representing some 80 000 workers, this denial of rights affected not only the physical strength of private sector workers but also meant a large section of the working-class was held in dire subjection by the state.

The LRA also gave excessive powers of intervention to the Minister of Labour who alone could allow dismissal of employees, proscribe collective bargaining and the right to strike:

Elsewhere I noted that:

“Besides the painful and bureaucratic method of dispute settlement which starts from a labour relations officer to a regional hearing officer, then to a Labour Relations Board, from which appeal lies with a Labour Tribunal and from there to the Supreme Court ----- . The range of spheres which are defined as essential services and therefore, no strike in them is so wide that only domestic workers remain outside the essential services sphere” (Sibanda, 1985, 4).

The Minister alone had power to declare any area “essential services” apart from those already prescribed in the legislation which include electricity sphere; fuel and food; water; fire and fire brigade; sewerage, sanitation and rubbish disposal; health and ambulance services; transport and communications; services such as railways, roads, bridges, ferries, airfields; and mining or any related service, (Saunders op. cit. 140). No provision for tripartite negotiation of this existed. The Minister also had powers to control union finances, union elections, union property, links with other labour movements abroad and even to overrule collective bargaining agreements.

Madhuku (2001) cites three principal areas to consider in terms of assessing whether the law enhances democracy in industrial relations or not. These are: freedom of association, collective bargaining and the right to strike. He notes pointedly that it was not until the LRA (1985) that the right to form or join or participate in the activities of trade unions became available to all private sector and parastatal workers in Zimbabwe. He says the Act was the culmination of an apparently deliberate public policy in which the state relied on the law to improve the status of workers and promote the activities of trade unions.

From the onset, lest us recall that the state never intended to empower the working class by instituting a break with fundamentals of the colonial labour regime. At the height of the strikes in 1980, then Minister of Labour, Kangai, cracking his whip on workers, politely assured commercial capital that “there will be no major changes to the (colonial) Industrial Conciliation Act (ICA), (Sibanda 2001, 65). And indeed the LRA (1985) contained significant “carry over from the pre-independence statutes” (Madhuku op. cit. 110). One example of such carry over is the principle of ‘one union in one industry’. No new union would be registered where another representing same interests already existed. In the LRA (1985), this principle, according to Madhuku, worked in favour of strong trade unions. A union did not need to prove that it was ‘sufficiently representative’, only that it was registered. While this may have worked to strengthen unions, taken in concert with other ‘corporatist’ moves of the state, we are not far off the mark to submit that it was a way to curb freedom of association, prevent anti-ZANU PF unions coming into being. When the situation demanded a change of tactics to weaken labour further, this very principle would be jettisoned. We will deal with this later.

Another institution which as we shall see later came to be used to weaken trade unions was the ‘workers’ committee’. We have indicated that this institution pre-dates independence. Section 53 of the LRA (1985) refers to this shop-floor institution as one whose functions included representing the workers in matters affecting their interests and collective bargaining on the shop-floor. The Act did not link it to the relevant trade union in the industry. Thus in enterprises where trade unions were weak, conflict arose with non-trade union members of the workers’ committee, and more so in situations where both state and capital intervened to undercut the power of unions through use of the workers’ committee. The LRA (1985) made no reference to the ‘works council’. Only in 1990 were Statutory Instruments 377 and 379 issued to give specific functions to a works council which was to be composed of an equal number of employer and employee representatives. The works

council had been created as an after-thought by ministerial regulations (SI 372 of 1990). The specific functions were stated in latter instruments and entitled works councils to register a workplace code of conduct. Once such was registered, the undertaking or industry covered was exempt from the operation of SI 371 of 1985 requiring ministerial approval of termination of employment. This gave this shop-floor institution significant power in the IR system in Zimbabwe. Statutory Instrument (SI) 404 of 1990 entitled the works council to receive and negotiate agreements over retrenchment. This institution signified the drive to empower shop-floor industrial democracy. It is important to assess whether this was indeed the intention of the state, given that historically such institutions were used to weaken labour in the tripartite relationship. Events post-1990 would reveal the true trajectory of state social responsibility.

### **Collective Bargaining**

There was no collective bargaining right accorded to black workers before the ICA (1959 which was amended to allow “a minority of African workers (specifically and exclusively those who were members of a few existing multi-racial unions)”, (Dhlakama and Sachikonye 1994, 148). In the colonial period then, collective bargaining took place within industrial boards, where no registered union and employers’ association existed and industrial councils, where such institutions existed.

At independence, as we have noted, the state intervened with legislation on minimum wages and employment conditions. Free collective bargaining was not in place until inaugurated by the LRA (1985). Madhuku points to the important aspect that Zimbabwe’s current constitution does not specifically refer to the right of trade unions to engage in collective bargaining as is for example, in the South African case. Besides, the Zimbabwean law automatically grants every registered trade union the right to engage the employer in this process, without any recognition or qualification in terms of representativeness or membership strength, as is the case in other countries in the sub-region. This poses problems as several trade unions can emerge as long as they are registered, and demand collective bargaining rights.

It is important to mention here that the fact that workers’ committees now also enjoy collective bargaining rights, the LRA addressed to the issue of potential conflict with the trade union. Section 25 of the LRA made the agreement made by the trade union in a National Employment Council (NEC) superior to that of the workers’ committee in a works council. This of course strengthened trade unions. But as we shall return to deal with the post-1990 amendments to the law, the true intentions of the state shall emerge.

Another aspect worth considering in terms of collective bargaining is that of the role of the state. There have been heated debates on state intervention in collective bargaining for a long time now in Zimbabwe. At independence state and labour seemed to justify such intervention as it was thought it benefited labour which was the weaker party. However, as Dhlakama and Sachikonye point out, criticisms were that this intervention underdeveloped the collective bargaining process and skill formation. Employers castigated central wage-setting as being blind to industry-specific or firm-specific peculiarities. Trade unions later became dissatisfied with state intervention from the mid-1980s onwards as the true class character of such intervention revealed itself. There was therefore in the late 1980s to the 1990s calls for unimpeded free collective bargaining, (Dhlakama and Sachikonye 1994).

Reluctantly, the state gave in as the economic reform programme was also being inaugurated. However, precisely because of the need for primitive capital accumulation and the state being the main or perhaps the only means of doing so under conditions of monopoly capital domination, the state has found it difficult to let go. Also, we must never lose sight of the political question. Power

leased at the economic level may or does translate, in certain historical conjunctures, to power at the political level. Madhuku notes thus:

“A disturbing feature of collective bargaining law is the involvement of government in the process, which in difficult economic conditions may work against the interest of trade unions” (Madhuku 2001, 125).

He, (Madhuku) argues that the state plays a key role in collective bargaining (CB) either by suppressing the process or simply tolerating it. He notes that since 1990, the Zimbabwe state has been encouraging free collective bargaining but the law gives the responsible Minister power to interfere with the freedom of the parties. “The most serious invasion of this freedom is the requirement that a CB agreement has to be registered before it is effective, whilst the Minister is given discretionary power to order non-registration of a collective agreement” (ibid).

The law says the Minister may refuse registration if it appears the agreement is “inequitable to consumers or to members of the public generally, or to any party to the CB agreement or unreasonable or unfair, having regard to the respective rights of the parties” (ibid),

The Minister alone makes an interpretation of these terms. The Minister has such discretionary powers not only to new agreements but also to order re-negotiation of already registered ones. There is always the big question of the ‘public interest’ which the state rightfully claims to protect. However, given that all sorts of things and interests can be done or pursued hiding behind this catch-phrase the ‘public interest’ should not be judged by the Minister alone but in a negotiated framework. This state intervention in collective bargaining mars the whole concept of industrial democracy in Zimbabwe.

Given that the public service workers are not included in free collective bargaining – despite the institution of a Public Service Joint Negotiating Council which merely makes recommendations to the state – the totality of collective bargaining in Zimbabwe, even for the private and public sector workers covered by the LRA (1985 (as amended in 1992), is weakened by state intervention.

### **The Right to Strike**

The right to strike is an integral part of collective bargaining. Collective bargaining without the right to strike is meaningless. Strikes became an important weapon for labour given the historic inequilibrium in the evolution of labour relations.

Madhuku again points out that the right to strike is nowhere enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe. This again distinguishes Zimbabwe from tradition in other countries such as South Africa and Malawi (Madhuku 1995). He points out that the strike law in Zimbabwe is ridiculous. Owing to a number of restrictions, it is impossible to have a legal strike in Zimbabwe. The net effect of all this is to effectively deny this right to workers. Public Service workers have no such right.

Although the LRA (1985) provides for what it calls ‘collective job action’, there is no clear constitutional protection of the right to strike. Section 104 (1) of the LRA says:

“Subject to this Act, all employees, workers’ committees and trade unions shall have the right to resort to collective job action for the redress of lawful grievances” (Madhuku 2001, 127).



The law here means not just strike but also other forms of industrial action. This is important because the attitude and response of the state as allowed in the law should be construed as including response not just to 'strike' but other forms of industrial action as well. Section 2 of the Act defines 'collective job action' as meaning an industrial action calculated to persuade or cause a party to an employment relationship to accede to a demand related to employment and includes a strike, boycott, lock-out, sit-in or sit-out, or other such concerted action (Madhuku 1995).

According to the law, this right is a collective not an individual one. Also, it can be called for by not just the trade union but workers' committees or unorganized employees, as long as they are 'employees'. The LRA (1985) does not cover political strikes (i.e. a strike directed at government or other public authority for change or influence on some policy or law). Developments in the late 1990s addressed this aspect.

The restriction on the right to strike in Zimbabwe included the following: The first and most damaging restriction is that of 'no strike' in essential services. We have already indicated the arbitrariness in the definition of such services and the undesirable discretionary powers given to the responsible Minister. A more humane and civilized scenario would be one as obtains in the South African case where the new law provides for a tripartite committee to determine definition of 'essential services'.

In Zimbabwe, employees may not resort to strike action before exhausting travel on the bureaucratic road of compulsory arbitration. Also, once a dispute has been referred for compulsory arbitration, no strike can legally take place. The dispute settlement machinery will of course eventually 'determine' or dispose of the matter and the story ends there, whenever such resolution is concluded. And there will be no strike. Lastly, no strike may occur where a registered CB agreement has not expired. So, either one is in an essential service or the dispute is under compulsory arbitration or is governed by an existing CB agreement. No lawful strike is possible then. That is why Zimbabwe's history of industrial relations is a history of illegal strikes!

Even where a strike breaks out, the Minister is empowered to issue a "show cause order" which has the effect of asking strikers to defend the continuation of their action. The strike is illegal until such defence. The Minister may then issue a 'disposal order' ending the strike as it will be deemed illegal. The Supreme Court in 1996 held that only the Minister can issue a 'show cause order'. The law requires 14 days' notice of intention to strike and this is the period that facilitates show cause and disposal orders!

The Zimbabwean law does not establish a link between the right to strike and collective bargaining. Those in essential services cannot go on strike period. Those in non-essential services must refer deadlock to compulsory arbitration, therefore no strike. This is what explains the predominance of illegal strikes in Zimbabwe because no strike can be legal.

Trade unions and workers' committees are immune from civil liability but not from any breach of the law. That is, illegal strikes are a breach of law therefore a crime! The law in Zimbabwe gives the right to strike with one hand and takes it away with the other. This is an attack on the workers reminiscent of the colonial labour regime. The uglier features of this will be laid bare even more in the next sub-section of the discussion.

## **The Road to Economic Reform: Industrial Relations and the State: Further Erosion of Social Responsibility and Increase in Repression**

Having inherited a highly unequal society, the post-independence regime in Zimbabwe had to deal with the glaring aspects of inequality forthrightly. This was not only in the sphere of 'incomes, prices and conditions of service' (Riddell 1981) but also in the social welfare spheres. It is precisely in the social sectors that the social responsibility of the new state in Zimbabwe gained world acclaim.

Briefly, the country's strides in democratizing access to education particularly at primary and secondary school levels in the post-independence period were dramatic. During 1980-85, the expansion rates were 6,16% at primary school level and 63,61% at secondary school level. The rate dropped however at both levels during 1986-1990 to 1,37% and 4,52% for both primary and secondary school levels respectively. Government increased its expenditure in education dramatically, especially to finance teachers' salaries.

Expenditure on education rose from 14% of total recurrent expenditure to 23% in the two-year period 1979/80 to 1980/81 and remained at 20% of total budget throughout the 1980s, (Loewenson 2000).

In health, real per capita public spending on health increased from Z\$10,50 in 1980 to Z\$18,17 in 1981 to Z\$37 in 1983/4 and Z\$58 in 1990/91. It started falling thereafter.

At independence Zimbabwe mounted such a massive programme of social development which started to be eroded with the economic reform programme. This social programme together with intervention in the field of wages and conditions of employment, led to some real gains in wages and standard of living, particularly in mining, agriculture and domestic service where such wages were extremely low, (Saunders, 2001; Dansreau 2001). The progressive social responsibility of the state here is recorded in that the control of wages was coupled with state intervention in welfare. Thus, the real standard of living of people improved, although in most cases minimum wages were set at relatively low wages, or even below existing levels. Saunders notes that by mid-1980s most real wages were in decline, following a wage freeze and reduced subsidies on essential commodities. I have elsewhere related the salient features of the road to economic reform, their impact on the economy and standard of living of the people, (Sibanda 1989, 1994) and the impact of ESAP itself (Sibanda, 2001a).

The liberalization in the economic sphere did not necessarily mean liberalization in the industrial relations sphere. I have discussed this issue and concluded that what happened in Zimbabwe was a more tightening of the industrial relations regime (Sibanda 2001b).

We have indicated the watershed legislation – the LRA (1985) – which cemented the main facets of the post-colonial labour regime and the attempt by the state to 'capture' the labour element under its political hegemony. The combination of restrictive labour laws, state intervention in wage setting, conditions of service and arbitration of industrial disputes and debilitating politically-motivated divisions and conflicts with the national centre and its affiliates, led to a marked decline in 'worker actions' during the second half of the 1980s. Unions dissuaded workers from outright strike action. But other forms of "collective job action" occurred. The labour movement had been decidedly weakened. Sachikonye (2001) argues that the 1985 LRA represented a pact guaranteeing control of labour militancy, but it was a pact resting on a shaky basis because it was a framework which invested preponderant authority, power and discretion in the state. Before long, both labour and capital would challenge this framework but for different reasons. In the short-term, however, the regulatory framework and incomes policy had succeeded in defusing industrial conflict through the

pacification of the work-force. Sachikonye says this pact had been concluded by the state with a labour movement leadership that lacked legitimacy since it had no strong roots within unions. It was, as we have argued, a pact meant to weaken the working class.

Again Sachikonye underlines the cardinal point we have made, that state paternalism and welfarist policies provided for (short-term) real gains for the generality of the population:

“Against the state paternalism and authoritarian approach must be set initial determined efforts to expand the infrastructure and delivery of social services, principally health and education. Together with prescribed minimum wages, these social wage goods represented real gains in the first few years of independence. This redistributive element was a new feature in the emerging labour regime”, (Sachikonye op. cit. (152).

Let us hasten to point out that neither the social wage goods nor the state paternalistic policy were negotiated and agreed programmes with organized labour. They were implemented by a nationalist ruling clique out of philanthropy. They could be revoked any time. And they were with the inauguration of the ESAP.

From 1986 onwards, there were changes in economic and social policy which required changes in the industrial relations regime. Piecemeal economic reforms beginning from 1983 onwards were intensified slowly until the liberalization measures were ushered in as from October 1990 and the ESAP starting in 1991. The ‘growth with equity’ strategy of accumulation and instruments of planning were abandoned. The state retreated from its social-redistributive role and embraced the ‘market forces’ as the dynamic of economic and social activity. A neo-liberal Investment Code in 1989 envisaged the deregulation of the labour market, especially as it related to job security and income guarantees. Among several of the planks in the ESAP package was deregulation of investment, labour and price controls. The ESAP programme had the target of achieving a growth rate of 5% p.a. between 1990 and 1995. To achieve this, attractive conditions for foreign investment had to be in place. Lowering production costs was to be achieved by demobilizing labour control mechanisms incorporated into the labour law. But more than this, spheres had to be created where the labour law was to be demobilized altogether (Export Processing Zones, EPZs).

Sachikonye (2001) and Jenkins (1997) have noted the ganging together of some factions of local established and aspiring capital and international capital to mould the ESAP programme to the exclusion of the labour factor. The ZCTU in its alternative to the ESAP programme (Beyond ESAP 1996) laments this fact and makes a demand for national participation in the design of such programmes.

Meanwhile, as the state prepared its road to economic reform, the labour movement was not only cleaning itself but building its capacity from below. In 1985 it voted out of office its co-opted corrupt and incompetent leadership. This cleansing ushered in a more assertive stance and posture for autonomy vis-à-vis the state. State paternalism came under fire. Strikes in the agro-industry and public service sectors exposed the limitations of unilateral wage-setting by the state (Sachikonye 2001). It had become obvious that the state-wage setting was not helping workers.

What is more, ESAP envisaged serious job losses as a consequence of restructuring in both private and public sectors. 26 000 jobs would be lost in the private sector and 20 000 in the public sector. As it turned out some 100 000 jobs were lost in the formal sector (Saunders 2001, 143). This made unemployment acute because the envisaged 100 000 jobs p.a. to be created during ESAP remained the pipedream that it was, (Sachikonye op. cit.).

In 1989, statutory minimum wages were phased out in most sectors except where no registered trade unions and employer associations existed. Most unions had acquired collective bargaining skills and in fact, they proved better skilled than employers who still remained in the authoritarian mould. Collective bargaining became strongly institutionalized in the National Employment Councils (NECs), the bi-partite institutions of equal representatives of employer and employee organizations. In this new framework, state paternalism was being frozen. But the state would not let go. Sachikonye says: “--- this new labour regime was not established without obstruction or contestation from the state” (op. cit. 155). It still intervened to declare wage increases inflationary and sought to set maximum limits in the 1990/91 collective bargaining period. The Minister of Labour still retained the power to veto wage increases “in the interests of the economy or the consumers”. The state still wields the power to veto or not to register negotiated agreements.

The above, plus what we indicated earlier concerning the exclusion of public service workers from collective bargaining rights, triggered off civil strife which saw strike actions involving health workers, teachers, tax assessors, aviation workers and civil servants between 1990, 1994 and 1996. “The strikes in August and November 1996 were the longest and most acrimonious, and eventually forced the state to commit itself to negotiating a pact under which a collective bargaining structure would be set up” (Sachikonye op. cit. 156). The structure was set up as the Public Service Joint Negotiating Council which is purely advisory. Both private and public sector workers called for a Harmonised Labour Act. Such an Act is, after a very long delay, now before Parliament and is suffering set-backs because of its unconstitutional and blatantly anti-labour provisions which infringe on the rights relating to freedom of expression, association and assembly, (Daily News, 16-01-02). The Bill attacks the right to strike and seeks to give the employer a free license to dismiss strikers (Loewenson, Daily News 26-01-02).

With the introduction of ESAP, the state intensified its assault on the workers’ organization with a clear intention to weaken the labour movement. The principle of ‘one industry, one union’ came under attack. The state changed its tactics and argued for a demobilization of trade union monopoly, insisting that the principle violated the cardinal principle of labour market flexibility and freedom of association as enshrined in the constitution and accepted international labour standards. A Labour Relations Amendment Act (LRAA) was passed in 1992 repealing the principle of ‘one industry, one union’. The Act made trade union pluralism legally permissible. The LRAA (1992) however gave the Registrar the discretion to refuse registration of unions that were not substantially representative of their employees. This provision though is vague since there is no clear definition of ‘substantially representative’. Such vagueness allows pro-state splinters to be registered to undercut the power of more powerful unions. This scenario was played in the Supreme Court case of 1998, where a registered agriculture union challenged the registration of another union. The registered union won its case with the court arguing that the Registrar failed to consider the mess that would be caused by having employers negotiate with two unions in the same industry, (Madhuku, 2001, 112). The issue of automatic recognition by the employer of any registered trade union still stands. A union does not have to prove a certain minimum level of membership for it to be recognized for collective bargaining purposes, as happens in other countries in the region, such as in Malawi, Namibia and Swaziland. This may also undercut existing registered and strong unions. In fact the state used this provision to register a rival of the ZCTU, the Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions (ZFTU) which is heavily pro-government.

The LRAA (1992) regulated trade union membership to reduce potential union membership. This was done through widening the definition of ‘managerial employee’ who, according to LRA (1985) was one whose employment involved him/her in a confidential relationship with his/her employer in relation to matters affecting rights and interests of other employees. Such employees could not be trade union members. The LRAA (1992) widened this definition to include an employee whose duties include hiring, firing, transferring, promoting, suspending, laying off, dismissing, rewarding,

disciplining or adjudging the grievance of other employees or making recommendations on these matters to the employer. This rakes in a lot of employees, thus denying trade unions a substantial potential membership base. Such employees are also barred from being members of the same workers' committee as non-managerial workers. The LRA (1985) did not bar this.

We have already indicated the tension introduced by according the workers' committee the right to negotiate collective bargaining agreements in a works council. The LRAA (1992) endorsed the works council institution as introduced by the statutory legislation we have already referred to. All provisions which were only in the regulations were now incorporated in the main Act. More fundamentally, Section 101(1) not only incorporated the right of the works council to apply for and register a code of conduct, but sub-section 1(ii) underlined the supremacy of a works councils code over a national employment council one. This makes the workers' committee superior to the trade union. Clearly, the law was crafted to weaken trade unions as important institutions to influence public policy. But this was in-keeping with the ESAP accumulation model and the strategy of the state from independence to date.

These measures did not come into place without resistance. The ZCTU protested strongly and called for their repeal together with the abandonment of ESAP to which they were corresponding. The state responded harshly by threatening the ZCTU and some of its affiliate unions with de-registration. On 13 June 1992 the ZCTU mounted a demonstration against the LRAA, ESAP and the high cost of living. This was brutally repressed by police and six unionists were arrested and charged under the infamous colonial Law and Order Maintenance Act for holding an illegal demonstration. They were acquitted by the Supreme Court which declared the relevant section of the Act unconstitutional as it infringed on the freedom of expression protected by the constitution (Madhuku 2001). Negotiations between state and labour collapsed as it was clear the state would not budge. Relations between state and labour deteriorated rapidly over the years.

The victory of the labour movement in the courts instilled confidence while their capacity-building programmes had started to bear fruit. As the first phase of ESAP closed in 1995, it was clear that the programme had been a failure, with all targets not met. Poverty was increasing as was unemployment. Real wages had declined to their lowest since 1980. General discontent was growing across the nation and this gave impetus to revitalization of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). They grew with an improvement in their lobbying capacities. This was so even for business and labour organizations.

As the government was set to enter the second phase of ESAP, the ZCTU sought not to be left out of the design stage. It produced its own alternative framework (ZCTU 1996) launched in 1996. In this policy document the ZCTU called for a national consultative body to be called the Zimbabwe Economic Development and Labour Council (ZEDLAC). Such a council was to be a stakeholders' forum to engage in formulation, implementing and monitoring development strategies. The ZCTU envisaged representative participants to such a forum whose decisions would be more than advisory or consultative. The state ignored this and instituted a National Economic Consultative Forum attended by individuals hand-picked by the state and representing no-one. The deliberations were purely 'consultative'. The labour movement refused to participate in what it saw as a mere talk shop.

Although the ZCTU had produced "Beyond ESAP ----" in the belief that relations between itself and the state were thawing and developing into a rapprochement allowing dialogue, this was not to be. The economic conditions worsened in 1997. The Zimbabwe Human Development (1999) acknowledged that 75% of Zimbabweans were now living under the poverty datum line. ESAP had totally failed. Retrenchments had soared and real incomes declined. Standards of living collapsed dramatically. In manufacturing the spectre of de-industrialisation loomed large (Sachikonye 2000).

“Meanwhile industrial conflict centred around wage increases surged with more than 230 separate strikes reported during that year (1997) alone. The economic reform programme itself ground to a halt as lending investment dried up. It was a deepening economic crisis ---- accentuated by profligate state spending on appeasement of war veterans who campaigned for a pay-back of their role in the independence struggles” (Sachikonye 2001, 162).

This discontent in the private sector was flanked by improving assertiveness in the public sector work-force. The public service strike of 1996 was the largest post-independence strike in Zimbabwe. It was a reflection of the frustration in the public service and poor management and political arrogance on the part of the employer. The strike cemented formally the relationship between public and private sector workers as they jointly fought for harmonization of labour laws. In September 1996, the Public Service Association (PSA) formally affiliated to the ZCTU.

At the end of 1997, war veterans campaigned for their pay-back and threatened a return-to-the bush if they were not paid. President Mugabe and his lieutenants secretly negotiated a package worth more than Z\$4 billion in state spending. This was not approved by Parliament and the attempt to raise the funds through a levy on citizens was hotly contested together with several other tax increases. When the state continued pursuing its tax increases, labour consulted widely across all national sectors, calling for a national strike. The state backed down on the war vets tax but this was too little too late. The state attacked strikers in Harare after having declared their demonstration unlawful (Sachikonye 2001).

### **Going Beyond Industrial Relations: Good Governance as Central for Sound Industrial Relations Framework**

In January 1998 there were sharp increases in the prices of basic foodstuffs. Riots flared in all urban centers around the country. At least ten people were killed while hundreds were brutalized by the police and army. Massive damage was caused to property. The government blamed the ZCTU for this but there was no evidence. The state attempted to appear as if it was moving towards consultation with labour, introducing the National Economic Consultative Forum (NECF) already referred to in January 1998. In February, when it became clear to the government that the national centre was organizing a stay-away for March unless demands bordering on substantive consultation and resolving macro-economic mismanagement were met, phoney consultations in a Tripartite Negotiating Forum (TNF) were initiated, led by the Minister of Labour, Florence Chitauru who however declared that her delegation had no mandate to deliver any concessions negotiated (Saunders 2001). On March 3 and 4 1998 a mass stay-away took place, well organized and mobilized via consultations beyond workers and employers. Between March and May 1998, a further series of consultations were conducted by the national centre using “labour forums”. Calls were made for more stay-aways of longer duration to confront the state on issues of economic hardship and mismanagement of the economy. In May 1998 the state again pretended to be willing to negotiate. The labour movement was urged to drop efforts to organize stay-aways. But again as had always been the case, the state was taking both labour and capital for a ride. As talks were beginning in the TNF, the government “mistakenly” gazetted new legislation using Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Regulations, which permitted the President to proclaim legislation lasting up to 6 months. The draconian legislation (promptly denied by the Attorney General as gazetted in error!) expanded the list of essential services, virtually making all strikes in the private sector illegal. Other regulations criminalized public meetings. Though these were withdrawn, the writing was on the wall for all to see. As negotiations were going on in the TNF, again the government displayed its contempt of the democratic principle. In October 1998 a 67% increase in fuel prices and a 40% increase in prices of basic food items was announced without giving prior notice to TNF partners or consulting for advice. The labour movement responded by announcing its

intention to hold a series of mass actions from the 11<sup>th</sup> of the same month to force the government to scrap the price increases and respect the TNF.

Two successful stay-aways were held on 11 and 18 November. They were largely peaceful except for the repression by the police and a ZANU PF businessman in Mutare who fired guns leading to the death of one man and injury to several others (Saunders 2001, 169).

The ZCTU had successfully cemented links with a wider cross-section of CSOs during 1997-98. A broad coalition of a social movement involving human rights organizations, landless people, progressive professionals and intellectuals. All these combined in the call for good governance and the labour movement led in the articulation of these interests. In addition to shop-floor issues, the ZCTU demanded the following: the establishment of tripartite bodies to deliberate on the national budget, land redistribution, privatization, government borrowing and spending (Zimbabwe had involved itself in a costly war in the DRC even without Parliamentary approval. This, together with the costly unbudgeted expenditure to pay-back war veterans threw the economy totally off-balance); the establishment of tripartite commissions of inquiry to investigate various corruption scandals including the VIP Housing Scheme abused by state and political party functionaries, the National Oil Company management, the alleged laundering of money by Roger Boka's collapsed Merchant Bank – (Roger Boka was a leading political party merchant businessman); and the looting of the War Victims Compensation Fund by state and political party functionaries and their friends; the system of issuing government tenders; etc. (All these were avenues of primitive capital accumulation and the ZCTU's demands for transparency on such transparency issues horrified the state. Individuals linked to the President and the President himself appeared not be clean) (See Roger Tangri 1998, p.113 and Note 12); a reduction of the size of the Cabinet from 55 to 15; introducing a new popular democratic constitution within a year; and freeing the state media from state control and placing it in the hands of neutral, nationally representative institutions.

The state responded in late November 1998 not with dialogue but with a formal ban on further stay-aways and other 'politically-motivated industrial action intended to pressure the government to change its policies'. This ban was through the Presidential Powers legislation withdrawn in August as "an error". The Presidential Act provided for steep fines and prison sentences for engaging in strikes, stay-aways and demonstrations. Zimbabwe in toto was muzzled by this legislation. The social responsibility of the state had long ceased!

Labour was no longer in a mood to be intimidated. The constitutionally provided rights to freedom of association, assembly and expression were attacked. The right to strike was revoked. Then President of the ZCTU, Gibson Sibanda declared:

"These regulations are only a joke. Stay-aways are the only weapon we workers have in this chimurenga chevashandi (war of the workers), and no one has the mandate to take that weapon from us ----- Ian Smith tried it, but where did it take him? And this is the path Mugabe is now trying to follow, hoping this imbroglio will go away. He is in for a rude surprise, for by banning us he is pouring benzene on fire", (Saunders 2001, 171).

His then Secretary-General, Morgan Tsvangirai equally declared:

"People are prepared to go to jail or even die because we are fighting to improve the economic conditions of the workers. We will call a stay-away any time, any day when we think it's necessary and convenient, and the workers will defy any stupid rules in place", (Saunders *ibid*).

Then Attorney-General (now Minister of Justice Legal and Parliamentary Affairs and Non-Constituency MP) Patrick Chinamasa threatened de-registration of the ZCTU, incarceration of organizers of stay-aways and suspension of collection of dues from union affiliates. The LRA (1985) allowed the Minister responsible power to interfere with union finances. In early December 1998, state secret agents invaded ZCTU offices to investigate finances and relations with foreign NGOs. No evidence of any crime was found.

The Presidential ban on strikes showed there was no possibility of gaining anything from dialogue. The ZCTU shelved plans for any further stay-aways and demonstrations for they were achieving nothing except inviting terror from the state. All avenues of tripartite negotiation had failed. Poor governance was the root cause of the crisis in Zimbabwe. The then ZCTU Secretary-General, Morgan Tsvangirai declared at the end of 1998:

“There is no longer any need for people to continue skirting the root cause of our economic problems. Zimbabweans must now resolve the question of national governance. When those who have been put in power show such arrogance and behave as if nothing can be done to them, then it is perhaps time for the people to find other means out of these problems --- What we’re crying about is the issue of governance, how national affairs are being conducted – corruption, the land issue, public tenders, involvement in foreign wars and amendment of the constitution. Until we address these, I doubt we’re going anywhere” (Saunders *ibid*).

Indeed, governance and the question of a new constitution became the rallying cry. Debate ensued as to whether the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act was constitutional or not. This has not been faced by the Supreme Court. Madhuku (2001) suggests that the Act is constitutional and that is why the fundamental issue is that of changing the constitution. But clearly the Presidential Act attacked the freedoms of association, assembly and expression which are specifically protected in the constitution.

The ZCTU took leadership of the campaign for a new constitution by the civil society coalition called the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA). Eventually the state acquiesced to the pressure for a new constitution but sought to control its process and membership. A constitutional Commission was set up by the President while the NCA, disagreeing with the process ran a parallel campaign. The Government’s draft was rejected by the nation in the February 2000 referendum and the NCA recorded its first victory.

Meanwhile the ZCTU’s national consultation process had garnered support across the nation for moves to form a political party to contest the 2000 general elections. “Union structures played a strategic role in the consultations with workers on the nature and programme of the envisaged party. Through the ‘labour forums’, the foundations of the new party were laid in 1999. The major landmarks in this process were the National Working Peoples’ Convention held in early February 1999, and the founding of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in September 1999. The significance of the founding of the MDC lay in that it was the first political organization in the post-independence period founded on a working-class base. It soon widened its base to include middle-class and business supporters which had become disgruntled with the Mugabe government” (Sachikonye 2001, 163).

Even before the political party was formed, the state denigrated not just the leadership of the ZCTU but its support base which was to become the strong support base of the opposition. In December 1997, an attempt to assassinate Tsvangirai was made by war veterans and ruling party supporters in the ZCTU offices. President Mugabe launched a tirade against what he called ‘lack of liberation credentials’ of the ZCTU leadership. Referring to Tsvangirai in particular, he said: “The freedom



that you have come from the people, from ZANU PF and those who chose to fight while you stayed behind enjoying everyday comforts” (Raftopoulos 2001, 13).

During campaigns for the 2000 general elections, the MDC was denigrated as a foreign-sponsored and sell-out organization seeking to reverse independence by bringing back white rule. It was posed as an organization wishing “to ensure that land and all other economic resources remain in the hands of the white community” (ibid). President Mugabe attacked urban workers branding them “mabwidi” or totemless foreigners. Civil servants, teachers and middle-class people and urbanites were attacked for supporting the MDC and for being sell-outs who now lived in former ‘whites only’ suburbs. This attack was joined by war veterans who declared they would go to war and punish exactly these people if ZANU PF lost the elections (ibid).

Despite these threats and actual violence leading to some 33 opposition members being killed in the process – and the President eventually pardoning the perpetrators of crime – the MDC won 57 seats against ZANU PF’s 62. It was this impressive performance after only 9 months in existence which sent shock waves through ZANU PF, forcing it to intensify crude methods including violence, murder, threats of war and military coups (The Herald 10-01-02, The Daily News 10-01-02), dirty media campaigns, farm (ZES-FES 2000 and Sibanda 2000) and factory invasions (CZI-FES 2001) changing electoral laws, passing more repressive legislation etc. in order to ensure Mugabe wins the March 2002 Presidential elections.

## **Conclusion**

There can be no doubt that the state knew its history well. The labour movement had historically demonstrated its capacity to provide a social basis for opposition politics. Instead of putting together a strong corporatist programme in which both parties give and take, the state embarked on a paternalistic road to woo the working class into its orbit and eventually weaken it in line with its accumulation model. In Zimbabwe, this process would not be immune to dialectics.

The working-class, acting spontaneously at first, forced a recognition from the state of its plight. The progressive social responsibility of the state in the early years of independence was such recognition. But the state used the opportunity to gradually embark on a road to weaken the labour factor. Facing this crisis and certainly weakened economically and frustrated socially and politically, the labour movement advanced its fight to a higher level, beyond mere industrial relations and onto the political field. This forced it to build a formidable social alliance, today posing a real potential to take state power.

The ZANU PF government and its emergent class allies seeking primitive accumulation are solely to blame for the crisis in Zimbabwe today. There was absolutely no reason for failure to build bona fide national consultative structures. The isolation, marginalisation and repression of labour reflected an arrogant state attitude not just to labour alone but society at large. The repressive legislation against labour was flanked by similar legislation against private voluntary organizations – the NGO sector – (Raftopoulos 2000, Sibanda 2002).

The attack on the working class, seen in the President’s insults of the workers as totemless foreigners, the attack on middle-class business people, civil servants, teachers and urbanites and white farmers and their workers (who allegedly caused the loss in the February 2000 Referendum), meant that everyone - except the lumpen elements of war veterans and the lumpen-proletariat (whose ranks had swelled due to ESAP-led job losses and chronic unemployment) and some poor peasants who could be bought with marginal confiscated lands – were the enemy of the state!

That is why the lumpen-proletariat and so-called war veterans were mobilized for terror and murder campaigns on farms, factories, villages and townships. The state's crisis of legitimacy is acute and its 'loose' links with the social base, cultivated during the 'nationalist' phase broke and the attempts are to build such links by the terror method. Unless a new regime with an honest, democratic conscience assumes political office in the country, a sound and democratic industrial relations framework will remain an elusive dream.

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### News Papers

The Herald  
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# **INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN ZIMBABWE TODAY: DECLINING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE**

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